

# Duša Jesih

## Módus Vivéndi

9 June –15 July 2017

KiBela, Space for Art  
MMC KIBLA, Maribor

### The Soul of a Painting: Modus Vivendi

Within the realm of fine arts in Slovenia, the paintings of Duša Jesih belong to the genre of geometric abstraction, characterized by visual composition of an art work by means of geometric forms, elements, or structures on a two-dimensional canvas, according to previously defined mathematical rules, which appear to be in accordance with the “scientific” rules of nature. Geometric abstraction is no novelty in Slovene fine arts’ production, it has been topical for over a century, from the time it was still called (and considered) avant-garde. But the scope of Duša Jesih’s paintings reaches far beyond the influence of geometric abstraction, touching upon almost all of the 20<sup>th</sup> century -isms.

In translation, the phrase ‘módus vivéndi’ means an arrangement or agreement that enables a peaceful coexistence. Duša Jesih uses the painting medium to construct geometrical forms into a syntax of horizontal and vertical shapes, creating the effect of architectural quality on a two-dimensional canvas. The artist’s distinctive feature is maintaining an explicit distance to the past and the limitations of the past, and not letting herself be trapped by any kind of direction or movement. The period of modern art, as well as art movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in general, share a common feature: the point is not to understand an art work, but to contemplate one.

In a manner entirely her own, Duša Jesih incorporates the avant-garde and neo-avant-garde 20<sup>th</sup> century genres, creating an entirely new, contemporary art work of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Through the subjective – her spontaneity, and the objective – her knowledge and skill, she builds a peculiar artistic expression. Her monochrome paintings reflect hues of black-and-white quadrates, reminiscent of suprematism, which really means clarity of perception. This is pure conceptualism of immaterial forms without any back-up in physical objects from reality. An esthetics based on surface forms, purely geometric forms, created on the basis of a metaphysical “feeling”, rather than juxtaposition – the latter is actually established post festum.

In other words, módus vivéndi, as an arrangement that allows to transcend what is seemingly incompatible, can only ever exist temporarily, as part of a consensus. In order to overcome oppositions, natural or political or structural or meaningful, different types of organic models need to be formalized, each carrying its own substance, and essentially existing because of this natural disparity: the difference that separates them from any other. This is what lies at the core of the symbiosis, which the author so confidently, yet unobtrusively, re-creates as architecture in the medium of painting. Surface, and its reduction, the line, as two fundamental expressive objects, can exist separately, but each time only at a precise moment and at a precise point in space. Duša Jesih’s módus vivéndi is established only when she exposes a basic geometrical figure against its counterpart. The compositional symmetry of co-existence, which emerges through the emphasizing of universal difference, is, however, ultimately formalized only by including the observer’s view.

Duša Jesih takes one step further: her geometric animation contains the element of surprise. The artist uses computer digitalization to alter the patterns of meshes, employing animation to add energy to the painting, and advancing it to a controlled chaos. There are no coincidences, it is all about the artist's spontaneity in creation, which is also the ultimate, most powerful virtue of beauty in art. The digitalization of this painting dialog adds further to the re-creation of the endless rhythm of individual 'modules' or building blocks, whereby the artist transcends the commonness of materiality. The view discloses, but without really revealing anything. Duša Jesih strips the sight of its vanguard decision-making position, in fact, she does more than that: the eye is exposed as entirely subjectivized and is allowed only the benefit of observation.

The cycle *Modus Vivendi* addresses something that could be called a "universal art work". There is no representation here, only pure lyrical truth; there is also no significance as to the colors or images, which are all unified. Duša Jesih reforms the painting into a meditation. Her intention is not to depict objects of reality, moreover, it is neither symbolic nor representative, but rather distinctly purist, clean, entirely open to contemplations about pure art. The perspective of color stands for a minimalist reduction; the rhythm of abstraction establishes the conceptuality of the work, thus upgrading it to something different, at worst; to a work that wants to be part of a spiritual harmony, and provide the same chance to the viewer.

The Object is no more. But there comes Duša, carrying a Sign.

—Nina Jeza & Artists&Poor's

**Duša Jesih** (b. 1977, Ljubljana) graduated in 2003 at the Arthouse – College of Visual Arts, Ljubljana, and in 2006 completed a specialized course in painting at the same institution. She participated in numerous exhibitions, colonies, residency programs, and projects. Between 2006 and 2007 she attended expert and research advanced studies in Paris, at the Cite Internationale des Arts. Since 2008 she operates as a self-employed person in the field of culture. In 2012, she began her MA degree studies at the Academy of Fine arts and Design in Ljubljana. In 2015 she received the Prešeren Award for Students. She lives and works in Ljubljana.

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KiBela / MMC KIBLA

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Showing until 15 July 2017.

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Open on weekdays between 9 a. m. and 10 p. m., Saturdays between 4 p. m. and 10 p. m.

**KIBLA**

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