

# An Interpretation of Petra Borén's Art

## A Romantic Attempt

Her paintings are open, wide open - which is a paradox, because they completely conceal what they show. They open to our human unexplainable. Their motives are hovering in a state of coming into existence, hovering over landscapes, that are also coming into existence.

Heaven and earth are there, searching their colors, as the artist is searching herself. At which I, the viewer, also begin looking for myself.

The only given explanation is wonder, and the viewer will experience this with its own feelings. What the lines are holding - bodies, animals - are mixed with the universe of the whole picture. The lonely person, still a child, is its contours, only in relation to all that exists. To exist, to be, seems to be Petra Borén's subject.

We pass from childhood into adult life without leaving our childish selves. The child in the human is the human as a child. So is human from the beginning, an unripe kind, that never passed the childish, neither as mankind nor as an individual. Deep inside us, we are never (fully) born to the world. We have to try to manage ourselves and the world. We have no choice. The child will stay inside.

"I Drömmars Land" (In The Land of Dreams) is the name of Petra's songs poetry, and also the name of her exhibition at Galleri Konstepidemin in Gothenburg, 2011.

The border of that land can be the moment when dreams at night after awakening turn into daydreams and into desires. Something important that you dreamt and forgot is perhaps still there as a vague feeling. Dreams can, even if you don't remember them when you wake up, contribute to the strength that your life needs - and an artist formulates it in its work. Petra's paintings seem to have the nonending, kindhearted expectation of a dream as a theme. Two irreconcilables there meet: reality and dream - such a soft surrealism. Perhaps André Breton could have agreed to this. He speaks in "Manifest" of "striking root in a mirage".

To the mystery of our great inner life, to the mystery of living and being, there are no motives. No guidance, no words, no pictures can help us. Nevertheless we always make something out of it. We manage it with the wonder that we wake in our own selves every day. So we keep on living. We are both awake and asleep.

The human beings in Petra's paintings are of childish age. They are no symbols. They are shapes, plain human visions. They only exist where they are, in her paintings.

They have become into existence, to express what can't be expressed. In that reality they are in company of winged angels. Angels exist, they exist in Petra's paintings. To five year old girls they are quite real. I, a man of seventy, have angle bookmarks on the wall of my study. Something that simplifies.

Petra's way of representing fragility impresses me. In one of her paintings for example she has drawn the skyline of a landscape with a soft pen - by hand so the line is trembling. A simple pencil line separates heaven and earth. This a child can do when it has grown up. In the same painting she lets a tree stand on top of the ground, above it, without roots in earth; a hovering vision. The smallest wind would push it over. But there will not come such wind, not once. Hers is a deep romantic art. I admire the hands of the girl figures. They look so innocent as if they never have been in use. When I see the small fingers, I think I understand, when everything begins - and ends. I realize that my life is surrounded by innocence. Thus I can forgive anything.

I know, everybody knows, that you can't live without learning how to handle your fragility. The best way is love, because it gives a chance to the unmanageable. The child in us is maintained in love. It is through this love that childishness moves into the adult life. The puberty transfer comes with such a strength that the childish achievement goes on and has to be repeated; over and over again, the whole life. More obvious than in Petra's paintings these delicious problems are expressed in her songs.

The eternal naiveté disappears to be recalled again. Emerges and gets out of the picture. It has been seeking from human to human through all times and it will continue, from child to grown up and from grown up to child. This feeling is so impossible to control that it can fill all your body. You become transparent. Human is one amongst all the animals, seeking protection by its pairs, and taking care of its own soul peace. Every human being is an animal to embrace.

I think I have seen all this in Petra Borén's art.

by Björn Berglund, writer, February 2011