

CHRISTIANE POOLEY

ATRAPADOS EN LO DESCONOCIDO

Text by Niels Labuzan

Translated from the Spanish by Lucy Faulconer

It's necessary to see beyond appearances. This statement is the first thing to detach itself when in contact with the work of the artist Christiane Pooley, whose paintings reveal fragments of a personal universe, made up of images and elements from daily life. Using photographs, collages, reflecting surfaces and diverse materials, she seeks to create an autonomous space in which the works themselves speak and relate to one another through a series of symbols and correspondences.

In this constructed universe, almost alive, we find characters that wander around without a fixed course, invented firmaments, and horizons that threaten to disappear. It is not only on the canvas that these manipulations occur but also in the artist's studio. She directs her own theatrical and visual scene and allows us to be a part of the intimacy of the staging itself, behind the scenes, where the characters are revealed to us, in all their fragility, almost as puppets at the mercy of an invisible hand.

Sometimes, we see that it is herself who is represented in her paintings, structuring and dominating her own game. It is through this game where, as well as using it as a vehicle to show us her vision, Christiane Pooley reminds us of the materials with which she is working. She is interested in questioning the painting methods and faces each work as a different challenge. The spaces left without paint discover parts of the support, the fast and spontaneous gestures represent a place or character in a direct manner and, at the same time, through a calculated synthesis it suggests a world lacking spatial truths, defying the rules of perspective established in the post-renaissance landscape.

She paints directly on the white canvas, without hesitation, what matters isn't detail perfection, but to understand the act of painting as a way of thinking, where the unity accomplished by the theme and the own canvas as a material object can converge. In this process also emerge her references, from Peter Doig to Wilhelm Sasnal or Luc Tuymans but without ever betraying, from their influence, the unique vision of the artist.

By looking beyond the actual subject, the observant viewer will see that in each one of these images, what is being revealed to us, as the centrepiece is the paint itself. Thus, one can understand Christiane Pooley's profound visual and conceptual connection with regard to the problems of representation and the conflicts that emerge when manipulating a fluid material on a flat surface. The colour and the texture of the support combined with the agility of her wrist, that allow to give up and abandon oneself in the contemplation of the image created by the artist's hand.

She says that what interests her is "the duality that painting possesses, because it is simultaneously a physical object and a visual image, and to experiment with the idea that painting is destined to remain in a state of limbo, trapped in the fine limit between being an illusion and being a real and tangible object". This intimate and personal way of facing the pictorial creation, precisely explains the way the artist chooses to reveal it to the spectator. Each work of art presents a challenge for her to question art and illusion, and also perception and reality.