

ARTTRA GALLERY

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**A tribute to Viktor IV
(1929 – 1986)**

Show in Arttra Gallery

Preview: Friday 20 January 2012 – 5 – 9 p.m.

The exhibition is open from 20 January to 23 February 2012

Additional opening hours: Saturday 21 January between 1 – 5 p.m. and
Sunday 22 January between 1 – 5 p.m.



**THE TIME
IS ALWAYS
NOW**

Life and works

Viktor IV (Walter Karl Glück) was born in New York City and as a young man followed some courses, with the idea to become a freelance photographer and journalist. He had all kinds of jobs, working in an ice-cream factory and being a lifeguard (he was a good swimmer).

In 1961 he made a European trip, travelling in an old van through France, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, England, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Russia, until he arrived in Amsterdam, Netherlands, where he decided to settle. He rather quickly got a permit to stay, what nowadays would not so easily be done.

After 1961 Mr. Glück continued travelling and doing photography. He also did some painting, until in 1963 the murdering of Kennedy was a turning point in his life. It made him decide to become a full-time artist. In an old ship he could buy and he had moored in the Amstel River, he installed a studio. With a lot of energy he focused upon painting colourful scenes on driftwood and old hatches that he collected in the harbour.

These creations he called "Ikons" and he called himself Viktor IV. Both namings would have no religious connotation.

His work got some attention of professionals in the Amsterdam art world. In January 1966 Viktor IV had an exposition in the Lefebvre Gallery in New York. His work was introduced by Mr. Willem Sandberg, until 1962 director of the Amsterdam Stedelijk (Municipal) Museum.

The expo was so profitable that Mr. Glück could buy another, better ship, the *Berendina Fennegina*.

In the early 70s of the former century Amsterdam became kind of a hippy paradise; young people from all over the world coming to the city would sleep on Dam Square and in the public Vondelpark. Open air sleeping was soon regulated by providing *sleep ins*, but the scene in the city in general remained free, tolerant and creative.

Victor IV in his own way made a contribution to this scene, by surrounding his houseboat with all kind of floatable constructs, making towers and masts to climb in. People in tourist boats would applaud to see him diving from these vertical constructs and swimming around in the river.

The harbour authorities took a mild eye on these constructions, and were able to convince Mr. Glück that expanding horizontally rather than vertically was to be preferred, probably with the provision that he would not try to reach the opposite border of the river.

This outsider environment has been there in the 70's and 80's of the former century.

In his development as an artist from 1970 on Mr. Glück paid less attention to making *Ikons*, but he began making logbook notes, i.e. texts, notes, drawings on sheets of paper, commenting on what happened in his life and in the world, all together some 5000 sheets. In 1977 they were exposed in the Amsterdam Stedelijk (Municipal) Museum

Then, in 1972, together with his partner Ina, he had met in 1968 in Denmark, he founded the Second Quality Construction Company. That marked the beginning of the construction of the rafts around the ship, using all kind of thrown away materials. In this period Mr. Glück called himself Jack Sun (but most people would refer to him as Viktor IV).

Another artistic period began around 1975 when Mr. Glück got the fantasy to be of Bulgarian descent. He began to call himself Bulgar.

He became very interested in clocks and created all kinds of clockworks, freely interpreting the position of the figures on the dial or letting the hands turn backwards. *Bulgar Time* (1980).....

In June 1986, while repairing the underwater connections of the floating structures, Mr. Glück got entangled in the ropes and sadly drowned. He was buried in the Zorgvlied graveyard, along the Amstel, some kilometers up the river. His body was transported by ship, in a procession of numerous other ships.

The floating structures have disappeared, but the *Berendina Fennegina* nowadays is still laying there. The ship is owned by the Danish Association of Architects.

As the Mayor and Aldermen would write in 1986 after he died: *"In Amsterdam "it" happens: the playful, the surprising. Walter Glück was pre-eminently the man to colour this in his own, special way"*.

Source: <http://outsider-environments.blogspot.com/2009/12/viktor-iv-floating-structures.html>
- Henk van Es

Viktor IV (Walter Carl Glück) blev født i 1929 i New York af en tysk far og en græsk mor, der som mange andre var immigreret til USA. Walter flyttede skole mange gange i løbet af sin opvækst, idet han havde store problemer med at adlyde autoriteter - måske som resultat af en veludviklet, stærk individualisme. På et tidspunkt blev han tilbudt plads på en skole for særligt begavede børn, men hans forældre afslog - Walter Carl skulle gå i den almindelige skole.

Efter endt skolegang fik han blandt andet job som livredder. Han havde tidligere markeret sig som konkurrencesvømmer - en omstændighed, der skulle komme til at stå i skærende kontrast til hans død. Udover forskellige jobs, rejste Walter Carl også rundt og besøgte blandt andet sin fars familie i Europa. Det var dog først efter endt universitetsuddannelse, han for alvor tog fat på rejselivet. I 1961 endte han igen i Europa, nærmere betegnet Amsterdam, hvor han slog sig ned og forsøgte at ernære sig som fotograf.

Han fortsatte dog både med at rejse og med at tage billeder af motiver på sin vej. Den dag, John F. Kennedy blev myrdet ændrede alting sig. Walter Carl søgte efter en ny måde at udtrykke sig på, og efter at have forsøgt sig med maleri i et par måneder, sagde Walter Carl Glück: Tro ændrede sig til viden. I april 1964 besluttede han sig for at blive maler og forfatter. Han ændrede da sit navn til Viktor IV. Det hele begyndte i 1964, som han plejede at sige.

Han købte et skib, indrettede det med atelier og kaldte det Kamakura Buddha. Viktor begyndte at male på drivtømmer som han fandt i Amsterdams Havn. Han lavede ikoner inspireret af de græske ikoner der for Viktor var uden religiøse betydninger. Hans værker omhandlede hverdagens begivenheder; de var kommentarer til livet - en leg mellem det seriøse og det legende.

Efter en succesfuld udstilling i New York nogle år senere, havde han penge til at købe en ny båd, *Berendina Fennegina*. I 1968 rejste han igen rundt og kom blandt andet til Danmark for at besøge en tante. Her mødte han Glyptotekets bestyrer, Flemming Johansen, og senere dennes kone, Elisabeth. En intens korrespondance forbandt den næste lange tid København og Amsterdam, og en dag forlod Elisabeth København, tog til Amsterdam og blev til Ina - den, Viktor IV kom til at dele resten af livet med.

Position: 52° 22N 04° 54E er stedet i Amsterdams Havn hvor Viktor og Inas båd - *Berendina Fennegina* - ligger. Efter Viktors død overtog Danske Arkitekters Landsforening skibet. Det ligger i dag på samme kajplads midt i Amsterdam. Restaureret og flittigt brugt.

Udover Viktors ikoner blev hans Logbogsblade meget kendte. Hans mål var at samle 44 bøger med de mange løsark han fik produceret med nøgleordsagtige titler. Gennem årene lavede han tusindvis af sider. Samtidig arbejdede han på flere bøger. Arkene var billedlige optagelser af hverdagens tanker og reaktioner på, hvad der skete rundt omkring.

I 1972 startede Ina og Viktor The Second Quality Construction Company - mærkelige konstruktioner skød frem som 3-dimensionelle collager med tekst som "Unødvendig" og "Hvem har brug for Stillehavet". Viktor samlede ting fra markeder og containere og følte selv, det var som at finde en guldmine. I 1974 blev han antaget til en udstilling på Stedelijk Museet i Amsterdam under titlen "Genbrug". Herefter var han inviteret til adskillige udstillinger rundt omkring - herunder til Louisiana i Humlebæk.

I tiden herefter begyndte Viktor at arbejde med den del af hans værker, hvor fascinationen af runer og det oldnordiske alfabet skinnede igennem. Farver og ord på paneler og plader. Som denne nye udtryksform tog til, blev der lavet færre og færre ikoner og logbogsblade.

Omkring 1978 involverede han sig entusiastisk i ure. Han mente, det var tid til at tænke tid på en ny måde og udvikle sin egen Bulgar Tid, som blandt andet kom til udtryk ved, at han eksempelvis fjernede eller byttede rundt på tallene på et ur. Han designede herefter sit eget ur, hvor viserne vendte i forskellig retning. Han skabte ure, der gik tre gange så hurtigt som normalt – nogle ure gik baglæns. Rundt omkring begyndte interessen for Viktors ure at vokse, og det blev til flere udstillinger rundt om i Europa.

I 1986 sidst i juni måned, omkom Viktor IV ved en tragisk drukneulykke under sin båd, og verden blev et fattigere sted. Viktor IV har efterladt sig stærke og inspirerende spor til os og til eftertiden.

Kilde: <http://www.galleritavi.dk>

