

BEAUX ARTS MAGAZINE

MARCH 2021

UNDER THE SUN OF ABSTRACTION

by admin



Almost Done, 2015, oil on linen, 48 x 72 inches

Some painters are not reluctant to grapple with the thankless subject of domestic chores, the dirty work from which we cannot escape. We must do the dishes, scrub the dishes, hang out the laundry. Yet the paintings are not as off-putting as the tasks. At least not the paintings of Henni Alftan, who will portray a woman in front of her sink, in a harmonious palette. No dripping, no fantasy: the line is steep and the surface accident-free. The flatness of these paintings, without relief or displayed emotion, is in itself a stance. Like Gustave Caillebotte, who accounted for both the hardness and the beauty of the labor of workers planing a parquet floor (1875), the painters he described choose their camp. They are on the side of those who are busy at work. Even if it means delivering an image of today's work tools, as Laurent Proux does with an image of a rotary saw grinding and dismembering a costume, or like Konrad Klapheck with his machine tables (typewriters, sewing, hair dryers and, we pass, the most arid). An evocation of the professional life is taken over by Mathew Cerletty when he portrays... a simple printer.

Photorealistic, the paintings of this American painter capture close-up objects of everyday life, placed under a harsh light and devoid of any sentimentality. Presenting the figure of a yellow duck in the children's bath, a jet ski or envelopes, Mathew Cerletty's work reads like the display of an objective observer, or even a technical manual. Except that painting always takes over. A man on his tiller never-endingly mows his soft green lawn under a summer sun, but the action simultaneously changes the genre of the painting, which begins a passage towards geometric abstraction by gradually covering itself with alternating bands.

Represented by Karma Gallery (New York).