



KANG CONTEMPORARY

Claudia Chaseling muddy waters

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Our understanding of the world is increasingly put to a hard test — experiences, connections, processes are obscured and single-minded solutions are no longer to be had in the mud of half-truths, interests, ideologies, promises. It is precisely this opacity that is alluded to in the title of Claudia Chaseling's exhibition. That insightful form and beauty can materialise from such disturbing opacities is no less than the riddle of art.

Claudia Chaseling's often expansive paintings act in the complex field of aesthetics as resistance and revolt, transformation and distancing from experienced or mediated reality: banishment and release at the same time. These images are not theory based pamphlets. The thematic starting point chosen in each case and the research of the explosive facts—change as they are implemented, come to life in the painting process, draw ever wider circles that frame the theme, open it up, expand it, sometimes even call it into question. Developed entirely from painting, the pictures remain present at every moment, subcutaneously as it were; the relationship to critical reflection leads into art, into its imaginative space, which brings something unprecedented to view and simultaneously into the world. These pictures are an encounter with the world and a demand to be in the world—to participate, to see, to make a picture for oneself—in a world flooded with images and yet strangely without them, without imagination. With their whirling dynamics, with the intertwining of lines and color planes, these images create an irresolvable oscillation between visibility and foreboding, between concise form and something that eludes form or formation. Words occur, illuminate; they are at once drawing, reference, and enigma. These pictorial formations become a stage on which the contradictions, the fundamental ambivalences of our conception of the world are played out and acted out.

In a certain way, Claudia Chaseling's pictorial spaces once again measure the path from utopia to dystopia and thus also query our wishes, fears, dreams, and the totalitarian claim of utopia to a better future at the expense of nature. Dystopias move us to act now, utopias to wait for better times. In a very idiosyncratic way, hope and crisis, topos and u-topos merge in this painting. Each painting thus also stages the possible turn to a cautious, empathetic, future-oriented action.

In her pictorial cosmos, Claudia Chaseling always considers the porous boundary, the complex tension between ethics and aesthetics, their connection, but also their polarities and differences. Through the freedom of her imagination, through the unadorned and yet so beautiful representation of our reality, images emerge that set up vibrations in the categorical divisions, liquefy them—illuminating trouble spots in the self-understanding of modernity. Like the echo that alters, fragments, and selects, our perception and the terms with which we described the formerly relatively stable world begin to totter here. It is as if material and energetic flows are permanently interacting in these images. This interplay opens up to the



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visionary task of seeing human beings as participants in networks of very different agents that include plants, animals, landscapes, resources, atmospheres, and things.

This multi-layered painting also reflects the capacity of art to transform, to refract the terrible into the aesthetic and thus to examine perception in each case and in all freedom for gain and loss of knowledge.

Perhaps only in this way, in and through art, can we achieve a new wonder about the miracle of the earth. What can we do, what must we know, in order to meet our responsibility for inhabiting and managing the earth?

Dr. Dorothee Bauerle-Willert / English Carolyn Prescott