

I CAME TO ART THROUGH PAINTING

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I came to art through painting, initially as a formal inquiry into visual language within a bounded picture plane. Increasingly, however, my interest centered on the nature of the viewer's reception of this inquiry, and my conviction that while the form was visual, the sensory experience was more complex. This led me to understand the plane of the picture as a form of tympanum, a resonating membrane possessing both a projective and a receptive dimension, like a cone capable of both hailing and hearing: not so much a 'page' as a doubled projection. This opened up the flatness of the picture, unfolded it as an active rehearsal of the body's spatial experiences from touch through hearing.

Consequently, in the late eighties I began to re-define pictorial space within my painting practice as multivalent emotive states linked by a common centre. This I have identified with the notion of the fold, or an unfolding – an unremitting flow of transparency and reflections of image into the texture of language and back again. More recently my work acts simultaneously to fold architecture's material space into text and to convert text into material image. For example in the installation *Two Lips*, pictorial space converges with the materiality of language and architecture. In this work the viewer is engaged not only as a voyeur in the spectacle of painting but also as a participant whose physical presence and movement, an index of shifting beliefs of what is real and what is imagined, acts out the meaning of the painting.

I have become increasingly curious about how pictorial space can function as a means of negotiating this oscillation as a simultaneous experience of first and second order consciousness where images of different modalities can be combined to produce images that do not yet 'exist'. *Melancholia* (2000) and *the seer and the thought, the seen and the thinker* (2001) and *full swing: (spatial reasoning)* from 2002 play with the puzzle – how we the owner of the movie in the brain can emerge within our own movie. My continuing project is to rehearse the associations that arc within this cone between the plurality of the body's sensations and the formality of visual experience.

The new work was initiated by "*full swing*" (2002), in which the objects – while part of a conventional context – begin to unfold in new ways, carrying the illusions and imagined pictorial possibilities outside the picture frame. In this process, the space occupied by the viewer becomes a double shift, and the perceptions that bind the viewer between the real and the imagined are rendered osmotic.

Yvonne Lammerich, January 2005