



PRESS RELEASE

GROUP SHOW TERRITORIES

GEORGE DE DECKER - DIRK EELLEN - DIEGO HERMAN - NATHALIE PIROTTE

10 MARCH – 27 APRIL 2024

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George De Decker

Dirk Eelen

Diego Herman

Nathalie Pirotte

Husk Gallery presents 'Territories', a group show in its gallery space featuring selected work by four contemporary Belgian painters: George De Decker, Dirk Eelen, Diego Herman and Nathalie Pirotte. The title of the expo has a double meaning: on the one hand, 'Territories' refers to the literal or figurative representation of a demarcated area over which humans as a species and as individuals desire power and control; on the other hand, it refers to the own artistic territory that artists create in the privacy of their studios. This exhibition brings together four 'pur sang' painters for whom the canvas constantly implies a new (partial) territory, and the material boundaries of the canvas each time delineate the painterly playground. The analysis of the material paint skin of each canvas and the depiction of specific recurrent themes related to the concept of territory in their oeuvre lead us to their highly personal idiom, the territory of their own artistic identity. Each painter's specific visual language offers a unique window on reality.



George De Decker is active in both painterly and musical territory. His abstract paintings that invariably form part of series are at the interface of both disciplines. His series 'Pli selon pli' (2016) is a magnum opus of white paintings inspired by the eponymous music piece composed by Pierre Boulez, which in turn inspired De Decker's own musical composition 'Wit in wit'. The four-part series 'Fragmente-Stille' (2015) was created after endlessly listening to Toshio Hosokawa's music composition. De Decker's creative process takes place in a momentum where the music and the painting act intertwine. The painting studio is a 'locus genii' - where the music infiltrates the canvas. In this special place, George De Decker's extremely layered painterly work emerges, both materially and intrinsically.

*Pli selon pli iiiii by George De Decker, 2016,
Mixed media on canvas, 40x30cm*



Installation view 'Fragmente – Stille' by George De Decker at Husk Gallery

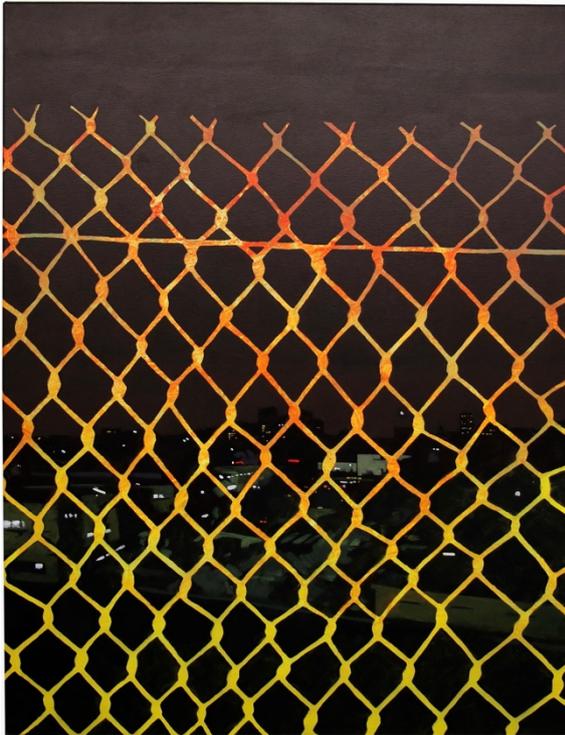


Nuit debout by Dirk Eelen, 2018, oil on canvas, 120x220cm

Using his typical oil painting technique, **Dirk Eelen** paints series in which he explores a theme in depth and also stages his subject himself. In the series 'Nuit debout' (2018), he depicts a gathering of family and friends in the garden of his parental home. The intimacy of the dark night is the setting for the group event, a temporary territory of human connection. By creating the premises for the series in advance; the garden became Eelen's observatory for spontaneous scenes with the protagonists. The 'caravaggist' paintings of human encounters contrast with the white snowy mountain landscape from his series 'Future Past' (2017). Majestic nature forms the setting of a mountain hut, the only trace of human presence in a vast and timeless landscape.

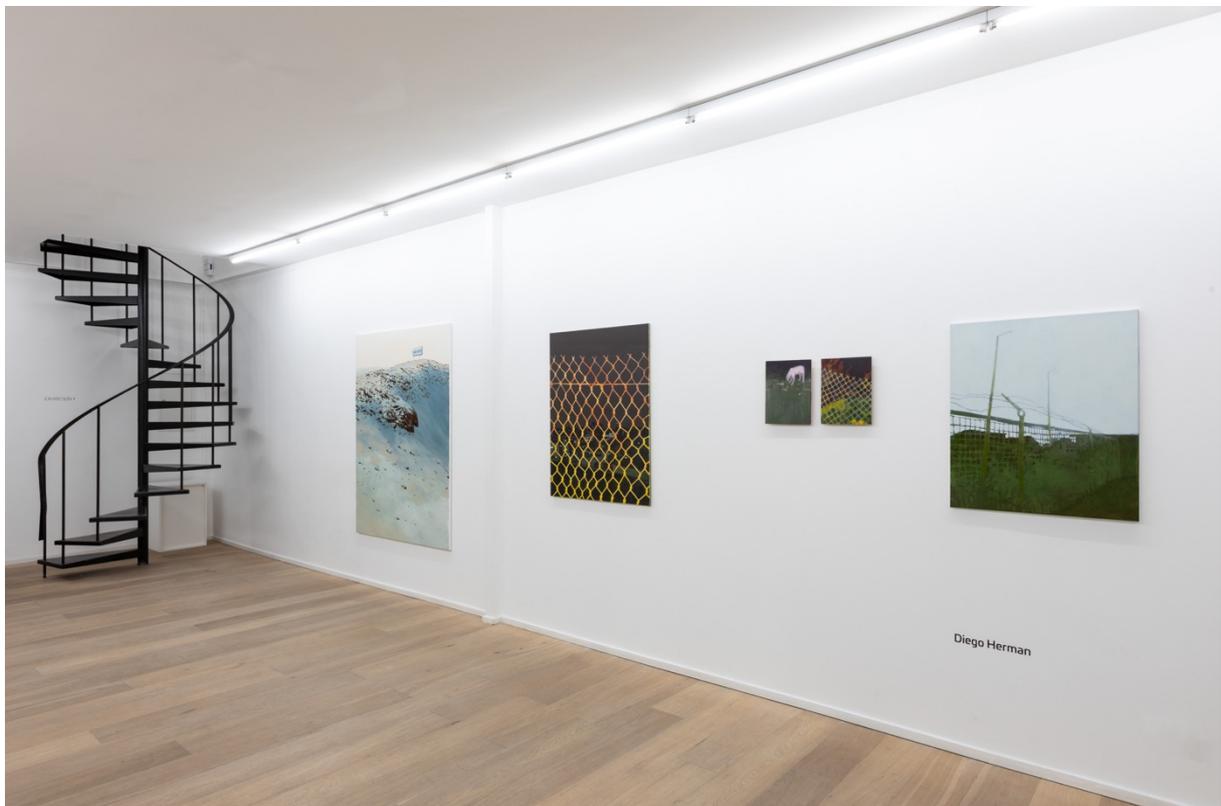


Installation view paintings by Dirk Eelen at Husk Gallery



Diego Herman is fascinated by spatial boundaries. In his paintings, he uses the motif of an industrial fence as a strong symbol for the obstruction of bodily freedom of movement. His images of material demarcations of territories evoke familiar socio-cultural phenomena and refer to current geopolitical themes. Indeed, humans and animals demarcate their territories by creating boundaries in a variety of ways. Animals do this through urine smell, with singing sounds, by threatening and attacking intruders, and there are plenty of examples in human society too. Pieces of land have at some point in the distant past been conquered or claimed by an individual or state as their property, humans now even undertake expeditions into 'alien' space.

*Room with a view by Diego Herman, 2022,
Acrylics on canvas, 100 x 75cm*



Installation view paintings by Diego Herman at Husk Gallery



Nathalie Pirotte's individual female portraits evoke beautiful and seemingly strong women. The construction of female identity plays a central role in her artistic oeuvre. Her paintings, characterised by smooth brushwork and vibrant colours, depict the mysterious lifeworld of her anonymous figures. The gaze of the seductive women is often camouflaged with paint or a mask. Only the pose, clothing and sometimes small scenes offer suggestions about their identity.

*Touchée by Nathalie Pirotte, 2024,
Oil on canvas, 40x50cm*

'Touchée'(2024) and her 'hands' series refer to the female body in #metoo times as a territory to be defended, with women claiming the right to make their own decisions about their bodies and raising their voices of protest about physical violence against women in a variety of contexts.



Installation view paintings by Nathalie Pirotte at Husk Gallery

SHORT ARTIST'S CV

GEORGE DE DECKER



George De Decker (°1951, Asse) is a visual artist and music composer who lives and works in Sint-Katelijne-Waver. He studied piano, composition and art history at the Royal Conservatory in Antwerp and Brussels, electronic music at IPEM in Ghent and painting in Anderlecht. Besides solo work (mainly with sound tape) and works for a large symphonic orchestra and sound installations, he also composed music for film, television and theatre. As from 2008 his paintings have featured in many solo, duo and group exhibitions in Belgium and The Netherlands. De Decker also created large mixed media installation projects including *Ørnen 1897* (2013-2022), a gigantic wooden zeppelin installation in which he combined fine art, music and film and *Le bruit de la pensée* (2014), permanent site-specific installation works for the prison complex in Leuze-en-Hainaut (BE) consisting of four sculptures, a large stained glass and two paintings. In 2016 he founded the music ensemble SP!TSBERGEN. His composition *Wit in Wit Goldberg Variations Revisited* (2019) is released on CD and performed by pianist Geert Callaert in several concert halls. Husk Gallery presented two solo shows: *Pli selon pli* (2020) and *Contrapunctus* (2022). His monograph *George De Decker - Pli selon pli* is published in 2020.

DIRK EELEN



Dirk Eelen (°1974, Louvain) is a Belgian artist who lives and works in Louvain. After graduating in Archaeology at KU Leuven University, he obtained a master's degree of Visual Art at Sint-Lukas Brussels. Since 2004 he is a full-time painter. In 2019 Dirk Eelen has been awarded with the first prize of the fifth Open M contest, organized by Museum M in Louvain. Solo exhibitions include *Into the Gathering* (2023), *Fair Encounters* (2019) and *Surveillance* (2023) in Husk Gallery, Brussels, *Shallow Waters* (2019) and *Nuit debout* (2018) in Gallery 15/17, Antwerp, Belgium; *Il faut cultiver notre jardin* in Chateau de Voltaire, Ferney-Voltaire, Switzerland (2016) and *Syria - as seen on YouTube in the Egg*, Brussels, Belgium (2013). He has also taken part in several group exhibitions in Belgium and abroad.

DIEGO HERMAN



Diego Herman (°1994, Brussels) grew up in a Belgian-Mexican household, he currently lives and works in Brussels. After graduating in 2021 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels, with a master's degree in painting, he was an artist in residence at Moonens Foundation, Brussels (2021-2022) and at Carrefour des arts, Brussels (2022-2023). Among others, his work was presented at Iselp Brussels on the occasion of 'New horizons in painting' (2022). Diego Herman's work is presented for the first time at Husk Gallery on the occasion of the group exhibition 'Territories' (2024).

NATHALIE PIROTTE



Nathalie Pirotte (°1965, Albertville) is a Belgian painter who lives and works in Brussels. She completed her Master in Painting and 3D Research in La Cambre, Brussels. In the past years her work has featured in solo shows in Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany. In 2020 Husk Gallery presented two solo shows *Pretty Chimeras (2020° and Mêmesés (2023)*. In 2023, her extensive solo show *Montré-Caché* was on view in the Alter Schlachthof in Eupen. She has also taken part in

numerous group exhibitions in Belgium and abroad. Her work can be found in the following collections: Communauté française de Belgique, Unisys, BSB (B), Town of Ettelbruck (GDL), City of Dudelange (GDL), City of Luxembourg (GDL), Sanrio (It) and in private collections in Europe, the United States and Australia. Since 1995, Nathalie Pirotte is also working as a painting teacher at the Arlon Academy of Fine Arts in Belgium.

Opening Sunday 10 March 2024 from 2 to 7 pm in the presence of the artists

Opening hours during exhibition

Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 2 to 6 pm or by appointment

Address Husk Gallery

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For further inquiries

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