

## Priscilla Heine – The Circle Is Then Complete

By Dominique Nahas

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Over thirty years of painting has honed and perfected Priscilla Heine's capacity to bring us in, as viewers, and connect us with the deliriously poetic inner-worlds she depicts. An intoxicating sense of abandonment spills out from each of the artist's distinctive works, suffusing our senses, and making our experiencing of her paintings not merely noteworthy or memorable but unforgettable. Why is this? Part of the reason is that Heine's varied abstract paintings with their fresh directness of touch are exceptionally sensual. So much so that it is impossible for the viewer not to get emotionally enmeshed within her works. Textural diversity in the work reaches a high pitch in her painterly practice and the artist's mark making is expansively varied. That mark making dimension can take on a wide array of looks that touches us as they convey a visual grammar of inner dispositions or mind-sets from the deliberate to the random to the constructive to the mechanical to the soft-spoken to the ostentatious. Added to this is Heine's skillfully deft use of unexpectedly intense color combinations and rich, often unexpected overlays of colors that combine exactness with nuance. Her pictorial forms, spatial dimensions, mark making, and coloristic effects are undergirded by a tensed equilibrium. What is in the balance is unified image with expressive detail, parts with wholes, and contrasting sensations of evanescence and materiality. Heine has a unique talent for creating paintings that depict forms that while not being renderings of anything in the world, have, at the same time have a "thing-ness" quality. A feeling of solid materiality or tangibility. Paradoxically, the artist's imagery also simultaneously appears on the verge of dissolving or on the brink of fragmenting or dispersing.

Heine's imaginative flexibility and complexity as an artist supports a visionary painterly approach that emphasizes both playfulness and soul-centered mindfulness above all else. In one of her recent talks at the Parrish Museum, Priscilla Heine made these remarkable comments : *" One tries to be honest with the work...the marks that are made are like love-notes of caring...the marks go in because the marks need to be there ... [ it's] having to do with what the entity is becoming...that is the dialog...it tells me what it needs and I understand from that what it is...for artists art is communication and that is why it is so good for someone to see it because the circle is then complete..."* The artist's words reveal so much about her and the vital mind-set of inner-connectedness she has as an abstract artist as she engages in a dialog with the materiality of paint and the mark making process to engage fully with chaos and order.

Priscilla Heine's thoughts reveal a whole infrastructure of artistic intentionality that has to be set into place in order for her vision to reach a condition of completion. She refers to how mindfully (*"love-notes of caring"*) she allows the work of art to emerge through her studio practice. In essence we learn her aesthetic process involves her being keyed-in, being in touch, with what her marks want to be on the pictorial surface. Of being and staying connected with what the aesthetic vision calls out for. Heine's words also succinctly point out why and how

artmaking is so vital for her as the author of her works and how vital it is for a viewer to behold the art as a manifestation of connecting with the world.

By engaging her unconscious while listening to the dual call of instinct and intelligence Priscilla Heine aesthetic vision resonates with sensations of moody, primal authenticity. The image-formations Heine creates appear utterly unrehearsed and spontaneous. Heine's remarkable abstract painting *Floating* (2018), for example, reverberates with uncontrived, deep-tissue vitality. Upon experiencing this large oil on canvas, the viewer has an encounter with a composition of loose, quavering, doodle-like marks as well as closed, abject configurations and smears of paint. The over-all look seems slightly suggestive of anatomical parts or organs on the one hand while also intimating the uneasy presence of an epiphenomenal manifestation that has just taken shape before us.

Priscilla Heine's entire art career and wide-ranging studio practice has been freed from the constraints of rendering, from the dictates of fashion, from the imposed marketing exigencies of a so-called "signature style". Heine's vision instead has been nurtured and developed by her individualistic perceptiveness and receptivity encircled by "inner necessity", the term Wassily Kandinsky introduced in 1910 to refer to the individuated energy of the artist that underlies art itself, underpinning the foundation of color harmonies and forms of which the artistic Self is part.

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