

Octav Grigorescu

Les jours gigantesques

Opening: November 11, 18 - 21 h

November 11, 2016 – January 28, 2017

Tuesday – Saturday, 12 - 18 h

Potsdamer Strasse 77 - 87, 10785 Berlin

Galeria Plan B is pleased to announce the solo exhibition of Octav Grigorescu, to open on Friday, the 11th of November 2016.

In the person and art of Octav Grigorescu (1933-1987) coincided a typically avant-garde nostalgia for the primordial and worship of the elementary on the one hand, and a postmodernist taste for crepuscular delights and the presentiment of death, on the other. Born in 1933, Octav Grigorescu died in 1987 at the age of just fifty-four, but during his short lifetime he created a body of work that made a mark on twentieth-century Romanian art. A painter, engraver and fine art professor, Octav Grigorescu plunged into his archaeological, mythological and even everyday reveries, filtering in a subtle way echoes of Da Vinci, Poussin and Hans von Marees.

Octav Grigorescu's first solo exhibition in Berlin, *Les jours gigantesques*, offers an insight into his extensive oeuvre. Focused on the 1960s – a decade marked by the artist's participation in the 34th Venice Biennale (Romanian Pavilion) – the exhibition explores his practice through the relationship between drawing, painting and poetry. A reference to the eponymous work by René Magritte, the exhibition title hints to the mythological battle of the Titans, which is symbolic for the tension between the figures in Octav Grigorescu's almost surreal works. Delicate figures intertwine in many of his drawings and paintings, morphing into hybrid, vegetal or animal forms, at times transgressing the pictorial realm into writing.

"The writing and drawing of Octav Grigorescu are interrelated in a highly complex way, at many different levels, which are hard to distinguish. Sometimes written notes accompany the drawings without any obvious meaningful connexion between them. They are ideas that spring up in parallel to the signs and the connexion between them appears accidental.

Memory is also at work at the strictest level of technique when Octav Grigorescu recreates the illusion of the palimpsest, which is extremely suggestive in his historical paintings, where the evocation of temporality is a necessity and a condition. The integral realism of which Octav Grigorescu spoke at one point means the rehabilitation of the plenitude of the world as a whole and emergence from under the fascinating curse of the fragment. His historical paintings and those on biblical themes are a series of visions in the original, etymological sense of the word, visions that tend to capture key moments in the history of mankind.

The vocation for the absolute so obvious in Octav Grigorescu's work finds its theoretical formulation in his notes when he discusses the possibilities of an *integral realism* where the super-reality of the dream is propelled to first place. Dream and sleep, as higher forms of perception, as the locus where visions emerge, as a field for the action of the inner sight, are obsessively the focus of Octav Grigorescu's art (*Forms in Dream, Sleeping People*). The sources of such convictions are quite hard to identify, because the artist was not in the habit of quoting the authors he read. But it is clear that besides German Romanticism – Octav Grigorescu read in German – there are also at play sources chronologically closer to us: fin-de-siècle symbolist and decadent movements, surrealism, which also drew upon similar sources and ideas correlated to historical moments of crisis, in which the rehabilitation of the dream as a refuge from a frustrating reality had been a constant." (Excerpts from the text *History as Dream in the Painting of Octav Grigorescu*, by Ioana Vlasiu)

"Visez la o casa ale carei ziduri sa-mi foloseasca numai pentru pictura, ca un loc fericit al imaginii."
(Octav Grigorescu)

Octav Grigorescu (1933-1987) lived and worked in Bucharest, Romania. Selected exhibitions include: The National Museum of Art, Bucharest (1984; 1960); The Biennial of European Graphic Art, Baden-Baden (1983); The Venice Biennale (1980; 1968); Edinburgh Art Festival (1971); Pratt Institute, New York (1969); Quatrième Biennale, Paris (1965). Awards and distinctions: Cavaliere al merito della Repubblica Italiana (1983); "Ion Andreescu" Prize, Romanian Academy (1966).

For more information, please contact the gallery at contact@plan-b.ro and +49.30.39805236.