

Betty Nigianni

Betty Nigianni is committed to her artistic practice. I met her in 2010 on the summer program at the Slade School of Fine Art, London, when teaching an advanced painting course, *Drawing into Painting II*. Initially it was Betty's ability to enmesh theoretical ideas with decisions taken in the studio that struck me. While the overall aim of the course was to help each student develop his or her individual ideas, the students started with workshop-based activities. In these Betty stood out as someone having an insatiable curiosity and an open mind. She was willing for her preconceptions to be challenged yet showed an independent spirit. Under imposed restrictions she produced some remarkable work demonstrating sensitivity: for example, colour relationships and an attention to edges, and also her choice of materials, each with a nuanced relationship to ideas. It was clear that in the studio she was drawing on her broad experience from other fields, in particular considerations of space – architectural, urban and the body – and bringing these to bear on the physical work with materials.

In the latter part of the course Betty flourished. Always open to experimentation, she exhibited exceptional drive as she utilised a variety of strategies according to the different ideas she wished to explore. Her interest in duration soon became evident as cinematic, dance and literary influences emerged. She started to incorporate her personal approach to materials developing her own performative methods using her body. She would continually engage in discussions about the relationship of philosophical thought to artistic practice and it became apparent that writing had a special importance for her. Having read some of her texts I am impressed not only by her original contribution but also by the eloquent articulation of the ideas.

Since meeting Betty I have been in constant contact and observed her resolve to carry her artistic practice forward. She takes her work seriously on a personal level as well as having an ambition to make a significant cultural contribution. I believe that she is at the right moment in her artistic life to embark on an MFA. She would be a real asset to such a course and I recommend her to you very strongly indeed.



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