

COSMIC

DOROTHEA ROCKBURNE
AMY FELDMAN
ROSA LOY
JENNY BROSKI
IRINA OJOVAN

TOPOLOGIES



DOROTHEA ROCKBURNE

space jump 2000

Lascaux, Aquacryl and caran d'ache on dieu donne handmade paper on moulin de Larroque handmade paper
65 × 52 cm



ROSA LOY

Gartengemütlichkeit 2021

Casein on canvas
150 × 130 cm

Cosmic topologies

In the diversity of their pictorial universes, generations and cultural influences, the works of Dorothea Rockburne, Amy Feldman, Rosa Loy, Jenny Brosinski and Irina Ojovan are nonetheless linked by their profound complexity and simultaneous openness, which is not necessarily apparent at first glance. A complex combination of formal and content-related references that—instead of giving simple answers—rather raises questions, including those about painting per se.

Dorothea Rockburne, born in 1932, studies at Black Mountain College in the 1950s. In addition to American professors like John Cage, Franz Kline and Robert Motherwell, former Bauhaus students such as Josef Albers and Walther Gropius and the mathematician Max Dehn also teach there. The latter brings her closer to mathematical principles in organic structures, which is groundbreaking for her work development. In the close coexistence, work and study of the students and professors, combined with open, flat hierarchies, key impulses of art history arise at the crossover of art, music, dance and literature.

Rockburne uses industrial materials such as crude oil in her early works on paper and canvas, which she also calls “visual equations”. Monochrome, cubic color surfaces, geometric drawings and folds from this period develop towards a dissolution of the sharp edged form with flowing color and structure transitions in the course of her oeuvre. Star and solar systems, ancient proportions, the golden ratio and spiritual issues become increasingly important in her practice.

Irina Ojovan’s minimalist forms, shaped by architectural forms and patterns with which she has been deeply familiar since childhood, also stem from geometry. In her works on paper, cardboard and canvas—the depth of the painting is reminiscent of a contemplative, Rothko-like color field—the colors stretch into the horizon and transition into impressions of landscapes and geometric bodies behind curved profiles.

In Amy Feldman’s canvases, we seem to encounter organic beings and structures. With their billowing bubbles, lurching

lines, blobs, stretching and shrinking bodies in different shades of gray, they refer to pop and comic with titles such as *Milk Bulb*, *Boom!* and *Bang!*. The flowing, process-related change in form and volume seems almost tangible. Even if gray is traditionally more related to drawings and graphics, Amy Feldman’s works are deliberately painterly. Gestures and brushstrokes are set dynamically, individual splashes repeatedly testify to their creation process.

In Jenny Brosinski’s paintings, the nature of their materiality and the energy of the artistic process become part of her work as well. Materials such as linen and cotton are often only slightly primed or preprocessed and sensitively equipped with traces of color, drawing and images. Her works bear titles such as *You know how I feel*, *Loose yourself*, or *Like catching snowflakes with my tongue*, which, in addition to a universal vocabulary, point to an individualized, introspective pictorial space. Pop merges with the personal, cartoon, object and word fragments remind of the subtle imagery of Cy Twombly, but also of the idea of the spontaneous, unadulterated element in automatism. Amorphous forms, constructions and deconstructions and overpaintings tell a personal story inscribed in them.

In Rosa Loy’s works, the viewer encounters a mysterious, surreal, mystical world of women full of symbolism. Following the more figurative and narrative tradition of her painterly history, her works also challenge an associative process in their reception. As she said in an interview in *Ocula* magazine in 2014, female equality and representation is important to her. Dreams, hopes, past and future in the personal, but also general female cosmos, are reflected in her practice.

The juxtaposition, but also the simultaneous delimitation of such diverse positions emphasizes the individual practice. Very heterogenous abstract to figurative positions in connection with concrete, narrative titles encourage to bring own experiences into their perception. The reflection of personal as well as painterly questions create an interconnected, synergetic cosmos within the exhibition.

STEFANIE STABY



AMY FELDMAN

Milk Bulb 2016

Acrylic on canvas
201 × 201 cm



JENNY BROSINSKI

Bears flying high 2021
Oil and mixed media on canvas
180 × 170 cm

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Exhibition

July 15 — August 7, 2021

Opening

Wednesday

July 14, 2021

5 — 8 pm

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Room for play of autonomy

A work of art unfolds through contemplative viewing. With the last stroke of the brush it is released into the freedom of the other, with the final appraisal by the artist into the expectations of the public. The five artists shown in the exhibition are familiar with the process of this dynamic. In different ways. Whether it be for biographical or geographical reasons, or through differing stages of mediated and appropriated knowledge, or through formal training or its rejection. Whatever. In any case, the consummation of the work is only attained through contemplative viewing. It remains a real component of the completed work to regard perception by others as constitutive. Then comes the experience and the communication of this experience. The work thus unfolds its growth initially solely in the hand of its creator until it comes into contact with other visitors to the garden. These visitors now begin to wander around pleasurably with one another, to stand still and to speak with each other.

It is this space of communication flooded with light that interests the Hungarian thinker, Georg Lukács. However, he observes a justified contoured shadow cast on its surface. Which in turn interests us.

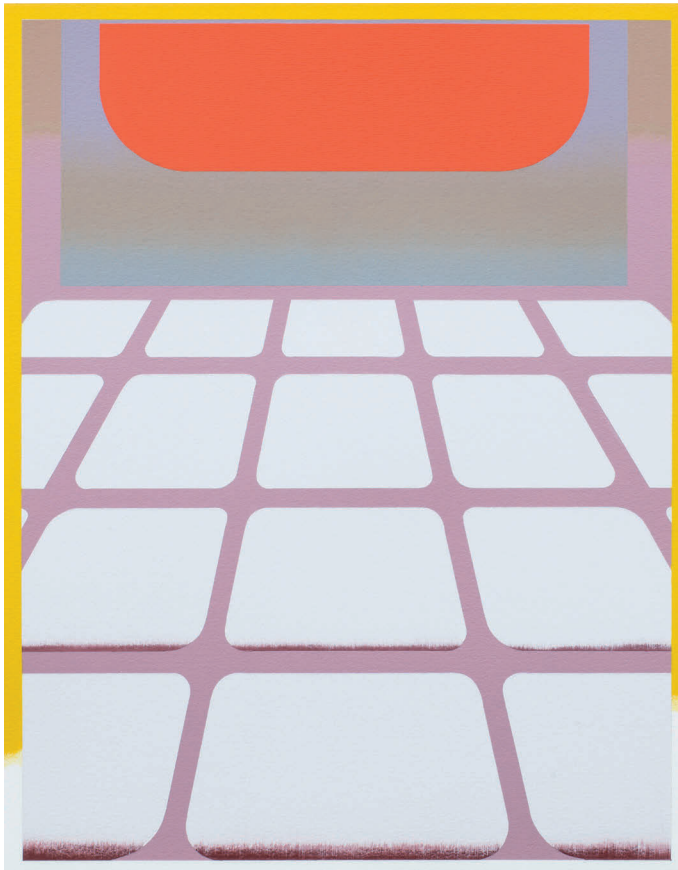
Lukács refuses “to conceive art as an expression of artistic willing and its effect as the appropriate conclusion of an adequate process of communication”.* Adequate inter-human communication as such seems to him to be questionable anyhow, since in his view, it is to conceive it in its function as a structural element in the pure experience of reality, indeed, its decisively constitutive categorial domain — “For the ‘reality’ of this world consists precisely in the fact that nothing can occur in it that does not momentarily take up — for the object admittedly subjective-reflexively, but for the subject of this reality — the solely constitutive character of what is ‘experienced’ and what is ‘experienceable’.” In the sphere of experience, of the reality of experience, there is, however, no normative rule for taking a position, for the ability

to describe. Each person experiences differently according to differences in the quality and intensity, and comes up against a perpetually accompanying barrier to agreeing on what is experienced.

Here Lukács sets up an evaluation, a kind of scale of individual human impressibility that conceives individual experience by its very nature as qualitatively unique. Any means of expression is powerless against it, insipid and downright falsifying. In daily life, however, people seldom become aware of this gulf, for a great mass of experiences of this reality is related to usual everyday practices. The desire for communication remains in the loneliness of speechlessness.

Now it seems as if humans have thought up a way out of this dilemma and have also immediately set out upon it: “Art appears to be predestined to fill this gap: it has left all the fleetingness and fluidity of the mere sphere of experience behind and raised itself to an objectivity far exceeding people and periods, and in this objectivity’s immediate effects, the subjects who have been left alone meet and unite. Art appears to be the sphere in which the immediacy of the effect is not attained at the expense of its non-ambiguity, and thus every anxiety and solicitude about the encapsulation of the individual in its subjectivity seems banished... the consummate human being, the artistic genius breaks through these walls and can communicate completely, without limit.”*

This hope, however, is deceptive. Indeed, according to Lukács, the experience of its effect is, in its intensity, superior to other experiences, but precisely by virtue of this, the ambiguity of the content is heightened. “... the essential hallmark of very deep artistic effect is precisely that in it, the experiencing subject feels most deeply precisely itself, that it experiences what is revealed in art as the revelation of its own most personal essence, when his personality seems also to expand into an entire world.”* If art were to be characterized primarily as a process of communication, according to Lukács’ argumentation, its autonomy would be broken. If the work of art were really to become the “vehicle of the process of communication”, it would have lost its independence.



IRINA OJOVAN

Profile N41 2021
Oil on paper, aluminum frame
41.5 × 31.5 cm

Lukács explicates the impossibility of an adequate substantive communication related to experiences, emphasizing the necessity of the immanence of the aesthetic sphere. “... art is assigned the paradoxical systematic place of having a normative and universal immediacy, of possessing an objective superindividual value, which on the one hand, is necessarily connected with the subjective processes of its realization, but on the other, is never captured by them in its essence. Only this paradoxical and unique position of the work of art as perpetual misunderstanding enables the independence and immanence of aesthetics. Through the eternity, universality and objectivity of its core value, it is sharply separated from the reality of experience...”*

“Misunderstanding” remains the key-word that is also not resolved in its problematic. The creator and the recipient equally bring their desires and yearnings to this form of communication: “Only when this misunderstanding is recognized as the sole possible immediate form of communication, does it become possible to understand the existence of the work in an unclouded fashion: then it is still only a problem to be resolved and it is no longer inconceivable how, from the twofold misunderstanding (that of ‘expression’ and that of ‘understanding’), a world arises that is not adequately reached by either of the two, which however stands in necessary, normative relations to both.”*

The relation of the recipient (as well as the creator) is marked by a “directedness” toward the work. It is inherent to the work that both the artist and the viewer do not completely get what they want. The autonomy of the work that thus arises therefore, perhaps, releases more than ever the discourse among differing opinions and knowledge into the freedom of a togetherness.

MATTHIAS KUNZ

Translated from the German by Dr Michael Eldred, Cologne

* Georg Lukács. *Frühe Schriften zur Ästhetik I – Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst (1912–1914)*. Vol. 16, Georg Lukács. *Werke*. Darmstadt and Neuwied: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1974, p. 13, 26, 37, 40.