

ROT IST DIE PANZERFAHRERIN (RED DRIVES THE ARMORED CAR)

My space will be a red room – two lines will be drawn in the red space – the third line will be projected – the third line will start moving, more and more, until it stops. Technical description: red walls painted with pigment and thread, black lines, video and a projector. This is how Birgit Sauer described her project for the 2nd Croatian Triennale of Drawing in the youngest of Confrontations tandem. She draws. She is a painter and etcher who boldly devoted her powerful expressive energy and creative intuition to exploring the power of painting and its constitutive elements. She does not shun powerful iconographic connotations.

It is arrogant to usurp the red colour. It is daring to try and command its ambivalent and dangerous nature, to make a space red by stretching its irritable surface. To deny the limits of space, the height, width, depth, vertical and horizontal line and to create uterine claustrophobia where the black horns (of bulls) threaten (a herd of horns or herd of unicorns?)... Birgit Sauer exteriorises the content of prememory, visualises, shapes, and confronts the eternally conflicting principles by her infallible intuition. Black and red are her basic colours, the red of the plane and the black of the border. The red of expansion and the black of negation. The relations are symbolical and pregnant with meaning, appearance expressive, experience dramatic, acoustic, transported to the evocative level of archetypal memory. We are referring to her Altamira from Ljubljana (1998) where the red pigment of the walls embraced us like volcanic magma, revoked regression and took us back to prenatal state... my walls will be as red as they were in Ljubljana, says Sauer and goes on to give a precise and articulate replay to our invitation to a drawing exhibition. She renames the introvert plastic spatial medium of the Altamira cave and builds a drawing into the project. A drawing in its essential form of a line that is both a border and a sign, the initial point of primary visual understanding and distinction between the darkness and being dark, between light and being light, between red and being red. Red surfaces on the right and left become screens where we observe the completed result of the drawing process. In the centre, we witness illusive, immaterial, projected dynamics of a line in creation. Birgit Sauer is giving a drawing performance. She uses a time segment to superpose and accelerate a still line until it coils into Ariadna's ball of compressed memory (deposited possibilities of its different forms and natures), then taking it back to the contemplative state of still and expanding horizon. An element in its inactive state. The suggestive scenic red environment that is the red colour of life inevitably endows Birgit Sauer's lines with the content function and role that connote psychogram, cardiogram, encephalogram – the pictogram of the mind, senses and memory under the rule of life-giving red colour. Birgit's drawing in the medium is temporary. It can be seen as a whole while in process, but retained only in memory. We dare say that it is a visualised concept of drawing as the original divider of the amorphous and immeasurable (red), a notion of the double nature of a drawing – one material the trace of a straight line on the wall and the other mental, in the process of appearing and disappearing.

In the last phase of planning the realisation of the project during the Triennale (her instructions and messages were always brief) we received Birgit's 46-line-long poetic manifesto rot ist die panzerfahrerin. Her anaphora about the life-giving nature of red cleared all doubts. Line is unrest, trace and border. It is the essence of difference, the outline of the other.

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