

PLUS-ONE Gallery

Hadassah Emmerich
'Creole Collidoscope'
07.09 – 06.10.24

PLUS-ONE Gallery is thrilled to present the first solo exhibition by Hadassah Emmerich in Antwerp. The works on show reflect upon the artist's visual vocabulary and techniques as gestures of indirectness. Emmerich developed a laborious method of imprinting oil paint onto the canvas or the wall, creating a visual language structured by the shapes of vinyl cutouts that she uses as intermediary templates. This process results in collage-like compositions in which the organic shapes and the vibrating colours of her painterly motifs are arranged inside the frame of the painting or in relation to the architecture of a space.

In 'Creole Collidoscope', Emmerich alludes to the exotification of images, cultures and personal stories. The show's title refers to the kaleidoscope, the visual artefact that mixes and rearranges several individual parts in unexpected compositions for the delight of the eye. The artist blends the words 'collision' and 'kaleidoscope' to imagine an instrument that becomes a tool for collision through its visual function. Associating this new word with the notion of creolisation, Emmerich proposes paintings as optical devices that present the world and its movements from a particular perspective in a singular moment.

The hybrid character of Emmerich's paintings is not restricted to the method of their making. It reflects her background as a Dutch woman of Southeast Asian heritage with Chinese and German roots. Mingling references appropriated, unfolded, and processed throughout her career, Hadassah Emmerich includes allusions to her upbringing in the work. These presences go from the batik technique, whose principle she could be seen to use in reverse through the imprinting method, to the silhouettes of Wayang, the traditional Indonesian shadow theatre, whose essence is distantly recalled as shapes in movement.

The kaleidoscope of Hadassah Emmerich's paintings suggests lustful profusions that engage the outlines of tropical flowers, fruits and plants while insinuating bodily parts and erotic elements. The appeal to the logic of resemblance and approximations in these works allows reflections, diffractions and distortions as welcomed deviations, forms of visual dissent. When put in relation, elements that wouldn't typically be perceived as belonging to the same context snap together, sparking zones of confrontation and pleasure.

Hadassah Emmerich's Creole Collidoscope have plentiful ways of describing the world. All of them are utterly material, although inherently indirect. Like special lenses, they magnify figures and backgrounds, constantly alternating the fore of their viewer's attention. Blending and mixing, mediating the oblique, they make perception and hallucination look very much alike.

Exhibition text written by Laila Melchior, 2024

Important recent exhibitions by Emmerich includes: Solo booth Art Brussel 2024 in collaboration with Galerie Ron Mandos (NL); 'Epicurean Eden', EMST Athens, GR (2024); 'False Flat' at Bonnefanten Museum Maastricht, NL (2022 – 2023); 'Hips Don't Lie' at BE-PART, Waregem, BE (2022); 'Abrasive Paradise', Kunsthal KadE, Amersfoort, NL (2022); 'BXL UNIVERSEL II : Multipli.city', CENTRALE for Contemporary Art, Brussels, BE (2021); 'The Great Ephemeral Skin', De Garage, Mechelen, BE (2019). Works by Hadassah Emmerich are included in various private and public collections like the ING Collection (NL).