

Paul Gondry's work is set in the ruins of a dying civilization paying for its gluttony. Drawing from European myths and fables as they have been passed down from illuminated manuscripts, Dutch etchings, and RPG video games, they describe the inner worlds of characters who know little more than suffering— save for the meager offering of escapism and dark magic.

Still, his fantastic worlds are relatable and often depict personal moments in Gondry's life. This series was painted in the mostly abandoned mining region of Malbosc, France, where Gondry's family lived for generations until the eastern movement of industry took its course, as it has in many rural towns, leaving it with little. But while human life has abandoned this once baron mountain landscape, today a dense forest has emerged in its place thanks an eccentric botanist who, at the turn of the century, strove to bring foreign trees to a region that had never seen them. In this obscure glimmer of hope, Gondry reconciles uncomfortable pasts with uncertain futures, painting motifs of children, eerie gatherings of elders, and shrouded figures with questionable intentions.

The paintings reference the French post-impressionists, a group drawn to spiritualism and nature painting as a reaction against industrialization, as much as they recall Orientalism, a contentious genre that looks to semi-fictional lands, either for pornographic escape or for utopic fantasies. This series ultimately asks what kind of futures we have the capacity to imagine, and what catastrophic failures we'll leave for generations to come. And what is to be done with the failures we've inherited? Is escapism the symptom or the contagion; the cure or the anesthetic?

KAYA is Kerstin Brätsch and Debo Eilers. Both artists consider their own practices – painting and sculpture – to be the subject matter and base material of a conceptual and multidisciplinary work. KAYA is interested in continual processes of displacement, variation and reproduction through appropriations of digital imaging.

*Various Others* initiates cooperative and international art projects in galleries, off spaces and museums in Munich. While serving as a content-driven forum for contemporary art that takes place each year in September, their mission is to intensify exchange and dialogue between the art scene in Munich and international partners, guests and media.

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