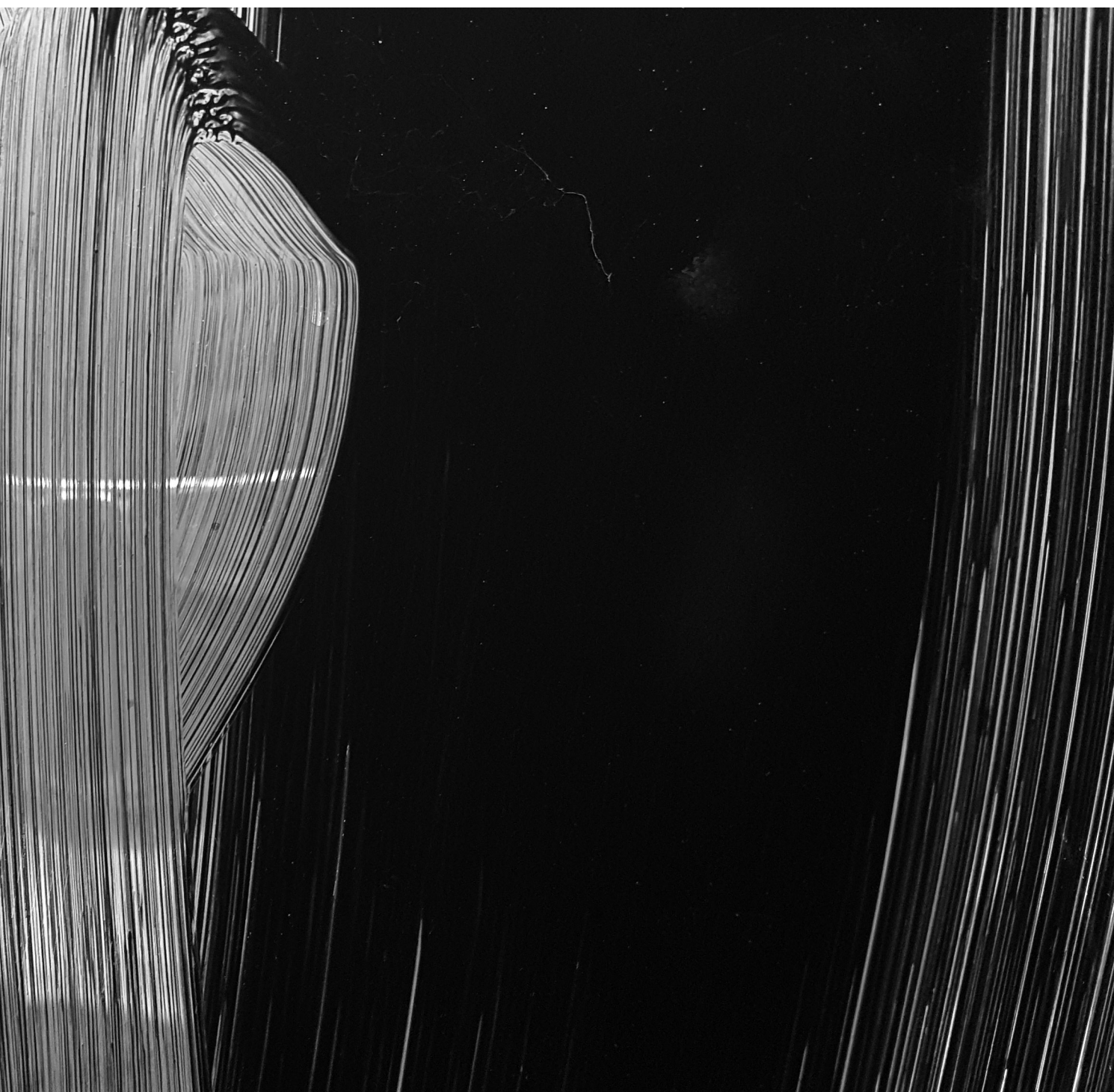
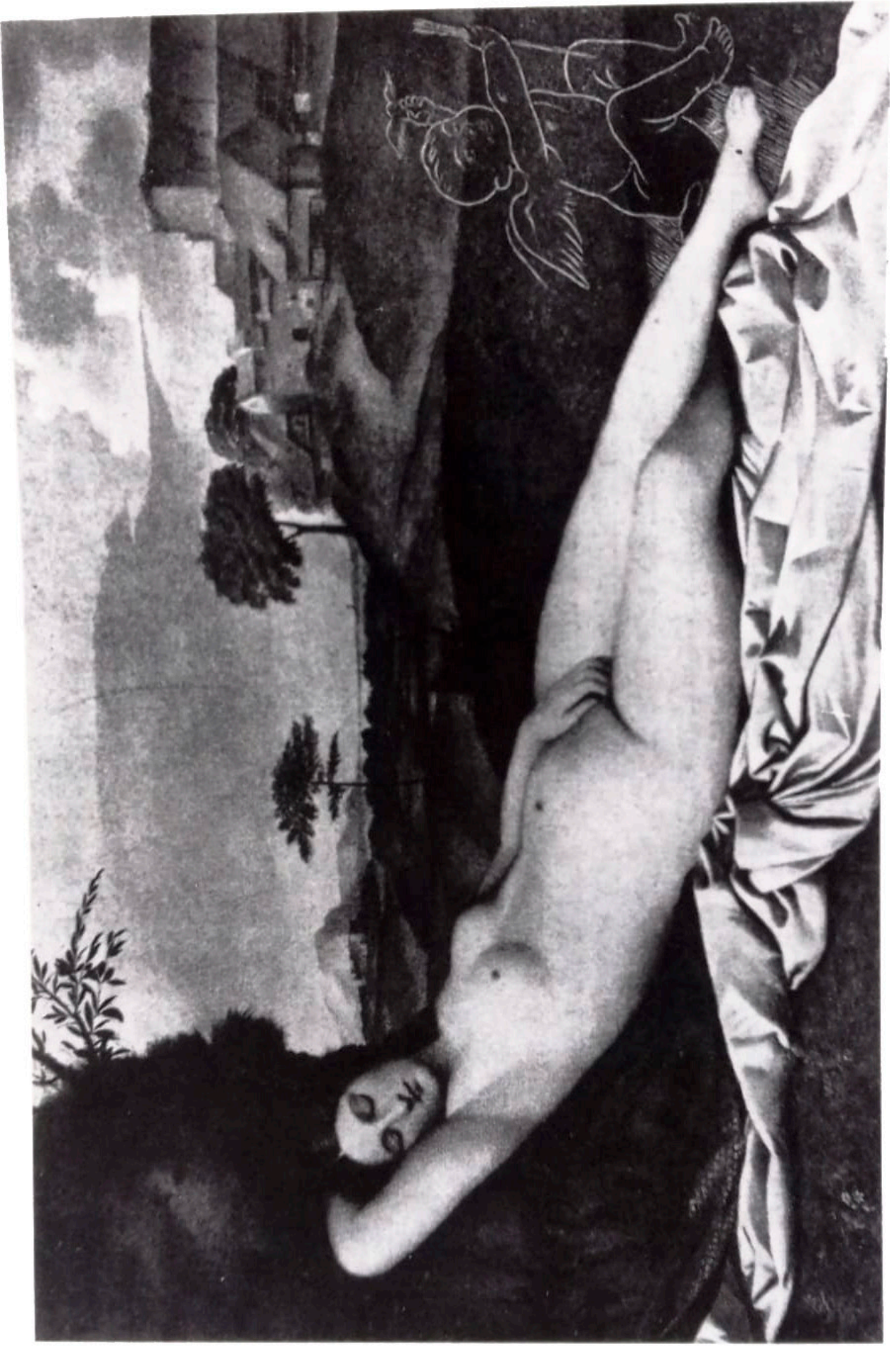


PRIMEIRA FUTUROSPPECTIVA



Stephan Dillemath



O Mundo: Soon you have an exhibition 'Primeira Futurospectiva' at Uma Certa Falta de Coerência in Porto, please let us know your plans.

Dillemuth: No, I am sorry.

O Mundo: Do you not know what you will do there?

Dillemuth: I have a few vague ideas.

O Mundo: We heard that you wanted to use a Giorgione painting?

Dillemuth: Yes. It is the "Sleeping Venus", also called "The Dresden Venus", because it is in the collection there...

O Mundo: Is it the one you "copied" in your early days?

Dillemuth: Yes, in 1985. Now I became interested in it again, in the original painting.

O Mundo: Why is this picture important for you?

Dillemuth: I kind of like it. Its perfect in terms of confidence, trust and tranquility.

O Mundo: Why so?

Dillemuth: The so-called "Venus" rests in the lower center of the image, fast asleep and naked. There are, in my view, no erotic or seductive undertones in that nudity. It is a self-conscious and yet innocent nakedness of the body. The scene is set in a cultivated landscape, there is a village, a farm or a factory nearby, and a castle a bit further down in the middle ground. The body seems to be a respected part of that civilization...

O Mundo: .. or in contrast to it?

Dillemuth: .. nevertheless respected. Once it is respected it is already a part of it. I find it important that the nude body is not just seen as "nature", quasi immersed in an idyllic garden Eden that might be set in contrast to an unhinged world; nor is the body caged in a palace, privatized and owned by someone, as a

kind of trophy or an erotic treasure.

O Mundo: There is a lot of criticism these days of the male gaze, abuse of and in power relations and cultural appropriation.

Dillemuth: Yes, that approach is important. Moreover, I find it interesting that authorship of the painting got smudged. Allegedly Giorgione's painting was finished in large parts by his student Titian. When the painting ended up in Dresden around 1800, it was so damaged that an unknown restorer decided to take the little angel away that rested at the feet of the figure. This is how the picture got modernised.

O Mundo: Almost in the center of the picture we can see a tree stump. Maybe the tree got felled when the putto was removed?

Dillemuth: I would leave it up to a psychologist to interpret this as a symbol of castration. But let me finish... no matter how many authors, the painting is placed in the "Venus" topos. Obviously we could speculate about "Venus" and "Eros", performance of both, model, castration, author- and ownership. However, it is the lack of eros that I see.

O Mundo: We could ask ourselves if this is an allegory, a person or "just" a body?

Dillemuth: I see a body in its very own right. I see a body that is in a way autonomous, neither naturalized nor owned, an untouched naked body, fast asleep. But the body is not drifting into dreamland, rather the opposite: Sleep enhances the nudity of the body and its contingent vulnerability. We could see that as a confrontation of the vulnerable human being with its environment, but then would there not be alertness and maybe a look to the imagined observer of the scene? But here, the sleep, the inward view of the figure, the tranquility of the scene, its concentration and the absolute lack of any disturbance shows the figures trust in its environment. Despite the nearby settlement the person is naked and even sleeps! So there is trust and confidence in this relationship between the individual and its civilization. That is my future perspective.



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