

STATEMENT

My work derives inspiration from the world in which I live and work. Wandering through Linz, and other various environments in Austria with their endlessly shifting landscapes, often incongruous, and always progressively changing, I recorded perception like metaphorical footnotes: the stains, textures, and marks imprinted everywhere transforms into a kind of mind map of daily life. My fascination with the decay of once celebrated architectural buildings and historical spaces led me to examine how perception and experience inform the everyday world. Seeing my childhood home bulldozed to make way for a tract housing development left me with a profound sense of loss that still resonates in my mind. The recurring theme of loss is an ongoing theme in my work, as places most meaningful seem to disappear. Historical structures containing a vast history and life force further inform, representing at once a safe space, and one imagined, yet within the passage of time degrades, becoming obsolete. Stored within memory are collections of images, landscapes containing objects, forms, and spaces, which I deconstruct and resurrect to reflect the fleeting nature of our urban landscape, as emblematic of the economic cycle of rebirth, growth, and decline. Of concern is the evanescent nature of material, the entropy of matter that dissolves away as the physical world reinvents. Memory contained in spaces cannot be erased, but is altered in time. There is something beyond the physical world where thoughts transmute into "things," objects, formations in literal space and time, and my investment involves extracting meaning wherein the sacred and the profane co-exist.

The structures I set up for painting echo or reiterate the impermanent and mutable states depicted in the painting. Or put another way, painting that is not simply static, an illusion or picture of an event, but allows for participation in the event itself. The visual world as I see it breaks down, turning a static work into a three dimensional event.

In this new body of work created at Salzamt, I used the space in the paintings with an added graphic element of printed wallpaper with repeated images of a few of the actual paintings on the walls. The scale of the printed images match repeated cell phone size images as a reference to the current Instagram / FB techno-culture of here and now - mixing layers of discourse. This is a new direction I have added to my practice. Using the gallery space, I re-defined it, so that one can walk in and around painted walls to discover the hidden images and repeated patterns that connect the whole and interact with the work from multiple perspectives and angles. Merging painting and architecture, I reverse the usual relationship of the two disciplines; instead of employing painting as architectural embellishment, I use architectural space at the service of painterly gesture. The allotted space dissolves visually and spatially - in a welter of painterly forms, both graphic and organic. Committed to painting as a viable means for making contemporary art and while ever conscious of historical precedents, I strive to expand upon the boundaries of painting.

Yvette Gellis – January 2016







