Gun Mattsson   
   
 **Welcome to Gun's world of images**  
   
 From a distance compositions in color and form.   
 Up close they swarm of life   
 Not unlike satellite photos which in enlargement  
 disclose the most varried life forms.  
  A penetrating report where even the  
 scenes most difficult to see are clearly visible.  
  Comments on our search for spiritual values;  
 our difficulties in getting along, our weaknesses,  
 our nakedness and fear  
 But also our joy, sense of humor and madness.  
 Our historical anchoring and puzzles   
 Our questions about that which is to come   
 Our place and roll in the universe   
 Daily life  
   
 B. Karlsson's presentation of the artist Gun Mattsson  
   
  **An excursion into the unknown: The works of Gun Mattsson**  
   
 The by this time sizeable production of Swedish artist Gun Mattsson risks at first to   
 overwhelm you. Marc Chagall immediately comes to mind. But here we are not   
 dealing with dreamlike representations of Jewish village life of a previous century, but   
 rather with a kind of global and epoch-less kaleidoscope, where medieval castles are   
 capped by cathedral cupolas, past which entire lines of yachts are sailing by. Around   
 them tumble fishlike creatures with oversized jaws, while on the shores giant   
 unicorns and midget humanoids roam - the humans sometimes half or fully naked -  
 often pallid, cherubic or hairless - sometimes in ceremonial robes or armour -   
 seemingly listlessly engaged in one or the other activity, or just languidly at rest.   
  Here time seems absent, instead making room for a permanent metamorphosis of   
 nature, civilisation and humanity - often in mild pastel hues of orange, reddish, green   
 or blue. There are hints of pre-World-War I enthusiasm with experimentation: the   
 sensual liberation of French fauvism;the impatience and energy of ltalian futurism   
 (but absent its aggressiveness); the German avant-garde reiection of form (but   
 without its socio-political message).   
  And soon you find yourself a captive of the artist's own cosmos. lt grabs you, absorbs   
 you, takes you along hallucinatory chains of association. You try in vain to escape   
 the myriad of scenes, you discern connections that within moments are replaced by   
 others, as if in a mist.   
  But when you raise the subject of symbolism and calling with the artist she becomes   
 a tad evasive. she wants not so much to change the world as to make the spectator,   
 as the French would put it, feel 'transporté', sensually and mentally, into a state of   
 timelessness, in which physical laws no longer apply, and where existence feels at   
 the same time without contours and endlessly malleable. "Ars pro arte"in other   
 words: art for art's sake.   
  So does that open the door to something subliminal in the artist? Here Mrs Mattsson   
 leaves the door well ajar, as she expounds on long-gone eras with which she says   
 she has a strange affinity, even a mystic belonging. How far back do our individual   
 memories reach? ls there an atavistic, collective memory within each of us that is   
 awakened by the works of certain artists? Is Mrs Mattsson's oeuvre more 'Ars pro   
 mente' than 'Ars Pro arte'?   
  ln a short critique like the present we have to leave the question at that. The reader is   
 invited to test it for him or herself, with senses wide open for the dizzying experience   
 ahead. Gun Mattson's work is truly multifaceted, her message profound, her mission   
 important.   
   
 Kjell M. Torbiörn  
 Auther, lecturer and former member of the Council of Europe