

MY LIFE IN LOVE WITH ANNA

“Love is of all passions the strongest, for it attacks simultaneously the head, the heart and the senses” (Laozi).

“No great art has ever been made without the artist having known danger” (Rilke)

When I met Anna, it was an Erotic Tsunami for me. I had never experienced such feelings before. It was as well a general Tsunami of emotions because of Anna’s irascible temperament. Without her mother, who had decided that I was the one to keep among Anna’s many admirers, we probably would not have survived this first period as a couple.

However soon another strong feeling entered my relationship with Anna – Pity (Mitleid in German = suffering with someone). Pity, which unfortunately should accompany all my life with her, because of her string of sufferings. Pity which found its visible expression in her Cloak of Conscience (find annexed excerpts from the book “The literature of Pity” by Professor David Punter from Bristol University, published by Edinburgh University Press).

The period of Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang in German) lasted until her second brush with death through a major accident when physical love was impeded for many years to come. Our relationship entered more quiet, more spiritual waters.

It laid the base for a totally new period in Anna’s artistic creation, she became a sculptor once she was able to move freely again.

The admiration I had for her paintings became even more intense with her Sculptures, which should bring her worldwide recognition. A last painting before her accident (To Be, or Not to Be), where she created for the first time the image of the Cloak, anticipated her new brush with death.

Physically this became a very challenging period in our life because of my continuous professional travels around the world and Anna’s complete dedication to her art. Anna, because of her inner and physical beauty (her Aura) received many proposals from rich and beautiful men, while I was stumbling over the perils of lonely journeys. But, we were both an anchor for the other and so our couple survived.

Once I had liquidated my company, our life changed again. I had now the time and pleasure to manage Anna’s art, using my professional experience in event management and my love for writing. I admired Anna’s love for animals, be it cats, dogs, sea gulls, and all other innocent beings created by God, following our joint Saint, San Francesco d’Assisi, who became a strong inspiration for Anna’s creation of the monumental Cloak of Conscience.

After over 50 happy years together our life and love entered a twilight zone because of Anna’s,

and later mine, sufferings. We were steadily moving closer to our Father, like on Anna's Ladder of Jacobs. Lao Tzu put it in these words: "At the end of silence there is the answer; at the end of our days is death; at the end of our life, a new beginning".

Anna left me after 60 years of happy togetherness, but the suffering continues until I will arrive myself at the "Pearly Gates" to be asked if I used all my potential in life to bring more conscience, peace and mercy into this perturbed world.

Excerpts from the "Literature of Pity" by Professor David Punter:

"Yet in all examples of Pity cited in this book – Michelangelo, van Gogh, van der Weyden – there are at least two bodies at stake, the living and the dead. In Anna Chromy's startling Pietàs, there is a filtering out, a rejection of all that may be inessential to the image of pity. The fundamental image is a seated figure. The stance of the figure suggests dejection, the hands are planted on the knees, the head inclined downwards. The whole figure is covered in a Cloak, which appears rusty with age, redolent of an outdoor life, of a lack of sustenance and nurture, and yet of the kind of resilience one sees all the times in the faces of those who have been condemned to life in refugee camps across the world.

And thus there is no faciality, no expression. What we have here is an extraordinary representation of a paradox whereby pity, that emotion which might appear most dependent on the reading of the face, as is evident in Michelangelo and others, has become transmuted into something which can be read through a specific droop of the body, through a physical expression of patience, of suffering, of waiting, of a continuation of being without hope.

And yet, of course, these figures of Chromy's do represent a kind of hope: a hope that a representation of pity – defigured, generalized, approximated- can move us to our own pity where other apparently more precise representations – especially ones tied to a particular religious cultural repertoire have ceased to do so. But then, where is pity located? It is of course in the one left behind, in the one grieving, in the state of mourning, in the unending cry of the bereft: this is where pity Excerpts lies, and this as I see it, is what Chromy's image has distilled for our contemporary age."