

INSOMNIA

Matthias Meyer's new painting cycle

Lying half awake, one knows better than to trust the strange hours in the middle of the night. Sleeplessness, especially with the eyes shut, encourages the appearance of retina-like webs and psychedelic structures that blend into each other like translucent veils and alternate between the more and less dreamlike. Behind each illusion of some only semi-specific thing lies another, often even more vague and illusory hallucination. Matthias Meyer's painting cycle of the last two years has a highly phantasmagoric quality which naturally lends itself to comparisons with this hypnotic trance state between sleeplessness and dreaming. "The atmospheric element that has always been in the background of my work has moved into the foreground," says Meyer. Landscapes of color and mood are created by metamorphoses of shifting perspectives that glide into vague depths and then strive back toward the surface and which seem, at first glance, to have something to do with states of nature.

Initially one seems to recognize the opalescence of reflective water surfaces, ephemeral wisps of fog, glinting rays of sunlight, pastel-colored wads of cotton, networks of vegetable matter, enlarged dew drops, and ice marked by skates or sleds. However these associations evaporate as quickly as the permeable veils of our night-time dreams because Meyer consistently disrupts every continuum in these wet-on-wet paintings. Part of Matthias Meyer's conceptual approach to painting, painting that is quietly virtuosic in its incorporation of glazing techniques, is working in cycles. Not unlike representatives of the classical modernist style such as Mondrian, over the years he has gradually exiled the vestiges of objects from his work and thus laid claim to an open space in the virtual landscape. Whereas a few years ago one could still make out the rudimentary traces of motifs in his paintings, for which photographs were used as the starting point, they have now been completely absorbed in the fluidity of the color space. It is as if the painting process had, to a great extent, acquired its own dynamic – a generous and free form of expression controlled with a light touch, which, like the imaginings of the sleepless, holds an endless store of evocative power.

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