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Labor of Love

Dietmar Busse, Anya Kielar, Talia Levitt, Arcmanoro Niles, Hilary Pecis

January 13 - March 4, 2023

Opening reception, Friday, January 13 from 6 - 8pm

Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present *Labor of Love* - a group show by artists who, by means of either repetition, layering, or material mastery - show a dedication to the emergence of imagery through laborious processes. From these demanding methodologies, a transformation occurs, one that bonds the artist to the work while simultaneously eliciting a strong connection with the viewer.

Dietmar Busse creates his work by combining photographic-development techniques with hand-drawn imagery. He exposes gelatin silver paper to light - without negatives - and then paints the prints from the darkroom with dyes and developer with a brush, such as a painter would with oil paint on canvas. Imbued with memory and emotion, Busse's dark and complex figures interrogate his relationship to his own history and his own pain.

Anya Kielar's larger-than-life figures are composed of stylized fragments set in a relief sculpture. Using labor intensive techniques inspired by upholstery and other decorative arts traditionally associated with the domestic, Kielar fastidiously wraps each element in hand-painted textiles, enveloping the forms in unifying patterns. By complicating their appearance, these figures' bodies become visually ambiguous vessels for the ideas about women and female power that have floated across history.

Talia Levitt creates painstakingly detailed trompe l'oeil paintings of quilts embedded with emotional feminist imagery. She refers to her paintings as Schmattas, Yiddish for rags, or beloved clothing worn to shreds, instilled with the history of the wearer. In her newest body of work, she researches her ancestral Eastern European and Russian Jewish immigrant background in the New York garment industry.

Arcmanoro Niles's figuration offers a way of suggesting shared emotional experiences. The artist often depicts his subjects in moments of solitude and contemplation. A traditionally trained painter, Niles is heavily influenced by art history, specifically history painting and portraiture. The poses of his characters and attention to light call to mind classical compositions yet Niles disrupts these standards by using a highly saturated color palette.

Through sumptuous detail, **Hilary Pecis** explores the genres still life, landscape, and domestic interiors. Deeply colorful, light-infused scenes have been distilled by Pecis's careful attention to the sensory pleasures of everyday life. Her painting evokes an intensely subjective experience heightened by saturated color, unconventional perspectives, and passages of loose, expressionistic rendering.

Image: Dietmar Busse, *Garden #1*, 2022, analog darkroom chemicals and retouch inks on silver gelatin photographic paper, framed: 50 x 44 in (127 x 111.8 cm)

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