

The Middle of Everywhere

Lisa Beck

Une proposition de Caroline Soyez-Petithomme

Vernissage le vendredi 5 juin à 18h

Exposition du 6 juin au 11 juillet 2015
Je-ve-sa de 14h à 18h et sur rendez-vous

The Middle of Everywhere is one of those paradoxical titles which have become characteristic of Lisa Beck's work throughout her on-going career since the mid-eighties. There is both a poetical and absurd dimension that comes up from the imaginative power of such an expression. On one hand, this evokes the reality of, let's say the constant, virtual or physical mobility we live with and are often constrained by. On the other hand, it also refers to a certain form of determinism linked to the place we come from, grow up or live in. Lisa Beck asks : "what is "the middle" ? Where are the boundaries from which to measure? The middle is a shifting point : it is EVERYWHERE."

Indeed this is through this *continuum* of possibilities inherent in the exhibition title that her paintings are given to the viewer for the sake of experience, far from any rhetorical strategies or dogmatic approach to abstraction. Lisa Beck prefers to play rather than to set up-rules, so that patterns and compositions are taken from a repertoire of forms and materials each time, emerging from a meditative making, as she meticulously applies layers next to each other by hand, without any-tape. In the wall painting seen from the entrance, the large-scale yellow concentric rectangles of non-uniform strokes are in contrast to the immaculate white parts and highlight this pleasurable digression from geometrical abstract painting. Her practice puts the viewer in an active position, partly because of the mirroring effects of the mylar, and because of walking around the paintings treated as sculptures in the second room. This viewer's active position resides in a non-authoritarian way through this dynamic which lets the eyes and the brain reconstitute the shapes and the whole compositions from the imperfections of the surfaces and at the edges of the various geometrical forms, colors or patterns.

The Middle of Everywhere can be seen as an invitation to an ethereal path through representations of potential doors and windows. The reference to archaic civilizations like Ancient Egypt certainly prevails, with connotations to similar abstract patterns previously used, for instance, by Frank Stella or Robert Rauschenberg. Somehow, this is also a way to step back from the references to psychedelia, and to other types of doors like those of Aldous Huxley's *Doors of Perception*, for instance, a reference that often comes to mind when looking at Lisa Beck's work. Expanded consciousness is here a matter that reappears via the spectrum of a chronological and other-worldly cosmic journey to Eternity. *Mastaba* (wall painting) stands as the first image and point of departure for a wandering, like one of those monumental doors of the Egyptian tombs prefiguring the after-death circulation of the soul. The vibrating and floating aspects of Lisa Beck's works resonate as a contradiction to the permanence of the architecture and of the patterns of the concentric rectangles throughout time and various cultures.

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On the wall opposite to *Mastaba*, three enamel paintings on mylar present hexagonal nested patterns. They could be traced back to many other fragments of collective memory, to ancient (not Oriental but Scandinavian) architectural buildings like the famous Uppsala anatomical theater in Sweden, as it also is reminiscent of the corridor of a sci-fi vessel or the blow-up of a sunlight effect on a camera lens. Entering the second room, a new series of five large-scale, freestanding corner paintings face each other like the corners of an evanescent and partly immaterial architecture. Promises of endless paintings dissolve themselves in the mylar, an industrial reflecting material. End of the illusion : the black backs claim their materiality as objects, as something standing precisely in the middle, between the artist and the viewer.

Caroline Soyez-Petithomme
Curator of the exhibition

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