

Lisa Milroy (space 2)

Exhibition from September 10 to October 22, 2005

Vernissage Saturday, September 10

An important figure of the contemporary British art scene, Lisa Milroy came to prominence in the early 1980's with her paintings of ordinary objects – shoes, books, clothes, stamps, vinyl records, plates etc – or rarer items such as Grecian vases and Roman coins which she presented in the style of an inventory or a collection, on a neutral grey background in order to isolate them from any context. From the early 90's, Lisa Milroy began to replace the objects of her paintings back in their original settings and to paint them in the context out of which they emerge including architecture, people or animals. Crossing a new stage at the end of the 90s, her feelings and emotions became the subjects of her painting. The result being an approach both rapid and gestural based on moments of her life.

Lisa Milroy has a long-held fascination for Japan which she has visited many times and as such, her later paintings captured subjects born of this culture: copies of "Ukiyoe" (Japanese prints), food, objects, architecture and towns. She also painted brides and grooms in their traditional costume and masks, which allowed her to explore the transition between still life and the living. Although the formal aspect of these first portraits have disappeared, they prepared the ground for the most recent work.

For her first solo exhibition at the Galerie Xippas, Lisa Milroy presents a quadriptych of nearly 7 metres long, emblematic of the pleasure she takes in painting. The title of this painting "*Painting Fast Painting Slow*" heralds the artist's intentions. This work gives Lisa Milroy the chance to confront the different subjects and shapes of her representations of the last twenty years. The composition of this painting produces a form of narration that leads us with generosity in the privacy of the painter's gaze.

The first two parts are made up of three portraits of Geishas isolated on a neutral grey background, painted with detachment and reservation in order to render only appearances. These seem to advance little by little towards the right entering a new pictorial space showing a group of geishas engaged in their daily activities. Here the way of painting becomes very gestural, ironic, and opposes the objective representation of the left side. In exposing their feelings more than their appearance, these women exhibit their privacy. Milroy represents them as fundamentally independent. She paints them not as exotic subjects but renders them familiar. Milroy's Geishas watch TV and eat pizza.

The background forms a kind of collage, made up of windows looking onto other paintings by the artist: a Japanese interior, a bowl of tea, a plate of sushi and copies of Japanese prints. The spirit of these paintings will be encountered across three different works in an adjacent space.

Lisa Milroy was born in 1959 in Vancouver, Canada. She lives and works in London. In 2001 Tate Liverpool gave her an important solo show which presented her work since 1983. She is represented by Alan Cristea in London and Luis Campana in Cologne.