

## **RAINER FUCHS : MALEREI DER GEGENSTÄNDE**

To create space via painting has consistently been one of Ona B.'s goals. Her early paintings show clear signs of an elementary spaciousness. Simple contours meshed with artistically vibrant spots of color seem to evolve on the painted surface in flowing folds or cubic crystalline shapes. The illusion of artistic space is not created by figurative or representative images, but by an expansion of colors and their intentional combination into forms that are free of objectivity and narrative. The spatialization of the contained surface remains recognizable as a colorful, scenic fiction that speaks to the observer as an artistic phenomenon.

Color in Ona B.'s art is a dynamically structured and sensually luminous medium that creates an unfathomable deep space. In and of itself, the color suggests an elementary object-ivity, namely that of a cosmically limitless and atmospherically throbbing space. The monochrome red images with objects placed in front of them allow the relationship between surface and space, between color and illusion, to take on new and complex nuances. The encounter between object and painting is a poetic exchange. Their basic difference requires that the observer become an interpreter, creating a synthesis while participating actively in the artwork with his or her gaze. At the same time, the painting projects a profane aura that necessitates a certain distance. This aura of profanity stems from the white symmetry and hierarchical order, and from the accentuated objects that due to their stereometric dimensions often assume archaic and ritual qualities. The objects in front of the paintings are not only elements and instruments of a poetic symbiosis, but also the filter that shields the painting and gives it space. Behind real and found objects, the painting becomes a fabrication. In combination with the exhibited objects, the paintings themselves yield plastic images. Image and object are both tools for the eye which is not merely an instrument of vision, but also a medium of perception that draws on knowledge and experience, expectations and judgment. The eye is like the mirror in which each new image causes a ripple in the ground lens, comparable to glass paperweights that distort and displace the images around them. The external world implodes as a distortion in these glass bodies that microcosmically reflect cosmic structures.

A central component in Ona B.'s art are glass balls and transparent circles, with compressed material and transparent layers that constitute varying kinds of space. The model of the glass ball is inverted by the distorted circle and swivel images of glass. Looked at from above, one can discern the exact shape of a drinking glass that then turns into a circling, self-contained shape. The photomechanical reproduction of the image onto a pane of glass allows for this. No longer recognizable in the image, the original object becomes the starting point for new content, e.g., the image of planetary worlds.

Yet "turning over" the little glasses, making them symbols for huge worlds, finds its own reversal: individually arranged glasses become the premise for a new spatial awareness. The once shrunken space returns. A further synthesis of painting and object, of color and image, can be found in the representation of colored objects that expand the meaning of painting. The glass cylinder filled with red rose petals and the bed with satiny red sheets illustrate the choice of new hues and a transformed connection between painting and object. They do not, however, represent a shift in painting toward object art, but rather probe the limits of painting on objects themselves. These artworks exemplify the notion that painting is not just about color on stretched canvas, and that objects can also be viewed as images. Objects can be transformed by accentuating their colors. The alienation of objects from their usual function and painting from its conventions is a deliberate and ongoing process. Each painted image is just one more object, and any ordinary object can be perceived as an image and an artistic situation. Ona B. focuses on developing new media that highlight painting as a realm of possibilities whose boundaries can only be determined by transgression.