

# THE SKYLINE

## The Exhibition of Works by Professor Tomasz Psuja

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‘The paintings of Tomasz Psuja are “signed” with dates. Nameless, they activate rather than direct the imagination.’<sup>1</sup> Jaromir Jedliński began his description of the artist’s works for the catalogue published in 2000 with the following words, ‘Faced with the paintings of Tomasz Psuja – a painter/non-painter, I can see (as far as I understand these paintings) landscapes and country-sides of space and time rather than of specific places.’<sup>2</sup> Tomasz Psuja referred to these words a few years later in an interview conducted by Rafał Jakubowicz. The artist stated that Jedliński had perfectly described his works and that basically there was nothing he could add to his words...

However, despite this ‘silent aura’, the paintings of Tomasz Psuja cannot be left without a comment. They are in fact a result of an extremely unique creative activity. Around 1980, the artist finally gave up the so-called new figuration and took up – as he said in an interview – ‘a certain type of landscape illustration.’<sup>3</sup> When searching for new forms of expression, the artist developed an unconventional creative technique. The technique combines simple computer

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<sup>1</sup> M. Polak, *Bez człowieka, dla człowieka*, an article from *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily of 29 August 2000.

<sup>2</sup> J. Jedliński, ‘Naprzeciw obrazów Tomasza Psuji’, [in:] *Tomasz Psuja*, ed. M. Michałowska and T. Psuja, Poznań 2000, 5.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Nazywam swoje prace obrazami, z Tomaszem Psują rozmawia Rafał Jakubowicz’, [in:] *Tomasz Psuja*, exhibition catalogue, The Arsenal Municipal Gallery, Poznań 2000, 51 (51-56).

graphics with printing and achromatic painting on canvas. Black and white prints of previously prepared drawings are put together and glued to the canvas. The result is a flat mosaic, which imitates a faded landscape when viewed from a distance. The material multiplications do not lead to visual monotony. On the contrary, they give a surprising variety of effects. Despite monochromatic colours, these works are characterized by intriguing tonality.

At the exhibition, the paintings of Tomasz Psuja are accompanied by a corresponding painting of Andrzej Kurzawski. Both artists developed their art projects in the same painting studio at the University of Arts in Poznań (the then Academy of Fine Arts), and they both used economical means of expression. Kurzawski's landscape presented in the gallery enters into dialogue with the neighbouring works of Psuja. They share 'temperance, humility, concentration and a lack of superfluity.'<sup>4</sup> Their juxtaposition is not accidental. Regardless of the relationships between both painters, attention should be paid to their common creative pursuits – not always evident at first glance. The works of both artists are 'equally sophisticated in their heavily horizontally or vertically extended rectangular shapes, whereas the artists repeat horizontal landscape motives in nearly mantric concentration. ... They reduce the range of colours to those between white and black. They complement their paintings with pieces of paper, cardboard and tape. ...'<sup>5</sup>

In his curatorial text concerning Andrzej Kurzawski's works, Tomasz Psuja wrote that his colleague's works were 'a testimony to the presence of the absent.'

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<sup>4</sup> An excerpt from the description of the exhibition of Andrzej Kurzawski's works at the Arsenal Municipal Gallery, which took place from 15 April to 11 May 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Tomasz Psuja, 'Pejzaż zewnętrzny, pejzaż wewnętrzny', [in:] Exhibition catalogue: *Kurzawski. Andrzej Kurzawski, Obrazy z lat 2000-2005*, The Arsenal Municipal Gallery, Poznań 2005, 5.

The same can be said today about Tomasz Psuja's paintings presented at the Duża Scena Gallery, University of Arts in Poznań.