
SUMMARY

Intimacy:

Everydayness in art

Intimacy is commonly known as something strictly personal, secret, close and familiar. It can mean many things. For instance, it can refer to various situations and contexts, can be concerning human body, interpersonal relations or our attitude towards ourselves. It may also picture relations not only between humans but also between animals, things or even when talking about an explorer and a explored object. Therefore intimate discourse includes whole range of multiple issues – from corporality, through feeling to memory itself. We can find it in physical side or the metaphysical one, focused on solitude being or the group of people, on meanings of things.

For contemporary scholars intimacy is a part of a culture. Seen this way it conditions the shape of contemporary social-cultural values, believes or prejudices, actions and opinions. Intimacy in Central European culture, which shaped some tabu issues, is the main subject that I introduce in this dissertation.

While exploring I was contemplating intimacy from many angles: sociological, psychological, philosophical. I came across the ontology of intimacy based on the concept of attachment; intimacy derived from culture and custom and even the caution of being too narcissistic (when we talk about tyranny of intimacy). Most of those approaches, however, point out the importance of female role when talking about democratization of intimate sphere and its introduction into a public discourse. History of art also makes women responsible for including intimacy into the area of interest. Griselda Pollock shows how much spheres where female impressionists were present, influenced the subject of their paintings. Due to emancipation everydayness had infiltrated the artwork for good and had become the subject valued as much as the battle scenes, religion or nature were.

It is believed that dynamics of social life is mostly ruled by emancipation discourse regarding women and LGTB society. They use their strongest strategy: intimacy understood as a registry of issues, problems, coming-outs and personal stories.

Contemporary intimacy is pictured as a show of freedom, independence and sexuality.

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In my dissertation – the creative part – I battle with this tough subject of intimacy in art while moving moments from life and their matching emotions onto the oil on canvas.

My artwork is however distant from being unequivocal. Their form, matter and composition become the narrator. They are histories “hidden” behind the white sheets. It is mostly the fabric what I consider the main factor in my artwork. It is modeled to be anthropomorphic and this way it shows both existential and emotional character of pictured stories. Stories themselves are very intimate – they refer to relations, emotions, and all of what is normally hidden. Making the fabric main object on my canvas means to be the act of covering the reality, protecting what indeed is intimate, what is underneath. This way I am trying to hide from the viewers what appears to be the main subject here. I put intimacy as central issue and at the same time I do not strip it of its place on the margins of reality.

Although the paintings seem monochromatic – with great majority of white and black, they in fact contain many shades of subtle colors and shapes. Realistic and careful way of painting and the lights refer to traditional painting techniques. This way I tended to show as much authenticity as possible.

Objects called nests meet motives of some bird nesting rituals where they, the Remizes, intricately weave their homes – the perfect forms, almost fulfilled and closed, which complete construction makes it unavailable for everyone except bird family. Therefore I take from this act performed by Remiz bird whilst creating on its basis my own hideaways – more or less perfect – for my intimate issues. Inside I hide excitements, moments, feelings, worries, dreams, doubts, angers and happiness. And when something is not perfect, unlike in life, I can such a nest abandon and construct a new one or even imagine that I indeed fill it once again with new form.

The subject of this cycle of works is supposed to meet stages of human life – mostly the stage which I am currently in – the motherhood.

Looking at it from critical point of view one cannot simply ignore the moment (emphasized by the critiques of art) when a woman who is an artist becomes a mother. A

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female artist is an incoherent category. So far being a mother and an artist was perceived as playing these two parts interchangeably.

Women, however, still feel the need to personally watch over their offspring and take care of the house. Their attention and sensitivity are facing this direction. Nevertheless, emancipation made way for everydayness into the artwork. It had become the subject of works considered equally important as war, religion or nature.

My works also concern everyday rituals, times of the day, meals and sleep that measure the time – everything that Jolanta Brach-Czajna calls “the bustling” (“krzątactwo”). It simply stands for our roots in everydayness, and this is what sets this everydayness in metaphysical order of things “here being is confronted with the void.

Talking about intimacy allows me to shift a bit into self-therapy process. I reconcile with the state of being, my expectations regarding the future are collided with the reality created by motherhood. Everydayness is shown to me as one worth concern, bringing senses regarding our existence.

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