

GLADSTONE

Kerstin Brätsch Opens Solo Show with New Works at Gladstone in Brussels

Kerstin Brätsch presents *META*, an exhibition of new paintings and wallpapers for her inaugural exhibition at Gladstone in Brussels. Expanding upon her *Psychics and Para Psychics* project from 2022, Brätsch's abstract compositions employ her painterly practice to probe the body's psychological, psychical, and social expressions. Appearing to be in a constant state of flux, the works possess their own internal metabolism, transcending a material existence to delve into infinite possibilities of interpretation.

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The antonym of representation is integration.

The resuscitation of representation is integration.

The familiarization of representation is integration.

The life of representation is integration.

In Brussels, a good one hundred years ago, artists of symbolist conviction took integration out of their own times. With no intention of representing the shapes of their present, their art was taking themselves out of it. Integrating away. This was never meant to be obscure. It was destined to be popular. Robert Pincus-Witten was struck by it in the late 1960s, by the Salon de la Rose & Croix in Paris, into which Fernand Khnopff and Félicien Rops exported their work: 10.000 people came to its first opening, 274 carriages drove up, 22.600 people would see the show. Eric Satié had composed fanfares. A perfumist gave the exposition its scent. A florist positioned lilies within it. In the late 1960s Pincus-Witten did a lot of things. He coined *Postminimalism*. It is the build-out of the present, not its critique, that he sees Symbolists and Postminimalists aligned in. Integrating out.

In Berlin, a good one hundred years ago, Lu Märten wrote the story of elves who tell a child to become a poet, materializing past generations' dreams. Not unsymbolist at all. Not even a tiny bit. In unison, Märten, a convicted materialist, wrote about the devastating "underconsumption" of art in her time. As artists are workers of "the head, the heart and the hand" their labor of integration isolates them out of a world built on the separation of their trinity. It renders them a "desocialized social being", delivers them to "artist misery", their state of the arts, still. Today. Integration is Märten seeking to bring art into general consumption: "That the walls of all life remain empty, while thousands of hands are working for them", is limiting representations into ideals. Fancy. The "artistic misery" of luxuriating scarcity has to stop, the integration of art into schools, hospitals, administrations, cafés, hotels, should undo it and recalibrate the "personal reagent of the individual". Chemical integrations.

In Zurich, a good one hundred years ago, Hermann Rorschach introduced the psychodiagnostics test of his name. Eugène and Françoise Minkowska popularized it in Paris a bit later, a non-illustrated publication followed in 1947. Like Rorschach, they studied with Eugen Bleuler, unlike him, they were really into Henri Bergson. Sarah Wilson writes that the artistic "craze" for Rorschach's test did extend well beyond Henri Michaux. That Gaston Ferdière, the psychiatrist who treated Antonin Artaud, and orchestrated large, Salon de la Rose & Croix-scale, shows of surrealist with psychiatrist artists in Paris in the 1940s, talked forty to fifty illustrious personalities of the Saint Germain-des-Près milieu into taking the test with him. Psychiatric patients' works of integration and surrealist professionals' work of representation were aligned on a sliding scale of a fantastic real. That art wanted to leave its representations so very badly. Not bad enough to let art (just) be a test though.

Meta is here to integrate. Like Brussels, like Berlin, like Paris, it offers a sliding scale (out) of art into (more) consequential consumptions. Brätsch tests: interpretations of bodies she found in esoteric sense/s, abstractions that broke out of bodies she painted, aided by blowing them up for inspection, aided by giving them an order of appearance, aided by systems of esoteric

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representation. Exotericism has proven to leave art weirded out, underconsumed and unconscious. Esotericisms on the other hand bring fanfares, elves, inks, where they do not exactly figure as singular belief system. Esotericisms are multifarious (yes, multifarious) orders of representation at hand, an endless supply of test runs, Rosercrucianisms, Marxisms, Psychoanalyses. They are all in the Brätsch tests for integration. Meta sense/s. This show in Brussels is technical: miniatures and maximalisms (Maximalism was the second neologism Robert Pincus-Witten tried to float. In the 1980s. It didn't stick) to test Brätsch's skills. Can she move the representations she finds into the integrations we need? In Brussels we can get comfortable with the question. In small scale. Then, in March, in the Munchmuseum in Oslo, we can get uncomfortable with Atem, its dispersion into a full blown registry: in drawing, in painting, in installation. Meta is the forecast of a metabolism in the making, Brätsch reading integration out of her right palm, the one painting. We are tested.

—Kerstin Stakemeier

Kerstin Brätsch (b. Hamburg, Germany) lives and works between New York and Berlin. Brätsch received an MFA from Columbia University in New York in 2007 and an MFA at Universität der Künste in Berlin in 2008. Brätsch has been the subject of several solo exhibitions at the Fondazione Memmo, Rome (2018) including KAYA, and the Museum Brandhorst, München (2017). Brätsch has also participated in group exhibitions at the The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2023, 2014); Camden Arts Center, London (2020); and was shown at the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York as KAYA (2017). The artist has had work commissioned by several institutions including: Gropius Bau, Berlin (2024); Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany (2023); LUMA Foundation, Café du Parc, Arles, France (2021); and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2019). Brätsch's permanent children's space, *BAUBAU*, at the Gropius Bau opened in 2024 and will be an ongoing project over the next several years with plans to expand into an outdoor area. In 2024, Brätsch's sculpture "Fossil Psychic Stone Mimicry (Palladiana, Mosaico_Bench I)" was commissioned by the New York High Line and will be on view through September 2025. Brätsch is one of 18 artists commissioned to create a mosaic floor medallion at John F. Kennedy International Airport's new Terminal 6, set to open in 2026 in Queens, New York. Brätsch has been the recipient of many awards, including the Rosenthal Family Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2022); the Guenther Peill Prize from the Guenther Peill Foundation, Germany (2020); the Helen Frankenthaler Award for Painting from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, New York (2020); the Edward Munch Award, Oslo, Norway (2017); and the August Macke Prize, Germany (2014). Since 2010, Brätsch has also worked collectively under the moniker, KAYA, with artist Debo Eilers. Brätsch has an upcoming solo show at the Munch Museum, Oslo, in March 2025, which will travel to Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany in December 2025. Brätsch will also have a solo exhibition at Casa São Roque in Porto, Portugal opening October 2025. As of 2024, Brätsch holds a professorship for Painting at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg, Germany.

Exhibition Details:

January 22 – March 1, 2025

Opening Reception: January 22, 5–8pm

Grotehertstraat 12 Rue du Grand Cerf

Brussels, Belgium 1000

About Gladstone Gallery:

Gladstone Gallery is recognized for its embrace of experimentation and visionary practices. The gallery has long been an active partner with artists pursuing catalytic ideas and engaging with pressing issues. Headquartered in New York, Gladstone's impact extends globally with galleries in Brussels and Seoul, enabling it to present new bodies of work and evolve its program to advance the practices and reach of its artists through time. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is a steward of the legacies of pivotal historical artists and an advocate for the enduring power of their work. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its long-term vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

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