

Jeanette Mundt
God Told Him to Wait
 September 8 - October 21, 2023

Société is pleased to present *God Told Him to Wait*, Jeanette Mundt's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Mundt's dynamic, formally omnivorous practice freely taps a variety of input, ranging from art historical references to personal photographs. Reworking and repurposing motifs from sources as diverse as Odilon Redon, illuminated manuscripts, medieval tapestries, Wade Guyton, and Matthias Grünewald, Mundt's recent paintings eschew adhering to an individual style in favor of a poly-aesthetic approach. Two ongoing currents in Mundt's practice come to the fore in this exhibition: an interest in painting elements in motion, such as fire and light, and bringing art historical imagery into new configurations that explore the ambiguous space between how we consume images in everyday life and art. Her richly seductive works, which construct images from multiple sources, speak to questions of painting, depiction, correction, and construction. The mood of these works—which are in turns contemplative, sensual, foreboding, and celestial—respond to the rage and rapture that pervade a cultural moment marked by climate change, the rise of religious extremism, and the curtailment of women's rights.

Art historian Bettina Funcke describes the first two decades of the twenty-first century as being shaped by what she calls a "culture of inflammation"—an era marked by the rapid development of technology, the lost utopia of global connection, and the polarization of autocracy and resistance. A chronic sense of social inflammation, she contends, leads to a kind of systemic overdrive that comes from being connected at all times. Yet inflammation, as Funcke writes, is also part of the body's immune function, "a way to protect ourselves, to stave off infections or damage to tissue."¹ Jeanette Mundt's individual paintings avoid offering direct commentary on social and political issues but read in relation to one another they nonetheless absorb and reconfigure the conflicting currents that shape their time. In *God Told Him to Wait*, Mundt oscillates between figuration and abstraction, between the bodies of women and those of animals, between religious iconography and the language of the glitch—a tendency that Funcke describes in Mundt's work as *defocalizing*: letting things in, trying out different perspectives, aesthetics, and approaches, which allows her works to "flicker with flexibility and vulnerability."² Painting, or more precisely looking at painting has the capacity to create new worlds. It can induce an urge to identify in the viewer, which is undercut by the medium's own hermeticism. Difficult painting refuses, it resists easy assimilation and pat answers.

Jeanette Mundt (b. 1982, United States) lives and works in New York. Her solo exhibition at TANK Shanghai opens in November 2023. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions internationally at venues including the New Museum, New York; G2 Kunsthalle, Leipzig; Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster; Musée d'art Contemporain, Bordeaux; David Zwirner, New York; Company, New York; Overduin and Co., Los Angeles; Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York; Bridget Donahue, New York. Her work has been included in the 2019 Whitney Biennial, as well as the group exhibitions *The Rest*, Lisson Gallery; *The Vitalist Economy of Painting* curated by Isabelle Graw at Galerie Neu, Berlin; *Painting: Now and Forever, Part III*, Matthew Marks and Green Naftali, New York; *Sputterances*, Metro Pictures, New York.

1 Bettina Funcke, "Defocalizing: Don't just give me figuration, please!"
 2 Ibid.