

Julia Steiner "consistence of time"

Exhibition: 18 November, 2011 – 14 January, 2012
Opening: Friday 18 November 2011, 6-8 pm



Julia Steiner
"consistence of time" 2011
part 1, part 3,
part 4, part 5
gouache on paper
each 120 x 200 cm

JULIA STEINER – CONSISTENCE OF TIME

Julia Steiner's work deals with mental landscapes. She is interested in condensations, in blank spaces and in states of transition. Even her technique is deeply marked by this. Judging from the medium (gouache on paper), we are talking about painting. The artistic gesture, on the other hand, is clearly committed to drawing. This indicates to what extent Julia Steiner's work is characterized by contradictions and tensions.

The act of drawing provides the artist with the magical identity between thinking and taking action. The direct and raw force of her work involves the viewer from the very first moment. The paintings are developed without any outlines or other preparatory steps. Quite irreversibly, Julia Steiner applies the thick gouache onto the sheet with a paint brush.

She dispels the narrative gesture of the drawing, however, by denying herself to the brush stroke. She develops her paintings by fragments which she condenses to spaces, thus highlighting the contemplative quality of her work. The chosen formats imply a suggestion to almost physically enter the pictorial space. In her technique the artist succeeds in uniting divergences which have their roots in her very subjects and which most subtly have become a constitutive element of her pictures.

Julia Steiner's works allude to people's sensations. Therefore they do not lend any support to the viewer by providing concrete or figurative subjects. Established references and codes are being eschewed and subjected to the inner logic of intuition and the drawing process. The artist neither wants to comment nor illustrate but to create an experience. Thus one has to move within these images without the familiar coordinate systems, being continually forced to ensure one's own position. This tenuous situation is omnipresent in Julia Steiner's art. She creates a most intensive relationship between the image and the viewer in this way, who find themselves as accomplices in overcoming the uncertainty surrounding them.

The ten-part cycle titled «consistence of time» comprises her most recent works (2010/2011; gouache on paper; each 120 x 200 cm). The group is in a unified format and can be joined to form a frieze. However, Julia Steiner made the paintings in a modular process and sequential presentation is therefore not mandatory at all. Each piece works for itself alone. As to the content, the artist is consistently addressing emotions. Her works capture a whole series of strong feelings. One has the impression that she shows idyllic places or secure retreats in which storms are gathering, or already raging. These places could be either concrete or located in the inner world. Everything is in motion and subject to change, and the fuzziness conjures up an uncontrollable and most profound vitality. It is as if Julia Steiner suspended the time space over and over by

extracting a single moment from it. The emotional intensity is thus condensed, as the viewer is given the chance to briefly pause in a moment of great focus and explore its complexity. This sublime play with time which simultaneously lets us experience movement and standstill, emotional condensation and its dissolving again, thus allowing us to enjoy these paintings in their full intensity—intuitively, intellectually and also esthetically—is of a unique poetic elegance.

Julia Steiner (b. in Büren zum Hof in 1982) stayed as artist-in-residence at the gallery's residency in Beijing from October 2009 to January 2010. She won the Swiss Art Award and the Kiefer Hablitzel grant in 2009. In 2010, she received the Manor Art Award, canton Berne. She lives and works in Berne/Switzerland.

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