

Leena Nio

January 10–February 2, 2025

Leena Nio's practice is underpinned by the pleasure of painting and looking. As she paints, she surrenders herself to the magic of colour and an abundance of details and intertwined brushstrokes. She plays with tensions between concealment and exposure, the personal and the universal, and juxtapositions of contrasting textures.

Nio's latest exhibition consists of still life compositions capturing scenes of quotidian daily existence. Many are composed around a laundry basket, a mundane household item that is rarely celebrated in art, yet nevertheless an object in which there is beauty, softness and nuances to be discovered. A human presence is suggested indirectly through cropped fragments of garments and laundry.

Nio's complexly layered paintings straddle between abstraction and representation. Things hidden behind façades are central to her recent paintings, many of which literally contain peepholes evoking the duality of daily existence: behind the public façade is a private world that is revealed only to one's closest loved ones. Fluffy jumpers and other items of clothing appear as recurring symbols of the softening buffers that we erect between ourselves and external reality.

Nio's layered paintings bring to light the interconnected nature of reality. As if braiding hair or knitting strands of woollen yarn, she visually juxtaposes and interweaves meticulously executed details, inviting viewers to reflect on the inextricable oneness of the objects, people, and other living beings in our lives.

Nio's paintings seem to ponder the way our lives unfold almost like a series of still life compositions. An object such as a laundry basket is a theatre stage upon which we perform our daily existence in an ever-changing procession of clothing, while we ourselves observe this theatre of life as onlookers in the sidelines.

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