

*Soft Edge of the Blade *

The same faculties (senses) that bring us pleasure cause us pain and the same faculty (mind) that plans for our happiness formulates our suffering. Soft Edge of the Blade is an acknowledgement of this seemingly mutually exclusive duality. The soft edge of the blade is no less painful when it cuts but there is a difference and we want to explore this difference by looking at works of artists who may not even posit "violence" as their subject matter.

Soft violence is not the representation of the violence hence it rarely gives in to the politics of representation. It is the presentation of the violence in the metonymy and poetics of the make and the image. It is an invitation to experience the nuances of a concept as it has been experienced by a human subject. Through this arrangement works of an artist as a human subject is seen worthy of exploration and therefore the stereotypical reading of the message is rendered irrelevant.

How does violence manifest softly? Do we even know that it has taken place? Do we need someone to point it out? Aren't we creating it by talking about it? We know that any conceptual treatment of violence runs the risk of dramatizing it. That's why works of art may serve us well here, because they come from another realm of inquiry, one that is beyond conceptualization.

So, the audience of Soft Edge of Violence is invited to not see violence, to even put it aside, when looking at these works. This is a playful invitation. Let us set aside our conceptual, habitual understanding of violence in all its manifestations and simply look. Perhaps in this way we will gain a deeper understanding as to the nature of suffering we see all around us.

Let us NOT see violence where local hero/heroines are abandoned, bloody eyed, by their society • the pain of otherness in a world whose very existence is predicated on othering • subjected to rituals of exorcism • glorification of suicide for a cause • agglomeration of nostalgia in a box • thick layering of magmatic emotions • casting for the comradeship of war • manhandling love • of love on fire • of erasing the undesirable from our lives • of many angels dancing on a pin • of a velvety heritage passed down into the future • of childhood interrupted • of tears turned into stone • of femininity kept behind doors and drapes • of lines that grow so enormous as to dominate our field of vision • of allegorical tales of salvation • of smashed/collapsed/disintegrated faces with bulging eyes • of faceless personaggio in blank expression • of the mischievous incubus of lore • of homework for long winter nights • of great heroes long lost to sleep • of primitive masks glossed in sophistication.