

COLETTE

LA VIE EN ROSE

Returning after several years from India, I had the occasion to view *LA VIE EN ROSE*, The New York-based artist Colette's recent exhibition, first shown at Pablo's Birthday in New York and now Part II in September at the Carol Johnsson Gallery in Munich. This body of work brings to mind timeless perspectives and attitudes of the creative process as a viable element in daily existence. Fusing art and life, since the early seventies, the glow of her vision morphs and defies technology to limit or define her. Colette's creativity is about energy, her journey into the nexus of her persona and the galactic dioramas she conceives, not representational but engendered.

Familiar with the myriad incarnations, this series belies a heightened integration of her characteristic palette and materials. Reflective of culturally resonant skeins of synchronicity, synergy and non-duality, her process has become one with her aesthetic. Threads of baroque and renaissance character shade the nature of La Maison Lumiere, but a broader modern vein delineates *mutum est picture poema*.

Reflective of *metonymy*, an integration of the inner and outer worlds, a personal idiosyncratic aesthetic blends with the organic process of domestic and philosophical exploration. As developed by the late Indian poet and linguist, A. K. Ramanujan, in his formulation of metonymic thinking, the human and natural worlds are intrinsically related to one another as are the transcendent and mundane worlds. With regard to contemporary creations it implies that one must take into account the organic psyche of the individual.

When artists create metonymically there is a commingling of an interior state of mind and outer material dimension. In Colette's weaving of tapestries, she creates her own artefacts deploying all material, memento mori, nature morte, and tactile imagery which fall within her locii. From furniture, clothing/apparel, photographs, and organic elements (potatoes, albeit gilded), to mannequins, sculptures, lighting, and LP album covers. Essentially, with each new phase or body of work, there unfolds a re-interpretation of mythology, an evolved projection of her own eco-environment, woven with extremely tangible materials: upholstery, satin, gauze, silk, ribbons

*La Vie en Rose* wields her colour palette – hues of rose ---streaming with glitter in tones of silver, cream, multi-dimensions of white, pink galore – reminiscent of the paler complexion of roses and tulips. However, here the previous experiments of her sensorial atelier/laboratory have been more tightly melded; decoration has imbedded itself within the strains of content. The personae are simultaneously phantasmagorical and potentially real, as she intertwines herself and fabricated beings.

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Balancing and revolving between the symbolic realm of art and imaginative processes, the value of objects testifies to an ecological unity. Perception beyond a mere material concretism of reality affirms an expansive, unusual adoption of motifs, through which quotidian elements transform into ephemeral talismans.

Colette's focus throughout her work thrives on the power of the visual and subjective recollection through the harmony of myriad elements and their images, maintained by a manifesto dedicated to feminine energy. At once, she constructs actual environments, replete with garments (hats, shoes, dresses, accessories); rooms (living, dining, sleeping, bathing, dressing, and entertaining) transcend their mere functionalism to arrive at the point of surreal installations. Drapery envelops all, including the creatures that pass through these 'living frames.' Consider the magical nature of the two works - *Dinner at Eight* and *Lumiere's Spring Cleaning* (a vision of a 'fairy', in fact Colette, surrounded by magic sparkled currents of air - rather than dust).

By altering and highlighting the present, *La Vie en Rose* connects the past to the future, clearing the way for new beginnings in an era of much dark, often placid and shallow panurgy.

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