

Movements in Energy – The Painting of Monika Humm

The painting of Monika Humm is painting without verbal restraint. It breaks through a rigid wall of silence, setting free the flowing current of the hitherto concealed and unexpressed movement.

There are pictures that are either one way only, or which are not at all. The painting of Monika Humm reacts very sensitively to this “either, or”. The artist brings out that exact moment, that long sought after instant, in which a painting “is”. Where there is no longer opposing doubt.

The specific expression of her work is based upon that perfectly unaffected, fundamental and sometimes unambiguous force; its incontrovertibility. Thus each of her paintings resolutely reveal at the correct moment, a unique answer.

When the artist paints, it is as if she is participating in a flow of energy, where the force of its current represents also the force of the pictures. It is as if she becomes an inseparable component of the motion, that is expressed as an image within the structure of the horizontal and vertical lines in her paintings.

It is as if the artist prepares herself for this immersion in the flow, through the choice of her space and canvas formats, with her range of colours, with the choice of liquid and solid painting materials, with broad and narrow brushstrokes.

Glowing fire colours contrasting with darker tones, the blackness of night or earthy hues, the colour radiating with an unreal clear white.

Horizontal lines are laid on top of each other in the image space, pressed together, stacked and consolidated. They are arranged again and again in a “grid”, a more or less continuous framework, underlain by verticals, painted over or interspersed.

Sometimes they open up the image space between two horizontals with that potential element of background luminescence, and sometimes they provide a balance to the crossing horizontals. The dynamic acceleration of the horizontal lines is curbed by the static. At times leading into an enclosed spatial image, entering the silent eye of a storm. The more the verticals are liberated from the architecture of the image, the more fluid and random they become, giving a finely spun embellishment to counterbalance the weight of the horizontal.

It is, as if the finished paintings become half human, half energy. The painter provides the touch of the hand, the body, the medium of paint and the movement. The energy yields the motion.

It must follow, fall and link together, and it must adhere to it; following the image space while still absorbing everything: The memories of the artist, her thoughts, experience, knowledge, impressions and everything that has prepared her for this encounter.

It absorbs it all, transforming it into an independent visual language, which knows and understands that nameless natural quality in its entirety.

The paintings of Monika Humm are in principal only a detailed extract of a larger limitless structure. Her choice of painting ground, and the visual rationale, permits a highly effective surface interception. Her canvas is the lectern from which she delivers the manifesto of a life's experience. Her actions will always equate with the result.

Her paintings reach for, and bear a resemblance of, impressions of urban and rural idyls, up and on to autonomous, pictorial distortions. Between the cityscape of New York, the open space of the West, and further on to mountain ranges; an ever shifting view of landscapes in depth and motion. They are a reminder of Monet without the water lilies, or a narrative free Manet. They continue on in the viewer as a pulsating, multi-toned configuration of soundless music, or they act as a calligraphy existing without text. Again and again, they recollect the means and possibilities inherent in the art of non-representational painting. It is, what it is.

Monika Humm is an artist with both an energetic and innovative approach, rapidly arriving at the very nerve centre of her painting.

One could characterise her painting as an unencrypted bar code, which translates her devotion to reality, into pure expression. Each of her paintings is a statement.

The immediacy, range, density and progressive development in the paintings, not dissimilar to the visual rhythmic movements of a dance, are where the artist opens up different and totally new horizons.

...going on!

Cornelia Kleyboldt, M.A., 2007 (Translation by John-Patrick Daly)