

Κενανίδου Μαρία 30/1/2012

Departing from representation, Maria Kompatsiari's painting has followed a consistent path of personal experimentation and investigation in both color and technique, which has finally led her to the construction of an original, abstract visual language.

Her abstract landscapes depict processes of the mind and spirit, which reference existential situations and escapes, open to variable readings. Her visual language is characterized by a tender yet violent, personal vocabulary. Tender in the way she engages with her theme; violent because of her extreme color contrasts. Through her formal and material adventures and through a persistent process of introspection, the artist hopes for an ultimately soothing visual confession.

Starting from the main structural components of her visual language and personal semiology –dynamic juxtapositions between the linearity of her drawing and the explosive intensity of color, breads, inversions, traces, scriptures, spreads of rhythm and form, cymose and sinuous arrangements– which she unravels through the illusionary handling of the canvas' surface and through the spatial manipulation inherent in her work, she produces the visual synthesis of her personal conceptual adventure.

Her installation "Illusory Cubes", presented in OPEN 14 – International Exhibition of Sculpture & Installation (Venice, Lido, September 2011 –event parallel to the 54th Venice Biennale and the Venice International Film Festival), is an interesting twist in the artist's handling of the painterly surface: equally eloquently, Kompatsiari invades the outdoor, public space. Through this transgression, she masterfully transposes the illusory manipulation of space and time into the real. She enriches her own representational vocabulary and creates new structural elements (words) and concepts. The cube and its spreads become symbols – vehicles of spatial perception and experience, incorporating the concepts of removal and travel and bearing the charged symbolism of some random flight, escape or daydream. Through the outer wooden construction/shell, the cube's basic structure encompasses the boxed paintings within the enclosed shape of a sui generis miniature of an imaginary gallery.

In any case, her work recurrently incorporates, like a conceptual cube, the structural elements of her visual vocabulary: ironic comment on multiplicity, chaos and entropy, space, dream, boundary, distance and intimacy, the familiar and the uncanny, rupture, entanglement, density and void, silence and noise, stillness and movement, explosion, sensory images of space – ultimately, the meeting point of the conscious and the indeterminate.

Maria Kenanidou
Art historian/ curator