

LUX WAX

DRS MONIEK PETERS,
CURATOR AT MUSEUM DORDRECHT

What Micha Patiniott wants to show is almost impossible to do in the art of painting. He seeks to show things – usually a body part or object – just when a manipulation causes it to change shape and meaning.

Take the painting of an elbow in an ever so slightly unnatural position, or that of a beam of light illuminating an object which itself produces light. Deformations like these often recur in his work. When something enters a different state, it assumes a different shape and, as a result, a new meaning. It would be easier to show this transformation in a video, occurring over time, but Patiniott tries to do so in a single painted, still image. He wants to present the object in both positions simultaneously: the shape in which it occurs to him as well as the new shape caused by the manipulation or action.

As an example, look at the painting *Lux Wax* (Schrödinger's Torch).¹ A flashlight illuminates some candles that have just been put out: candles, giving light or not, illuminated or not, static or dynamic. Patiniott wants the viewer to see these different modes of being coexisting, without choosing between either 'on' or 'off'.

On some level, the materiality of paint bothers him. He would want to represent his ideas in a matterless way, but he is stuck with the membrane of paint. At the same time he likes its physical nature. He uses a type of primer which makes his canvas highly absorbent, causing the paint to soak into it deeply and take on a translucent nature. His canvases are often left bare at the edges - so the paint doesn't sit on it like a veil - in pursuit of further translucency.

A loose and frivolous style of painting and absurd and humorous images characterize Patiniott's work. He doesn't seek to trowel on the comedic nature, however, and strongly dismisses the notion that his art is narrative, preferring to call it 'performative'. Yet, it will always present images suggestive of stories.

(This text was published in the catalogue accompanying the exhibition 'What's Up' - De Jongste Schilderkunst In Nederland at Museum Dordrecht, 2011)



¹ *Lux Wax* (Schrödingers' Torch) — 2019 / 2011, oil on linen, 50 x 60 cm