



ALTERPIECES OF PHYSICS ANDART

In this Art Gallery of Knowledge are several altarpieces brought here directly from the studio of painter Lars Physant. In contrast with Romanesque and Gothic painting or that of the Renaissance (the revolution of fragmented knowledge gathered together through the Encyclopaedia, as it is today through the Internet) the works on these walls have never hung in any church, palace or virtual web, although they are still historic pictures with real scenes showing different civilisations, cultures and religions caught halfway between a fixed image and the narrative movement of the eye. At the beginning of the 21st century, in the global world, we are living a simultaneous present. The paintings of Lars Physant, although they are bi-dimensional, present space in concurrent multiverses and time in several different states of matter. Suspended collages, flat simulacra, floating images. Images in silence, garrulous in community, rituals, ruins, landscapes in which the light vibrates like pre-Socratic atoms. Spectres of transubstantiated images in light after the death of the image. In Lars Physant's vision, painting transcends visible reality.

The artist's signature brings us down to earth with its irreversible biological providence and its legal echoes that confirm the presence of design; as well as any proverbial reverberations that a signature implies. In the case in question, Lars Physant (Copenhagen, 1957), the artist is of Danish extract and resides in Barcelona. Curiously, the word Lars, if read as L'ars (in accordance with Latin phonetics which links together the romance languages) refers to The Arts; that which is made with skill and intelligence and brings us closer to beauty or, not paradoxically, artifice. This is certainly the case in Lars' work which makes visible the fact that the art of visual representation, transmitted through the tradition of painting, does not have reality as its goal, but rather the study of what it is composed. Put simply, Lars attempts to make visible the invisible and to put in motion that which is still, in painting.

All the sciences have need of L'ars (art); the need to be arts in unity, arts in love aiming to become language, that is, knowledge. It is well-known that the scientific method is sceptical, empirical and provisional. The opposite of the religious, based on revealed truth. Thus the arts have replaced the empirical eye of the surgeon for the intuitive eye of the theoretical physicist, capable of holding in his brain invisible theories. Avant-garde science, speculative and forward looking, finds itself, the deeper in we go, shoulder to shoulder with the ancient pre-Socratics. Manual art, which painted with the

hand what the eye saw, painted along with Lars Physant the art of Physics and the Psyche. Our latter day saint (Saint of Physics and the Arts) uses his painter's hand to convert material objects into mental substance and the physical world into the psychical. He also transforms the religious world, with its rituals of death and erotic exercises, into a physical, psychic and quantum world.

Danish visual culture resides eight minutes from the painter's studio, in the Mediterranean. The sea at a light-second, so close to the classics. In one, a skimming, slanting light, cold and scanned, analytical; in the other, direct, Romanesque, in sun and shadow and in pyrotechnical outbursts. The diurnal and nocturnal worlds equalised as opposites. That which is awake, sleeping in the schemes of time. That which is in ruins, revived. If we look at the painting of Lars Physant we see captured and frozen instants of an absent past which reaches us through molecules of light. In a twist to art history, beyond mere gesture, the paintings give life instead of drying it up. Looking at colours, we read the light of atoms. So many syllables, prefixes and words, like those I am writing. We all depend on the fire of art not going out, but rather searing through a brain, in fusion, in permanent combustion, in stillness, allowing the hand to explore its limits. We live from atoms engendered by dead images.

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*Translated from catalán by Berni Armstrong