

gatekeepers | natacha donzé

10 March – 15 April 2023

In her first solo show *gatekeepers* at max goelitz in Berlin, Natacha Donzé refers to political, social and cultural structures that manifest themselves in the architecture of public spaces, as well as through information transfers. The title *gatekeepers* metaphorically describes the manifold activities that control or restrict access. This includes the influence of people as well as digital search engines (algorithmic exclusion), firewalls (geo-fenced information), social structures (institutions), hazardous material containment vessels or physical manifestations of virtual space (border walls).

In the paintings created for the exhibition, Donzé takes up architectural elements such as doors and portals, which act as social barriers through their delimiting characteristics and at the same time offer opportunities to enter other realities. Using air-brush techniques, Donzé builds multilayered and atmospheric paintings that become portals themselves.

The artist allows various iconographies to merge in her paintings, referencing images from political contexts, historical encyclopedias, science fiction, religion, as well as mystical phenomena, superimposing them without hierarchy. By referring both to the physical barrier of gates and *gatekeepers* and to the increasing shift into virtual realms, Donzé allows time horizons to flow into each other and highlights the diversity of gatekeeping. Natacha Donzé approaches this subject through painting, creating an exhibition that unveils new dimensions, raises questions about temporality, corporeality, and power, and demonstrates how these issues play out in physical space, as well as through digital information transfer.

The exhibition follows the artist's 2022 residency in Berlin, which was funded by the Swiss Department for Education, Youth and Culture.

Natacha Donzé (*1991 in Boudevilliers, CH) deconstructs power structures of institutional, political and commercial systems of our time by taking up fragments of these orders and embedding them in her visual worlds without hierarchy. She combines pop culture quotes, such as architectural elements from films, with scientifically influenced images and brings them to the canvas by means of meticulous brushwork and air brush technique. Instead of treating the surface as an interface to the illusory pictorial space, the focus shifts to the surface of the canvas, on which, in turn, dimensionless spaces unfold. In strong color, the artist explores the influence of humans on their environment and creates interfaces between our own reality and an imaginary representational space in her paintings.

In 2018, Natacha Donzé was awarded the Young Artist Prize of the Museum of Art in La Chaux-de-Fonds, which is awarded as part of the Biennale of Contemporary Art. Solo exhibitions of the artist have been shown most recently at Kunst(Zeug)Haus in Rapperswil-Jona (2022), Musée des Beaux-Arts in La Chaux-de-Fonds (2021), as well as at parliament gallery in Paris (2020) and Unit110 in New York (2018). In 2019, the artist also received the Kiefer Halblitzel Prize for Young Artists, and her work was exhibited at CAPC in Bordeaux and at the Swiss Art Award in Basel.

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