

## **Getting to the Heart of Things**

### **A visit to Marie Blabolilová**

*The journeys that lead one to understand art take diverse forms. Our journey to the art of the painter, printmaker and restorer Marie Blabolilová (born 1948) took us to the village of Kublov near Beroun, south-west of Prague, to a cottage with a poetic garden where she spends her summer months. We sit together and talk about creative expression, about people and about life. Art pervades everything around us, above all in the unassuming beauty of 'ordinary' objects sanctified over the years by innumerable touches of the human hand that, thus, symbolise the course of human existence itself.*

Richard Drury, 2013

### **Home, sweet home**

I truly feel that the older a person gets, the better it is to be in a particular place and experience it to the full. I stick by that here and I really enjoy home-building. Sometimes I say to myself that I'd like to be an interior designer, though I wouldn't actually like designing things for other people. I love it here. There's something truthful about this place. I wouldn't be able to live in one of those luxury developments they build nowadays. It would really bother me. That's just the way it is – I like old-fashioned things.

### **Simplicity in life and art**

I simply paint things. I'm essentially a very simple person. I support the theory that a painter has to be a bit simple and unintellectual. I like simple people – the kind that stay true to their word. Nowadays, in the effort to achieve originality at all costs, everything's unreliable and complicated, which is why an unintellectual but kind person lives a simple life.

### **The cat as a soulmate**

It's got to the point where I have two cats that I understand like kind people. They live the right way – in contrast to people, who have gone crazy and do idiotic things. I sit down, the cats quietly sit a little further away and look contented, happy even. I tell myself that 'it's a fusion of souls' and I'm happy as can be. A dog, on the other hand, never stops running around, making those doggy eyes and making a nuisance of itself. I say to myself that if I had a dog I

wouldn't do the slightest bit of work because I'd have to keep taking it for walks. I feel that the souls of those cats have a wonderful effect on me. The cat prefers its home to its owner, and that suits me. In fact I'm like that cat – I prefer to have my own familiar surroundings where I feel good. None of that wandering around for me.

### **Nature as home**

I don't feel the desire to walk to some forest I don't know. I have a couple of walking routes of my own where I feel great. Things change there a little bit every year. I like walking in places I know. Those surroundings make a big impression on me.

### **The truthfulness of folk expression**

What I love most of all are folk songs, those old ones. I've always felt that folk songs and, equally, folk art, should provide a starting point for us. Folk expression often moves me. I emotionally sense the plain, humble things that those people do and it isn't twisted in any way. Essentially it's primitive symbolism; there's something symbolic in it all.

### **Ploughing one's own furrow**

I mustn't ever let myself be influenced – I always have to begin from scratch to prevent anything disrupting me. When you're young, you don't know what you're about. I told myself that I had to get to the heart of what I was about. I try not to think things up too much – rather it's case of what suddenly strikes me between the eyes. If I notice something, or see something I like, I tell myself that it's the right thing I like the look of and I'm going to paint it. It's crucial that I enjoy it and feel a truly close affinity towards it. Otherwise I'm not capable of doing anything.

### **The way the world is**

I kept asking myself when I was a very young child – what's this world like? Perhaps, before I die, I'll discover why it is the way it is. You try to find an answer somehow, but in vain – the older I am, the more confused I become. I try to orientate myself and understand it all.