

FROM IMAGE TO PERCEPTION

On the development of my artistic position

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At first glance, there seems to be a fundamental break between my earlier underwater work and what I do today. The earlier works were figurative, physical, and in some cases shaped by a strong visual aesthetic. My current work, by contrast, appears reduced, abstract and minimal.

For me, however, this transition is less a break than a consequence. When I feel that I have taken a body of work or a particular visual language as far as I can, I lose interest in repeating it. I am not interested in continuing what is already familiar to me. I am interested in what I do not yet know and have not yet understood. Curiosity and the need to keep learning have therefore always been part of my work.

Looking back, I also recognise that reduction did not begin with my current work. In the underwater works, figures were often isolated, the surrounding space was reduced, and spatial orientation was sometimes suspended.

Light, surface, states of suspension, and the question of how little surrounding information is necessary for an image still to be read spatially were already present. At that time, however, the figure remained at the centre.

Today, it is perception itself. This shift developed over a number of years and is closely connected to the fact that I have come to understand my own aesthetic more clearly. Much of it was intuitive before. Today I can articulate more precisely why certain spaces, structures and situations interest me while others do not.

Living in Portugal has also played an important role in this development. Building a house and engaging intensively with architecture and interior space forced me to think about how I actually want to live and what I want to have around me.

At the same time, I live in a landscape that, outside the summer months, is characterised by expansiveness, quietness and a particular kind of visual restraint.

The lagoon, the light, the large open spaces and the sometimes almost deserted surroundings have sharpened my awareness of space and of the relationship between presence and emptiness.

I became increasingly aware of how strongly I respond to visual noise. I began to understand that, for me, reduction does not mean showing as little as possible or following a minimalist aesthetic. Reduction means concentration.

When visual information is limited, what remains gains significance: an edge, a line, a subtle shift in light, a reflection, or an almost imperceptible difference between two surfaces. This realisation eventually transferred directly into my artistic practice.

Today, I am less interested in what an image shows than in the moment when seeing begins to organise what is seen.

When does a line become a spatial edge? When does a minimal tonal shift create depth? At what point does visual information become something we recognise and can name?

In this sense, I have not moved from figuration to abstraction. I have moved from the subject of the image to perception itself. The reduction that is so clearly visible in my work today was already present before. Over the years, it has simply become more consistent.

What has changed is less my fundamental interest than the point towards which I direct my attention: previously, the figure carried the image. Today, I investigate the process of seeing itself.