

MADELEINE HATZ | Sea Change

**A review written by Alex Head and Anna Kostreva, Plural Studio, Berlin
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Given what the younger generations are going to have to live through as billions die off prematurely in the coming decades, one might incorrectly and resentfully read the title *Sea Change* as synonymous with that hackneyed phrase climate change. Yet geriatric millennials like us also remember the term Climate Change as the outcome of millions of lobbying dollars to avert the term Global Warming from taking hold in the vernacular of our age.

The title *Sea Change* speaks to a pivot away from such sense making apparatus, away from the corporate governance that got us into so much climate trouble in the first place. Either way, regardless of demographic, every generation must ask whether art, whether painting ever be meaningfully employed to deal with the environmental and societal collapse that beckons.

We came to Stockholm to see the work for exactly this reason. Because resisting dark narratives is critical to both Madeleine Hatz's work and to her person - her action. Central to what she represents to us in a way that represents a form of evolutionary potential. For not only do we need a vast variety of approaches to maximise human survival - we must always know what values we want to survive and why. And the value of the human, the depth and sorrow of human experience, is writ large in these explosions of clues to the current moment. How much time do we have in the business as usual mode? For whom? Time is crucial to painting, painting takes time, literally, in the form of money invested into paint, and smears it across the canvas before our very eyes.

Fingers in the paint. It occurred to us that one movement works coextensively with the other: it is a human hand that intervenes and investigates into what it finds alluring yet disturbing. And if we talk of isolation and painting, isolation and technology then what could be more isolating than finding disturbing what others seem to ignore. As though we were not reliving and preparing to relive on a global scale the worst atrocities of recent history.

Sea Change, the show of works, a bleeding body of colours. The raging polyphony of conflicting voices embodied and brought forward, one step after another, into the public, into light from shadow. No, there is nothing to resent here. For there are many lives honoured in such artworks. The lives of those who struggle and the lives being lost today, daily.

As the dominant war machine tramples children, with nothing but the cloth on their backs, a great furnace reemerges in the global imaginary.

And we see this in Madeleine Hatz's work - that churns and smelts like a furnace from which new works are forged to transcend clichés and stereotypes. We believe there is a form of metabolic process at work here. Of alchemy. Though the furnace is unpredictable in its creations without doubt. It spews molten, reflective, enameled and galvanised forms. Smoke plumes and gunshot powder stand with and against hardened residues of the fire this time.

Impossible to miss here is an engagement with emotion. The full range of work on display represents a spectrum of emotional registers in which the viewer can and must locate themselves. Each painting uses colour, texture and composition to reveal associative ghosts. Some of these encounter seep beyond the viewer's comfort zone. Plugging depths our conscious minds would rather not reveal.

We came to witness how someone who cares, who couples thought with feeling - that most human of all traits, paints. We left, changed.