

# EVERY MOMENT LIVES TOGETHER

KARLA MARCHESI

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Dienstag 2012 Oil on Board 50x60cm

New city, new studio, new art – Karla Marchesi's migration to Berlin has yielded major changes to her aesthetic and conceptual concerns as a painter. Her recently completed six month residency at the Atilierhaus Mengerzeile provided her with space to reflect on her practice in ways not previously possible whilst living in her hometown of Brisbane, Australia. *Every Moment Lives Together* is the impressive end product of Marchesi's dedicated experimentation during this time, its title neatly pinning down the intent behind her explorations.

Marchesi has considered the lifelong relationships we forge with domestic household objects in order to deliberate on how their aesthetic depiction can create connections to past places, rituals and memories lodged within our subconscious. Her practice was previously characterised by realist depictions of domestic interiors, dilapidated exteriors, and confronting mixes of these public and private worlds colliding. Australian curator Allison Kubler has made connections between the artist's practice and the *Memento Mori* tradition of still life. Another curator, Renai Grace, locates Marchesi within the canon of quintessential Australian landscape painting. *Every Moment Lives Together* could certainly be understood within both these genres, as the artist's struggle to 'possess' the enduring memory of her subjects is similar to that of the landscape and still life traditions. Marchesi herself states that these works bear 'silent witness' to the memories they represent. However, the nature of the relationship between object and memory in these works is far more dynamic than a gesture of possession alone. These constantly shifting reference points bestow her paintings with a pulsating resonance, demonstrated through their tendency to fall in and out of the nothingness of the picture plane which surrounds them. For Marchesi's objects to reference geographic locales from both Brisbane and Berlin simultaneously, they must also reference both future and past as well. They indicate Marchesi's past preoccupation with material items and their connection to her personal and professional

history, as well as her technical desire to return back to the fundamentals of drawing and monochromatic colour schemes. However a clearly progressive gesture is also evident, seen in her determination to dislodge her technically labored practice from its comfort zone and consequently, to reassess past ways of thinking, remembering and acting. In this way, each painting acts as an intermediary between Marchesi's present and past lives and connects with her on significantly personal and emotive levels. However the universal function of the objects depicted (a towel, a plant, a room) enables them to resist communicating in cryptic ways only she can decipher. Marchesi's ability to render her subjects in a sumptuous yet haunting palette enables the viewer to establish their own connections, extract their own meaning and evoke their own nostalgia.

Marchesi is quick to insist that this exhibition should be viewed as a collection of experiments in progress, rather than as a body of finished works. However her ability to provide a deep and focused scope to such simple, everyday objects means it is difficult not to view this exhibition as a meaningful experience. This push and pull within her works between two sides of the globe, between past and future simultaneously, may sound contradictory or even chaotic but Marchesi's exceptionally developed technique has enabled them to communicate with uncluttered, lucid and compelling intention.

Carmen Ansaldo

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