

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

Saimi Suikkanen: Soft Light

Galerie Forsblom April 26–June 2, 2024

Saimi Suikkanen turns our gaze on fleeting, intimate moments in the midst of monotonous day-to-day routines. She paints subjects as seemingly nondescript as clothing piled on a chair or a tea bag sagging on the edge of the kitchen sink. How can something so apparently trivial be transformed into something so spellbinding on canvas?

Suikkanen takes inspiration from slow-paced films and books in which the storyline seems to move nowhere. Through her paintings, she strives to capture the lingering inertia of arrested moments that verge upon tedium. Suikkanen describes her method as being partly intuitive. Sometimes, a nuanced color might inspire her to replicate exactly the same shade on canvas. Occasionally, she might stumble upon a suitable theme after an unremarkable daily occurrence – a forgettable experience such as trying on a shirt that has grown too tight is a mundane incident, but one that imparts a tragicomic narrative that lends itself consummately to a painting. Suikkanen records her observations as cellphone photos and text snippets, which she jots down whenever she notices anything of interest. She then harnesses these random observations in the studio as raw material in her painting process.

Suikkanen's recent work has grown progressively more stripped-down and minimalistic both in subject matter and style. In her latest paintings, she pays growing attention to polishing her compositions and perfecting her subtle treatment of color. The process often presents a challenge that spurs the artist to delve into a certain theme. How can the paintbrush be employed to create an illusion of fluffy softness like the texture of a knitted woolly hood? And how can different shades be combined so that the color planes leap to life upon our retinas?

Saimi Suikkanen (b.1994) graduated with a master's degree in fine arts from Helsinki's Academy of Fine Arts (in 2022) and a degree in painting from the Saimaa University of Applied Sciences in 2017. She has held several solo exhibitions and participated in group exhibitions in Finland and internationally. Her work has been acquired for the collection of the National Union of University Students in Finland and the Finnish Art Society's annual art raffle.

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