

Wetterling Gallery

MALIN MOLIN

Swedish artist Malin Molin's figurative practice is centred around an overarching commentary on today's image culture. Anchored in the principle of media intermediality – understood as relations between media typically perceived as different – she ponders on the specific conditions of different types of imagery, within the context of an ever-increasing, high-paced digital environment, in which one is continuously visually saturated. As such, her most recent group of works – on display in Stockholm during the Spring of 2024, under the title Ekfraser (Ekphrases) – offers a juxtaposition between generic, computer-generated aesthetics, with that of oil painting, an inherently slower, spatial, and historically-rooted medium.

Molin's previous investigations revolved around the relationship between images, desire, and the body, in which she enlisted carefully arranged, still-life depictions of food, through which the artist could dissect the realm of human desires. Motifs were collected from existing images available online, most often issued from social media.

For the most recent body of paintings, reference images were generated by Molin herself, through AI tools – such as Open Ai's Dall-e 3 or Midjourney – in which a 'prompt' is typed in; for example: Realistic photo of a white slim dove sitting with ruffled feathers on a branch in a willow tree. It has a long twisted marshmallow rope in blue white pink and yellow in its beak. It is twilight and the foliage almost covers the bird. Following this linguistic command, the AI tool produced an image that is then employed as a template and transferred into painting by Molin, allowing for changes and unplanned alterations, typical of her painterly process. As such, painting becomes a depiction of an image – standing as a reflection on the specificity of this medium, on its physical presence – as opposed to the interpretation of the image itself.

Overall, Molin is interested in the meaning of painting as a medium, in the possibilities it allows in today's image-driven society. The active choice of starting from computer generated images is driven by the artist's attempt of understanding the systems of image production that shape our shared reality, our desires, our minds, our bodies. At the same time, the subsequent step of translating these computer depictions into paintings allow for a different pace, a deep moment of reflection, a manner to open a conversation around existing conditions in the digital realm of images and its effects on reality.

Malin Molin was born in 1989 in Gothenburg, Sweden, where she continues to work and live. She holds an MFA from the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm (2021) and a BFA from the Chelsea College of Art, London and the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm (2016).