

BABSTA - The Kiss of a Meteor

By Tchera Niyego

Babsta is the acronym the artist Barbara Stacher ciphers. Phonetics echo; 'Babe'; 'Baba'; 'Sista'... Beautiful Wisdom Sister.

Tom Waits' voice consorts Babsta's art; "The Earth Died Screaming... While I lay dreaming...", ringing two finger widths below the belly button; "...Dreaming of you ..."

Barbara Stacher has traveled the world seeking. For any and every little detail that could promise her a law. Yet she did not find it. Babsta's work is raw and unframed. Stripped down. Furthermore; to the bone... Clay speaking in tongues while hands of hungry ghosts manhandle females into statues. Horizontals pleasure in juxtaposition with vertical whispers "You'd better get down on the floor, don't you know this is war?"

The female figure as the center of gravity in Babsta's story line told by her sculptures calls us to come and hear. The drums are steady and ominous. "God's Away On Business." The roughhouse of dogs that threads through the artist's photography consisting of her studio shots 'Fonderie" and the "Waterpolo" series, mirroring the high stakes contemporary youth has to face in the contest of social life and the cynicism of the cause and effect world we live in; that reaches its peak in sculptures of bronze and clay; is also somewhat carried through her bold collages... Tom Waits voices the silent scream, up in the hollow of the heart crying "Down in the Hole... When you walk to the garden... You've got to keep the devil down... Down in the Hole..."

Babsta is an open invitation in her mixed media paintings; "All your cryin don't do no good, Come on up to the house." Babsta's house is made of 'joie de vivre" especially in her "Compositions" and "Couleurs d'ete" Series. The 'Summer Colors' are indeed loyal to the raw heartbreak we see in the artist's sculptures yet with an interpretation that revels in rising from it. Babsta likes to outdo herself. "The world is not my home, I'm just passin thru, Come on up to the House..." This house is built on stone. Painted with acrylics and sand on paper. "Does life seem nasty, brutish and short, Come on up to the House. There's nothin in the world that you can do, You gotta come on up to the House ..."

Barbara Stacher is a formally educated and trained artist. This is most clearly evident in the two extremes of her repertoire; namely the "Dessins" and "Transparences". The through line in the artist's balancing act lies in the "Impressions" Series. In these three bodies of work one can deeply feel the saturated field within the context of Babsta's vision and mastery. Babsta's simply beautiful use of pencils and charcoal on paper, without any hesitancy or pretense, is undoubtedly achieved through a lifetime of study and practice.

The artist's "Couleurs Nature" series which fascinated the acclaimed German expressionist Markus Lüpertz, while they were painted in his studio during the previous year, are eminent departures from impressions from nature into a rather abstract expressionist direction while Babsta's introverted nature is reflected in her "Paysages Interieurs" series as landscapes and colors emerging from her thinking/ feeling processes. "Paysage Interieur 6, Jaune" recently renamed by the artist as "Romance at Contre- Lumiere" is a portrait of a wandering couple along the river shores. We can

view the pair so merged with their environments that we could say that they change the banks of the river with their passions. Babsta expresses a transparency of her passions in action in rhythmic nuances in "Nue Dansants (Dancing Nudes)" giving us a spacious, sky-like dream.

In particular recent drawings among the "Dessins" series are very telling of the coming into fruition of Babsta's raw and fearless expressionism seen in sculptures; starting with the compelling sexual tension's basic erotica in "Dessin 3 - Nue Recliné" from 2011 and depicted in 90 degree angles with "Nude, Angles" and "Gymnastique 2".

Finally, "Bare - Empty Spaces (Nue - Espaces Vides)" and "Intransparences"; both charcoal drawings on paper, seamlessly tie the complete body of Babsta's work to her wonderful accomplishment one can view in the "Transparencies" series. These black and white acrylic monochrome works on paper typifies the essence of Babsta's work, giving the marvelous promise of a matured artist's brilliance to continue coming without any delay or interruption.

The artist's most recent abstractions, especially her "Struggling with Reality" which indeed the artist states to have struggled on in the course of many months is an excellent piece pointing the artist's new direction.

Babsta is a shooting star. "Hell does not want you and heaven is full." ... Tom Waits howls with his trademark growl. "You're innocent when you dream, when you dream, you're innocent when you dream..." ... Tom Waits cares.

Note: Sentences in apostrophes " ..." are quotes from lyrics by Tom Waits