

The merciless moonlight in the paintings of Gefso Papadaki

*My beloved one, you are shivering  
surrounded  
by the silver coldness of the moon.....*

Yiannis Ritsos, *Vernal Symphony*

Gefso Papadaki, collecting with persistent dedication minor remnants of time, matter, places and memory, composes a unique painting language that draws and constructs its distinctive clarity on fragmentary, subdued visual sounds and plain but distinctive symbols.

Having chosen travelling as a necessary condition of her existence and expression of her most recent work, and by boldly using canvases, colour pastels, brave erasings transfigured into abstract organic forms and superimposed materials, the painter comprises, as if they were fresh memories, small palimpsest tactile universes of fragmented geographical marks, scattered moments and faded private notes.

The theme of all her new work derives from the experience of travelling that emerges as a reflective adventure of the intellect, using seven of her favourite poets as a vehicle for expression. Here, to the people familiar with her work, the tactile experience of a transition to a different place is now being turned into an escaping but meaningful moment that converses with scattered and at the same time allusive complementary verses, triggering images and emotions before this moment dissolves inside eternity.

Then the underlined setting of poetry becomes an inhabited street and a number. Then the residents of the verses turn not only into familiar participants in a discussion but also into old, nearly present acquaintances.

Inside small and for their most part spaces-boxes that the painter defines structurally and shapes as brief but concise stage monologues reside the small countries of Karyotakis, Cavafis, Seferis, Ritsos, Elytis, Leivaditis and Gkanas, plowed by successive punctuation marks, silent pauses and open parentheses.

Gefso Papadaki, in her most mature and self-cognizant moment of her work, transcribing all the above with fertile freedom and moving towards an in-depth confession, narrates plainly but eloquently the adventurous circle of life and consciousness: the beginning and end of a day, the beginning and end of a relation. The merciless galloping of the omni-

taming time but also the wisdom resulting from it. The retrospect of what was before and the fear or ignorance of what happens after that converses with the denial to part with youth. The sharp blade of loss or the vanity of an obscure destination, the sour aftertaste of the willing or unwilling exclusion from one “together” or a habit. The inevitable end. As a consequence the precarious impression of our ability to withstand the separation from the people we love.

Seizing *the stem of the day or the edge of the moon as if she clenches a small piece of time*, painting the paleness or silver coldness of her soul, the hilarity of a young love, the empty shell of a silent room, the hands of a slow moving Cavafy’s watch, the slightest flame of insistent candles or the ashes of a horizon beyond, collecting in a tender diligence *the ash of the lost time*, Gefso Papadaki ultimately paints the alleviating sorrow of poetry as a lonely but necessary way towards the truth. Something she really succeeds.

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