

## The creation of a painting

A painter starts with a blank canvas and works it with paint and brush until it is finished. Then it has become a painting. Usually, we have no idea of the things that occur between the conception and the birth of the painting. The creation of the work of art takes place in the workspace of the artist and the painting is complete only when it is brought out and shown to the public.

Stefan Peters goes about it in another way. The painting he makes, talks about what can happen in the studio.

Imagine that the painter wants to paint a landscape painting. Which landscape is he going to paint? Which colors is he going to choose? Will he paint a vista, a shallow chalk coast, a romantic woodland scene, show us a streak of blue sky and what does a waterfall of paint look like? Peters examines all the possibilities that flash unseen through the mind of the painter, and renders them in the form of narrow postcards, none of which are identical. He paints on and on and on, creates a sampler of possibilities and all those series then make up a painting. It is not even finished when all the boxes are filled in, since even the cut-off preliminary attempts at the edge of the work suggest an unlimited continuation.

The accurate application of the millimetered grid onto the carrier is possible because Stefan Peters works on a gesso-coated panel, which forms a hard and dense surface. A woven canvas of linen or cotton starts to bend as the wet paint is applied, making it impossible to achieve the intended precision. This solid base forms a perfect springboard for the illusion. The illusion, evoked by means of paint and brush, emerges with hallucinatory force from all those tiny landscapes. Thus we come face to face with the primal source of painting: we see a few brush strokes and suddenly discover in them the landscape in which we hiked during our holidays or that we recognize from the museum: a Ruysdael, without the old oak tree in the left corner, a Caspar David Friedrich, without the monk. But also a Bob Ross of the TV lessons. Stefan Peters has a super skillful hand. With visible ease he conjures up an endless variety and offers the viewer a generous collection of – neatly organized – comparative material. And he does manage to make us look, the eye jumps uninhibitedly back and forth between the spring and autumn landscapes, the vistas and the vibrant nature scenes, the browns and greens, the pasty, scraping strokes of acrylic. Peters' sophistication is also evidenced in his compositional organization. Aside from the geometric white frame, the alternation of colors and shapes within the rows of images create a strong image. The composition is totally balanced.

What the painter does here is nothing less than exploring the magic of painting. How is it that we can lose ourselves in strokes of paint to the point where we project onto them memories of actually lived environments? It is a research that fits into our time and resonates in the series of Internet pictures such as the ones collected by artists or photojournalists because of their formal congruity. Stefan Peters' methodology is in this sense conceptual, based on a research plan, and simultaneously expressive as an expression of painting. Therein lies the singularity of this work, in the unique bridge that Peters creates between concept and expression.

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