

Art in Berlin

Our highlights of the Gallery Weekend

April 29, 2022



Stanislava Kovalcikova and Shuang Li at Peres Projects

At Peres Projects, two artists are exhibiting who don't necessarily have anything to do with each other, but who are both great. On the left, Shuang Li, who is currently also in the main exhibition at the Venice Biennale, is processing her lockdown experiences. Since her last Berlin exhibition in February 2020, the Chinese artist has not been allowed to travel back to her home country. During this time, "home" has increasingly become an abstract idea for her, which she now processes in a pixelated video, synthetic shell sculptures and wall works inspired by anime. The installation spreads the aura of artificial intimacy, which has long since ceased to be about the search for reality, but at best is still about the search for the real image. Does the physical even exist beyond the screen image?

In the gallery's on the right, black suit shoes with painted soles hover on the windows. Opposite, cigarette butts hang on the wall. The shoes are empty, the cigarettes smoked up; all that is left of the insignia of a classic men's salon is the smell of leather and tobacco. In the absence of the male, the painter Stanislava Kovalcikova, who was born in Czechoslovakia in 1988 and studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy with Tomma Abts and Peter Doig, positions her female figures. A black Venus looks at herself in the mirror and turns her back on us. A "female parade" marches through the picture. In place of Holbein's Jesus lies a pregnant Virgin Mary, with headphones on her ears.

These are enigmatic images, which can neither be assigned chronologically, culturally nor geographically, and enigmatic materials. There is dazzling gold leaf as in classical icon painting and old-masterly sfumato that makes the contours float. Latex and dried orchids, on the other hand, span the arc from art-historical depth to the glamour of an exciting present.

Stanislava Kovalcikova "Am I dead yet", Peres Projects, until 27 May