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Jan Svoboda, *Space for Pink Picture*

The fourth and final artwork I will describe today is called 'Space for Pink Picture'. It is a black and white silver gelatin print on paper, mounted on Sololit with back metal bracing. Sololit is a thin MDF or fibreboard. At the top centre of the image, Svoboda has hand written 1972 - the date the photograph was taken was taken and/or printed.

The photograph measures 80cm in width and 104.5cm in height. The width of the photograph is around the height of a kitchen work surface, and the height of the photograph is around the width of two kitchen cabinets side by side. So if you imagine that arrangement flipped so that the work surface and the cabinets are on their side, then that is the size of the photographic print.

The subdued tonal range of muted grey in this photograph brings an instant sense of calm. The content of the photograph is simple - a narrow strip of wood is propped lengthwise up a wall, at an angle from the floor. The HB pencil lead-coloured grey pebbledash wall fills the majority of the composition. If the image was divided into six horizontal strips ... the pale grey stone-coloured tiled floor fills only the bottom strip, and the wall takes up the rest.

The wood is on the centre left side of the photograph as we face it ... but only just. It is almost as if it were resting against the imaginary central vertical line of the composition. If we imagine again that the image is divided into 6 horizontal strips, then the wood reaches to the bottom of the strip second from the top. On the floor, the bottom of the wood rests about a quarter of the way down onto the floor.

Of course, it is impossible to give exact measurements of the wood. It is certainly wider than thicker. It looks to be a piece of 2x5 timber - so 2cm in depth, and 5cm in width, and approximately one metre in length. As we face the image, we face the wider side.

The wood looks well used - particularly on the left side as we face it. Near the top, on the left side - there appears to be a pin or small nail attached. Further down ... several chips of wood have been taken out from the left side. At the very bottom the top layer of the wood has been removed somehow to reveal the grain underneath the smoothed surface.

Light comes from the left, and the wood casts a shadow on both the wall and the floor. The two shadows ... each coming from the top and the bottom of the wood ... expand outward and meet in a foggy point on the floor, at the very right side of the composition. These two shadow lines, combine with the piece of wood, make a subtle acute triangle.

The textured pebbledash of the wall, the cold-looking, smooth floor tiles, and the used wood ... all come together to create a palette of textures. It isn't easy to tell from the reproduction of this image on a screen or in a book, but in real life each element of the photograph is not only slightly out of focus, but quite blurry. The bumps of the pebbledash are less severe. The marks and pieces of dirt on the floor are less noticeable.

There is undoubtedly a materiality to this print. There are abrasions to the edges of the photograph, small tears or scuffs along the sides - particularly at the bottom corners. The print surfaces of Svoboda's works are left unglazed, and many of them are unframed, making them raw, vulnerable and intensely physical.