

Galleri Riis

Admir Batlak

Every Frill is an Edge

November 14, 2024 – January 04, 2025

We are pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Admir Batlak (b. 1982 in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina), his second solo exhibition with Galleri Riis. The works in this exhibition consist of a series of images printed on wadding, using a large flatbed printer. Batlak first used this technique for his exhibition «In the Kink» at MUNCH in 2023, where scanned images and photographs of sequins were digitally processed and transformed into impressionistic 'landscapes'. In those works, the sequin became a pointillist painterly component.

In the new series 'Every Frill is an Edge', Batlak develops the technique further, this time resulting in what can be described as fused 'digital quilts' composed of abstracted photographs of architecture and nature. The wadding has a porous, fluffy quality and as the ink sinks into the fabric, it further abstracts the motifs. Multiple layers of printing create a three dimensional effect that diffuses the image.

- *Painting inwards* -

In the installation at MUNCH, Batlak actively related to the exhibition space's characteristic eight-metre high tilted wall, and the museum's external facade. This kind of monumentality, which mirrors its surroundings, is typical of several 'Spomeniks', the Yugoslav anti-fascist monuments that have been a consistent reference and inspiration for his projects in recent years. Batlak uses both ideological and visual aspects from 'Spomeniks' in collages mixed with various references, where the resulting artworks open new thoughts about monumentality and materiality.

At Galleri Riis, the interest in site-specificity is continued and several works in the exhibition are based on the view from the five windows in the gallery's main rooms. The gallery space was originally built as an apartment and the windows are now made opaque and anonymous with tone-on-tone roller blinds. Snapshot photos of the Brutalist office building across the street have been mixed with photos taken in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina. In these works, Batlak again works with his personal history and references to monuments while also addressing the exhibition space.

- *Look at a window through a window while thinking about something completely different* -

'Working digitally is new to me. Crafts and the treatment of textiles are replaced with a touchscreen. At the same time, the choice of material to be printed on is important. Wadding is an interlining fabric, and among other things, used as the middle layer in quilts, which for a long time have been an important medium for expressions of tradition and craftsmanship, resistance and protest, and not least community, tribute and optimism. It's a material that is not visible, but does the job.'

- *Making the invisible hypervisual* -

Admir Batlak works with textiles, sculpture and clothing. Central to his work is experimentation with craftsmanship and the development of new textiles. Through a wealth of techniques and references to fashion, history, social movements and mainstream culture, Batlak creates complex expressions that observe the present, and explore questions of taste, ideals and identity.

Batlak (b. 1982, Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina) lives and works in Oslo. He is a trained fashion designer from the Istituto Marangoni in Milan (2006). In recent years, he has worked primarily with visual art and has shown his work at Soft, Oslo (2022); The Sculpture Triennale, Sculptors Association, Oslo (2021); NoPlace, Oslo (2020); Galleri Riis, Oslo (2019); Kunsthall Stavanger (2018); and Kunstnerforbundet, Oslo (2017). He is represented in the collections of The National Museum in Oslo, Kode in Bergen, Nordenfjeldske Kunstin-
dustrimuseum in Trondheim and Stavanger Art Museum. In 2020 he won the Norwegian Art Association's debutant prize at Høstutstillingen (Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo). In 2023 he was the third artist in the SOLO OSLO exhibition series at MUNCH, Oslo.

Kindly supported by:  Arts Council Norway 