

(Chit)chat

Trivial chitchat after-images. Jacek Świąłski's paintings displayed on this exhibition unfold in a series of encounters.

Conversations of brightly coloured heads painted simultaneously from a few different perspectives seem to be spinning over hefty stone-like bodies. The bodies frozen in the postures of - withdrawn? forgotten? – impetuosity. Colourful combinations, though complimenting, inevitably gravitate towards black. The illuminated heads, mind still awoken and vigilant despite the fact that the talking personages have already begun their hideous transmutation into demons. They resemble characters from Beckett plays - doomed to each other and utter loneliness. Yet the intimacy of two personages, their mirror image enclosed in a common frame is undermined by a split as the paintings consist of two separate canvas.

The series unfolds into colour-inverted couples. These alienating symmetries form a broader pattern, repeated or confirmed also in diptych *Women*. Single figures sketched in a dynamic movement or hieratic postures meet through their colour likeness or silhouette, turn to each other looking out of the empty space from which they emerge. However, the attempt at the recognition disturbingly resembles a journey through a mirrored room, where all they can see is less and less or their own deformed reflection.

Thus, a chitchat as a title of this exhibition does not relate to a cultural talk. Neither is it a lighthearted gossip exchange. It is rather an attempt to meet the other - blindly, clumsily, thoughtlessly. The simplified composition makes the vividly coloured accents look like something that has just slipped. It's the way you talk when you are still uncertain what can and what cannot be said, or when there is nothing left to say. The painting is mute and such are those dramatic endeavours and trips shut in silence.

Two works seem to counterpoint the *Conversations* and *Women* series. In *Dreamer* a lonely figure - table - pinkening window compose a vividly coloured trail, the trail of what is undoubtedly present. Apart from this clear trail, black outlines suggest the impossibility to grasp the transition between what "is" and what "seems to be". *The Resting* despite being painted in a sharp red line, smoothly sinks into the background.

Talking transforms into a frantic attempt to reveal despite the monotonous background. In *Conversations* and *Women* it is intertwined with a subtle murmur of uncontrolled thoughts, appearing lightly and without resistance.

Dr Agnieszka Skolasińska
Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, branch in Piotrków Trybunalski
Institute of Polish Philology

translation: Monika Kępczyńska