

"Work, he thought, is something in which material is next to nothing, structure almost everything; something that rotates on its axis without the help of a flywheel; something whose elements hold one another in suspense; something open and accessible to all, which cannot be worn out by use."

-Peter Handke, "The Afternoon of a Writer"

Charline von Heyl creates paintings that function as self-perpetuating visual events, enigmatic presences silently seducing or disturbing the viewer. They are often funny, but not afraid of poetic depth and even pathos. The colors are active: they shift, empty out or recharge depending on the time of day and the position of the viewer. Interference colors made to engage paradoxically with light confuse the hierarchy of tonality. Copper, aluminum-flakes, dirty pastels, charcoal powder, fluorescents but also graphic black and white are laid down in unstable and abused layers to provoking different moods and feelings.

Drawing is important, even though line and gesture hide mostly in the contours, creating shapes. Repetition creates pattern, pattern creates agitation or stabilization, tension or dissolution. There will be narrative elements delivering their own kind of energy, never keeping their promise. Composition, color and line slow down and accelerate the eye, stretching and morphing the moment of seeing, turning time into space and image into object.

Von Heyl relies more on visual effects than the visceral agency of a build-up surface. The matter-of-factness of acrylic paint is favored over the seductive materiality of impasto oil. There are no brushstrokes, the image seems to be printed rather than painted. The work reaches out or retracts just optically from a completely flat surface. Painted-on "Stickers" deflate illusion with illusion where the painting is in danger of falling in love with itself.

Charline von Heyl lives and works in the USA since 1996.

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