

Telescope MAX

Gabrielė Adomaitytė

19 May – 1 July 2023

The installation of paintings and sculptures at Gabrielė Adomaitytė's solo exhibition at Gratin, Telescope MAX, is focused on the act of recording, as a periphery between not quite remembering but also not yet forgetting: what filmmaker Chris Marker called the lining of memory. In Adomaitytė's practice of selecting and reframing pictorial elements in lucid combinations, the collision of painting with archiving and the documentary genre is the persistent interest.

In *Aether* (all works 2023, oil in linen, unless otherwise stated), a cropped, rectangular graphic sun from a found ex-libris frames a composition of metallic forms; the airy field is disturbed by the word 'error' painted backwards. Similarly in *Magnification Unknown*, a painting of a wooden bed frame designed and carved by Adomaitytė's father is layered with 'micro-crops' painted over it—the size of analogue slides—culled from various print media. These croppings create the surface tension which is also present in the large format painting *Witness of an Instant* (oil and acrylic on linen), where volumes of grayscale clouds marble with angular pastels in psychedelia—the outcome of a condensed and layered masking process. In these works, memory seems to be iridescent: an imperfect but vibrant desire to describe what is not yet known with a bricolage of nonetheless recognizable elements, like the small pearl resting just beneath the equator of the painting.

In the work *Violeta*, tiles from the kitchen of Adomaitytė's grandmother (circa 1972) in Kaunas, Lithuania are painted as a memory of color and texture: a shared familial memory which, taken out of context, has the appearance of op art. This lacing of associations runs through Telescope MAX as diaristic turns; while always still being legible as painted images, motions of emphasis are placed on memories that are personal and generational. *Bodice Channel*, a reworking of a collage from 2019, while she was on residency at Rupert in Vilnius, depicts fragmented items from the Clothes Museum in Kaunas: self-founded by an archivist, essentially living in a present that looks like the past. This painting, conscious of the not so distant Soviet regime in Lithuania, puts into motion a poetics of recollection as intimacy that is far from nostalgic.

A preoccupation with cropping and framing extends into the site-precise installation, with elements of lacquered walnut 'braces', powder coated aluminum poles, anodized steel and aluminum bars moving the paintings and micro LCD screens into combination. These fabrications operate like a pictorial grammar, spread in time and space. Two micro LCD screens, *Fitness Flowers* and *High Impact Dryer*, the first mounted to the painting *The Floor of the Mouth* (oil and acrylic on linen), display images from Adomaitytė's photo collection, strutting with the ebb and flow of digital media. The adjective humor of the screen works extends into the sculpture *Chimerical Chew*, a hand-made, scaled-down version of a 1950s chair designed by Friso Kramer and Wim Rietveld, produced from American walnut and with a natural history book placed as its seat. *Reporter* (powder coated S235JRC+C/SH H11 mild steel) is directly inspired by a scientific depiction of an enzyme. Telescope MAX, as an essayistic bank of references—the recipient as a fictional you—magnifies the potential of painting beyond archival impulse and digital exhaustion.

Text by Mitchell Thar