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NICOLAS PARTY

by Maria Chiara Valacchi



View of "Nicolas Party: Panorama", 2015

SALTS

Hauptstrasse 12

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"Panorama," Nicolas Party's debut solo exhibition in a nonprofit institutional setting in Switzerland, is inspired by the nineteenth-century pictorial phenomenon, a precursor to cinematography. Here, Party transforms the gallery space by constructing a wooden cube superstructure, sixteen feet high on each side, which is the support for wall paintings. He has shifted the exhibition space from inside to outside, covering the exterior surface of the cube with acrylic paint, in hues ranging from white to blue. Vertical bands in a two-tone pattern act as a background to twenty-nine unique works created over a ten-day period, which reproduce his typical subjects: teapots, fruit, and genderless portraits. Executed in a blue-tinted kind of grisaille, these images delineate the subtle boundary between two and three dimensions, shifting the artist's interest from a typical horizontal "landscape" layout to an in-depth exploration of isolated subjects (something perhaps inspired by his previous work as a writer).

Party's most obvious models for examining some of the formal and historical principles of painting are Giorgio Morandi's dusty representations, Massimo Campigli's chilly portraits, and David Hockney's vivid landscapes—all of which are filtered continuously through Party's personal quest for humor. He has thus erected a very low-fi, site-specific work: It is a 360-degree painting gallery that reveals his imaginative capacity to engage viewers and transport them in the work's boundless vision.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.