

# G A L E R I E F O R S B L O M

## **Jenni Hiltunen: Purple Grass**

Galerie Forsblom, 11.2.–6.3.2022

In her latest works, Jenni Hiltunen (b.1981) has surrendered herself to the painting process with gleeful abandon, permitting herself to play with different techniques and binge on delicious colors. The title of her new show, *Purple Grass*, quite literally reflects how this is a *painting* exhibition in the truest sense of the word. Her compositions are more simplified than ever before, consisting of vague spaces formed of interlocking color planes. Color obviously plays a major role in her current practice. She clearly enjoys creating harmonies and juxtapositions of color, line, and form. Fittingly, the basic elements of painting appear to be more important than finding a uniting theme for her current works. It is enough that the paintings carry a reminder of the things she has experienced and the thoughts she has been thinking while working on them – no specific theme needs to be underlined in order for them to form a coherent body of work.

Hiltunen's paintings are studies of the human condition, many taking their cue from the artist's personal experiences and states of mind. The artist believes that a painting can capture personal experience without necessarily being a recognizable self-portrait. Although details from the artist's real life might leak into her paintings, each work constitutes its own intact reality. Many layers of meaning emerge during the painting process, and these meanings can be interpreted from a variety of perspectives and frameworks. One of the universally relatable aspects of her paintings is the state of arrested melancholy they portray. Her characters stare at us with blank faces devoid of expression, as if they were waiting for something to happen. With glazed eyes fixed on a distant horizon, they lounge in slumped postures in various settings, conveying a tangible sense of being stuck in a frozen state of in-betweenness.

Hiltunen graduated from the Turku Arts Academy in 2004 and the Academy of Fine Arts in 2007. She has held numerous solo exhibitions and has participated in group exhibitions both in Finland and abroad. Her work is represented in major Finnish collections including Helsinki's Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and the Saastamoinen Collection. The artist is based in Helsinki.