

The Window, the Stain, the Bricks and a Life Strange and Mundane

Constructive dialogue in the third space

Looking outside at the scene beyond the window is an act that is essentially contemplative and rather passive. The 'stain'-the mark that indicates a third space-is an element that can disrupt the act. Yet Suh hai-young intentionally sullies the transparent glass with stains. By doing so she draws the viewer's attention to the space that has been created on its surface; a space that would have escaped their attention had there been no such mark. The canvas is essentially no different from a window covered with numerous bricks. The window stands firm, dividing the world inside and that which is outside, but the bricks are empty. In her latest works, Suh has filled the emptiness with her elements of her daily life. Her life may look as mundane as anybody's, but it embraces a strange realm that can be recognized by only those who sees the stain as a mark of a unique space. The viewer can follow along the empty signifiants that Suh has filled and attach their own meanings to them. The artist and the viewer are engaged in a game which unfolds in an interchange of emptying and filling; i.e. emptying (the bricks)→filling (the forms overlaid by the artist onto the bricks)→emptying (the viewer's initial response to forms imposed by the artist; the viewer perceives them to be foreign and strange)→filling (the viewer projects her own daily experience onto the forms)→and again emptying (the bricks are emptied once again, even the experiences projected by the viewer). Through this interplay the viewer and the artist can engage in a constructive dialogue in the third space that the artist has discovered. And it is precisely this exciting game that I look forward to.