

# **Virginia Orbon Retzmann**

## **C a t a l o g u e**

### **Paintings of People and Places**

On the occasion of her

### **Exhibition at Friedrichsdorf Town Hall**

**1 March – 25 March 2020**



*Virginia in front of her large acrylic paintings on canvas at the KTC of Commerzbank in Königstein in September 2011*

### **Virginia Orbon Retzmann**

*was born in Iriga City, in the province of Bicol on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. She studied chemistry in Manila, thereafter she moved to Hong Kong where she was trained in the hotel- and catering management. For many years, she successfully managed the well-known English Winchester Club and also ran her own catering business.*

*She has been living in Friedrichsdorf since 1990 and started painting spontaneously one year later, at first with Hille Koch, a renowned Frankfurt art teacher and water colour painter with whom she cooperated until a few years ago. Later, she joined the Frankfurt Malakademie where she mainly worked with Acrylic, but she also undertook figurative and portrait drawing and painting. She attended the summer academy of the Frankfurt Städelschule and the European Academy of Fine Art in Trier where she refined her techniques in acrylic painting by attending workshops of the well-known Scottish painter Joe Allen. From 2004 to 2007 she attended courses at the renowned Slade School of Art in London where she was primarily taught by the Australian artist Hephzibah Rendle-Short. In 2001 she cooperated with the late Hungarian painter Helmut Jahn in a large painting project at Frankfurt Main Station. From 2005 until 2009 she regularly worked with the noted Frankfurt painter and teacher Michael Siegel in his art school.*

*Since 1994, Virginia has been exhibiting regularly, mostly in single shows, now and then she participated in joint exhibitions. The most important venues were the Frankfurt Airport Center, which invited her three times already, Friedrichsdorf Town Hall where she also exhibited three times, the Galerie VG in Frankfurt, the gallery in Eltville Castle, the Frankfurt Malakademie, the Town Gallery in Bad Soden, the Kulturbahnhof Rosbach and many more. She also had exhibitions arranged in England and Arizona. Her two latest exhibitions took place in September 2011 in Königstein at the Congress- and Conference Center (KTC) of Commerzbank and at the State High Court of Hesse in Frankfurt in January 2014.*

*Virginia Orbon Retzmann is also involved in charity work. Amongst others, she provided many paintings for the benefit of refugees displaced by the Balkan wars, for Haus Miriam in Friedrichsdorf, for a new cage for the bears in Frankfurt's zoo, for the restoration of an 950 years old norman church in Yorkshire, for an irrigation project in North Africa run by World Vision, just to name a few.*

*Virginia Orbon Retzmann is always painting. She is constantly active, even without paintbrush, canvas and paper. She observes, wherever she happens to be. She perceives what she sees and stores it in her memory and applies it later. Virginia paints foremost for herself as most serious artists do. Her paintings derive from spot decisions which she transfers into something lasting, creations that remain in the memory of the viewer. She asks the latter to judge whether a painting embraces such claim. Virginia allegorises, she creates instants of amazement, her work is impulsive, spur-of-the-moment type of explosions, her colour applications are inimitable and her compositions demonstrate originality. She accentuates symbols and renders these accessible to the viewer whom she wants to convince that her interpretation of art is recognisable and authentic which can be absorbed as well as remembered. In doing this, Virginia sees a fundamental challenge.*



*"A Saint", water colour, 2004, appr. 60 cm by 80 cm*

*This figurative painting in water colour was finished in 2004. I got the idea from a medieval statue in an old church in Yorkshire, however, I applied my own colours and later I abstracted the painting.*



*"Carnival", water colour, 2014, appr. 60 cm by 80 cm*

*This painting, finished in 2014 was derived from a photo of a church window taken some ten years ago, I think it was in Arizona and as always, I later abstracted the figure and named it "Carnival" due to the lively colours.*



*"Two Fairies", water colour 2007, appr. 50 by 64 cm*

*This watercolour painting of two bodies floating somewhere in a mainly greenish scenery dates from the year 2007. First I completed a realistic version with two models which I abstracted at a later stage. I do like figures floating.*



*"Nude", water colour, 2007, appr. 50 by 65 cm*

*The figure in this watercolour painting which was completed in 2009 is not floating. Initially I intended it to descend, but then I liked the idea of the contrast between the fervid top and the calm green at the bottom and I left the figure standing up.*



*"Fairyland" water colour, 2014, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*Here I want to show a water colour painting which has its origin solely in my phantasy, although most of my landscapes are based on sceneries in Arizona and Catalonia as in both regions the sepia/brown/yellow colour combinations are dominant, especially in late summer and fall.*



*"Season Change". Water colour, 2014, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*A scenery in Catalonia: the colours of autumn want to forcefully chase away the colours of summer. A marvellous spectacle.*



*"Summertime 1", water colour, 2015, appr. 50 by 40 cm*



*"Summertime 2", water colour, 2015, appr. 50 by 40 cm*

*Two water colour paintings on Wallpaper, these were completed in 2015, after I had been exploring this for some time. In the end I completed two abstract paintings showing sceneries in the Pyrenees (left) and in Arizona. The figures I finally included are just some remote insinuations to show that the landscapes I love are populated.*





*"Untitled", water colour, 2016, appr. 80 by 60 cm*



*"Untitled", water colour, 2016, appr. 80 by 60 cm*

*These two water colour paintings were finished in 2016. They are abstract figurations of rock formations which I had seen in the canyons of Arizona years ago. Very recently, I added some abstract contours of a body to present the paintings as a kind of interplay between nature and a human figure.*



*"Faces", water colour, 2017, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*Colourful indeed, based on various colour structures I happened to remember at the time of painting; the fact that the face on the upper left looks ancient roman or ancient greek is not a coincidence, I found it in an old Latin textbook of my husband.*



*"Pueblo", water colour and ink, 2012, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*The structures of a pueblo near Cameron in the north of Arizona, quite close to the Grand Canyon. Here I tried to apply colours which are normally not commensurate with the prevailing colours on location.*



*"Pueblo", water colour and ink, 2012, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*The structures of a pueblo near Cameron in the north of Arizona, quite close to the Grand Canyon. Here I tried to apply colours which are normally not commensurate with the prevailing colours on location.*



*"Disappearing" water colour, 2018, appr. 65 by 50 cm*



*"Vanishing". Water colour, 2018, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*These two water colour paintings are based on sceneries from my memory when driving from Girona to Cadaques close to the Mediterranean Sea –that is where the Dali Museum is-. This mountain range is the eastern part of the Pyrenees and the roads to get there are quite dangerous. I made the people in the left hand painting disappear into the mountain, whereas those in the right hand painting seem to be dissolving in a cave.*



*Family, Acrylic on Canvas, 2019, 200 b 130 cm*

*Here I was just playing with colours until I got the idea to add some figures and I created this family of four, living in a world of hope symbolized by the bright colours which are mainly blue and projected from the blue sky above.*



*"Drifting", Acrylic on Canvas, 2020, appr. 100 by 70 cm*



*"Resting" Acrylic on Canvas, 2020, appr. 100 by 70 cm*

*These two paintings – both in Acrylic- are meant to be supplements to No. 11, as style, structure and colour composition are not identical, but rather close, however, the figures are somewhat changed in order to create a contrast to the contours of the trees.*



*"Midday", water colour, 2015, appr. 80 by 60 cm*



*"Evening", water colour, 2015, appr. 80 by 60 cm*

*sketched and photographed both of these scenes years ago when I went to visit my home town of Iriga in the Philippines. here is a lake nearby and the scenery is very picturesque. As can be seen from the way I painted the sky, its colouring keeps changing several times during the day due to the prevailing supply of light.*



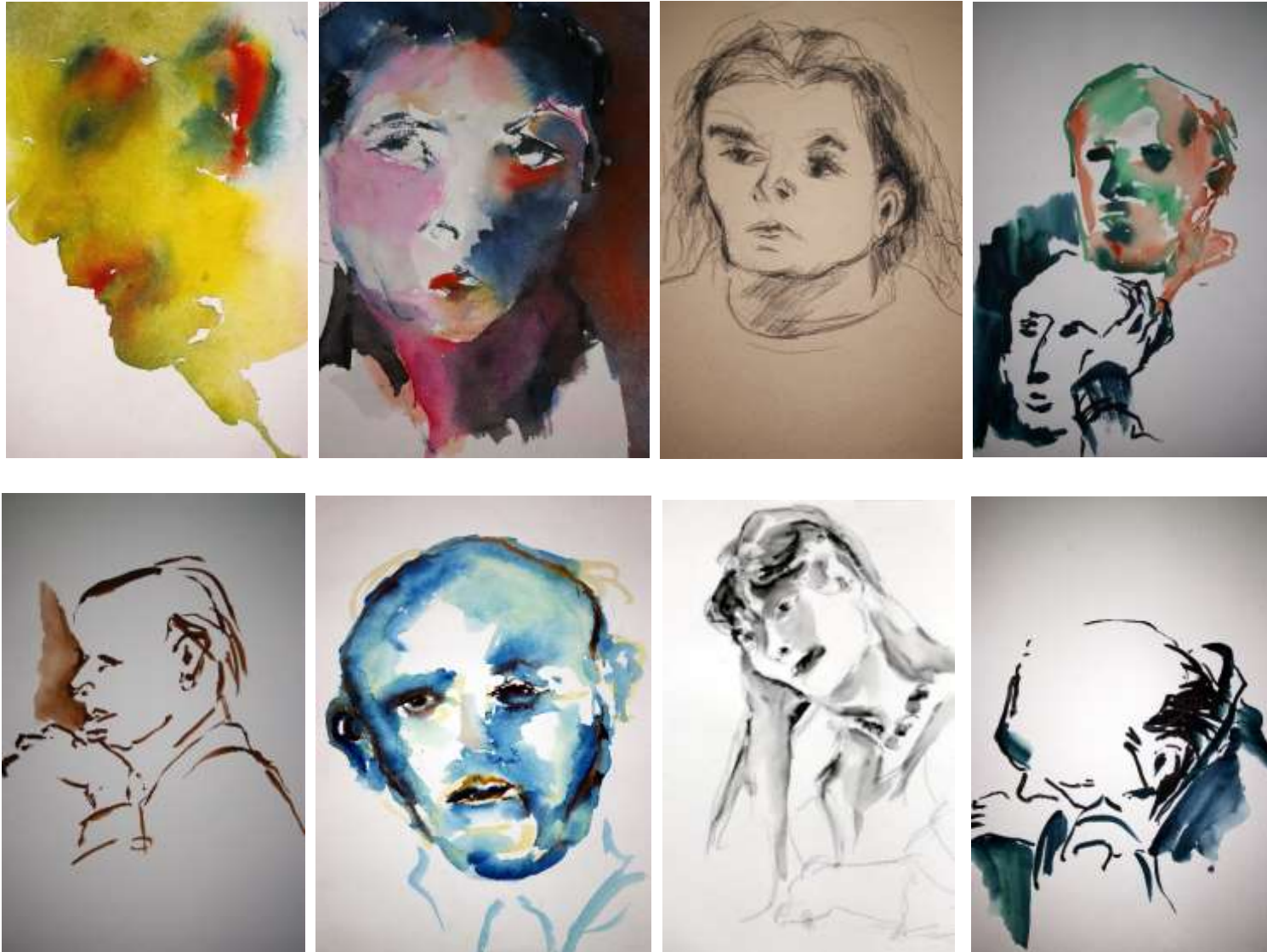


*"Catalan Impression one", water colour, 2017, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

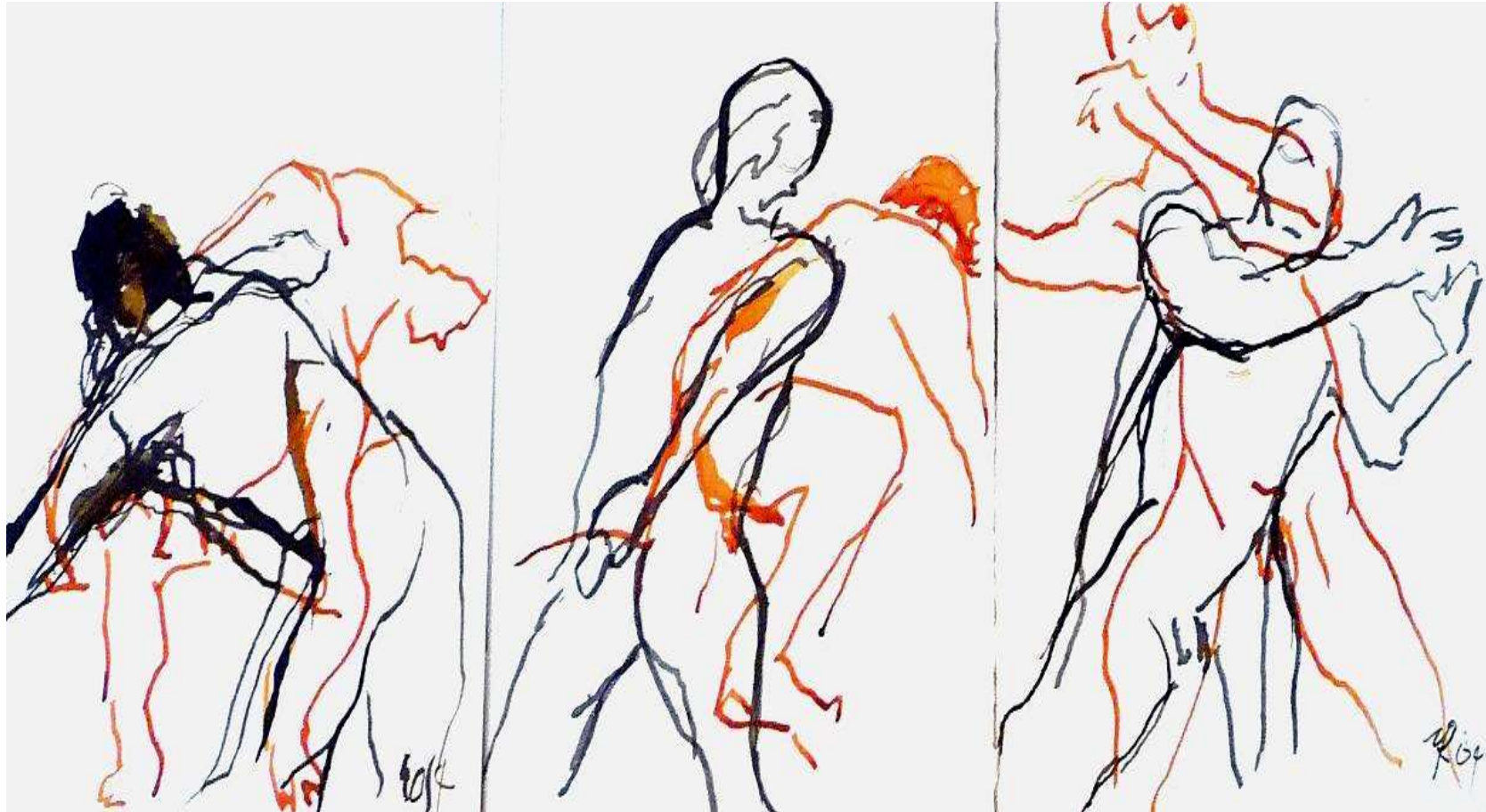


*"Catalan Impression two", water colour, 2017, appr. 65 by 50 cm*

*These two water colours are both "Catalan Impressions", both are sceneries as you may often find the at the lower levels of the Pyrenees, the one on the left hand side depicts the summer, the one on the right the autumn. Although this area is not very densely populated, it is the privilege of the artist to include some (little) people.*



*Eight people -some of them co-painters, some of them models-, all very nice people who helped me years ago to develop my portrait skills.*



*I really love figurative drawing and painting, especially when the models are moving.*



*8 models posing for me, painted with water colour and ink  
These paintings are of various sizes.*



*Another eight of my co-painters who posed for me during portrait sessions in the early 2000s.  
These paintings are in water colour on paper and of various sizes.*



*Some of these models who posed for me are the same you have seen on page 17*



*"Untitled", water colour, 2019, appr. 38 by 26 cm*



*"Untitled", water colour, 2019, appr. 38 by 26 cm*

*These water colour paintings completed in 2019 are based on memories of numerous stays in the Barcelona area. The two buildings in particular remind me of houses in Valdoreix and I am sure they are inhabited by people.*



*"Floating", water colour, 2017, appr. 40 by 50 cm*

*This water colour painting, completed in 2017, shows figures who seem to float in some kind of cave. I got the idea when I took a boat trip along the coast of the Costa Brava near Cadaques, especially from the very blue water.*



*"Bending", water colour, 2016, appr. 60 by 80 cm*

*I once saw a sculpture of Rodin, which moved me and left a lasting impression, so I based this painting on that sculpture, however using my own colour perception.*





*"Life in Town", Triptychon, Acrylic on Canvas, 2019. 50 by 70 cm (for one)*

*This landscape –or better: townscape- developed from various sketches and photographs which I took in a catalan town. Initially, I painted the triptych without any figures which I included only recently in order to give the painting more life.*



*"The Tale of Four Cities" Acrylic on Canvas, 2019, 40 x 50 cm,(single) 160 by 50 cm(all four)*

*This is my allegorized presentation of 4 cities, one Spanish, one Chinese, one Catalan (maybe also Spanish) and one Italian. The left hand one could be Malaga, the Chinese may be Canton, the one with the unmistakable towers ought to be considered as Barcelona and last not least Naples in Italy. Please note that these are not Photographs but my abstractd paintings with my very own colour combination. It is a tale, to use Charles Dickens' term.*



*"Untitled", Acrylic on Canvas, 2020, 75 x 100 cm*

*An imaginary landscape, with figures on top, presented as a triptych*

**Explanatory notes:**

**-not all paintings printed in this catalogue are shown in the exhibition**

**-some paintings displayed in the exhibition are not in the catalogue**

**-prices are not quoted as this catalogue is just to show my work**

**-the figurative- and portrait paintings in this catalogue (15 to 19) are not part of the exhibition**

**-this catalogue was compiled in 2019/20 by Karl Heinz Retzmann**