

## A Swedish artist paints water and human soul

*Eha Komissarow, Hommikuleth 1993 09 16*

Ann Frössén, born in Stockholm, is a Swedish artist, whose paintings are exposed the next three weeks in the Vaal Gallery in Tallinn.

The title of Frössén's comprehensive individual exhibition is Mare Animae, referring to the breath of sea, in which the theme of sea - river-system - water is handled in naturalistic as well in abstract style. No painter of sea can free oneself from the substance of water, water as material, no matter how abstract the style. Frössén, however, combines the flow of water with cleanliness and beauty, with the being of human, and puts behind the theme of water such particulars as life, the human being and passion of life.

It is not difficult to classify as one of the representatives of the post modernistic romantic direction, her solutions are poetic as far as ideas as well as the painting achievements go, but also the conceptual integrity is obvious. Also in Sweden the fate of the theme of sea is not better in the world of painting than in our country, and everywhere one is used to the fact that only naivistics and "market-place" (inferior) artists are sufficiently courageous to paint water.

Water as an object of art has grasped its place in exhibitions in its natural form in tubs and vessels, as it has become the big favourite of the art of installations. The aim of Frössén to paint original water - sea - river-system, while avoiding the horrible characteristics of "market-place" art and to try to find her own expression, seems to be at least heroic.

As a Swedish sea painter Frössén unavoidably gets into dialogue with the greatest sea painter in contemporary art - August Strindberg, whom we all know as a brilliant drama writer.

The sea paintings of Strindberg are remarkable works completely serving the psychological origin, where the wide spectrum of moods has the primary importance, leaving the way of painting suffering from some weakness and lack of power. Supposedly, Strindberg was able to say everything about the themes sea - soul - mood. In her dialogue Frössén does not deny Strindberg's achievements, and takes from there what suits her in order to create her own point of view in a renewed language of art.

Ann Frössén's career as an artist is quite unusual, - it started in the world of fashion as art, more precisely the art of theatre. 1973-74 she studied in Paris - at Ecoles de la Haute Couture Parisienne, - she has been working with theatres, she has also created costumes for the Strindberg plays, and she has studied realistic painting in Paris, in the studio of Francis Harburger as well as in La Grande Chaumière 1980-81. Since 1986 she has been completely devoted to the art of painting. She has participated in group exhibitions of abstract expressionism and had independent exhibitions in Sweden and several other places in Europe.

From September 14 Ann Frössén's Mare Animae is in Tallinn, the ambition being to destroy scepticism as to the ability of the present art to handle water and soul without falling to the level of kitsch.

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