

Description: *LEF (Liberté-Egalité-Fraternité). The Predella Series, 2005 - f.*

The occidental tradition of painting goes back to the medieval altar. The altar during the early medieval period combines as a liturgical body of art predominantly architecture with sculpture. Painting is added later.

Painting is found first in the 12th century AD on the Antependium, which is the name of the frontal and side panels of the altar table. On the Antependium paintings are symbolic; they indicate the holy theme of the altar.

The representational ability of painting appears first on the rear of the altar piece, the so called Retabel. During the 13th century the Retabel is subdivided in order to surround the statutory representation of the central altar table with wings, first also with statutory figures.

Genuinely coloured altar panels first appear during the 14th century, in the area of the so called Predella which is located underneath the altar wings. There small scenic depictions support the main theme of the altar. Thus the Predella develops an independent picture space between the more cryptic ideograms of the Antependium and the mostly very expressive attributable figures of the Retabel.

I have always been fascinated by the picture space of the Predella because it reacts to an elementary artistic problem that is resolved neither in the Antependium nor in the Retabel:

The picture space in the Antependium conventionally insists on the principles of non-representation of religious themes. However, its symbolic use of colour remains too general in order to elevate itself to an enlightening medium of theological reflection.

On the other hand, the Retabel gives holy topics a concrete historic form but equally depicts over sentimentalised idols.

The Predella therefore seeks to solve the problem of non-representational religious themes by depicting scenic narratives with the use of colour forms. Thus the most powerful aim of modern art is already founded in the origin of occidental painting, namely to enlighten authoritarian premises by sheer depicting means.

My series *LEF (Liberté-Egalité-Fraternité)* that started in 2005 as a work in progress deals with the conceptual opening of the Predella into an episodic, transient picture space.

It is designed as an open sequence of same-sized single paintings (40 x 40 cm) that gradually lead one through the complete colour wheel and that, with the help of the operative variables of paintings, playfully opens up pure intelligible constructions.