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## THE ESSENTIAL TROJAN HORSE

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Călin Lucaci, *Spațiul-imagine. Ontologia spațiului în arta plastică*, (Space-Image. The Ontology of Space in Fine Art) Cluj: Provopress, 2009.

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Following the trail of one of Romania's greatest historians and art critics, Constantin Prut (who masterfully completes the illustrious gallery of the genre's "giants" – Virgil Vătășanu, Răzvan Theodorescu, Dan Hăulică, Gheorghe Achiței, Viorica Guy Marica, Gheorghe Arion, Mircea Țoca etc.), the writing of Mr. Călin Lucaci – a writing that brings to mind the great traditions of our noble ancestors – offers the experience of an enthralling incursion – ultimately intended as initiating – into the image-space of the Trojan Horse.

Just like every fortress is built to be conquered at some point, the present book can represent at any moment a challenge both for erudite debates conducted in the stiff setting of lecture halls and, equally so, for the casual and friendly controversies held on the terraces of neighbourhood cafés.

I must confess that, in my quality of person who occupies a location in space (a same-with-myself-location), but also of modest modeller who metamorphoses plastic virtual space into utilitarian-aesthetic objects that occupy a well-defined location, on reading Mr. Călin Lucaci's book I experienced not only great satisfaction, but also the revelation of a refined intellectual (endowed with authentic talent, I suspect), of an artistic personality on the point of stepping on his own shadow, of a man who would never dare to address Her Majesty ART by Her first name, but respects Her piously, as one respects the sea that protects both the rainbow and the shell...

The author proposes several daring approaches – artistic, aesthetic and philosophical – for the investigation of space: both component and creator of art, viewed as a living entity in continuous transformation and, at the same time, captured in palpable works of art.

In this way, the dualities real-unreal, real-surreal, real-imaginary, become perspective lines for as many optional perspectives that

eventually mark the way out of the maze. Because Mr. Călin Lucaci dwells in a fabulous maze, having surrounded himself willingly with its space. Here, he does not meet the Minotaur temporarily asleep in some hidden corner of the consciousness; what he meets are the elemental spirits of the arts, which can transform any maze into a museum.

And, just as two parallel mirrors multiply real space infinitely into as many virtual spaces, to observe, perceived and register them we need well-defined landmarks. Does the mirror reflect and invert the nothing, the real but empty space, in some different way, emphasizing it? Optically, this is what happens; but the very presence of the mirror in that inert space which it duplicates makes it empty no more. And the supreme landmark in this equation of understanding (plastic) space is still Man, the Artist, the Creator.

In this context, to my mind come Escher's magical mirrors – disturbing metaphysical projections of a personal subconscious raised, by focal projection of kaleidoscopic thinking, to the level of artistic innovation. Or, I can mention from the same contextual field Nicolas Schoffer's kinetic sculptures of the "Chronos" cycle – hypostatic illusions of substance in a space that transcends the virtual into the environmental, the artistic and, last but not least, the social.

Ultimately, every book represents an encounter of the author with himself, a fancy coat put on at the court of lay secular; at the same time, and in equal measure, it is a token the author offers to the reader. This book is an event because it deals with a space-event.

And, since books should form people, not libraries, the Trojan horse continues to exist. We, the beneficiaries of the teachings, do not simply put such books on a shelf, with an inventory number, but lock them into our soul and consciousness.

That is exactly what we'll do with the scholarly book hereby presented!