



Mónica Katz
Plastic Artist

REVIEWS

CESAR MAGRNI, BUENOS AIRES, AUTUMN 1981

The sea... the mountain... the plain... Those seem to be the big demands to which Mónica S. Katz's painting art responds. Slits, strange cuts in the geological structure of the earth are other claims answered. She does so with a magnificent, penetrating, enquiring look. There lies the mystery for her, solved in a unique, absorbing manner: the act of painting. Here it is a sky dyed with afterglows; there, the rugged slope trimming its clear geography; over there the happiness of the bloomed field, exulting in the joy of some butterflies or a few dragonflies. And everywhere, in a celebration for all senses, a neat prick, which relies on light as well as high-purity colours, sometimes exalted, sometimes moderating their vigour, and always with a unique mission: that of expressing what Amiel already knew when he wrote down in his Journal: "the landscape is an emotional state". An emotional state in which –in this case of such a noble painter– serenity, calm and peace prevail. Since that which sprouts from the canvasses of Mónica Katz, even from those in which the colour –vibrant in itself– vitally charms, is a sense of steadfast balance. Being a reflection of another internal aspect, undoubtedly, the composition is wide and open; the structuring, strong and confident; the design, legitimate and steady; all of which make her painting a genuine act of faith.

And there is no creation when one hesitates; hers is an aesthetic and artistic faith embedded in a road taken in no futile rush, turning a deaf ear to trendy clamours; observant only to the call for serenity. Each of her paintings is a manifestation in such sense. And if it conquers, as it does, the spirit of the landscape, it is because the landscape lies there within, built in as the most unshakeable truth, a flame that illuminates and warms, that dissipates shadows, that scatters tenderness and sweetness at the same time.

These things are embodied in this painting: a simultaneous answer to a calling deeply rooted – each painting represents a piece of that intangible spirit matter– and promise to a path that shall be taken with an identical clarity, with the same passion and forces similar to those that have so far been its companions, of which all her works of art are the most radiant, the most resounding and most fortunate testimony.



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OSIRIS CHIERICO, AUGUST 1987

In a few days of this August 1987, three paintings by Mónica Silvia Katz shall be added in Brussels to a tribute to Jorge Luis Borges. In the last works done by the artist from Buenos Aires the intimate communion that justifies her presence in the event can be observed.

And this is merely thus because, still with no need to evoke her magical, revealing adjectives, the path taken by Mónica Silvia Katz has a lot from the “forking paths”¹ through her quests and findings in different territories, in journeys that cover strenuous geometries and allusions to the immediate overt reality of the landscape. As if Borges’ invisible voice would quote once again “the fountains purl by arbor’s throng, / and statues and odd ruins brush,”² from his poem, Adrogué.

It is curious, in the first instance, the repetition of the purl in almost all the last paintings of the artist. And what is curious –a haphazard definition in such an accurate work of art– is hardly an approach to what it means underneath: not a whimsical syncretism, but a need to define a dialogue between two levels of the personality of the painter. Precisely those in which it seems to split but constitute in fact two sides of the same coin: the strict theorems and the signs of liberty. Remember Juan Gris’ words: “To me, the painting is like a cloth, all of it in one piece and uniform, with a set of threads as representative, steric element and another set of transversal threads as technical, architectonic or abstract element. These threads are interdependent and complementary; if one of the sets is missing, the cloth does not exist”. Of course this wording by the cubist master suggests an absolute definition, a sort of ideal balance between the attitudes that represent the sets of threads, but does not contradict the supremacy in which clearly the other set survives, although the proportion for each may be altered.

Mónica Silvia Katz deals with her current work in accordance with these premises. And both faces of her art converse in search of its revealed identity, in which the free representation of the landscape has taken, maybe incidentally, a protagonist role.

¹ Translator’s note: “*The Garden of the Forking Paths*”, translation for “*El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan*”, original title of a 1941 short story by Argentine writer and poet Jorge Luis Borges.

² A translation by Hadi Kamil Deeb.



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LAURA FEINSILBER, JUNE 1991

“Pressures” (“Presiones”), “Displacement” (“Desplazamiento”), “Arrhythmia” (“Arritmia”), “Crisis” (“Crisis”), “Chaos” (“Caos”), “Enough!” (“¡Basta Ya!”)

If we let ourselves be guided by the titles with which Mónica KATZ names her works of art, we should have to think they respond to a change, how to address a painting work enclosed in an abstract, labyrinthine landscape, which, in turn, is already locked in a circle. Why this change? The external circumstances of an artist’s life in a Society that needs to cry out for the truth cannot help that artist remain indifferent. Obviously, Mónica Katz does not cry, she suggests that what she is showing, hides other things. She weaves plots that overlap and move about, she is in search of a light that runs along colour bands whose shift is gradual and that mutually vibrate achieving a personal kinetism. Lyotard said: “There is something that can be envisaged but cannot be seen nor cannot be made to be seen”.

The observer shall see what he or she can perceive.



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ROSA FACCARO,

“But something truly spectacular is taking place in science, something as unexpected as the birth of geometry and the magnificent Cosmo-vision, expressed in the work of Newton.” (I. Prigogine)

In this current series, Mónica Katz resumes the pictorial enquiries she exhibited back in the year 2001 at Vermeer (Arte BA gallery). Here the artist shifts our attention to the issues concerning the knowledge about the cosmos, in a vision that highlights the spatial and temporal dimension.

Contemporary to the voyage to the Moon and the exploration of the planetary systems, she has made, in these last works, a change in the treatment of the visual field. Observant to the nature of the cosmic light, the matter and the representation of the endless space, these recent works of art remind us about the possible observations of a stellar universe. The scientific theories from the beginning of the century about the space and time open a new mandatory dimension of that reality, the art space graphic systems from that time unveil it through the appearance of cubism.

From the geometric abstraction and the rupture of the atmospheric space done by Mondrián, art becomes a legitimate landmark to reflect the spirit of the time in great discoveries in the field of macroscopic physics. Mónica Katz has captured in her pictorial representation a structure of this collective view based on the abstract conception of orthogonal weaving of her previous painting period. Connoisseur of the colour sciences and the molecules presented on the canvas in micro and macro tactile structures, her work of art can be perceived with multiple senses. The interest placed on that organic and inorganic worldview is reflected on the pictorial resolutions in visual fields of an informalist nature that can be noted in the bindings, strains, gaps and holes, in the vertiginous shift of the matter in absolute order and disorder.

That series belongs to the world familiar to our collective view where photography has caused a vision that goes beyond the eye and that further extends telescopic devices and photographic cameras of far-reaching nature. Here the artist tries a new objectivity, a novel planetary realism, to quote Pierre Restany, and topographically restores that view that would fascinate the whole generation of the second half of the XX century. In this possible universe, that continues the previous series of the relationship between heaven and earth, Mónica Katz is now reconsidering them from the human being position in the cosmos.



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ROSA FACCARO,

“The understandings about metaphysical and cosmological issues have affected and transformed the world in a way by no means less cataclysmic than the understandings of artists and scientists”.

Mónica Katz has gained an artistic experience that extends in a period of three important decades of the Argentine art. Her exploratory course along the changes undergone in this historical period is related to the spatial investigations and with the post-industrial world at the end of the XX century, in which different languages related to those events were developed. This anthological exhibition has intended to overview that period with works of art that represent those enquiries.

Rigorous training in the national schools of Visual Arts, with top masters –Raúl Russo and Carlos Cañas, among others– allows us to think that Mónica Katz is able to articulate languages according to her expressive need and with a legitimate authority. Her outstanding exhibitions in the country and abroad included in her résumé demonstrate a qualified commentary and the galleries Hoy en el Arte and Vermeer –both senior in our field– have opened their rooms to exhibit a production that summarizes these recent years, including works of art never exhibited before.

The work “From Another Galaxy” (“De otra Galaxia”) pivots this exhibition where the artist’s constant views make us observe the plurality of the worlds. We become aware that we belong to a planet that moves around in an orbit inside a solar system, and in the cosmic world, thanks to scientific advances. It is in Malargüe, in the Province of Mendoza, Argentina, where an astronomical observatory can be found, which is an example of these investigations.

Art and Science get together to discuss these new expressive and spatial dimensions. Thus, we can find in the works of Mónica Katz: “Asteroid” (“Asteroide”), “Moonlight” (“luz de luna”), “Luminous Object” (“Objeto luminoso”), which boast their own pictorial constellation.

The intervened drawings and engravings belong to that spatial collective view, they possess a composite structure made up of virtual planes that deal with a new space.

We add a work of art “Cry of crowds” (“Grito de multitudes”), dedicated to Eva Perón, which –due to its merits– has been chosen as part of an itinerant exhibition organized by the Museo Evita of the city of Buenos Aires. In this selection of works, we include two objects as the opening of a dimension that entails a curiosity in the world of the object.