

Ella Amitay Sadovsky: Entrances and Exits

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"I regard myself as an artist who explores reality through the known sequence, and who generates alternative sequences to the existing ones," says Ella Amitay Sadovsky, whose works expose the fragile nature of the visual and its modes of fascination. She traces the real within artistic practice: pursuing its reflections and illusions, and probing the limits of the painting's and painter's ability to grasp a piece of reality. At the same time, she revels in the moment in which the rational occurrence dissolves, when control is undermined, and the work of art resumes being a spectacular array of stains, forms, and lines. The point of departure for her works is not a traditional white surface, but rather industrial fabrics overflowing with images and patterns which she gathers from different places; alternatively, they are white canvases on which she paints textile-like surfaces. Rich and infinite (since the pattern of the fabric disregards compositional restrictions), these surfaces furnish her with an extensive ground for an ongoing conceptual and material dialogue.

Amitay Sadovsky's painterly compositions refuse to propose a single clear point of view. They indicate the ends of stories, which begin and are subsequently abandoned, spun and unraveled. Her works juggle with the Renaissance idea of perspective as an elucidation of the world, leaving the viewer in a state of constant uncertainty regarding the nature of the painterly image: can it represent reality and generate meaning, or merely indicate itself, its being a recurring form which outlines an aesthetic array. Clusters of sex organs thus create a ravishing sequence that fills the bourgeois room; ducks fly from the house's interior outward and back, wavering between symbolism and decoration; figures alternately peek and hide amid images of trees incorporated in floral patterns; helicopters penetrate a geometric weave, circling over dormant houses; a forest bursts into the rooms of the house to form a single ornamental sequence; an adolescent girl on a bed floats within an intoxicating landscape, which is all a developed textile pattern.

In the animated piece *Quiet Island* (2012), which follows her mural on Ayin Het Street in Jerusalem's Musrara neighborhood, the image is constantly transformed and recreated in response to different stories and the figures that pass by the mural and the artist. Animation is innate to Amitay Sadovsky's oeuvre, which is akin to a jigsaw puzzle of situations and memories that surface and disappear through multiple windows and doors, alternately leading in and out. The times of the different events, both imaginary and "realistic," are likewise shrunk into concurrent entrances and exits. Her works thus operate as multi-systems which address past and present, historical continuity versus the continuum of individual existence.

The paintings are rife with intimate, domestic family scenes and couple's intimate moments, dinners together, random whispering, and mundane activities, such as watching television and reading a book. These fuse with local landscapes and current news which ceaselessly infiltrate

the individual's world. The sense of self and its constant metamorphoses are thus examined time and again. Multicolored, these works are replete with daydreaming, secret desire, tension, and anxiety anchored in everyday life. They transpire between dream and reality, a fact which charges them with intricacy and multiple meanings. The visual excess enables Amitay Sadovsky to keep a rear window open to the depths of the soul. In the portrait Chicken and Egg (2011), the figure of the "clown" conveys the ambivalence underlying the work of art with great force: she oscillates between feminine and masculine identities, between a façade of happiness and a sense of deep sadness, between the fabric of the costume and the painting's fabric-like surface.

Leon Battista Alberti in his book On Painting (1434) compared the act of painting to a window open to the world as the artist sees it and chooses to depict it. John Berger in Ways of Seeing (1972) described that window as a door to a safe, to something one desires to take and appropriate. As someone whose private biography binds together science and art, Amitay Sadovsky is well aware that the world—nature and human existence as a whole—is founded on fixed systems and models, and at the same time—on versatility and chance. Thus she sets out to expose ways of controlling the painterly object, enabling it to move constantly, to change under her hands and before our eyes, to generate a harmony by undermining it.

Biographical Notes

Born in Kibbutz Geshet; lives in Moshav Mesilat Zion and works in Tel Aviv

1987-1991 B.Sc., The Wolfson Department of Chemical Engineering, Technion—Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa

1991-1994 M.Sc., The Wolfson Department of Chemical Engineering, Technion—Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa

1994-1999 Ph.D., Department of Materials and Interfaces, Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, Israel

2000-2003 Post Doctoral Fellowship, Department of Physical Chemistry and Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of California, Berkeley

2003-2004 B.F.A. Program, California College of the Arts, San Francisco

2004 The Midrasa School of Art, Beit Berl Academic College, Israel

2004-2007 Senior researcher and lecturer, Department of Physical Chemistry, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem

2007 B.F.A., Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem

2009 M.F.A., Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem

Since 2009 Lecturer, Department of Textile Design, Shenkar College of Engineering and Design, Ramat Gan, Israel

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2004 "Women of the Village," University of California, Berkeley 2009 "TITLE," as part of "Industry," graduate show of the Bezalel MFA Program, Hatachana (The Station), Tel Aviv / "Band Aids," The Art Gallery, Memorial Center, Kiryat Tivon, Israel 2010 "Dream Decipherer," Gordon Gallery, Tel Aviv 2012 "Quiet Island," video projection at Muslala project, Muslala, Jerusalem / "Landing," Janco Dada Museum, Ein Hod, Israel / "Short Escape," Gordon Gallery 2, Tel Aviv

Selected Group Exhibition

2004 "Best of Junior Review Show," California College of the Arts, San Francisco 2008 "Open Studio," Bezalel MFA Program, Tel Aviv / "Flock," Bezalel Gallery, Tel Aviv 2009 "Dubbing: Artist's Cut," Gordon Gallery, Tel Aviv / "A4," The Art Gallery, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow 2011 "Escape," The Artists' House, Tel Aviv 2012 "New Prints," The Gottesman Etching Center, Kibbutz Cabri, Israel / "300 to 3000," Cabri Jewish-Arab Cooperative Gallery in the Galilee, Israel