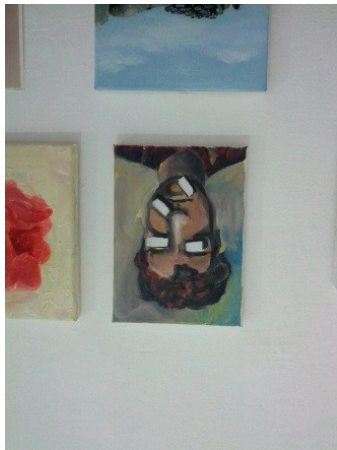




**DP:** *Is it important to you whether you use photography or painting?*

**GE:** That's a very good question. I believe in the equality between photography and painting. It's all in how you read it. As Roland Barthes said: "books are only read not written", (so) pictures are only seen, not made. So in a way there is also the question of what images *don't* do, in the sense that our mind creates them. Photographic reproductions are made of ink and painting of paints, there's no figuration or abstraction there. The picture actually doesn't exist. That's very interesting to me. I am not really interested in the individual pictures; I am interested in the spaces they create, with the exception of this one, the Gellu Naum picture (image below). This one is physically important, I can't really explain why. I have taken an image of a cover of his book "Autopoem" from 1940, where you see his face, eyes closed and bits of paper covering his eyes and the area around his mouth. I have painted over it and also introduced its painted replicas in the show.



*Painting by Giles Eldridge after Gellu Naum's "Autopoem" 1940, in "The Sea (a sea)", Exhibition View, 2016*

**DP :** *How do you perceive the work here in this exhibition space (that is also Suzana Dan's studio)? Has it changed for you from how it seemed in your own studio?*

**GE:** To me it's important to understand the physical transition from studio to exhibition space; I enjoy the process of making the installation in the exhibition space, and thus extending the studio space. I think the work says something different in each of them. There is a quality of *wateriness* that I try to follow, a quality of it not being easily contained. That raises the question of whether it should always be all works together or not or whether they can stand on their own as individual works or groups. To me it is important that they should be shown together, but they could also be shown separately. I don't have a recipe of how they should *always* be shown. It's a continuous process.

**DP:** *Do you sometime feel that someone else made the work, or that you don't remember actually making it?*

**GE:** Yes, sure, there is the question of having a distance from the work once it's on the wall. I don't know, can you really forget it's your work? There is this anecdote of the English painter Malcolm Morley, a "painter's painter" who apparently started crying in a documentary film about his work, when he saw a tonal painting from his youth. The entire memory of that time in his life came back to him, everything he had put in that painting, and then the time elapsed from then probably made it a very emotional moment for him.



*"Crete" by Malcolm Morley, 1984*

**DP:** *Does it ever happen to you that you feel happy when you look at one of your works?*

**GE:** Well, *happy* is a bit strong, but yes, I sometimes look at works later on and say: "this is interesting!"

**DP:** *OK, could you share some thoughts about your process of making art?*

**GE:** Yes, the thing is I can't just *do it* (the work), there's always 3 stages of the work I make:

1. I make work and throw it away
1. I make work and do not throw it away yet
2. I make work and I show it

And then there's the question of constructing a methodology, and having a starting point, for example the idea of making abstract painting, and then building from that. You want to make abstract painting, then you think of how to make it, then you think maybe you don't just paint an abstract painting; maybe you use other kind of imagery and so on. The idea is to not replicate your own work from before, but to build on it. For example

George Shaw literally replicates a photograph in a painting. I like Philip Guston because he was successful with abstraction and then he changed his work, and he lost friends because of that.



*"Scenes from The Passion: The Cop Shop" by Georg Shaw, approx. 1997*



*"Painter's Head" by Philip Guston, 1975*

**DP:** *What about the use of analog imagery in this show? It all seems to pre-date or maybe ignore the digital era? You use printed images from art and nature books, and then your own painting made from these type of books. Can you talk a little bit about that?*

**GE:** Yes, that's a good point; there are no digital images in the show. It has been pointed out to me before. But I think we are all operating in a digital space and to introduce a kind of metaphor, you don't have to drive a car to acknowledge its presence. I think anything that happens in this (analog) work happens in digital work as well. I use digital tools such as laptop and I pad, I don't use a smartphone or any kind of mobile phone though. I think the more you are connected to machinery, the more you are in *that* space, the more you are denied others' physically. You are denying yourself in the environment and it's a kind of self-harm or suicide. It's de-sensitising and de-subjectifying your

experiences, so I try to limit that as much as I can. Perhaps this is where the so called analog images come from. In terms of the *contemporariness* of the work, I think it is just obvious *when* something is made, even if it doesn't use the latest technologies or aesthetics. It's like saying that carrots are less contemporary than other vegetables. It's ridiculous.



*Images in "The Sea (a sea)", including a diptych, 2016*

**DP:** *You mentioned the importance of space in your work, although you are using 2D images, not sculpture or installation as such..*

**GE:** Yes, what I am always interested in is creating space where you can come in and read the information outside of cultural forms. I think in terms of space, illusionist space, physical space, psychological space. I don't prioritize, there's all these different types of space.

**DP:** And is your work poetic in any way? Does it operate in terms of poetry, of non-linear, non-rational thought processes?

**GE:** It might be poetic, yes, but not as methodology, I don't think you can be poetic intentionally. But yes, poetic maybe in the sense of misunderstanding, or confusion or delays in reading. I think I like the idea of people misunderstanding my work.

*As mentally recorded and slightly edited, September 2016, Bucharest.*