

## On the work of Jordana Rae Gassner

Rae Gassner's paintings are psychological manifestos that playfully bring the human psyche in confrontation with nature and the other way around.

Whereas landscape painting and still life remain the major influences at the core of the work, Gassner shifts this around to awaken the senses and invite the viewer to discover something unknown, eternal and transcendental on the canvas; something so unfathomable like the human psyche herself.

While believing in the individual's will and self-sufficiency, Gassner rejects dualism and perceives the human spirit as one with the body - and in extension as one with the artists' intelligence. She sees painting as a way to access the subconscious and therefore the *a priori* universal knowledge as concealed in the connection of humans with their environment.

Believing in 'psychic automatism' the artist's works are improvised color explosions that aim to reveal the inner world of the artist. In this sense, she falls unapologetically into the tradition of the abstract expressionists who thought of painting 'not as a picture but as an event'<sup>1</sup>.

Unlike other abstract painters of her generation though, Gassner's every work is equally powerful and highly charged with gestural creativity. Spending endless hours contemplating her work, Gassner has finally achieved what for many artists remains a mystery: a visual language that is free from artistic jargon and stereotypes, figuration preconceptions and cultural rhetoric.

Gassner loves to name her works after stars and cosmic elements, like an ancient shaman or Greek poet who calls upon her muse for inspiration. Whereas her titles reveal her subject-matter reservedly, there is always the feeling that the real action is being concealed from the viewer, like a diary with the most intimate thoughts and truths; one has to spend time with the paintings in order to become part of the process of deciphering them.

Gassner's paintings invite us to become co-pilots on the trip to her painting with the only luggage, our own experiences and emotional understanding of the work. Every time we look at the art, a new truth awaits to be revealed, exactly like in everyday life.

Text by Vanessa Souli.

---

<sup>1</sup> Harold Rosenberg, "[The American Action Painters](#)", 1952