Notes on Antonia Gurkovska's grid paintings

    The work is expectant, unslakable. Some dumb chorus gesticulating, revenant, each oh mouth empty and moving. I touch each throat, a throb, Untitled, untitled, and above this (contrapuntal) a high note broken off. Soundless, a failure of voice or ear. Poor little world, the chorus shudders; it has dropped to its knees.

    Before us, for us, us, acomedy of errors, (of eros) a demand. All things in the sun are sun. The work is an emphatic proof, an agon of code.

    Here is an account of the encounter, from monumental (diegetic) to intimate (mimetic): The structure is a centripetal grid. Its edges keep the world out: a container containing itself, a proscenium in which everything pulls toward the center. Gurkovska employs grids diegetically, as language, as enervated metaphor for order, prior and final. The work anticipates us, posits semiotics as invitation: offers the grid as history and system and architecture, as holding space and receptacle for attention. Phenomenological engagement starts here with an enormous sign, a tragic mask.

    Which then breaks down by tiny cuts. The vulnerable monument is replaced by the ferocious joyful intimate when we see what the thing is made of. Code collapses at the revenge of the body, it disintegrates into touch, to idiolect and material. Recursive, mimetic, emancipatory, each mark of the grid is a small violence, a cut, an index; when bodies are present and considered in all their somatic responsive potential (this is the demand of the intimate), a crowd becomes a mob. A grid of absences, deliberately of silences, the and-and-and of breathing, wounds like mouths singing; punctum is irreducible to code. Each object is specific and present.

    To replace map with territory, mask with the terrain of a face, is arduous, is beautiful.The work is painting as repository of breath and action, as exuberant document, as ambivalent gift, agapé agape. The war here is conducted out of love. The heart is a fist.

- Dana DeGiulio
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