

In her best years, an experimental woman turns 60

Today the Artist Brita Weglin turns 60, something she celebrates on her flight to Minsk in White Russia. She is exhibiting in a museum of Modern Art together with 15 other Swedish graphic artists, amongst others Philip von Schantz, Per Sundling, Helmutrud Nyström and Per-Gunnar Thelander, in the collection exhibition Swedish graphic art 1980-2005.

The exhibition that is produced by curator Karl Haskel for Swedish Institute and has moved around for three years and when it is Minsk's time, Brita Weglin is taking part to educate in modern graphic art techniques together with colleague Per Sundin.

Weglin has two times earlier held the workshop in Centre of Contemporary Art in Chisinau, Moldavia, for the examination of the great graphic exhibition. Brita Weglin enjoys teaching; she works amongst other things part time at the Swedish Art College in Haparanda.

Nervous but important

- It is of course a little nerve wracking to go to White Russia, but with my experiences from Moldavia I think it is important to do it. Artists and students need to get more contact with us in the west; the need for material is great, as is the interest for new techniques. The exchange between people is enriching and has a meaning for both parties.

Weglin leaves behind a rather messy atelier at Kronan in Luleå. There newly returned pictures are crowded from the exhibition at the Silvermuseum in Arjeplog with pictures that were just taken down from the exhibition at Konstgillet in Boden. On the table lays sketches and on a shelf is a model of the wall she was given in Kulturens Hus in Luleå – Brita Weglin is one of five chosen artists to make permanent installations there. Her work will be a series of pictures – 13 meters long.

- I believe it will be both different and exciting, she explains rather secretly at the unveiling in connection to the opening ceremony the 13th of January next year.

- The pictures have a connection to water, life and culture – I have made something for the soul, but of course you may interpret them as you wish.

Silversmith

Weglin is a graphic artist, one of the more experimental in the country. But now she can also title herself silversmith. Soon she will start selling her jewellery – Handmade to fine detail – necklaces, wristbands, broaches and other items of an artistic nature. At present she is working on her own homepage.

A couple of years ago she felt tired of graphic art, but mostly in her back where she suffers from many years of hard work with hand driven printing presses. She applied to Stenebyskolan in Dalslånghed for a two year silver smith-degree. She was accepted as a special student and took the degree in one year with her baggage of konstfack-education and could skip many of the obligated courses.

With this you might say that she is back with her old dreams. Brita Weglin grew up in the little village Gäddvik in Hälsingland, not far from Alfta and Bollnäs. Much of her inspiration was taken from her grandfather's blacksmith.

- Already as a child I wanted to become a silversmith, but that was seen as impossible at the time, instead she went to high school in Edsbyn and later college in Bollnäs.

After that she left for art-school Konstfack to become an art-teacher and a couple of years later she started to develop her art in graphic direction.

Her work in silver is as experimental as her art – pearl-buttons as lockets on the most beautiful silver chains, the figure “Målle”, that also re-appears as motifs in her pictures, as broaches and imaginative hat-pins.

Celebration in Stockholm

On her way to Minsk Brita stops in Stockholm to celebrate with her husband Lasse, children Emil and Anna with families and of course grandchild Aprilia.

- Aprilia is one and a half years now and the world's most charming child. I always miss her; I never thought it would be that fun to have a grandchild. It is also nice to see your children becoming such great parents. Later there will be a party for relatives and friends in Luleå.

Before that she will stay in hotel Sputnik in Minsk.

- First I thought it would feel strange to turn 60, it happened so fast, but I feel very pleased with my life and feel I have so much more to give, I have both life experience and Wisdom. Age gives perspective on life, but also of death, existence creates a deeper understanding, certain things become more important than others. As an artist there is nothing wrong with aging – The more I know, the more I can go crazy, take risks and feel fewer limitations. I ask no one for permission – It is so nice.

Translated by Jennie Weglin and Ben Yeates.