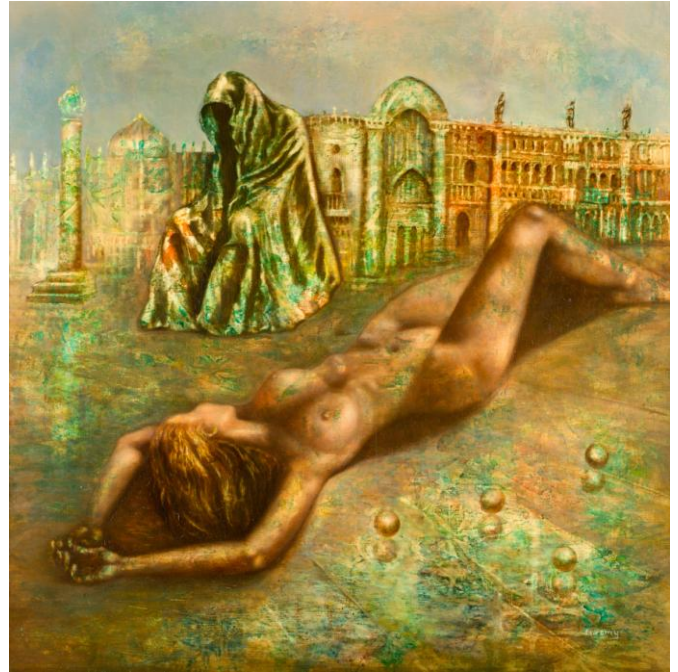


MOSTLY MOZART

The Frozen Music of the Cloak of Conscience

In 1980 when Anna Chromy created her first image of the empty Cloak in her painting "To be or not to be" she was inspired by the screenplay "Jedermann" (Everyman) of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, a mainstay of the Salzburg Festival since its foundation, and W. A. Mozart's opera "Don Giovanni". In his moral play, as Hofmannsthal calls it, the rich Everyman finds out that it's not his "Mammon" (money) or futile friends who are ready to accompany him on his last journey, but faith and his good deeds. In a word, he discovers his conscience; late but not too late.

Lorenzo da Ponte, the author of the libretto for Don Giovanni, called the Commander "Il Convitato di Pietra" (The Stone-Guest). When Don Giovanni accepts the dinner invitation of the Commander, his murder victim, he knows that his day of reckoning has come. By reaching out to the statue



To Be Or Not To Be (1980)



Folds of cloth in marble

in stone he demonstrates that he is finally giving in to his conscience. Anna Chromy shows in her painting the Commander in the form of an empty Cloak, bent by the weariness of a long life, inhabited by his soul or conscience. He mourns in front of Anna, his beautiful daughter, abused by Don Giovanni. The setting is the City of Venice, the symbol of nostalgia and transience.

There has always been a mutually beneficial relationship between music and the visual arts. Mozart found the inspiration for his Requiem whilst contemplating Michelangelo's ceiling in the

Sistine Chapel in Rome, and it is certainly no coincidence that Anna Chromy got the decisive influence for her Cloak whilst listening to the eternal melodies of Mozart's Don Giovanni.

When Anna started sculpting in 1992 her first creation was the empty Cloak in bronze. While Anna was still working on the model in clay the Cloak initiated his mystical journey, guided by an invisible hand. The



The Cloak of Conscience in Prague

organizer of a sculpture exhibition on Pietrasanta's Cathedral Square, who accidentally passed her studio, saw the Cloak and decided spontaneously to make it the centerpiece of an exposition titled after the Cloak "La Veste del Vuoto" (the Clothing of the Void).

When Prince Rainier saw the Cloak in an exhibition of the Don Giovanni Group in the Monte Carlo Opera in 1996 it was love at first sight and the Cloak was moved to the Palace of Monaco.

At the inauguration dinner Prince Rainier took Anna's arm and they disappeared for a long moment in the Palace Gardens. He wanted Anna to agree with his choice for the installation of the Cloak, in the place where the late Grace Kelly liked to spend her afternoons reading and painting.

At about the same time a friend living on the island of Sylt, the northern border of Germany, decided to donate another original of the Cloak to the protestant Church of Keitum, the oldest wooden church in the country.

In 1998 the Archbishop of Salzburg saw the Cloak as part of Anna's Don Giovanni exhibition in this city and decided to install it in front of the Cathedral. In the year 2000, at the commemorative mass for the victims of the cable car disaster in the Salzburg Mountains, the bishop made the Cloak the centre piece for his sermon, and against the back-ground of Mozart's Mass in C Major the Cloak appeared for five minutes on Austrian National Television and Eurovision. Only a few steps from the Cathedral at the historical St. Peters Cemetery a cross in wrought iron dating from Mozart's time, next to the grave of Mozart's beloved sister Nannerl, marks the place where Anna Chromy will eventually find her final resting place.

In 2000 the Mayor of the Old Town of Prague saw the Cloak in Anna's Don Giovanni exhibition in front of Stavovske Divadlo, the theatre where Mozart conducted the world premiere of his play in 1787, and decided to install it permanently in front of the Theatre entrance, only a few steps from the Old City Hall alongside the Astronomical Clock, where no Prague tourist is going to miss it.

He followed this honor in 2002 with the installation of Anna's "Fountain of Musicians" on an Old Town square where the people of Prague paid their enthusiastic tribute to the composer.

Other Cloaks in bronze followed, in Pietrasanta, Bologna, Athens... until a day in June 2005, when at the mass for her 40th wedding anniversary the Abbot of the Holy Monastery and Basilica Saint Francis in Assisi asked Anna if she could conceive the Cloak as a space of meditation, according to



the words of Saint Francis "to use in the absence of a consecrated space our own body as a place for prayer and contemplation".

This was the moment that launched the project that Anna had cherished since her first painting of the Cloak, - to create the "Stone-Guest" as a universal symbol of conscience in a dimension never attempted before. To carve this chapel into one single block of white marble Anna had to wait for a whole year until she received on Christmas Eve 2006 the news that the famous Michelangelo quarry in the Apuan Mountains in Tuscany had finally given birth to a piece of 250 tons.

The white marble and the baroque, tissue-like, folds lighten the sombre quality of the Cloak in bronze and give the sculpture a feeling of hope and confidence for the future. This effect is similar to Mozart alternating between serious, dark, and joyous, light passages in his works. Contemplating the upwards spiraling wall inside the Cloak or the softly flowing tissue of marble one is inevitably reminded of the dynamics of Mozart's melodies.

But the baroque folds are not only an aesthetical feature; they are also part of the message of the Cloak. As at the time of the Baroque period we need today a dramatic rethink, a break with our way of doing things in all walks of life. The citizens of our globe have to rediscover their "Liber Arbiter", their free movement of mind, and take responsibility for their own actions, based on their conscience and sense of ethics. This is the basic message of the Cloak and the purpose of the Conscience Institute with its development on the Internet, allowing all to participate and share.

Throughout our life we strive for beauty, the beauty of what has been created, the beauty of our loved ones, the beauty of our daily objects. Beauty instils love into our heart. The frozen music of the Cloak, with the softly undulating folds of pristine white marble will make people love it and listen to its message.



Looking up from within The Cloak