

## About Katarzyna Miller's painting

Katarzyna Miller is one of creators in whom the power of artistic will shows signs of an imperative. With such an attitude opportunism or pseudo-artistic speculations of sorts are out of the question. It may seem striking that I include Katarzyna Miller into the circle of 'creators' and not 'artists'. In view of the status of contemporary art where the word 'artist' often refers to people who offer calculating, narcissistic and egocentric performances, I consider this classification more appropriate. Contrary to them, Katarzyna Miller presents a categorical, nonconformist attitude of a creative painter.

When she paints, Katarzyna Miller creates new spaces, new realities. She creates not only on the surface of canvas, but also beyond it, especially when her whole studio becomes a painting space. It is a place where the restraint in representation, motifs and themes is confronted with the explosion of painting substance. In her studio the artist creates a unique painting laboratory, where the ongoing process of painting, transformations, coming of a painting into being, and alchemic experimenting takes place. Its interior appears to be a revelation of intimate creative act with all its consequences. Katarzyna Miller creates a painting territory for herself and it can be treated as identical with a work of art, and the studio itself becomes a tableau vivant. The number of painting experiments which take place there shows that the author is far from satisfied with her results and tirelessly strives to reach the ideal.

While searching for new forms and motifs, Katarzyna Miller often refers to representations and figures which have been created in art before. She transforms them into her own reality, her own worlds. She does so in accordance with her intentions, realizing though that forms once created may become again an interesting living material. She conducts a dialogue between the form and painting substance where a landscape may become a person or a person become a landscape. A partial presentation of a human figure, its general outline is often blurred, taken out of the picture, pasted, mutilated. Is it a mirror of the same identity which goes beyond the limits of existence or should one see it as symbolic representation of the artist's profile? The paintings create the atmosphere of melancholy, and indirectly lead to questions about what being, existence, life and death are.

Katarzyna Miller is first and foremost a complex and interesting personality and, as one can imagine, the process of creation is in her case on the border of suffering. As the French poet Antonin Artaud put it 'cruelty to another person brings rather mediocre artistic effects. Cruelty to oneself is far more interesting'. Thus, talent itself is not the only precondition for harmonious development of new artistic forms. One also needs strong character, which is something that Katarzyna Miller undeniably has.

Although in her painting the artist sometimes employs accepted stylistic conventions, she avoids naturalist boredom. She eliminates unnecessary elements and seeks for simplicity. She struggles for her own, new form. She purposefully deforms and destroys painting motifs which she defined in the past and which in time have become a nuisance to her as an artist.

Katarzyna Miller's intelligence and sensitivity inspire her to consciously strive for artistic freedom by recognizing, transforming and finally destroying her own well established and – one might say – safe language. Throwing overboard the ballast of artistic habits and conventions is often a painful process. However, it leads to clearing of her painting of its beauty, in favour of the strength of expression of anti-aesthetic formal means. By destroying what already exists and is firmly established, she has a chance to become avant-garde in relation to her own art.

That is why Katarzyna Miller tries to construct a new form for painting and a fresh essence of a picture in general. It can be perceived as a rebellion and a way to protest against something that has finally become unbearable. She does not belong to artists who are cut off in the safe world of self-repetition. Even as a student she used classic themes and motifs in her painting. After graduation she established the main motif of her paintings: a figure in an interior, multiplied by a reflection in a mirror. The use of a distinct element of composition, a mirror, introduced a play both formal and conceptual, with additional ontological meaning.

The works painted in her student times were excellent, but Katarzyna Miller does not create only on the basis of previously developed qualities. She had to give them up and betray them to build a new world of original forms. Leaving this excellent painting output behind might have been difficult for the author, but nevertheless opens for her a path into new, unexplored regions, full of mystery – full of painting. Such an approach clearly means a risk of failure, yet it certainly does not indicate weakness, but shows spiritual power and creative energy.

The artist is looking for new solutions for her art in the realm of painting, as an exceptionally difficult and demanding profession, where the attempts and experiments undertaken, no matter how many, do not guarantee a desirable final effect. It can be then presumed that she is able to give up everything that gave her self-confidence and security for the sake of greater love.

And it is so much easier to take the easy way...betray one's ideals; become simply a contemporary 'artist' and, which is desirable in our times, produce a few simple new-fangled installations, ectypal in their principle, or take part in some theatre-related presentations. These are easy substitutes to deep creative effort.

Katarzyna Miller presents mature painting, brave and versatile, and her natural sensitivity and talent allow her to capture elusiveness and futility of life. However, regardless of the ideas conveyed, Katarzyna Miller's artistic work always leads to the pure art of painting, which is a clear artistic utterance, without unnecessary addition of post modern trash. Katarzyna Miller can afford

expressing an utterance in painting in its strict sense as all her work is grounded upon years of exploration and persistent experimenting in the field of painting. Therefore, she is one of the few who should risk a journey into the inexplicable world of art.

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