

# The Stone Age of emotional technology

Ștefan Radu Crețu surprises us every time through the semiotic challenge of his artworks. No matter if he represents species of animals in contemporary materials, preserving their Latin scientific name, or if they combine different elements creating odd objects, named by means of some Latin terms, the artist opens a window towards unknown worlds in which the real and the fantastic co-exist.



His works express conundrums for the intellect. Based on physical principles, easily decodable, they preserve a certain degree of mystery, defining them as surreal artistic objects with kinetic resorts. His birds, insects and fish become intensely colored functional mechanisms, the rocks are provided with propellers, and the comets can be closely studied, with sounds and motion, like in the current exhibition, *Stone Age*. The ambition to create props – like

illusions – with elements of the past and future in the same place emphasizes the strangeness of his works. From an exhibition to another, the artist develops while adjusting to the location. Although his works seem like deriving from another world and are not intentionally in agreement with the domestic environment of a gallery, their enchantment is given by the *come from nowhere* sensation they concede.

The kinetic drawings are found between the mechanic and the artistic, the incisively cropped board combines with the intense colors, and the sounds created by motion can be perceived only in reality. Ștefan Radu Crețu's art is meant to approach the artistic object and experimentation on the living element. It has no smell, it is only equipped with ON/OFF buttons.

A controversial artist of our times, Damien Hirst, used to say that “painting is so poetical, while sculpture is more logical and scientific and makes you think of gravity.” Moreover, the volumes of Ștefan Radu Crețu make you think of the universe, nature and primordial forms. This is the way everything starts. Then comes man (the creator), who provides them with a finite meaning, by adding his mark (or a propeller, a little engine, a button). The natural questions deriving from this might be: Do these objects have their own life? Do they live beyond the game suggested by the author, beyond the concept and space visited, where they can be seen? And, why not – is art a vital factor for the mankind? Are people ready to process their emotions in their connection with the artistic object, thought-out and created by the creator's hand, or do they expect a signal from the object itself to overcome the antonymic barrier *do I like it – or don't I like it?*



I consider that this rhetoric makes sense especially when the objects we are related to are strange from all viewpoints and are non-existentially and non-sensually projected. They are not endowed with the explicit dramatic dimension of the species we belong to and do not express things like us, although we have all the chances to share the same source of feelings. The existential questions emerge in moments of peace, and the dumbness of some artifacts instigates us to develop a dialogue with the self.

The challenges of contemporary world are sensed everywhere and nowadays art is an artificial mountain, which, fortunately, many people try to climb. A kind of mount Everest, with some permissive and apparently well oxygenated atmosphere. A reachable and possible place, making us think that we become heroes when we reach the top. However this mountain is terrestrial and its escalade makes you closely look at the sky. It makes you fly and conquer the next level, even though your feet are heavier and heavier because of the effort. As if they were of stone. Gravity is again provided with meaning.