

In lieu of a biographical note

PLAYING WITH GLASS FRAGMENTS



**Hommage à
LC Tiffany**

04 - 19.06.1993

**Muzejsko
Galerijski Centar,
Muzejski prostor,
Jezuitski trg 4,
Zagreb**

Several years ago an intriguing exhibition was held in the exquisitely beautiful rooms of the Miramare mansion in Trieste. The exhibition was entitled *Abitare nella periferia dell'impero* (Living on the perimeter of the empire - meaning, of course the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and it drew attention to the cultural significance of Trieste, Rijeka and Pula as cosmopolitan centres in which unconventional and exotic artistic ideas had often been assimilated more readily than in the recognized metropolitan centres of European culture. Similar views on the cosmopolitan character of artistic production in nineteenth-century Rijeka, backed with firm archival evidence, were expressed by dr Boris Vižintin in his recently published book *Umjetnička Rijeka XIX. stoljeća* (Art in nineteenth-century Rijeka). I believe that one can justly claim that Željka and Boris Rogić fit very well into the rich mosaic of cultural heritage of Rijeka. The two artists, who have been together since their high school days, are graduates of the Zurich Tiffany school of stained glass art. Perhaps one ought to mention that they also studied law, since this may prove another element that helps to explain their choice of a seemingly rigid and certainly strict self-discipline. Though they tested their skill outside the existing range of Tiffany models soon after acquiring the Zurich diploma, it is only their lamps with plaited ornaments shown for the first time at this exhibition that demonstrate their conscious decision to transgress the boundaries of self-imposed constraints.



The two artists have fully studied and mastered all the nuances of the Tiffany code of glass design - with special emphasis on limitless tonal combinations within the prescribed coloristic solutions - embarking on a creative adventure only once they had proved, to themselves and the best informed members of the public, that they had assimilated the most valuable and most complex experiences of those who preceded them. The present exhibition marks a watershed between the respect, to the point of obsession, for the tradition of the chosen artistic skill and the self-confident expression of personal glass cutting and designing art. The exhibits shown in the historic rooms of the Zagreb Museum Centre at Gornji Grad do not yet show which creative path the artistic couple will take in the future (opting between variations of the famous Tiffany windows and their original treatment of the "fusing" technique), but it is obvious from this exhibition that the time of exercises in stylistic virtuosity is behind them and that they are gradually but with full determination exploring new areas and new potentialities. Departures from tradition strengthen the foundations of an original poetics which, despite its peripheral roots, yields not an inch of its high standards of workmanship and artistic ambitions.



Darko GLAVAN