

Raja Schwahn-Reichmann

Iconography of the big chandelier – Omnia Vincit Amor

Love conquers all

Sparkles from the core – Hit by Cupid and set on fire, the wounded, flaming heart becomes a source of light and passion for every living being. Its fire stays victorious over frigidity and darkness. So all creatures, animals, plants, spirits, satyrs and satyresses are pushing towards this fire, in its shine becoming flames themselves! Devoted, illuminating, dancing around the centre, around their divine desire, featured out as a wine red jewel, willing to sink into the rose-coloured lotus blossom...

Om Mani Padme Hum
The male be within the female
So it is! - and there is light
From lust to lustre!

About the motivation for my paintings

My great pleasure and joy to intervene with my paintings in our rooms, in our lives needs, additional to the painted space, three-dimensionality – namely the cropping of the figures (the painting on plywood is cut out according to the silhouette, inspired by the baroque Chantournés). Freed from their painted background and exposed to our reality all these gods, genii, erotes, fauns, chinoise ladies and dancers intervene in our actions, with their cheerful, festive message pacing us politely but firmly as light-bearers.

Some words about the chandelier groups

About Omnia Vincit Amor

Dionysus – as leader and rioter of all the baroque bucolic bustle, with Cupid and his divine relatives and ambassadors, he is a protector against melancholy as bearer of wine, lust(re) and light

About Each Pagody an Episody

My Chinoiserie is inspired by the European baroque Chinese style that knew how to combine India and China, Indian and Moorish, easygoing, cheerful and elegant.

All nonsense is hard – thus highest art!

Biographical notes

Raja Schwahn-Reichmann was born in Vienna in the district of Leopoldstadt, where she lives and works. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts (graphic, conservation and technology), learned all traditional techniques like oil, wall painting, tempera, miniature, historical polychromy of sculptures, gilding, concerned with costume history, the conservation of archaeological and ethnological objects but also architecture and monument protection. She graduated there in the domain of paper and parchment.

For several years she taught historical art techniques, painting and drawing for conservators. Her special artistic interest lies in history baroque interior designs and the connection between painting and architecture.

Her painting is widely inspired by antique and baroque iconography. This also means to show the paintings not like an exhibition but during a feast, for example for Dionysus, so that all visitors, which shall be styled supported by the artist, become part of the Dionysium, that is like a "time sculpture". To direct the feast she paints mostly life-sized figures as cut out silhouettes (inspired by baroque Chantournés) which also carry candles to create the festive room.

Starting from the spatial idea of the paintings: Design of the "Au-Theater", a stage for the visitor centre at the National Park Donauauen. Setting for the baroque feast for the Festival Palace Schloss Hof on the occasion of its opening (Documentary „Prince Eugene's Miracle Garden – The reincarnation of the baroque garden of Schloß Hof“, Interspot 2005), overall design of the Life Ball 2014 with the motto "Garden of Earthly Delights".

Schwahn-Reichmann was also founder of "The Josefinian Committee for Enjoyment", which fought for the preservation of historic gardens at the Augartenspitz, part of the baroque Viennese Augarten.

Key areas of training

- Care and preservation of monuments
- Photo restoration
- Artistic sculptural work
- Relief
- Wall and panel painting
- Chantourné painting in all techniques

Lectures

- Costume History & costumes (University of Applied Arts Vienna)
- Historic art techniques in theory and practice (Academy of Fine Arts)

Clients and Projects

- Painting by Raja Schwahn-Reichmann was and is shown, inter alia, at:
Vienna City Festival, Wiener Lustspielhaus, Baroque festivities at Schloss Hof, annual Christmas market in St. Gilgen, Long Night of Museums
- Equipment for the film "The Three Musketeers" (1993) with, amongst others, Kiefer Sutherland and Charlie Sheen
- Storyboards for Austrian films
- 2009 awarded with the Premio Mantegna, Italy
- Participation in music videos with facilities & paintings or as contributors
- Staging of vintage fashion shows from the estate of author and collector Elfriede Gerstl

- Production stage and costumes for the Vienna Life Ball on "elements" (water) and "Garden of Earthly Delights"
- Sculptural works, ceramics, reliefs, objects like the design of a whole indoor pool in the Swiss mountains
- Ceramic design for walls in the tradition of baroque azulejos
- Wall paintings

Further enquiries:

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