

## Texture of the Universe

Delivered at Café Miró (1014 Bp. Úri u. 30.) on the vernissage of AKIRAM's exhibition. 23 September, 2001

Here we have the opportunity to witness a rebirth. Maria has not always painted. In her early years she danced a lot – truly, she is still in her early years, here we have the early years of a new life, a new career. Since stopping dancing – this very beautiful, expressive art which truly came from her body and soul – there has come a new turn in her life: the art of drawing. She has done considerable work abroad, in Sidney, Brussels, Paris, and Montreal, then in her native Budapest at the Pannonia Animation Studio. She was present at the birth of many works of art with which we are also familiar, such as an animated film version of Snow White, or the Asterix series, from her time in Paris. Now, at the present stage of her career, she has arrived to such a medium of expression – aquarelle – that has opened a completely new road for herself and for those who see and observe her work and have followed her career with attention.

It was an interesting personal experience to get to know her – but I shouldn't like to burden the audience with more biographical data. I think many people know her. Let me speak about the pictures, because one can best approach the artist on the basis of her pictures. It is immediately striking that we see flowers in her pictures – flowers, and a very fine, very translucent, even transparent, dream-world. Aquarelle. Everybody knows that aquarelle means a picture painted with water. This is an ancient medium. And it is a very difficult medium. There are artists who express themselves for their entire lives in aquarelle, this medium which in many cases is harder and more difficult than oil paint or copper etching or pencil drawing. Because they can be corrected – let us say this in quotation marks, as you can work them on a surface for a longer time. For example, Leonardo painted the Mona Lisa for four years! – and we still don't know if he really finished the picture. You can't paint with aquarelle for four years. There are ones which are finished in four minutes, or four hours maximum. And in this easy, clear, fast-drying, and evanescent form, you cannot lie. The way she places her pictures on the paper, her fantastic flower-fantasies, she works a bit like the Eastern masters; this sort of spiritual world, this sort of skill in presentation, would not be out of place coming from the Eastern masters, who found a meditative practice in aquarelle technique. They had to think about what they wanted to create and place on the paper. They couldn't pick up a brush until they felt that they knew the true essence of the phenomenon. When dipping the brush and applying to the paper, they created a branch in blossom or a snoozing cat – and it remained unchanged. It was perfect how it was, because it had never been just a branch in blossom or a dog or a cat. In these fantastic Japanese etchings, there is, in the branch in blossom, a blossoming, and in a cat, the being a cat. Maria also creates instinctively and naturally. The pictures have no overly-calculated structure such as we find in the work of some modern masters. Fastidious composition, the whole picture well-elaborated, we can analyze pictures in this way since Cézanne. Entirely instinctively, she paints based on her inner world, nearly how ordinary people write: the way we write automatically, so she lets these unaffected and very beautiful pictures flow from out of herself, following the dictates of her inner world. And this substance, the way she places it on the page – aquarelle has this quality – also shapes itself, the forms let themselves flow into each other, fluctuation between the surfaces comes into being, an entire world comes to be.