

WLS : First of all welcome

ET : Thank you

WLS : We want to ask , we spent a lot of time trying to persuade you to have a show with us can you talk about that process, why you took a long time to agree ?

ET : I don't remember did you ask me more than once for a show ?

WLS : Laughter

ET : Actually until now I was not sure that I should have a show.

WLS : Why was that ?

ET : Well my practice has not been very consistent for a few years, I have been doing a lot of things, mostly just trying to make a living doing different types of jobs.

WLS : Yes there is this kind of pressure to have this consistent practice, and to develop this kind of long list of things the 'artist' has been involved in, we think that kind of attitude may have more to do with trying to be an Art Professional and less to do with being an Artist or having a socially relevant practice. Those Jobs that you took were part of a conscious choice that you made at the time, you had funding to continue to some extent without a job and to stay in the art education system but you chose to leave.

ET : Yes I did, things had reached a tipping point for me. For a long time I realised that painting as it is , traditional painting, was not my cup of tea. Just for some background I had graduated from MKE ( Hungarian University of Fine Arts ) I mean I love painting but I have a problem with the art object.

WLS : We would like to return to that question of the art object later. For now as an observation it's interesting that you left your MA degree early and headed into a restaurant. Interesting because we have always suspected that work is very important to you, the idea of some kind of constructive work, as if there is a question there about the process of making an art work, and that as a valid activity of work.

ET : Yes I agree, I am still debating for myself what counts as valid work. There is something in me that thinks only a certain kind of labour can be validated as work and that maybe stems from my class, I come from a working class family. For the last few years I have been on and off with art jobs and cooking jobs, but I have understood now that they don't have to be two conflicting practices.

WLS : You also have just resigned from a painting studio where you worked for high profile British artist , how was that ?

ET : I think that was more practical, I moved so was left with little choice

WLS : We remember when you said “yes” to us and this show, you came back and said “this is my job now, at this moment this is what I do”

ET : I took a bar job once, more as a challenge as I could never see myself doing that , but I did it, I did not love it but I did not hate it either.....I think I might feel the same way about this show.

ET/WLS : LOL !

WLS : Ok moving on we want to ask you about the large wall print, you had mentioned the influence 20th century Hungarian photography has on elements of your practice, you're Hungarian after all, can you talk about the print not your nationality !

ET : George Brassai, Robert Capa, Martin Munkacsi, Andre Kertesz and especially Laszlo Moholy-Nagy these are all Hungarian artists whose work I admire. In respect to the large wall piece here, I took that photo because I was intrigued about the squares in the woman's hands, the motion of those two squares (cushions) appearing in a larger rectangular shape (window) right across the street. I looked at these things as an abstract, I did not care about any social reading, about the women, just the rectangular window and these 2 distorted rectangular shapes. I love abstract modernism, I do tend to see things very stripped down, shapes and colours, that's the kind of photography that I like to do.

WLS : Within WestLane the wall piece takes up a rather dominant position over looking the entire show, is there a specific relationship there with the tables, the food, the scene you have laid out below ?

ET : I did not think that there was, it's an old photo, I have had it for 5/6 years, nothing was intended but if it's there I don't mind, if someone finds a connection, if someone thinks that person is looking down into the space then I have no problem with that.

WLS : We were thinking more of this potential reading of female labour, of matriarchal power, sitting over these tables with food again being a potentially loaded feminine activity, but it's not that is it ?

ET : Well we can talk about femininity but it's not that, it's nothing other than the fact that my gender is female, and unfortunately everything just falls into place \* laughs\* but my interests lay elsewhere. I mean the making of the tables is coming from my desire to paint but I have these problems with the art object as the painting. I mean regular painting.

WLS : Yes I think we agree with that, especially as we got to watch the space evolve, to watch these individual pieces start to come together as a whole and this aesthetic of yours start to impress itself within the space. So these table tops, this dissatisfaction with painting well your paintings, can you talk some more about that, about process, the process of painting as you see it.

ET : I don't want to overplay my dissatisfaction with painting in general, paintings can work for other artists, do work, but maybe they don't work for me. You know you have this blank square in front of you and many options, I mean I am not a good decision maker, well less so in that arena and that is what I struggle with, I mean there are too many things that can go wrong, and well in painting it brings you very close.

WLS : Can you elaborate on that, in fact maybe we should bring the food in here, the making process involved in the production of those things.

ET : Well, in painting everything seems to be just so intuitive everything is down to the moment of making. If I could come up with a method in painting where everything is planned out from the beginning to the end that could be a solution for me, and that is what I have found in the cooking to be more straightforward, I like it when things get made in a production line of some sort.

WLS : Yes well that would allow you to achieve some sense of distance within the making of the work obviously that distance then collapses within the actual presentation of the show. The distance you achieve, if that's what your after, within the production of the work is not the distance experienced by the viewer. This show is not set out to keep the viewer at a distance, its not specifically about that.

ET : Yes, in fact I think I want to achieve the opposite, well the opposite of the distance that I struggle with in the production of the work. I want people who come and see the show to enjoy it. I like the fact that food does not belong to this world of aesthetics (little hand movements) because taste is the most subjective sense, I think. I would even say it is beneath this, because you don't have to go to art school to take it in, everyone can achieve this experience of eating and I think this particular aspect of food makes the work very democratic.

WLS : Smiles\* Ok go on

ET : Well now we are talking about the methodology of painting and the production techniques involved with the making of food I think here actually I should mention the eggs. The reason why I could carry out this work with the eggs with fewer problems is that I helped myself to come up with the programme for it, I said I am only going to paint straight lines or curved lines. It's like a recipe, I mean I used a recipe to make this work, straight or curved lines that's it nothing else.

WLS : Obviously there is a big history of artists using formulas to make works how does that work for you ?

ET : Actually yes my old tutor in Hungary who I love, well who's work I love, Dora Maurer, actually I love her as well, her work since the 70's is based on formulas. I suppose there are lots of influences for me in that particular field , Gabriel Orozco's work that is based on chess steps. ( From the Samurai Tree series, IM (2006), egg tempera on red cedar panel with gold leaf, 21 5/8 x 21 5/8" ) that is another thing that has stuck with me.

WLS : So how do you see your position in relation to those types of practices

ET : Well actually I do not have many paintings like that at all , maybe because I just don't have the rigour to carry out that kind of stuff.

WLS : Yes we agree actually, there is a very kind of gentle approach to the things that you find, you have this confidence to make that step, you find these things and you bring them forward into, well the world of art, you struggle internally with the delivery of making but you do not have any fear to bring those marks, those kinds of marks into the arena of art, there in fact you are very very confident.

ET : Yes maybe , I am just not worried about that 'arena of art' it is not something that troubles me.

WLS : That is something we at WLS are definitely interested in, your disinterest in that. Ok so we just want to ask you about the process of making the food, the production line, we are thinking specifically about authorship here and how the food arrives beyond the opening night, can you say something about that.

ET : I present food here as if I am my own catering service, well not as if, but I do present food as a catering service, that why for me it is irrelevant to talk about authorship, and any way recipes do not have copy rights they are not copyrighted. Also I do not make any claim about the recipes or the food I make here, most of them are not my recipes anyway, they are coming from various sources and just for the record they do not have anything to do with my background either.

WLS : Ok I think we are clearer now, so our suggestion that by asking the gallery to prepare or make some aspects of the food going forward is not an issue of authorship, or highlighting your lack of concerns about whether you as the artist make the food, you're just actually genuinely not concerned about it.

ET : I mean there is going to be food after the show, maybe , sent up here , also made around here by WestLane. I would like to leave the recipes cards here also, for someone to take away. I suppose it is a bit like Sol Le Witt in that sense that he provides the directions , authenticates them and allows you to take those away and produce them.

WLS : Yes no doubt one example of many but in your case you are genuinely happy for people to be able to take those cards away and work from them in the kitchen.

ET : Yes of course

WLS : But the economics of it, this Capitalist notion of monetising labour, of authoring labor, of giving some kind of extended value to it, that is not of interest to you and certainly not something that WLS would be pushing you in a direction to do, after all we opened with the slogan 'Liberty or Death'.

ET/WLS : LOL !

ET : I wanted to tell you something in the beginning because you asked me about the photo and it's relationship to the rest of what I have presented here.

WLS : Go on then, go for it.

ET : This whole show has been built more as a space, I had something in mind that was more like a food establishment, I was dealing with the interior like that, there are a lot of references to that.

WLS : Being flippant, do you mean like the classic big black and white photo of the lady holding a large glass of red wine in front of a big bowl of pasta with a gondola bobbing in the background, something that you see in Zizzi's?

ET : Yes! It works for me more like a decoration in a cafe or a bar, that's why it's a poster and not a print.

WLS : Yes we agree, it is interesting though that the image has this Eastern European flavour to it, and that actually bears no relationship to food as such, well actually maybe it does as we have not seen it yet, in fact maybe that would change the whole interview ! Anyway you are using the same techniques as a restaurant would, to give you a feeling of being transported into a different arena, but in this case it is the arena of your aesthetic.

ET : It's just funny how whatever you do in a gallery....

WLS : Oi ! we are not a gallery we are just a proportion of space !

ET/WLS : LOL !

ET : Ok but you know what I mean it just becomes art, it does not matter what you do how you try to avoid that it get's turned into that. In fact that is my main frustration with this show , I don't want a show I want a restaurant! Can you give me a restaurant?

WLSi : We were wondering actually if we already had ! Seriously though at this moment we are really thinking about what the differences actually are, but we think that is a discussion for another day, let's end now.

ET : Yes I think so, Thanks