



TRENDS

CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

M
masters of today

VICTOR HAGEA

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SUMMER CLOUDS, 2006 OIL ON CANVAS 31,5X23,6 IN. / 80X60 CM.

Surface and decoy. The Painting as Seduction
Around and about Victor Hagea's imagery

There is a virtual dimension at stake in the image, a kind of spatiality there, of which William Gibson might say that "There's no there there." The surface of the paint is so virtual as it makes all boundaries permeable: see there, in the painting "Dream" (2001), "The Tissue of Ariadne" (2002), or in "Genesis" (2003), how walls collapse into marine weaves or linen folds, but no contour can delimit the specificity of such things. Their physicality is denied, transformed, and transfigured. They are neither objects, nor atmospheric phenomena, objects become ineffable phenomena and phenomena receive a magic substantiality in a world in which the trace of their crafting is skilfully hidden. There is no trace of difference. The fluidity of such world makes it problematic to define the kind of spatiality we are in. It is like a dream space, a vision, a space of interval or in-betweenness that allows things to cohabite and to exist side by side in their irrationality. But the true nature of such hyper-real space we might never get to know. Anyways, Hagea is not present there to tell, I mean, the physicality of his body and hand. The Master has erased totally his masterful hand, there is only the interstice of his body, that is, the vast surface of his hunting imagination. The interface of his imagination is projected inside out on the surface of these hallucinatory visions. It fills up completely the surface of paintings, as well as of the space beyond, crossing out the frame, spilling into the space of the spectator.

There is a quite strong perception of the will of the painter to engage his viewers in his hypnotic visions, to make them acknowledge the paradoxality of their ground, to engage them in a kind of delightful visual lust from which one cannot escape. The transparent screen of this kind of concetto-like image, a medium of deception, as well as fascination, acts as a surface with its own depths in which one can inscribe oneself and erase one's own traces at once. No one is finally there in the paint, neither the artist nor his viewers, although, in a most conspicuous way, they are all right there. Yet Hagea's vision is not the kind of a mere optical illusion, neither is it a pure decoy, a Baroque deceit of some historical extraction. Rather, it is the reality of our own deep hyper-reality, which he forces us to acknowledge and cultivate – it is the space of creative imagination.

Nicoletta Isar, curator, critic

