

LIMINAL ZONE | BETWEEN WORLDS

Jorge Queiroz | Andreas Eriksson | Aelita le Quément

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In an exhibition triologue, the museum Kunsthau Kaufbeuren is showing works by the Portuguese artist Jorge Queiroz, the Swede Andreas Eriksson and the young French painter Aelita le Quément. For the first time in southern Germany, the work of the three artists will be presented institutionally and thus to a broad public. Some of the works were created specifically for the exhibition in Kaufbeuren.

A key connection between all three artists can be found in their handling of "liminality" as a central aspect within their respective works. Since the term liminality was coined in the early 1960s, it has been discussed again and again in various research fields. In general, it serves to describe a transition, an ambiguous or even a threshold state and refers to different areas, such as sociology and especially ritual research. In the visual arts, the principle of a liminal transformation space represents one of the most interesting and versatile approaches to conveying a specific type of abstraction of a state and its pictorial representation.

The paintings by **Jorge Queiroz** (\*1966, Lisbon) are difficult to describe. Of course they are visible, can be grasped visually, but at the same time they are vague. They do not make any explicit statements that can be named. They don't show any idylls, don't tell any stories, and don't want to be political statements. What presents itself to the viewer is neither reality nor a dream. – Queiroz's pictures are coherent in their almostness, in their play with the unfathomable, their in-betweenness in the liminal space of painting, which opens up in each of his works. Like an alchemist, Queiroz uses the entire range of techniques and materials to create his world, from gouache to oil, from ink to acrylic, from pencil to pastel, on canvas, paper or as a collage. Nevertheless, Queiroz leaves little to chance in the creative process of producing images. In these hidden object pictures, nothing flows unfiltered from the unconscious onto the screen. On the contrary. "I have to work in order to think about my work," says the artist. And he specifies this thought process, which he sees as a kind of staging: the characters come and go in his head, have their entrances and exits as if on a stage. The screen thus becomes merely an external stage backdrop for his brain theater. Thus, the painter creates his very own universe of dragons, faces, hands with amputated fingers and black holes, people with people living in their heads, cyclops, cascades, squid. For Queiroz, the act of painting becomes the unleashing of demons.

The paintings, weavings, drawings and sculptures of **Andreas Eriksson** (\*1975, Björsäter) testify to a fine, constantly evolving sense of subtle natural phenomena. Eriksson's connection with nature is deeply emotional: in the balance between representation and abstraction, his works evoke the contemplative, yet equally detailed observation of his immediate surroundings and convey the artist's almost romantic need to slow down. In a reflective and meditative practice, he creates recordings that move on the threshold between calculated and improvised gestures.

In a noisy art world hungry for sensations, Andreas Eriksson's works seem like a poetic and quiet counterpoint. In contrast to Jorge Queiroz and Aelita le Quément, Eriksson's artistic work is less guided by impulsivity; Rather, it is subject to a controlled and intensively reflected work process. In the genesis of his artistic cosmos, the observation of nature, especially the landscape with all its details and atmospheric nuances, provides Eriksson with an endless source from which he draws for his visual language. The visible is dismantled, rearranged as a quotation and elevated to art through abstraction, alienation and transformation. Abstraction and figuration, heavy and light, inside and outside, concrete and mysterious or illusion and reality complement each other in both the process and the result.

In a painterly synthesis, **Aelita le Quément** (\*1999, Saint-Cloud Île-de-France) skillfully fuses influences from various movements and painting styles, such as impressionism, expressionism and surrealism. But apart from all the -isms, she develops an unusual, very own visual language. The stories that unfold in her pictures appear abysmal/profoundly serious, but often incredibly humorous, ambiguous and sometimes nightmarish. A variety of approaches to deciphering the content are presented visually, but at the same time le Quément's works raise more questions than they attempt to provide answers.

Le Quément's creative drive stems from the artist's deep interest in exploring gender identity or gender dysphoria, existential insecurities and cognitive processes. Again and again it is strong emotions and impulses, such as anger, fears of old age, illness and spiritual desolation, social rejection, reactions to negative body images, the effects of illusory deception through vanity, or the intoxicating euphoria of newly discovered love, which are reflected in her paintings flow in. The focus of le Quément's images are usually a few protagonists in bizarre environments, either as actively acting or passive, subjugated figures - often in distorted poses or in a rear view - whose presence forms the starting point and driving force for the unfolding narrative. Using the means of alienation and the overlay of different layers of painting, the artist blurs the boundaries between subject and environment, describes situations and suggests stories that always remain ambiguous. In a state of suspension, Aelita le Quément's picture figures are exposed to their impulses and subjective feelings on the one hand and to uncontrollable external influences on the other.

An extensive, bilingual publication (German/English) accompanies the exhibition, documents the current production of the three artists and at the same time provides an overview of their respective works.

*Concept and curation by Jan T. Wilms*

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