

DOMOBAAL

REBECCA GELDARD WRITING ABOUT ANSEL KRUT'S WORK, EXTRACTED FROM THE ESSAY FOR OYSTER GRIT, A GROUP EXHIBITION AT DOMOBAAL IN SEPTEMBER 2007.

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THEATRE AND SPECTACLE ARE OMNIPRESENT IN THE WORK OF ANSEL KRUT. VAUDEVILLIAN PORTRAITS BRING TO LIFE FACETS OF HUMANITY NOT NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE GENRE. THE CARTOONISH CHARACTERISATION THAT DEFINES HIS WORK PROVIDES A METAPHORICAL FRAMEWORK FOR KRUT'S UNAPOLOGETIC PORTRAYALS OF THE HUMAN CONDITION WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING HIS NARRATIVE LINEAGE THROUGH PAINTING'S PAST. THE CANVAS, LIKE THE TAUT FLOOR OF THE BOXING ARENA, FEELS AT TIMES LIKE A PICTORIAL BATTLEGROUND: A TENSILE SURFACE BETWEEN FANTASY AND REALITY UPON WHICH TO WRESTLE WITH AN ENDLESS SEQUENCE OF PAINTERLY PERMUTATIONS. WHERE SATO'S HUMANOID MOTIFS LOOK AS THOUGH DRAINED OF LIFE'S ESSENCE, CERTAIN OF KRUT'S CROSSBRED CREATURES APPEAR TO HAVE SUCKED THE BARELY DESCRIBED WORLD AROUND THEM DRY, OTHERS BLEED TECHNICOLOR FIGMENTS OF THEIR DEPRAVED IMAGINATIONS BACK ONTO THE GROUND FROM WHICH IT WAS ORIGINALLY STOLEN.

KRUT'S IMAGINARY WORLD, LIKE THAT OF NÍ BHRIAIN, IS NOT FOUNDED UPON EARTHLY LOGISTICS. YOU GET THE FEELING THAT, PICTORIALLY, ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN. AS JEANETTE WINTERSON WRITES OF THE HOUSE WITH NO FLOORS IN SEXING THE CHERRY: "AFTER A FEW SIMPLE EXPERIMENTS IT BECAME CERTAIN THAT FOR THE PEOPLE WHO HAD ABANDONED GRAVITY, GRAVITY HAD ABANDONED THEM. THERE WAS A GENERAL REJOICING, AND FROM THAT DAY FORTH NO ONE CONCERNED THEMSELVES WITH FLOORS OR WITH FALLING". ITS HABITANTS, ALL IN DIFFERENT STATES OF CONFIGURATION, EXIST LIKE ANIMALS BEYOND THE BORDERS OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

'SAILOR LOLLY', THE PAINTING SELECTED FOR THIS SHOW, IS ONE OF KRUT'S EARLIER, QUIETER HYBRID PORTRAITS. THE SINGLE FIGURE WE ARE PRESENTED WITH APPEARS FEMALE IN ORIGIN, NOT THAT SUCH THINGS CAN BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED IN THESE WORKS. BOLTED-ON LIMBS AND A CLASSICAL POSE SPEAK SIMULTANEOUSLY OF THE ARCHETYPAL BEAUTY OF THE DOLL AND THE MUSE, YET THE SAUCY INFERENCE OF THE TITLE RELEGATES THIS TURBAN-TOPPED MADAM TO THE CHEAP SEATS. THIS PAINTER'S MODEL IS NOT SO MUCH 'GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING' AS HE-SHE WITH A RUSTY RIVET. TENTATIVE CURVILINEAR ARCS AND SCRUBBY, SCARCELY FILLED AREAS OF TONE GIVE THIS PIECE A SENSE OF URGENCY - AS IF THIS IS THE LAST POSE BEFORE THE END OF THE LIFE DRAWING SESSION.

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NO MATTER HOW QUIETLY SHOCKING OR OUT OF THEIR TIME THE WORKS OF THESE EIGHT ARTISTS MAY APPEAR, THE APPARENT NON-CONFORMITY OF THIS GROUP IS DRIVEN BY INDIVIDUAL DEFAULT SETTINGS OVER A COLLECTIVE SENSE OF DESIGN. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF PREOCCUPATION WITH TREND OR OWNERSHIP - AS IF THEY MIGHT BE CURATORS OF LOST THOUGHTS OR PROPERTY. THE PAST, THE MANY SOURCES OF REFERENCE UNASHAMEDLY ACKNOWLEDGED IN THESE WORKS, OFFERS AN ESSENTIAL PORTAL BETWEEN STATES, A NARNIAN WARDROBE OF UNKNOWN ELEMENTS THAT MUST BE NEGOTIATED IN THE PROCESS OF MOVING FORWARD, A BACKSTITCH DURING THE RE-HEM OF A SECOND-HAND GARMENT ESSENTIAL TO THE WENDING LINEAR STRENGTH OF THE HAND-SEWN WHOLE.

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