

Audibly Visually Miniature

“Miniatures” is a series of 9 video intermezzos intended for interstitial broadcast on arts-oriented TV channels (as if such a thing really existed). It received its world premier screening at the Prix Visionica TV festival in Wroclaw, Poland.

When in 2006 I saw some new paintings my friend Alexander Gorlizki was exhibiting at Joost van den Bergh’s gallery in Jermyn Street, London, I asked him what were the chances of my getting hold of some of the pieces for a couple of days. I wanted to take them to Ken Morse’s rostrum camera studio.

The timing was tight as they were to be delivered immanently to a gallery in Germany, but Alexander knew Ken Morse’s work from a previous collaboration and agreed without hesitation.

As I sat watching Ken at work I hazarded a guess that there has been no other human being in the world who ever pointed his camera at as many works of art in his lifetime. Smiling, Ken acknowledged the likelihood that this was true. His renowned ability to animate visual art for the medium of television has made him a household name in the UK, even though most people have no idea what a rostrum camera is.

The paintings I had brought along were miniature masterpieces – conceived and created by Alexander, while integrating the immeasurably fine brushwork textures of traditional Rajasthani miniatures painter Riyaz Uddin.

Ken’s camera explored and devoured Alexander’s works with a matchless sensitivity and elegance. The footage he produced demanded an outstanding musical setting, and I could think of nothing more perfectly suitable than Howard Skempton’s exquisite, crystalline piano pieces interpreted with great delicacy, poise and immaculate restraint by John Tilbury. When the composer readily gave the project his unreserved blessing, only one thing remained to be done. I needed to put the whole thing together in a way that would do justice to the excellence of everyone’s contribution.

I’ve done my very best to cut these sequences with due attention to the form, texture and lyricism of Alexander’s artwork, while melding the organic fluidity of Ken’s camerawork with the limpid perfection of the musical structures. My intention in “Miniatures” is to suspend, albeit briefly, the passage of televisual time.

It’s my sincere hope that viewers will be able to taste the extraordinary pleasure I’ve derived from this work. I am deeply grateful to everyone who has taken part.

Richard Coldman
Wroclaw, December 2009