

LOOK BEHIND THE HORIZON.

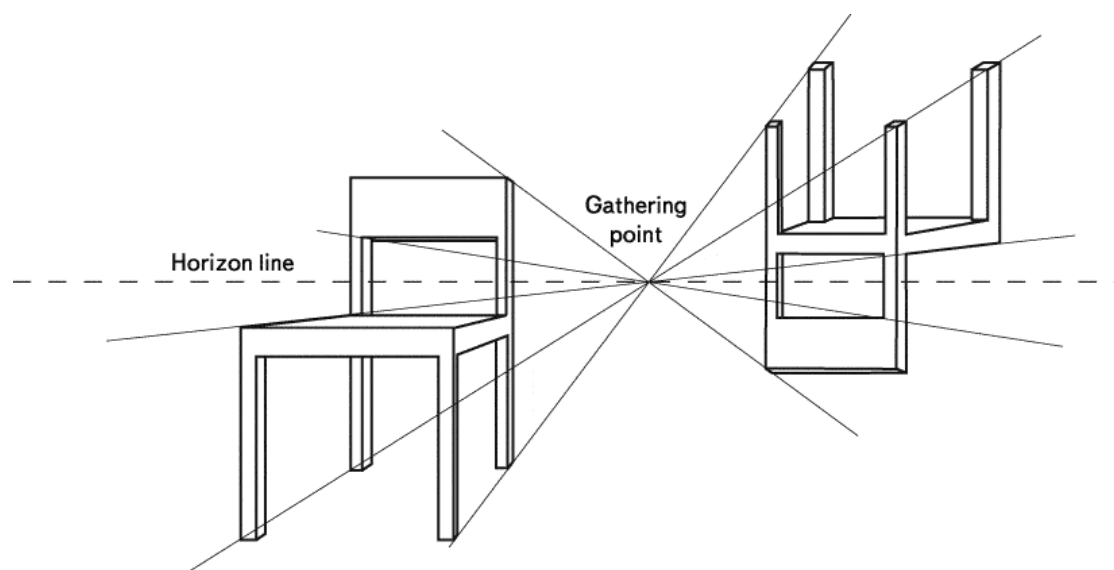
Project presents the actual works of Moscow artist Gor Chahal, in which the author shares the experience of conversation about the sacral in the language of contemporary art. Liturgica, iconographic space, Godly energies, Tabor light - subjects of his art works. In particular, the artist succeeded to realize the principle of reverse prospect, used in the ancient iconography, by facilities of plane photograph technique as metaphor of «documentary proved» evident existence of the transcendental world.

THE REVERSE PROSPECT.

Invention of linear prospect laws, contrary to established opinion, have, in general, quite mediated relation to the epoch of Renaissance . Long before the beginning of the Early Renaissance the considerable circulation in Europe receives fundamental work of Arabian thinker Ibn al-Hajsama (965-1039), more known under Latinised name - Algazena, «optics Treasure». Further, on the basis of this treatise the Polish scientist Vitelo, or Vitelon (apprx. 1226 - aprx. 1260), has created the «Prospect» unusually popular among sophisticated Europeans already in XIII century. Diotto di Bondone (1267 - 1337) was the first artist who has applied these ideas in art practice. In other words, inventing of "optical illusion" of linear prospect cannot be considered as a main merit of an epoch of the Renaissance. As a matter of fact, prospective constructions were known as far back as ancient Greeks. Probably by that reason, the greater popularity of rather late and secondary work of Vitelo in comparison with «optics Treasures» of Algazena was that the last one was considered as a copy of Ptolemy's composition. Thoughts on that parallel lines are gathering in process of moving out of the spectator's eyes, we can to find already at Euclid. Though he still did not do a conclusion that it should converge in one point on horizon. During an epoch of Hellenism, painters, actually, already used reception of rapprochement of lines to the full, but each group of parallel lines had the different gathering point. The Greek artist each subject saw, so to say, separately, or, in other words, he considered the landscape

simultaneously from many points of view - from above, from below, in front, sideways. Such dynamical sliding sight it was. Therefore the theory of linear prospect, in effect, was only end (mechanistic enough) constructions of visually connected space, begun by artists of an epoch of antiquity. The prospect problem consisted in creating on a picture plane the same conditions in which real subjects in real space are appearing to our sight. Inventing of prospect does not mean, thus, a new view on the world (the person always saw things in more or less consecutive prospect), but only certain way of the imagining space, hierarchically subordinated to a sight of the spectator looking in «window» of a picture. In world view the reverse prospect of Byzantine and ancient-Russian icon painting, placed in the centre of life hierarchy the celestial world, inaccessible to «corporal» visual perception can be considered as original revolution only. The image of conceptual space in ancient iconography - there was original revolution in the art, carried out by east Christianity in the Middle Ages. If the direct prospect describing «visibility» of spatial relations of the real world, with evidence finds a substantiation in perception and descriptive geometry, the reverse prospect, itself, is not connected neither with experience of rational knowledge, nor with experience of supervision of a complete picture of the world. As the geometry of visual perception it does not develop in independent system. Possibly, therefore the question on sources of occurrence and development of reverse prospect is so debatable. In Russian literature among the researchers expressing on this theme, usually allocate P. Florenskiy, L. Zhegin, A. Losev and B. Raushenbah's works whose opinions on the historical background of reverse prospect disperse sometimes polarly: from interpretation of reverse prospect as illusory projection of space from the point of view of the «other world» with engaging of the Riemann geometry and the Einstein's theory of a relativity (at Florensky), to an explanation of an ancient iconography by direct perception, artless drawing of what artist sees on very short distances (at Raushenbah). Meanwhile, if to consider the direct and reverse systems of prospect, without opposing one another, in aggregate, the answer to a question on occurrence of reverse prospect in the Byzantian and ancient Russian iconography comes quite naturally.

Let's take for descriptive reasons any subject, for example, a chair, and try to construct its linear prospect. The gathering point of direct linear prospect is laying , as it is wellknown, on a horizon line. Now let's continue prospect lines behind the horizon, and then draw the prospective image of the same chair, but laying behind the horizon, on the same distance from a gathering point, as initial.



We see that behind the horizon lines of prospect are naturally dispersing, and the chair which is laying behind the horizon, sees to us in reverse prospect. It turns out that the subjects which are positioned behind the horizon (in conceptual world) it is possible to observe only in reverse prospect. Now it becomes clear, where ancient icon painters tried to glance, representing celestial world, perfectly acquired laws of prospect from ancient Greeks. Now it is obvious that returning back to direct prospect by artists during an epoch of Renaissance is only loss of desire by them to glance behind the horizon. On-essence, refusal interest to the Divine world. A step back in spiritual development. Clearly, why P. Florensky considered that direct and reverse prospects are antipodes of art thinking. There are two cultures from which one it named "contemplate-creative", and another - "injuriously-mechanical".

Gor Chahal, 2010.