

Checklist

Artist: Tatjana Danneberg

Title: *Better Small Talk*

Venue: LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina, Kosovo

Dates: 08.11.2023–27.01.2024

Photo credit: LambdaLambdaLambda

All photos: Courtesy of the Artist and LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina

1_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24 - 10_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24

Exhibition view, Tatjana Danneberg, *Better Small Talk*, LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina, 2023–2024

2a_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, *Blissfully Unaware*, 2023

Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

2b_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, *Sun Drawing*, 2023

Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

3a_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, *I Guess I'm Just a Little Too Sensitive*, 2023

Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

4a_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, *Crowd of One*, 2023

Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas, 60 x 40 cm

5a_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, *Induction*, 2023

Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas, 150 x 100 cm

5b_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, *Mythology of Success*, 2023

Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas
150 x 100 cm

8a_TD_bst_LLL_2023-24.jpg

Tatjana Danneberg, Contort Yourself, 2023
Ink-jet print, gesso, pigments, glue on canvas, 120 x180 cm

Press release

Better Small Talk - Tatjana Danneberg

I know a kid. It's my daughter. She has just discovered that language is a game, that language itself is the medium of thinking and that thinking is not bound to reality. She says different things as a test, to see what happens, and what the reactions will be from those around her. She says: "A bird came and scratched my nose with a fork". The event is a past moment and now she is retelling it to us. She describes how the scene unfolded at kindergarten. Only the mark on her nose remains as a sign of the incident. The bird with the fork flies outside of the picture.

Ludwig Wittgenstein writes: *It would be odd to say: "A process looks different when it happens from when it doesn't happen." Or "A red patch looks different when it is there from when it isn't there—but language abstracts from this difference, for it speaks of a red patch whether it is there or not."*

Between language and reality, words become something more than a semantic representation of the objects and phenomena they describe. The meaning of words are not generally determined, they are negotiated. Wittgenstein calls this "a language game", the context in which we utter words colors our reading of them - In Tatjana Danneberg's work, scenes are created that reflect this phenomenon, namely the one between the figuration of reality and the abstracting effect of language itself.

The exhibition lends its title from *Better Small Talk*, a self-help book by conversation coach Patrick King, providing advice on how to "talk to anyone, avoid awkwardness, generate deep conversations, and make real friends". There seems to be a desire for such advice in our current networked society, where technological advancements and shifts in communication methods have left many feeling ill at ease in basic social interactions. Presence, with each other, or in any given moment, is contested, fragmented by "communication parasites", to use a term from the late Mark Fisher.

At the basis of the exhibition's seven works are photographs, in which the attention is directed towards ambivalent scenes from Danneberg's everyday life, caught by the artist's poetic sensibility. On top of the photograph, the artist allows the painting to direct these scenes, the color sweeps in decisive gestures, like waves over the canvas, spread out in fields of restful impenetrability.

The act of painting in Danneberg's work oscillates between accentuating and hiding the photographs that make up their base layer, it embraces, enhances, overlaps, confuses and deconstructs. As a result, reality is expressed in two different layers of time - an isolated moment being alternated with the continuous movement of the painting hand. This could be considered as an allegory for the discrepancy between a lived and a mediated reality and the attempt to maneuver it through one's language.

But the red patch is definitely there.

Emily Fahlén