

Dalit Gurevich



"The Bath", 1998
acrylic and oil on wood
40" x 56"



"CMT", 2000
acrylic, oil and photography on wood
20" x 14"



"Little Red Riddinghood", 1998
acrylic, oil, charcoal and level on wood
40" x 28"

by **Tom Brumley**

Dalit Gurevich mimes the motions of her friend's insistent mania. She describes his religious obsession, the way he handed out his money to people living on the streets, his trickling loss of self – recognition, and his slow descent into madness. I'm looking at *The Bath*, 1998, and Dalit is talking about the complex family relationships that drive her project. In this painting, Dalit and her relative are together in a green bathtub surrounded by uneven, multi-colored tiles and cloud-like water. Her blue eyes mirror the blue of the bath water and suggest the submerged family narrative below the painted wood surface. The skewed perspective hints at instability, and the little, yellow, rubber duckie may represent the emergence of a new identity born of this very encounter. Dalit paints her kinsman in transparent mustachioed stereo. I see two perspectives, two potential uncles, two conversations, two obsessions, and two religions. Gurevich often shares these personal dualities and private relationships with the viewer. She mines the sympathetic so that I can see her losses, her failures, her triumphs, and her family.

Photography: **Sarah Small** >



She paints her self-portraits with a heavy intuitive hand and renders her own face honestly and directly. There she is, staring up at me... I am not sure of her true identity. Is she a child? Is she a fiction? The answers lie in a closer look at the work. In *CMT*, 2000, Dalit paints herself as a troubled pregnant child limping in the direction of her loving parental unit. She shows me a childlike body topped off by her adult face. Her gray foot is in the foreground. Her genetic tribe is lurking in the negative space... they are the ones who passed on this disease to her body. She is sharing her loss and showing me the internal child confusion. Her pregnancy hints of a new beginning, but it is not plausible with such a young girl. She must be a child... with the consciousness of an adult. Her painting often highlights this child / adult dialectic within.



"Bobe", 1998
acrylic on wood
40"x 28"



"Debi", 1998
acrylic, charcoal and collage on wood
40"x 32"



"The bride", 1997
acrylic and photography on wood
40"x 28"



Each self-portrait is based on a real event, but many fictions are layered on top of this real event to create a quasi-real representation of the self. In *Little Red Riddinghood*, 1998, Dalit is looking directly at me. Her face is rendered in a raw, emotional style that emphasizes her eyes. She tells me that the yellow carpenter's level is a phallic symbol on one hand and a metaphor for balance on the other. She has placed herself in the middle of a Freudian fairy tale! This part child - part adult creature in acrylic paint keeps going back to the quest for the emotional "gain" in the physical loss. By sharing her personal struggle with CMT, her lineage, or her internal balance in *Little Red Riddinghood*, Dalit asks for my empathy and tries to increase my sensitivity.

Dalit works in a cathartic style similar to Frida Kahlo, Alice Neel, Lucian Freud, and Francis Bacon. She calls her time in the studio a "likeable struggle" and enjoys every minute of the creative process. She likes to tell the stories of women's everyday lives. Her ideas twist and turn around the notion of a struggle to identify the true self. This self is in danger of being lost to religion, insanity, or family dysfunction. *Bobe*, 1998, shows me a delightful little girl on a swing with her strong cousin. She looks like an elegant misfit warming up for her evening show as she swings in twitching ecstasy. *Deby*, 1998, delves into a personal friendship that was lost to religious obsession. Deby lost her mind to religious fanaticism. Dalit used parts of a Hebrew bible to create a decorative collage in the background that indicates Deby's internal orthodox dialogue. *The Bride*, 1997, shows a grotesque, multi-breasted woman with a crooked neck and the power of a rabid she-wolf. She's the mother, soon to be wed, getting ready to feed her hungry family of babies. Once again identity has morphed into a new incarnation and the cycle of life repeats...