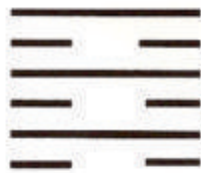


Nick Miller

C L O S E R



DRAWINGS 1993-1999
BEFORE THE END

Rubicon Gallery
DUBLIN

Art Space Gallery
LONDON

CLOSER: THE ANATOMY LESSON.

I am taken by surprise while teaching; the connection between life and death is not clear. This is a room for science, where bodies are given for the study of anatomy. I am in a trance at the intimacy with material that is preserved past both life and death; it is out of nature's cycle. Now I am drawing.

I have no pride about my work, just nervous curiosity. Sound seems hollow and the formaldehyde makes me queasy.

Physical proximity and stillness fire adrenaline, hurrying my freedom to look. There is a strange sense of shrunken scale, perspective feels changed from the surface to the interior and beyond. Something is happening between hand and eye, a heightened concentration that brings clarity. I will remember this feeling.

I will remember the hair follicles and the painted nails.

Leaving. I return to life, struggling with learning and awkwardly facing into painting people, I feel dissatisfied with distance. Unconsciously in the studio I begin to move closer, as if I am short sighted and cannot find focus.

These small drawings make a big black hole in my mind, art is sucked in and lost. Since then, drawing is different; looking for a momentary sensation, an almost physical connection to the subject; a life-line of energy out of the void.

I return another time to anatomy, but this time my curiosity feels morbid, there is no energy. Going underground to where the bodies are stored, it is impossible not to connect back in history with the weight of death. It overwhelms me. Living in this time of endless fracture, it is not easy to comprehend a relationship to history. But I begin to understand something of a cyclical order, of how all things come to an end to begin again.

ANATOMY DRAWINGS:

Royal College of Surgeons In Ireland, March 1993.

CLOSER: TO A NEW PERSPECTIVE.

Ideas leave me cold.

I thought drawing you across the room, naked and draped on the couch would be enough to wake me up. But I have become stuck behind the easel, distanced and wooden.

Before the end of the century, take me out of formaldehyde, take me into nature - I am starting to learn a different sort of knowledge.

This is not science.

I say it is about learning, but it is also about hunger and desire. Somewhere there is an ambition to make a drawing.

I began working with people for company, to try and face my connection; to see what I know, and be known - I want to shift the balance from art into life. In the studio, space is made, time is out and I am travelling.

Form and flesh are important, even central, but energy is the nearest description of a subject - I need to be closer to see who I am with you.

Because I am too far away.

If you just lie there on the paper while I trace around your body....to mark your position.....now...just move over to the left a few inches, you can rest your head on this small cushion...relax if you can, I'll put on some music.....I am going to kneel across your body like this.....(laughter).... and start drawing with my face directly above yours..... I hope It will not take long.

To make you present.

Remembering the anatomy lesson - something is revealed.

DRAWINGS: