

## Deurdagte Reis – 'n viering van vrouekunstenaars Thoughtful Journey – a celebration of female artists

Marianne Podlashuc (1932 – 2004)

Podlashuc is in 1932 in Delft, Holland gebore. As kind het sy die Nazi-besetting van Holland, tydens die Tweede Wêreldoorlog, beleef en dit het 'n onuitwisbare indruk op haar gelaat. Van 1949 tot 1952 het sy aan die Rotterdamse Akademie gestudeer. In 1952 het sy na Suid-Afrika geïmmigreer en haarself in Bloemfontein gevestig, terwyl sy as kommersiële kunstenaar gepraktiseer het.

Sy is in 1957 met Alexander Podlashuc (Suid-Afrikaanse kunstenaar) getroud en die jaar daarna was hulle saam die stigterslede van die *Bloemfontein Groep*\*. In 1964 het hulle na Port Elizabeth verhuis, waar Alexander aan die Tech Kunsskool onderrig gegee het. Gedurende hierdie jare het sy verkies om net saam met die Bloemfontein Groep uit te stal, die eerste keer in 1958, deur die Kunsvereniging van die Oostelike Provinsie, en sy het groepuitstallings saam met haar man gehou. Hul eerste gesamentlike uitstalling was in Kaapstad, in 1961.

Haar eerste solo-uitstalling, in 1977, was in die William Humphreys Kunstgalerie in Kimberley. Een van die min nasionale geleenthede waaraan sy deelgeneem het, was die Republiekfees-uitstalling in 1981. Dit is dalk weens haar terughoudendheid dat Podlashuc nie beter bekend was by die publiek nie of meer erkenning geniet het nie. Haar eerste oorsig-uitstalling – *A Woman from Delft: The Art of Marianne Podlashuc* – is in 2006, twee jaar na haar dood, in die Ou Stadhuis-gedeelte van die Iziko Michaelis Versameling gehou.

Podlashuc se maatskaplike bewustheid van haar daaglikse omgewing en die lyding van plaaslike gemeenskappe het 'n rol in haar onderwerpkeuse vir haar skilderye gespeel. Die tema van haar werk sluit aan by die Weerstandsbeweging, gedurende die sewentiger- en tagtigerjare – haar werk was polities gemotiveer en sy het sosiale kommentaar gelewer. Tydens verskeie reise na die Verenigde State het sy werke van die 'American New Realism' waargeneem, waarvan die styl Suid-Afrikaanse kuns in die sewentigerjare beïnvloed het.

*\*Die Bloemfontein Groep is in 1958 gestig na teleurstelling onder sekere kunstenaars, wat in Bloemfontein en die omliggende gebied gewoon het, wie se kunswerke deur die sameroepers van 'n jaarlikse uitstalling van werk van Suid-Afrikaanse kunstenaars wat in die Bloemfonteinse stadsaal vertoon is, afgekeur is. Die totstandkoming van die Bloemfontein Groep was hoofsaaklik die gevolg van die geesdrif van Alexander Podlashuc, wat gehoop het om bewustheid van visuele kuns, anders as amateuragtige skilderye, te skep en platforms in die lewe te roep waar lede van die Groep hul kuns kon uitstal.*

Die Bloemfontein Groep het sy eerste uitstalling in April 1959 in die Nasionale Museum in Bloemfontein gehou. Die lede van die Groep is beskou as kunstenaars wat die verlede se prestasies en die visuele kunste herdink het – hulle het bestaande norme uitgedaag en persoonlike vernuwende wyses om kuns te skep bekend gestel. Almal het hul eie persoonlike artistieke style, met 'n spesifieke filosofie en/of oogmerk, vertoon.

Podlashuc was born in Delft, Holland in 1932. As a child she witnessed the Nazi occupation in the Netherlands during World War II, which left an indelible impression. She studied at the Rotterdam Academy from 1949 to 1952, immigrated to South Africa in 1952 and settled in Bloemfontein, while practising as a commercial artist.

She married Alexander Podlashuc (South African artist) in 1957 and, together, they were the founding members of the *Bloemfontein Group*\* the year after. They moved to Port Elizabeth in 1964, where Alexander taught at the Tech Art School. During these years she preferred to exhibit only with the Bloemfontein Group, for the first time in 1958, through the Eastern Province Society of Arts, and she held group exhibitions with her husband. Their first joint exhibition, in Cape Town, was held in 1961.

Her first solo-exhibition, in 1977, was at the William Humphreys Art Gallery in Kimberley. One of the few national events in which she participated was the Republic Festival Exhibition in 1981. It could be as a result of her reticence that Podlashuc was not better known or acknowledged by the public. Her first retrospective exhibition – *A Woman from Delft: The Art of Marianne Podlashuc* – was held in the Old Town House part of the Iziko Michaelis Collection in 2006, two years after her death.

Podlashuc's social awareness of her daily surroundings and the suffering of local communities played a role in the choice of the subject matter for her paintings. Her theme of work fits in with the Resistant Art movement, during the 1970's and 1980's, and her work was politically motivated, while delivering social commentary. During various trips to the United States she observed works of American New Realism, a style that influenced South Africa art during the 1970's.

*\*The Bloemfontein Group was established in 1958, following disappointment amongst some artists living in Bloemfontein and surrounding areas whose artworks were rejected by conveners of an annual exhibition of works of South African artists displayed in the Bloemfontein City Hall. The emergence of the Bloemfontein Group was primarily due to the enthusiasm of Alexander Podlashuc, who hoped to boost awareness of visual arts other than amateurish paintings and to create platforms where the Group members could exhibit their art.*

The Group held its first exhibition at the National Museum, Bloemfontein in April 1959. The members of the Bloemfontein Group were seen as artists rethinking past achievements in the visual arts. They challenged existing norms and introduced personal innovative ways to create art. They all displayed their own personal artistic styles with a specific philosophy and/or goal.

Bronne / Sources:

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Revisions website. 2015. *Marianne Podlashuc*. Available: [www.revisions.co.za](http://www.revisions.co.za)  
Oliewenhuis Art Museum. 2012. *Stylistic Links: The Bloemfontein Group and other South African Artists – Bloemfontein*. Press Release. Bloemfontein.



Podlashuc, Marianne (1932 – 2004)  
*Three Boys*, 1960  
Olieverf op bord / Oil on board

Versameling / Collection:  
Rupert Kunststifting / Rupert Art Foundation, Stellenbosch