

Alexandra Noel

Table

9.06 — 23.07.2022

In her painting, Alexandra Noel seems to deploy all the conventions for the depiction of our everyday lives in a style which is not hyper-figurative, but hyper-visual, forever leaning towards an exaggeration of the visual field, be it microscopic or macroscopic, while also being ready to stretch over an approximate 180-degree angle. And this work is even akin to an attempt at an extreme perception of objects and environments in an analytical re-transcription. Light plays an important role here and often creates the impression of being artificial, as if the scene were a film set just before a shoot.

In its very close framing, *Hamish Handles* aims at a play of *trompe-l'oeil* around doors with false handles. *Horse Milk*, which depicts a mare's udder, creates a clinical and organic resonance, thanks to its shading of grey, white and pink. The double-take from *Cutting Pieces from the Bread* takes the form of a timeless user's manual, detached from its original action. *Split Double Pop* evokes those sorbets whose two-tone configuration means that they can be separated before being shared. A moment that needs to be successfully managed so as not to spoil a child's pleasure. A horse, ice cream and bread to be sliced are not banal elements. They are objects with a strong affective charge, linked to memories which may just as well be personal, collective, or cinematic... Such is the disturbing side of Alexandra Noel's work – her analytic painting is above all intimate. And it also takes on a clearly poetic aspect. *A Knife on High Seas*: the knife used to cut the bread becomes a wave, in the distance, a wave of paint which is rather reminiscent of Kanagawa's iconic big wave. *Oranges Falling in Between Train Cars*: the connecting accordion pleats between two moving train cars become a field of gravity, hung up for some oranges which have come from heaven knows where. *You Started it (Food Fight II)* is a perfectly aligned arrangement of tables where a food-fight starts up, materialised by minuscules touches of lively paint. Like notes in dissonant music, they also structure with infinite grace such landscapes as *Under the Table (Sea)*. The space beneath a table here becomes a refuge, a playground, or an improvised sea, on which floats a piece of cake which has fallen from the upper level. *Skyscape Under Table* plays on another element: the sky, provisionally imprisoned by this gravity-defying sculpture. *Seafood Tower* and *Seafood Tower Returns to Sea* takes culinary items and then depicts them with the immersed reality of cooking. *Big Painting* is a miniature reproduction of the gallery, containing a single large painting, as a fiction inside a fiction. Which then continues with *Thirty Stuffed Grape Leaves Visit the Louvre*, a work linked to the most recent story published by Alexandra Noel, *Thirty Stuffed Grape Leaves*, evoking both a treasure map and a veduta from 18th-century Venice. Just like *Mouth Landscape*, an oral-dental topographical view.

Crèveœur

There is in Noel a singular contrast between immediacy and the vision of a canvas, accentuated by her tiny formats and the care paid to each painting, whose edges are lacquered. There is also here an irreverent synthesis of several art histories, as varied as the Surrealism of Yves Tanguy, the Pop Art of Wayne Thiébaud, the Neo-Geo of Peter Halley, or the comix of Lee Lozano... When faced with visual habits grown replete from our new digital practices, Alexandra Noel's approach opens our eyes: it is like a harmonious conviction overcoming doubts, or a welcome strangeness overwhelming traditions. As when – in *Church Steeple Ice Cream Cone* – we find ourselves tasting an ice cream whose bright pink scoop is by chance perfectly lined up with a centuries-old steeple looking down on us.

Alexandra Noel (born in 1989 in Columbus, USA) lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. Her various personal exhibitions include — Derosia (Bodega), New York; Antenna Space, Shanghai; Atlantis, Marseille; Freedman Fitzpatrick, Paris. She was featured in numerous institutional shows — Office Baroque, Antwerp; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (*Made in L.A. 2020: a version*); X Museum, Beijing amongst others. She is invited to participate in *FRONT International Triennial*, Cleveland, 2022.