

In Other Words

I know the beginnings of Katarzyna Miller's artistic path. What I have in mind are her student years when we came to know her as an energetic, talented person focused on acquiring professional skills. She aroused interest and appreciation of those around her, which was reflected in the awards she received at the time. Her student works concerned the issues connected with actions on a plane realized in painting and drawing techniques. She continued this line of creative activity for several years after her graduation. However later in her career, she reached a point when actions on a plane became only one of the elements of her works.

In her doctoral dissertation 'Non – Presence. A Mirror as a Reflection and Illusion of Reality. A Return to the Interior' the artist wrote about her latest cycle of paintings: 'in the installation the image functions as a performative and changing form defined by the context in which it was created. The work is a self-referential creation.' The changes, perhaps radical, took place as a result of a long-lasting creative process fostered by intuitive actions. In her latest works the artist refers to personal, very intensive experiences which consolidate her artistic identity and which, as it were, stand in opposition to the external world shaping the reflection of the identity. Hence, 'a mirror' has a very original and at the same time personal meaning in Katarzyna Miller's painting. Today, the creative process, stretched in time, is an expression of strong emotions and feelings. I have talked with Katarzyna Miller numerous times and I do not doubt the sincerity of her creative expression. I was particularly impressed by a conversation which we had in her studio, surrounded by her paintings. The paintings were autonomous works of art and at the same time they were means of expression - a building material or a peculiar arrangement of the studio's space. The studio seemed to be a monumental installation containing enchanted, huge territories of intimacy. I became an observer, a recipient but also a tool, means of expression. I could interfere with the arrangement of elements in the existing configuration, which I did, but nevertheless, my actions did not have the slightest influence on the character of the artistic work, by which I mean the studio and the personal message of the artist.

Despite the great intellectual charge and the skill of finding the proper perspective on her own artistic work, Katarzyna Miller, who is on a path of creative metamorphoses, is guided by pure emotions and intuition. However, she is able to convincingly name the effects of her intimate artistic actions, which break off with the frames of a painting (literally and figuratively speaking). Verbalizing the phenomenon of depicting, of creating, etc. requires great translation skills. Creating a universal language, which in principle is impossible to create, calls for a large amount of desperation and courage. The determination with which Katarzyna Miller tries to establish and name the line between what is real and what is illusory is prepossessing and confirms the artist's need to embed her identity in her works. Creative passion is, or rather may be, proof of an artist's survival or self-preservation instinct. Passion, which is connected with an immense effort and exhaustion of the body not noticed by an artist – is a certain kind of madness. Rest and intellectual distance come only after the creative process is finished.

Katarzyna Miller's latest paintings are characterised by a wide variety of means of expression accompanied by a limited yet very refined colour spectrum. The artist covers the canvass with paint so as to produce the effect of a plane differentiated in terms of temperature and colour. She applies patterns of anthropomorphic silhouettes, various canvas sizes, graphic, simplified and allusive

depictions of human figures which are reduced to a sign; colourful accents which break the rather dark yet refined background of beautiful shades of grey. Stencils, discarded paintbrushes, the almost Pollockian floor spattered with paint, cans of paint, things lying on the ground: paintings and stencils, ripped papers, cut paintings which seem to have been ruined (destructive actions), cardboards, etc. – these are all artefacts of Katarzyna Miller's private space. A **DISTINCT space** from which she moves to find herself once again surrounded or accompanied by other values, which are still in agreement with the path of intuitive achievements building her artistic identity. This kind of nurturing of the identity, in the broad sense of the word, when painting, creating in an enclosed space, a studio - a **TEMPLE OF CREATION** is comfort, paradise and a curse for an artist. It affects artists who had gone through the wonderful process of building their personality and found themselves on the border between the total engagement in the creative process and intellectual objectivism or the complete awareness of the circumstances.

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From the superior's text to Katarzyna Miller's doctoral dissertation, Łódź January 15th, 2015