

Cecilie Norgaard: *Emotionally Invested*

22 Feb – 4 May 2025

In colorful canvases, Cecilie Norgaard's conceptual oil paintings humorously tease out the hierarchical highs and lows produced by contemporary society.

If oil painting was once a cultural cornerstone in glorifying the upper class, in Norgaard's new painting series, produced for O—Overgaden, she insists on flipping this narrative, instead focusing on mundane, everyday objects. Colored pencils, numbers, and letters; piggy banks, cars, clocks and trucks crash, repeat, or multiply in the paintings, collectively creating a tongue-in-cheek, absurdist universe mixing school tools with money and protestant (time) pressure.

Part of a circular alphabet, each of Norgaard's individual motifs becomes a parcel in a wider ensemble of recirculated figures, bleeding from one painting into another. The motifs are centrally placed and stage-lit on darkened backgrounds, as scenes suspended from context. Jointly, the images seem to form an inventory of working-class baseline tools turned primary painterly, aesthetic objects, while pointing at their own artistic craftsmanship as part of this very infrastructure. In one painting, haulage trucks and shipping containers—key to European cargo trade—are rendered as monochrome rectangles, akin to early modernist block-colored abstractions. In another piece, a dot-to-dot puzzle overlays the depiction of a car crash.

In the midst of this prompt to create new surfaces for and understandings of where art or aesthetic experiences occur, there is something unsettling about Norgaard's inescapable and circular world of images. The works combine playfulness and sobriety, with the paintings eagerly accelerating, building up, and growing, while their content withers, fades, and collides. When the cute piggy bank is broken, it simply reveals another broken piggy bank.

Cecilie Norgaard (b. 1991, DK) is a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (2021) and lives and works in Vienna and Berlin. She has previously exhibited at venues including Rinde am Rhein, Düsseldorf (2024); Shahin Zarinbal, Berlin (2024); Matteo Cantarella, Copenhagen (2024); galeriepcp, Paris (2023); Den Frie, Copenhagen (2022); and mumok, Vienna (2022). The exhibition at O—Overgaden is Norgaard's first institutional solo show.