

## interview: elke reis



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

### Interview: Elke Reis

Luca Curci talks with the artist **Elke Reis** during **CONSCIOUSNESS of ANIMA MUNDI festival 2017** in **VENICE**.

**Elke Reis** is a **German artist** currently living in **Munich**. She was always connected to art – as a child she was stunned by the drawings of her father. He was a talented graphic artist but decided not to go into art – growing up in a poor family under miserable circumstances during the last years of World War II he couldn't even consider being an artist. But his love and his talent to draw influenced the artist's life more than she'd thought. The artist was longtime busy with her family and her job. She loves educating and teaching kids. But her deep passion for art never diminished. The opportunity to take a sabbatical leave and the adventure of trying out a life in California was a welcome break to deepen this love. "I felt like walking a new path – doing a few steps not knowing where it will lead me. I've discovered my old love and I nourish it now with all my heart. I realized what I've missed for so long – focusing on figure, shape and color, approaching and sculpting the essence of the human being with paint." Meandering from figurative expressionism to pure formalism, her recent work became more and more abstract and reduced. In her actual paintings she explores various nuances of the color black and the interplay with the light on the canvas. Sometimes there is still an idea of a landscape or a figure in her paintings but only vaguely suggested. With the nearly monochrome black canvas she tries to create an infinite space and to go beyond the limits of the canvas. **Elke Reis** moved back to **Munich, Germany**, several years ago. Her artwork has been shown locally and internationally and is represented in several private collections throughout **Europe** and **USA**.



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

**Luca Curci – How do you find creative inspiration?**

**Elke Reis** – Try to walk through life with open eyes and you'll be inspired by anything around you. It is the world around me and my response to it that gives inspiration to me. I get my ideas from nature, from the urban environment I am living in, sometimes from photographs I took by myself or found in newspapers and magazines. Sure, in the beginning there is a conceptual process about the composition of colors and forms. But sometimes when working on a painting or object the work itself inspires me to alter the concept.



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

**L.C. – What is the most challenging part about creating your artworks?**

**E.R.** – I am an abstract artist but my work is not only about forms, lines and material. For me it is more about exploring the human mind and soul. This is the most challenging part I can think of when creating art: to cause my viewers to stop and reflect, even get lost in perception and sometimes contemplation, to leave behind all distractive, narrative or descriptive content and to create feelings of tranquility and balance.



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

**L.C. – Do you agree with our vision of art and what you think about the theme of the festival?**

**E.R. –** Yes, definitely. I am fascinated by your idea to bring together and support artists from all over the world and to help them by promoting their art and artists career in the international stage. The theme of the festival ANIMA MUNDI and especially the theme CONSCIOUSNESS is very connected to the conception of my work. According to the great American artist Marc Rothko: it is all about us, our feelings, our emotions, our soul.



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

**L.C. – In which way the artwork presented in our exhibition is connected with the festival's theme?**

**E.R. –** The artwork I submitted for the CONSCIOUSNESS – ANIMA MUNDI festival is titled "Black Box", it is filled with memories (photo negatives from the past) like our heart, our soul is filled with conscious and unconscious memories. They make us the person we are today, they determine our perception and our attitude.



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

**L.C. – What role does the art have in society?**

**E.R. –** Every culture has art. Like language it is a medium to express ideas and to understand and share our individual and shared history. We need art to express ourselves, it gives us identity, makes us complete human beings. We need art to keep connected to each other. And we need art to create our reality and to design a counter-concept for modern society.



Image courtesy of Elke Reis

**L.C. – What is your idea about It's Liquid Group?**

**E.R. –** It is the first time I work with It's Liquid Group and I am very impressed how efficient and helpful they are. I like the inspiring diversity of events and themes and the high professionalism of the staff. I definitely love to do more cooperations in the future!