

NOVEMBER 2012

CHAOS



Acrylic 50 x 50 cm (2012)

With the word 'chaos' we associate negative concepts like disarray, tangle, mess: situations beyond our control.

But we would like a world in which everything has its place, and therefore we create systems in which one can sort things neatly one by one. We construct models to explain to ourselves complicated occurrences in a simple way, we find laws of nature we are subjected to, and then if there is still something inexplicable, we construct theories to explain what remains inexplicable. In this way we have everything nicely under control. ... unless we would like to make some reliable forecasts. Then, all of a sudden, our reliable systems become unreliable because the ironclad laws only function without interference. Even the tiniest influences can have a big impact, and could shake up many theories we think are sound.

A true challenge for mathematicians who straight away created a new discipline, the Theory of Chaos.

Even though one can now approach the chaos using mathematical formulas, can explain complex dynamic systems or nonlinear occurrences in nature in a new way, one still will never get a 'proper grip' on it - every so often the weather forecast will be way off mark!

By iterating logistic equations, substituting the variable x with different values, with the help of a good computer we achieve complex and wonderful depictions of the chaos. It is the enchanting world of the fractals which create, with relatively simple equations, the 'applemanikin' of the Mandelbrot sets, the Julia-set, the Sierpinsky-carpet, Barnsleys Farn and lots of other mathematical beauties. But, is determined chaos still true chaos?

Even randomness is linked to chaos, and one can never tell for sure where the roulette ball is going to stop. It is exactly this happenstance that plays a big part in the creative process in art, as for example in the case of the Tachists of the last century. In music we are familiar with the term 'aleatoric' which means the melody of a theme is determined by a dice. And the result is well worth listening to, for example Pierre Boulez's 3rd Piano Sonata or Eclat.

Chaos as a limitless creative element, order as limited freedom, chaos shows all possible new ways. Order is standstill. How far should order go? As far as the glass man in the ape cage? How far should chaos reign? As far as the total liquidation of all things, all values? However, all ends in death and decomposition...

... but not to worry...

... the nicest cucumbers grow on dung.