

MONICA DE CARDENAS

Project Room Francesca Gabbiani

Opening

Thursday 13 May 2021
6 pm

On view

from 14.05.2021
to 30.07.2021

Hours

Tuesday – Saturday
3 – 7 pm

In the Project Room we present a new cycle of works by Francesca Gabbiani, Italian-Swiss artist based in Los Angeles and known for her complex collages. Her research focuses on the representation of intangible scenarios: through detailed and flawless reconstructions she is able to convey the subtle disquiet of a situation or the persistent force of natural elements.

Following the latest exhibition centered on the theme of fire and the devastating blazes in Los Angeles, this new series of works focuses on another primordial element: water. In contrast to the previous nearly apocalyptic settings, Gabbiani depicts female figures surfing the ocean waves; slender silhouettes who elegantly dance amidst the seething foam. Women of different ethnicities enjoy this sport, once considered an activity for men, with ease and freedom. Gabbiani thus introduces reflections on gender and racial issues, even more after learning with horror that the beaches of Los Angeles used to be open only to whites in the past.

The theme of the ocean evolves in the collages on bioluminescence, a phenomenon observed by the artist on the beaches of Malibu: the light emitted by aquatic micro-organisms takes on a magical aura in the moonlight. The fascination with natural elements returns, moving the observer on a sensorial and emotional level. At the same time, the impression of these works seems to be strangely familiar; the theatrical narration, as in the tension of a wave about to break, plays with the visual memory of the viewer, suggesting scenes from cinema and imagery close to the world of Hollywood. The artist, known for her menacing atmospheres, turns her gaze outward in these latest works, offering us a vision of harmony with nature.

Francesca Gabbiani creates her collages with a mixed technique, combining fragments of colored paper with inks, gouache and acrylics to shape images charged with suspense and desire. The process is complex and delicate: she deconstructs the image into colors fields and then reconstructs it by working in layers that create depth of perspective, an effect that is pictorial and three-dimensional at the same time.

Francesca Gabbiani, who currently lives in Los Angeles, was born in Montreal (1965) and raised in Geneva, where she studied at the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux Arts. In 2005 the Centre PasquArt of Bienne (CH) presented a major solo exhibition; she has also shown work at the Kunstverein Wolfsburg in Germany, the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Hammer Museum. Her pieces are included in the collections of important museums like the Metropolitan and MoMA in New York, the Los Angeles MOCA, the Hammer Museum and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.