

Consuelo Cavaniglia
through the door that holds you

through the door that holds room for you

The room. A room. Rooms. Not taking them for granted. Still. The room you saw Consuelo Cavaniglia's work in was likely not the first room you'd been in that day.

Today. A while back. That. Fading. Day. And even if you didn't wake up in a room, proceed through other rooms, rest a head on the doorway, it is inevitable that as your day 'progressed' you were aware of room-like arrangements impacting on your movements, demands, desires.

Depending on your personal situation. You were subtly helped or hindered, frustrated or liberated.

By how these room-like situations operated on your behalf, against it.

Both, simultaneously? Likely. There are no perfect scenarios.

This is what it means to have agency?

Don't take these statements as a prelude. Too basic.

Don't take them towards a set of proposals about gated communities or governance or frustration tolerance.

Never linger on how they shape the room this life can take under this modernism versus that modernism.

Anyway: do we really believe that if circumstances have the feeling of accommodating us that's an actual positive outcome?

Okay, some of us yes (!) and all of us (!) at some times, in some rooms, where we have all the room we could ever wish for and take up all the space and be loved for it too.

This is fantasy. This is life. They're not separate. Nothing goes away.

Is this the history of fascism or the history of the self?

Both, simultaneously? Likely. There are no perfect scenarios; there is so often overstepping.

This is the grain of at least one current reality.

Lauren Berlant's *The Inconvenience of Other People* will address this. I hope.

It's just been released. Published. Jessica Benjamin had taken it on before.

As had Klaus Theweleit.

Berlant will surely give it the mode of at least one current reality. It's necessary. She died, sadly, and she's of our time. And from her it counts because, well, didn't *Cruel Optimism* kind of predict (if not even conjure up) this era?

I mean, whatever we think of affect as it's loosely employed around us—as an around about us—the tropes Berlant summed up in 2011 snowballed and engorged us; the descriptions became more and more prescient until they took all the room there is.

It saw rooms beyond itself. What 'it'?

Hard to say, save that 'it' is why the optical flickers Cavaniglia stages are thresholds that do not frame moments of liberation and freedom.

Their aesthetic is minimal and optical (but not Op obvs); sumptuous but embedded differently to the work it might be typologically connected to.

Not gonna list names.

Having said that. Precursors.

I kept finding—well, twice I found—the perfect line of poetry that skirts many of these complications.

By way of an allusive contour-mapping: speak, they do, they did, of a release of energy after a period of build-up.

They read like a squeezing, read like a light streaming out and a realisation of how damned compressed we'd been all this long tedious while.

These poems were written decades before 'the pandemic'. Meaning long tedious whiles have been calling on us for quite some time.

As if that were ever in doubt: though to look at all these hot damn social medias fella.

Nor is the fact that poetry won't stand being quoted. Because of copyright infringement, yes.

Also, it's the space around the words being altered in perhaps violent ways that copyright is a warding off of. (Those last three words. Odder than I'd hoped.)

Oh, it's the fact that the room they took—back to the unquoted poem here—has been shifted to a 'standing for'.

In their new execution. Heavy. And not comradery, substitution. A life for a life. A space for a space.

The complications around this breach and overstepping are partly what Cavaniglia's works allusively contour-map. Standing for. I said that.

Standing. Cavaniglia says her forms are person-sized. Playful that. The person. The forms. Playful I guess because we have in mind 'person' in terms of a range and in this very idea of a range is a kind of displacement, a shuffling along, that holds together and that substitutes one shape and space for another and so there's a chain of 'things' and with this an unconscious. She's establishing it between the ground and the sky.

Leaning back on Brancusi's bridging and gathering. Gathering us as this unconscious's figures.

If not its symptoms. One person moves aside for another.

I said that, in the place of, these figures, figuring their perimeters here and beyond.

As perceptual apparatuses, in looking and feeling the limits and non-limits of their-our bodies; a movement carrying us ahead of ourselves: ingratiatingly, shyly, fearfully, wonderingly.

A sense of weight, balance. A sense of colour. Cavaniglia says it is grating. And so, as Unspecific Objects (is this Kaprow's phrase? Run ahead and look it up) they are material manifestations of a transient blur whose structural twins are non-Marfic: say, *Demonlover* and *Inland Empire*.

In those films there is a slipping between realms that are oddly perfectly congruent so there is a shifting of affect *balance* not a building of affect *load* that operates as a series of pulsing (throbbing) interstices where movement carries us ahead of ourselves without release and in place of resolution.

Ingratiatingly. Etc.

There is no *navigating* this.

It makes sense then that Cavaniglia says there is no single point to see her whole arrangement. Because this matches Jameson's notes on the postmodern as an awareness of a totality that evades us.

The complexity of which is now (is it?) too much to bear (is it?) and her holding figures perform something deftly abstracted around loads and torsos and rooms for organs and not being wholly in control and not being able to stand outside the question of the bearing and the load and the burden and the freedom. And its balance.

I hope I've not made this clear!

Statement: an ambiguous meditation on the heft of bodies, what it is to be person-sized, to mimic ourselves as our own occupants, while knowing there is never a proper and true and full occupancy. There's always too much or too little room in ourselves. We need *a*, we need *this* threshold to threaten us.

I should backtrack.

Say that they (these works) stand and hang and hold; and forever slump, and we enter this mix without pre-existing scare quotes around ourselves and our looking makes us recede and memory and association are art of this, or all of it.

Whether we like it or not, know it or not: there is no being present, but there is an impression of labour that is part of their impressionism.

Okay this is not backtracking at all. They create impressions. Sinking, and a slipping that keeps on slipping.

Such that you are not in, or of, a margin. Not bound to *Sliding Door* fates.

The binaries of: if this, that. If; the element of doubt in the binary revealing itself as *producing* time (not its pacified outcome).

I could have had. Each word in that sentence. I. Could. Have. Had.

And time. So, you're in this world where alienation begets time, begets being.

Slipping and slumping, and then you step different.

Eye and footfall. Careful in their collapsing.

Falling outside and around a *Crystal World* horror show. Freezing. Not cold.

Your fractals unfurled, making off into a hallucinatory wildness.

Thinking of outrunning the room you took, the room you're overtaking.

Until you're caught? Fail? Fall, finally? Likely, there are no perfect scenarios, nor airtight rooms. Catching up with you.

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