

TRACING THE INEFFABLE

In her recent works, Maria Kompatsiari invites the viewer to a speculative exploration of the inexhaustible domain of time. Dominating most of these compositions are free-flowing lines that spiral and weave into labyrinthine pathways, suggesting imaginary peregrinations. The tenderness or violence of their execution signals the sentiments generated by each of these works, whose rhythm and intensity are drastically different.

A sense of textual delineation marks the visual epicenter of these works. The intention is not a reading of the text, as is obvious from the title of the exhibition, but rather a focus on the gesture itself, the unique morphological characteristic that links this set of paintings with her earlier works. Letters drawn from modern alphabets scroll across in horizontal strings like single automatic pen-strokes. Encoded spiritual deliria externalize the artist's innermost being, expressing echoes of today's world and contemporary society, which is characterized by the phenomenon of visual hyper-information.

Undeterminable phrases float over two-dimensional chromatic field, interwoven with a plethora of symbols. Many of these are reminiscent of the iconic ideograms of the Linear B script, a form of writing that flourished in the Mycenaean and Minoan periods and is preserved on fragments of clay tablets. Other elements, like the concentric circles and the zig-zag lines, suggest Egyptian hieroglyphs. Isolated calligraphic Greek letters, arithmetical symbols and geometric shapes call for a fragmented reading.

Childhood memories intervene, consciously or unconsciously, in this visual journey through time. Parts of some of these works suggest blackboards, or classroom desks with hearts or symbols of eternity scratched into their surfaces. Images awakened out of dormancy co-exist with clear references to the present. The internet codes that appear in some works are an obvious allusion to global impersonal communication and to the interminable flow of miscellaneous information that pours into our homes, mercilessly bombarding us in our everyday existence. A conscious receptor of these messages from the outside world, the artist gives poetic and abstract expression to her initial and most personal motivations and concerns.

In these paintings intensities of colour contrast with finely traced lines, textured monochromatic surfaces with the applied material, precision of form with spontaneity of expressive gesture. The

result is an extrication of dialectical visual relations, harmoniously interwoven of opposites. A cartography of the soul, Maria Kompatsiari's paintings are an allegorical interweaving of logic and the oneiric substance of creative conception, whether radiating serenity or explosive energy.

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