

G L A D S T O N E

Claudia Comte presents new installation dedicated to painting practice at Gladstone

Comte's presentation explores themes of antiquity, technology and interconnectedness

Gladstone is pleased to present an exhibition on new wall paintings by Claudia Comte, the artist's first exhibition devoted to her painting practice.

"In the beginning was the wall. Before geo-politics, Pink Floyd or wall-drawing was the structure itself: a divider between us and the rest of the world, it builds on the promise of all civilization, of protection and enclosure, of distinguishing that which we have claimed as ours from that which is not. It is the wall, along with its agrarian cousin the fence that separates the mentalities of pirates and farmers, of those who settle and those who raid. How we celebrate that enclosure and how it has been breached – at various times by optics, religion and force – has been the subject of artists since time immemorial.

Delving back 32,000 years into Herzog's Cave of Forgotten Dreams we find in Chauvet the imprint of hunter-gatherers who already mastered the kinetic language of repetition, the stop-frame evolution of one form into another, an intuitive understanding of the graphic math that Fibonacci would sequence in the eleventh century. Fast-forward and we begin to witness the slow millennial long drift as art gradually detaches from the cave walls and sacred frescoed architectures to a land in a frame somewhere between the auction house and designer couch.

So what life could possibly be breathed into such ancient form and what might that tell us about the script of existences for which the cathedra of church and cave have been supplanted by the geometric conventions of a contemporary social space? What would it mean to transfer the cadences of a digital age directly onto white walls of a secular conscience? How can the architectural vitrine once stripped of objects come alive to the pulse of choreography, the dance of surface and volume?

These are just some of the questions that flicker between the lines of Claudia Comte's orchestration of ever morphing, syncopations of contour and form. The writing is on the wall but the language is of mathematics and universal consciousness. Even when the patterns moired interference of nature and culture forces the eye deep into the graphic circuitry there is a conscious avoidance of illusion or three-dimensional effect. Here surface no longer delivers itself as the exterior of the object it encloses but rather as a thing in and of itself, vibrant and alive with the presence of its architectural condition.

And so, Comte's version of the cave feels more alien than ancient, more like the

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moment at which Robert Moog broke free from the sine-wave of the transistorized Theremin to create a new sound by breaking down its process into a number of functional blocks which could be carried out by standardized modules. Squares, circles, golden sections, fractals rhythms and algorithms start to interact and synthesize. Surfaces seduce themselves. Line leads us along the metamorphic edge of things. As straight lines curve and geometric forms begin to round off, so the unity and complexity of the spaces we inhabit are teased and patterned into a kind of singular eloquence, a visual symphony of sensual logic a contemporary cave of as yet unremembered dreams.

—Neville Wakefield, 2018

Exhibition Details

The Morphing Scallops

January 11 – February 16, 2019

515 West 24th Street

New York, NY 10011

About Claudia Comte

Claudia Comte (b. 1983, Morges, Switzerland) lives and works in Basel, Switzerland. Recent solo and group exhibitions include K&L Museum, Seoul, Korea (2024); Lehmbrock Museum, Duisburg (2023); LagoAlgo, Mexico City (2023); Fundación Casa Wabi, Oaxaca, Mexico (2023); Desert X, Alula, Saudi Arabia (2022), Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich (2022), 58th October Salon - Belgrade Biennale (2022), Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (2021), Kunstraum Dornbirn, Austria (2020); Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy (2019), Copenhagen Contemporary, Denmark (2019); MOCA Cleveland, Ohio (2018); Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2018); KölnSkulptur #9, Cologne, Italy (2017); Basement Roma, Italy (2017); Messeplatz, Art Basel, Switzerland (2017); Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland (2017); Desert X, Palm Springs, California (2017); Public Art Fund, New York (2016); Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2014).

About Gladstone Gallery

Gladstone 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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