

Geometry can dream too

At home, on top of my drawer, a small white passepartout leans against the wall. I acquired it from a recent graduate of the Academy of Arts, who initiated a spontaneous studio sale of pictures that had accumulated in their studio. To let go of some weight I assume, before returning to NY City. I had been thinking of a frame on top of this drawer from the day I moved in, and had recently received a refund from my taxes. But to be frank, it was an impulse buy. I simply liked that picture.

Day by day, the picture and I get to know each other a little better. I investigate what's it about that image in the most mundane settings: during a morning read, lunch breaks, when I dust off the surfaces of my furniture... The first layer, the closest material to the photographer's lens, is a square shaped fence. A few days ago it suddenly hit me: there's something in line with Albrecht Dürer in this picture. The renaissance figure was not only known for his persistent use of the perspective frame, a grid-like structure to assist in correctly reproducing a picture from reality. In several works, such as *'Man Drawing A Lute'* and *'Draughtsman Making a Perspective Drawing of a Woman'*, the artist actually depicts the device itself. He is thereby utterly transparent, and shows us the glasses through which he approaches a subject. This perspective is linear, and as an artist, assists him to comprehend the world and precisely reproduce it.

Grids are straight-forward and can appear narrow. Printmaker Vitor Pascale engraved a maze of cubes around the body of a young boy, who is staring towards a black square outside the frame. I come across the image in the group exhibition *'Translucent Dreams'* at EKA Gallery. The drawing is part of an installation that contains a 3-dimensional grid, stretched out vertically, in order to fit two wooden doors. There is more air to this than in Dürers: but the extra space is still bound to standardised measurements. National and international committees determine on a daily basis the heights of our steps or the width of that same door. It appears to me that certain frameworks feel tight for Pascale. This impression is amplified once I notice the little cyan-coloured print which is part of the same installation, portraying a small boy arms tightly around the knees and mouth wide open. They seem in despair.

A grid contains meeting points. Borders are a shared matter, and lines systematically cross each other. The exhibition *'Translucent Dreams'* brings together young artists from different corners of the world. Studying together in the master program, each of them deals with individual identities. I believe the exhibition carries at heart the result of encounters. With a fatigue from themes such as personal identities, I decide to follow the commonalities and overlap. The installative pieces of Chloé Geinoz and Vitor Pascale house readymades, more specifically wooden furniture, which feels solid. To stay in touch, and get a grip? I find the same grounding in Rose Magees work, where fragile glass sculptures settle in a concrete mass as if they were tucked into a blanket or a tub. Both materialities contain a certain level of comfort and home. Kitkit Para presents a wall piece made primarily out of foam. Each variety resists being fully covered by Chinese Ink. The artist allows us to witness the ink pulling apart and spreading out, and through this mismatch, reveals its host material. In a similar manner, Syed Sachal Rizvi's large-scale drawing contains lines that refuse to hide behind newly added colours. Identity is indeed an intersection point. It is a witness of contamination by the other and the world at large; a point of encounter and integration. The gallery itself earlier that year already decided to showcase themselves purely through the other: they exchanged the banner with 'galeri' at the entrance for a piece by graphic designer Pille-Riin Valk. To allow someone to take over the mechanism of introduction reveals a lot about the space's identity: it is above all a space for invitation and encounter.

A grid is a field. The metaphoric glasses we use to read one another contain a set of rules and sure have their limits. It sounds similar to what's at stake when we play. After all, aren't humans players at heart, according to Dutch historian Juhan Huizinga?

Borders are porous. In words of game theories, the play field, also called the magic circle, separates reality from the world of the game. Yet its borders appear to be spongy. This magic circle has eyes and ears: it gazes at the

world's movement and can never be fully shielded from it. I notice objects with their own rules get contaminated by reality all throughout the exhibition; the painted wooden dressing table in Chloé Geinoz' work collects cracks due to exposure to a certain (more humid?) environment, and well, with the passing of time. That same object's drawer is filled with water, which is sticky to insects and dust. The backs of Rose Magees works are mainly concrete, yet I notice small impurities, such as a tiny piece of blue plastic mentioning a few numbers. As if a plastic band dropped off a bird's foot and fell straight in the liquid matter while it was hardening.

As chance seeps through the material in artistic works, frameworks or perspectives are generally spongy as well. Our world is naturally in motion, and so its reading mechanisms are re-evaluated and adapted accordingly. The course of this depends highly on the player's approach. J.P. Carse distinguishes two varieties in games: finite and infinite ones. The purpose of the finite game is to win. In the other type of game, players will do anything in their power to keep playing. The young artists in this exhibition aim for the latter. They shed light on different stories and materialities, but as it goes with translucency, lines appear blurry. A blurry line is wider than a sharp one though. Are they looking for extra space, a little leeway to play? To test out the resonance of their personal experiences? The academic soil is supposed to provide wiggle room after all.