

JACKY STRENZ

Kurt-Schumacher-Str. 2 60311 FRANKFURT am MAIN

The Subtle Upheaval of Sensibility

Competition, self-exploitation, individualism, overexposure, performativity, interconnection, success, anxiety, exhaustion, isolation, failure, resentment, depression, hatred. The subjectivity of the 21st century resembles a whirlwind of negativity.

The characters that inhabit Lea von Wintzingerode's paintings seem to be living (and resisting) the consequence of the pathological effects of our time. By creating an ethereal cloud of flowing dark or bright colors, the artist paints people that interact, gather, have sex, eat, dance, sleep, read, fade away. These characters are the lonely souls who recognize themselves while living the disillusionment of the global capitalist era. Their bodies are mostly bodies of young men and women blurred by quick delicate strokes. They fall apart and integrate into the pictorial dreamy landscape of the paintings as if they were living in an erotic dream in which enjoyment is micropolitics of active desire, the hope that the subjective insurgency of vulnerable bodies will potentiate life to re-appropriate its vital force and its creative energy.

The artist is telling us that it is precisely when power makes us vulnerable that we are able to find the potency to subvert this condition. It is an upheaval that comes primarily from the risk of death, of course, but also from a shuffle of emotions that is the vital force of life. Therefore, she is creating a fundamental link between the dream and the existence and finding a way to reinvent a life that is in ruin. It is the ability to exist resisting and to create other possible worlds, other modes of life.

It is at this very ambiguous moment of vulnerability and potency that the characters of Lea von Wintzingerode's pictorial works are divided into two groups: the group of those who are looking for ways to approach the community, through interaction, dance, music, rock concerts, pop culture rituals, and the group of people who are isolated – the ones who seek to the calmness of interiors but still remain in conflict with the collective subjectivity of their time. In both cases, they are marginal, outsiders, and resist the normativity established by today's socio-political and cultural realm. They are about to find again the free potency to look ahead, to open their mouths, to sing their desires, to dance, to invent, to rise up. That is why the figures painted by the artist are ghostly, distorted, disproportionate, genderfluid, de-racialized, ugly, pretty. They are Pagu, Poly Styrene, teenagers having fun, Clarice Lispector, Audre Lorde, a girl in a dance school, a painter, a guy from an unknown rock band, all at the same time.

Since the artist creates her images from her own personal memories and observation without using any image archive, she creates a heterogeneous and discontinued imagery that breaks with false linear historicity and allows us to glimpse social phenomena in their historical dimension. The temporal zig-

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zag of the paintings takes us away from the linear progression and developmental politics of our time and puts us in contact with another way to live and to celebrate life.

Once her works are mostly small-size paintings she denies the spectacularization of art that is commonly seen in big art events and even in museums nowadays. They do not submit to the conditioning of art as mere entertainment. The modest scale of her works represents indeed a commitment to solidarity, a pact of tenderness that the artist proposes to the public. This generous insubordination gains reinforcement when the artist equally rejects the historically technical domain of male (often white) painters, who are still the favorites of the art system. There are no genius, no masters and no hierarchies here. Her explicit dilettantism derives from the will to live in a horizontal society where there is no power but potency.

In addition to the paintings, the artist composes sound pieces on piano and synthesizers dialoguing with the tradition of electroacoustic music composed by women such as Delia Derbyshire and Eliane Radigue. The artist displays her paintings in the space with the sound pieces in order to create an emotional ambience. By intersecting painting, installation and sound art the artist creates dense layers of affections, emotions and feelings. She establishes a crossing of the senses and expands the way how she communicates to the public: The sound notes are like an extension of the paintings and vice versa. This hybrid situation creates a third space between the pictorial and the sound, where the exhibition space multiplies our environmental notions and expands the questions where (and how) we move our bodies. It is about spatial and time perception, vision, body and sound.

Lea von Wintzingerode creates in her work a temporality that marks a time out of time. It is another temporality that synthesizes nostalgia while it is, simultaneously, tied to the present. It is the oscillating time of the dream, a time that refuses the speed of social-media, the mass production, consumerism, competition and the blind faith in technology as an inevitable possibility for the future. Her works are a subtle emancipation gesture that disobeys the norm. She wants to consolidate another subjectivity that is critical to those who have lost their hope and surrendered to the neoliberalization of life. This remarks a socio-political aspect in her practice: The faith that emotions such as love and compassion can overcome barbarism. This way her works call for the preservation of a dignified life. Art becomes a poetic alternative to the masculinist, racist, heteronormative, capitalist world. It is the victory of Eros over Thanatos. Thus, she helps us to keep existing-resisting! Oxala!

Filipe Lippe

Filipe Lippe is a poet, artist and researcher born in 1986 in Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He is currently a PhD candidate in history and philosophy of art at the HfBK Hamburg, Germany.

TEL +49 (0)69. 21 99 98 70 CELL +49 (0) 151. 11 64 97 37 www.jackystrenz.com office@jackystrenz.com