

Necessary Sequels

Detour and Memory¹

Jonathan Miles,
Regarding Sin Park's paintings

"The eroticism that belongs to whatever is living is scattered in the air, in the sea, in the plants, in us..."

Clarice Lispector, Agua Viva

Things are never straightforward with painting, lines never quite reach their destination, densities never recess as deep as their promise, and yet with all such things, something comes into the light in ways unexpected. This is the beginning of being thrown out of the process of being able to add up, or assemble evidence, to become face to face with obscurity rather than banality. Yet there is only paint and canvas, nothing much to act as a support for the daily application of yet more matter. Then there are all those long passages of not adding up. How to make an account of this?

Sinking into, reaching beyond, circulating around, going before, breaking out of, spreading across from, displaced by so many movements, attached to so many gestures. Gesture is an indication of what is elsewhere, an excess that cannot be contained, so is related to the re-imposition of directions² and is in turn connected to the act of disfiguration. So, it could be claimed that this is like a surge of becoming that becomes manifest in densities, inscriptions, patches, stains, intensities, accidents, and traces. The question then, is that all,

because equally such states might be drawing into nothing much at all. Such is the risk in painting! Trying to write is a task of relating what is seen with what is spoken. The conversation drifts this way or that, but the paintings are steadfast and still. They simply look back. Perplexed and yet fascinated, nothing comes easily as words both sink and spin when all that is asked is that they sit on the page and cohere into a pattern.

As paintings they are nothing other than a meeting point between energetics and memory. They follow the markings of the body, but a body that is hidden and thus disguised. There is the sense that something is happening, but that the question that might be in circulation is what? There are no Baroque folds of the body, no Rococo flourishes of flesh, so nothing that points to a rhetoric of sexuality. The encounters that are rendered are much closer to the lives of plants, but that this might be the way these paintings detour around themselves. There is within this something that lurks, and this announces a potency, as opposed to a sensuality. So, the detour takes the viewer

¹ "Memory is the real name of the relationship to oneself, or the affect on self by self.... But time as subject, or rather subjectification, is called memory." Gilles Deleuze, Foucault, Bloomsbury, p.88

² "The gesture re-imposes directions and dimensions on space, turning out of its course the teleology of time: past, present, future. It unfolds again the in-stance that it is sub-jacent to ecstasies. It confounds the erection of the transcendental. It makes turbulent what should remain unmoved in and for the commemoration of Being. It neutralizes the neuter/neutral character of a there is on which basis everything would be given – given back. Intact. Disfiguring the order of language." Luce Irigaray, The Forgetting of Air Continuum, p.169

away from the human realm, into the potentiality of the vegetal realm only to discover a bodily realm hidden within the undergrowth. Thus, they not only record detours, but they also contain the secrets of the undergrowth.

It is strange the references that are accumulated, the fascinations, and the admirations, all drawn from the past, sunk into the patina that time generates. Looking she says is the process of removing dust from history, or even to realise that history is a form of dust. Art in its ahistorical aspect is related to its shine³ which resists the grain of history or is the residue of this resistance.

There is an insistence in these paintings of the relationship between space and forces that are held in contest by a network of memories. Memory is in the spacing between things, the meeting point of sensations, and that which gives texture to interval. The play between what soaks into the surface of the painting and what erupts from it, and in this, it gives rise to the push and pull within pictorial space. Whereas the drawings of Tracey Emin figure bodies within states of spasm and rapture, these paintings disfigure⁴ the body into networks of forces that are hidden within the elsewhere of appearance. Instead, there is the entanglement of space, memory, forces, and energetics in which there is a struggle to make manifest the irruption of desire within patterns of being with. Nothing is known in advance, so the encounter is therefore raw or stripped back to a drama of becoming. This implies an undoing of stable identity which is one of the main cornerstones of representation. The paintings become ciphers of action but not the action that is unleashed by Abstract Expressionism that gestures a liberation of spatial encounter rather a sense of action that loops back upon itself to present its own process of entanglement. On the other side it references Far Eastern Zen aesthetics only in passing, as if there is no longer a space of discovery between these two conjunctions. In effect it is a mode of abstraction that cannot be deduced from such models.

³ Hegel said that the beautiful is a sensuous appearance or shining of the idea.

⁴ In Jean-Francois Lyotard's writing the figural both pertains to the force of figuration and dis-figuration, a force that is linked to desire.

The term abstract subjectification was muted, it drew upon an inward breath and then vanished into vapour. Vapourised abstract subjectification. Somehow this became attached to Sunday but not just Sunday but 5pm on Sunday. Vapour, memory, scent, subjectification all mixed within the pull of sensuality at that juncture.

Sundays come and go, but the memory of that Sunday lingers, turning into an object of attention or persistence. This is what provides tone or even mood to the situation. Repetition is occasioned by tonal reserve recording something that has gone missing. The painting is a fold of passing time and the impossibility of its retention as a figure but there is an eruption of this fold with visibilities coming into free play. It is neither celebration or lament, but instead pure contingency of the release of space emerging from immanence that knows nothing of the difference of the beautiful and the sublime that are in turn predicated upon different temporal order. This is an empty form of time that implodes before and after manifested as caesura which is an outcome of an event that cuts into time in order that the new might occur rather than a dulling repetition.

Each painting records a series of entrances and exits. Bodies cannot be seen but the trail leaves marks of passage. Doors and windows are opened and shut. Something is going on, but what? There is little by way of any evidence, no bed to couple with dreams.

What is being presented in these painting is a struggle for and a resistance to the construction of an abstract space of painting that retains the play of figural memory with the encounters presented. Therefore, they keep alive the difference of the two plains of abstraction and figuration, but without the recourse to synthesis, and it is this turning away from resolution that gives rise to the sensation of always being on the edge.

One moment opens the drama in the sky, the next looking through or into a window, each painting collects its referent, only to lose the temporal fixity that gives rise to them in the first place. Within this the image and

This is linked to Freud and the idea that the dream thoughts figure in ways that make them appear as things. If the dream is the work of desire, then it is also the place where desire dis-figures itself and hence it is both a process of absencing and presenting.

the impulse collide in order that the difference between these registers is kept alive, serving as the creative tension within the painting process.

Between one painting and the next a spacing occurs. Between is also a time for experience outside of painting and this forms a chain consisting of being in and out of space. On moment or passage in the studio might be a form of refuge but the next be an invitation for experience to enter but never in ways that are predictable. The painter might be beside her or himself, absorbed within, or estranged from but whatever the posture, dealing with what comes along. There is always the open possibility of having a different relationship within the pursuit of an outcome.

We are not left with the choice between them being splendid or forlorn on the level of affect. because they entice us into a depth where such distinctions do not come into play. Instead, they are closer to orgasmic or semiotic⁵release of the force of dissolution or pulsation. In this they are outside of a formal procession of abstract painting based upon a currency of negation but instead re-distribute sense in ways that enables the disclosure of surprise. Of being exterior to such distinction. The disclosure of surprise is related to the way that desire secures the mobility across the surfaces and within the depths, and if things are on the move in this manner, then no fixed viewpoint can be secured in ways that establish signification. Subjectivity is not a passage or securing of the self but instead is attached to temporal flux in order that it is opened to a state of perpetual becoming. This is the root of the abstraction that is at play. Anything else is the pragmatics of craft which provide for the touch-feel of disclosure. The painter wakes up with craft and task but closes the day with visions of difference. This exhibition enters and exists its space through abandonment of strategies to control the outcomes of such mobility.

Three words jut out: vapourised abstract subjectification. Somehow this combination of words sublimates the gap between seeing and saying. The subject is never quite settled as a subject facing an object as both circulate around the other but is the

⁵ Julia Kristeva claims in 'Revolution in Poetic Language' that "the semiotic is articulated by flow and marks" and the "cutting up of the

inauguration of a process of overcoming such a distinction. Painting coheres around the splintered debris born out of this overcoming or is a fabulous fragment of it. In turn it is an assertion of a possibility that is not automatically given. Painting comes out of painting but also derives from a confrontation with the otherness of a process that wishes to assert its autonomy.

On completing an abstract within the research process, the idea is that the greatest degree of condensation has been achieved. In the case of these paintings there isn't a closure around the idea of being abstract rather it acts as a cipher for heterogeneous encounters that are unbounded by a regulative idea. Each painting functions in part as a gap that is left in waiting, a residue for what is left unsaid or of something that cannot be completed, like the title for the exhibition which is a fragment of yet another fragment.

Here painting presents itself as a scattering in which identity is "swallowed up in difference" so as to leave "the domain of representation,"⁶ in order to become experienced. Nothing is left over, no solid lumps, no certainties, but instead the persistence of a pulsation that endures, and from within this a surge becomes manifest as a force. All this is gathered either side of there being nothing much at all, this being the risk of such painting, visibilities passage closes to the threshold of its disappearance.

corporeal and social continuum." (Revolution in Poetic Language, p.40)

⁶ Gilles Deleuze, Difference and Repetition, Continuum p.68