

## **UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION**

**Christa Blasius, art historian, M.A.**

### **"World Art" - Saarburger Art-Talks**

**Asia as a source of inspiration in the exhibition "Spirit of Asia", by the Chilean artist Marjolaine del Pino.**

In a series named 'Mirror reflections 2013', art historian Christa Blasius conceived and designed an art-talk for enthusiasts from the region. The occasion was the Chilean artist Marjolaine del Pino's exhibition "Spirit of Asia", hosted by the Saarburger Culture Foundry. Christa Blasius gave first an introduction to the works, whose forms, techniques and themes are influenced by Asian cultures. In a relaxed atmosphere, the interview participants discussed the effects and meanings of the paintings, between tradition and modernity, design and art.

### **Travel as artistic inspiration**

Though she lives in Luxembourg, Marjolaine del Pino was born in Chile. After studying graphic design, she worked for various companies, newspapers and magazines. In 1996 she moved to Luxembourg, where she worked as an interior designer. She devoted herself also intensively to acrylic painting and silk-printing techniques.

In 1999, she moved to Asia, where she toured India, China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia and Southeast Asian countries. For ten years, she worked intensively on the Asian cultures, their religions, their arts and their traditions. Since then, Marjolaine's art has never ceased to be inspired by these manifold and intense impressions, especially the colors and forms of visual arts, but also Asian music and dance.

In 2009, Marjolaine del Pino returned to Luxembourg. Her artistic work deals now increasingly with her environment there.

### **Asian and European traditions**

Typical of the exhibition "Spirit of Asia" is Del Pino's approach of Asian and European art traditions and ways of seeing, alternating art and commercial art and always looking for the formally, technically and medially new. A characteristic example is her experimenting with formats, diptychs or triptychs that mimic the shape of the kimono. The use of various mixed media techniques, of painting, printing, spraying, of fabrics, wallpapers and photos evokes very consistent aesthetic effects and contrasts traditional and contemporary ways of seeing and issues.

Marjolaine challenges thus the panel painting of modernity (the picture as such). She raises also questions about the relationship of art and design. Traditional Japanese art for example associated even more strongly the visual effect and the use in daily and ceremonial life.

### **Images that break up the frame**

This is particularly evident in the kimono, which plays a prominent role in this exhibition and whose characteristic shape Marjolaine uses to play with pictorial traditions. While it reveals the garment itself, the format of the kimono is also a pure "image support", as in the painting "Samurai Battle", whose expressive style "breaks up the frame", or in the picture "Fuji", whose landscape goes beyond the usual image format, as in a panoramic image.

The collages (e.g. "Monk's Robes") and paintings (e.g. "Geisha") too are inspired by Asia, but do not look folkloristic. They explore traditional and contemporary representation techniques and question thus viewing habits and attitudes. Another group of Marjolaine's works are the abstract works. Experimenting with different materials is paramount in that respect, as in the picture "wind", whose gold paper composition on a dark red background refers both to Buddhist traditions and to elemental forces. Traditional Javanese batik has another image, combining the Mythological and the Historical while experimenting with structures and plasticity. The smocked and knotted structure of the fabric and the surrounding batik print yield a kind of panel the viewer will read only if he/she looks very closely and thinks along. By dealing with the issue of quality of craftsmanship and everyday objects, such as textile fabrics, Marjolaine places herself unexpectedly in the middle of a very actual social debate.

### **Talk about art**

It is these ambiguities that give Marjolaine's works an artistic depth that calls for a second and closer look by the observer. During the Art-Talk about Marjolaine's exhibition in the Saarburger Culture Foundry, participants seized the opportunity to intensively analyze the works. It was mainly the conceptual strength of the technical and medial experiments and of the manifold related levels of meaning that inspired most the participants. They also highlighted the very good hanging of the exhibition in the rooms of the Culture Foundry with its entanglement of outside and inside.

### **Christa Blasius**