

THE THREAD OF TIME AND THE TIME OF THE THREAD

In Marianne Mannsåker's artistic work there is an interwoven, underlying, primary and yet achieved sense of belonging, situated beyond what is woven. And *the thread* is both a tangible working material and a charged symbol.

In myths, primarily from a Scandinavian culture heritage, she gets ideas that enrich her own personal attitude to life as well as her textile work.

Another – invisible – element in Mannsåker's woven world of images is *time*, both the time practically "used" and the time manifest in the motif – experienced as well as present. Here, I believe, we find a special dimension – patience's triumph – in the slow growth of the tapestry, and a mature insight into lasting worth. "It has to take the time it takes ..." – far removed from the best-before trend and the morality of numbers of our own age. Just like the images have taken a long time to bring forth, they also demand that the spectator spend time with them.

On the one hand, Mannsåker has a deep and natural anchoring in an old, Norwegian tapestry tradition and, on the other hand, an urge towards a personal, existential statement. It is all about life, an inner life as well as a life beyond the self. She may draw power, nourishment and energy from the poetry of Olav H. Hauge, as well as from the paintings of Paul Klee; she may take in the silence from the surrounding dark spruce forest, as well as from Gregorian church music. What is expressed in her images are states rather than events. The poetic and musical values are not only sources for her art, they characterize her imagery. There is also a strong sense of presence in a Nordic landscape. Through abstraction, simplification and selection of visual elements, Mannsåker lets signs, rhythms, traces, and layers emerge in the surface of the image.

But ultimately it is the colour that lends expression to the tapestry. In Mannsåker's case it is a question of artistic transcendence, of *painting* with the colour of the thread, of using its timbre to lend expression to the image. Thread, thought and colour – equally significant - are thus at the heart of the image.

Marianne Mannsåker works with linen, wool and silk - classic materials, as timeless for the textile artist as granite is for the sculptor. Materials and techniques of the past are consequently transformed into imagery of the present and the future.

The thread runs from fire to ice, between skin and iron. Something has come to stay; this enigma that simply *is*.

Bengt Berg

English version: Anna Uddèn