



Catalin Pislaru

Ur-

Vernissage: June 22, 2017

June 23 - August 5, 2017

Nir Altman presents "Ur-," the first solo exhibition of work by the Moldovan painter Catalin Pislaru, from June 22 to August 5, 2017. A new cycle of works in subdued tones and conceived especially for the gallery is to be presented.

Catalin achieves a maximum of expression with minimal graphical means. All of these works, in many different ways, revolve around space as an unreal dimension. One can practically see how the motif impressed itself into the artist's mind, body and hand before it was created. Usually without initial sketching, the lines are sprayed onto carefully prepared surfaces.

The technical preparation of these surfaces is a ritual for Catalin, a ritual which precedes the act of painting. A lot of time is spent preparing the colored and also white primed surfaces, but producing the paints themselves also takes a lot of time. The artist works on his paints until he is satisfied that they will create the right vibration. A painting surface made of graphite indicates an endeavor to reproduce the sensitivity that one would associate with a drawing. That means that painting is created through drawing and drawing is created through painting. Technically, this is achieved by mixing ground graphite into the liquid substrate. This liquid is then applied to the aluminum surface, and, as is done in classical illustration, the artist uses hatching to create tension.

The fine white lines exude architectural calm, and yet they stand in a relationship of absolute tension with the picture's painterly space. The palette used in this new cycle for the exhibition seems more toned-down than the repertoire of colors one is used to from Catalin's earlier works. With the exception of a deep rust red, which appears to shine in its colorfulness, the palette of colors ranges from white to a tremendously nuanced variety of shades of grey. In the large-format series that dominates the gallery space, the paintings' sprayed gray lines stretch and expand like columns on the painting surface. They dominate the format, and, upon closer examination, the fine nuances and the increasing concentration of pigments toward the middle can be perceived.

With each series of paintings, the painter strives to formulate new goals and to develop new approaches to overcome the obstacles that he creates for himself both formally and intellectually.

There are no abstract ideas says Catalin Pislaru – behind every abstract gesture, no matter how small, there is always a specific figurative idea. His first training in painting was with Giuseppe Modica in Rome, and was based on a figurative world of the imagination.

The thing that fascinates Catalin Pislaru the most is the relationship between the work and the viewer – where the true chemistry in art takes place. The pictures are intended to evoke curiosity or the feeling that one is seeing something familiar and unknown at the same time – mysterious and yet at the same time obvious.

Artistic influences often present a limiting factor, and one must be able to free oneself from them. Nevertheless, it seems important to make some historical references to representatives of the abstract expressionism of the 1960s and 1970s.

Michael Venezia (b. 1935) for example, who contributed to the renewal of the concept of painting in the USA early on, or Martin Barré (1924 -1993), whose work Catalin first discovered very late in his career. Both artists painted lines using spray cans to exclude any possibility of subjective gesture, and both are regarded as inventive and subtle explorers of line, color, form and the processes of their times.

Catalin Pislaru was born in 1988, in Chisinau, Moldova. He completed his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome in 2012 and began his studies with Professor Jean-Marc Bustamente at Munich's Akademie der Bildende Künste in 2013, where the painting and graphics class has been led by Professor Florian Pumhösl since 2016.

Catalin Pislaru lives and works in Munich and Rome.

For more information and image requests, please contact: Nir Altman, info@niraltman.com