

## **URBAN TRIBE**

### **Reflections on paintings by Jonna Pedersen**

They are like tribes only in the context of modernity. It concerns young, well-educated people of both sexes. Often single often focusing on developing a career. Busy and yet cool. Moving in new directions all the time. Conscious of the life they wish to lead. Conscious of lifestyle and design. Self-confident and then again not. All trapped by the unbearable lightness of being. And by the constant spinning merry-go-round of globalisation.

These tribes live in the modern city. They have their own rituals. They surround themselves with things. Tasteful things. A world of beautiful surfaces and fascinating facades.

It is a world where it is all about *appearance*. A world where you *mirror* yourself in things and where you must be able to *control* your experiences.

This is the world which the painter Jonna Pedersen describes in her latest series of paintings. She does so with an eminent sense of staging the many codes and the outstanding icons of modernity. She has a keen eye for modern compositions and their paradoxical compounds of the modern and retro.

However, her paintings also have other origins. She is inspired by the concrete painting, furthermore you also sense an early interest in figuration. To be accurate you would have to place her paintings within an abstract universe.

Initially, Jonna Pedersen's paintings may appear to convey a conscious clear style. Nevertheless, they tease you all the time by containing strong spontaneous elements. She often balances on a fine line between the controlled and the spontaneous. In her own words the paintings are created at the borderline between the conscious and the unconscious: 'If you plan your painting too much something important will be lost', she once said.

That is why she readily admits that *unpredictable occurrences* play an important part in her painting. These occurrences she seizes with a precise sense of timing and she incorporates these in her works, creating an inner tension resulting in fascinating paintings. It is as if she catches the final expression in an *unguarded moment*.

It is clear that each painting is the result of a dialogue between artist and the final work. It shows. As the paintings are never too perfect even though they can be beautiful. They show a certain nervous, vibrating energy and it suits them.

Jonna Pedersen moves as a curious flaneur in the throbbing universe of the city. She paints striking paintings of what she sees and she works on her motives with originality and nerve.

It will be exciting to see where her curiosity will lead her.

**Ole Lindboe**

**Editor of The Art Magazine and author of a number of art books**