

ARTFORUM

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THE GIRL WITH THE PEARL CURTAIN

by admin



Henni Alftan, Beads, 2017

Some painters are not reluctant to grapple with the thankless subject of domestic chores, the dirty work from which we cannot escape. We must do the dishes, scrub the dishes, hang out the laundry. Yet the paintings are not as off-putting as the tasks. At least not the paintings of Henni Alftan, who will portray a woman in front of her sink, in a harmonious palette. No dripping, no fantasy: the line is steep and the surface accident-free. The flatness of these paintings, without relief or displayed emotion, is in itself a stance. Like Gustave Caillebotte, who accounted for both the hardness and the beauty of the labor of workers planing a parquet floor (1875), the painters her described choose their camp. They are on the side of those who are busy at work. Even if it means delivering an image of today's work tools, as Laurent Proux does with an image of a rotary saw grinding and dismembering a costume, or like Konrad Klapheck with his machine tables (typewriters, sewing, hair dryers and, we pass, the most arid). An evocation of the professional life is taken over by Mathew Cerletty when he portrays... a simple printer.

She doesn't have time to turn around to look at you. Henni Alftan's subject has no time to present her with her best profile. Her hands are busy cooking something. Judging by the knife and the board placed on the plane of work, we would bet on vegetables. Domestic paintings, according to the Franco-Finnish artist - who has just completed two exhibitions in New York with great critical success - know how to be discreet.

Represented by Karma Gallery (New York).