## MARTINE POPPE — Peering at the Edge of Daydream

through my mind, I wondered how perception works on encountering something that first seems smooth, light, well, cloud-like and "easy", but on hindsight contracts as through a needle's eye into a very haptic world of dense matter informed by an "origin narrative that contains the smell of the sea and the restoration of polyester fabric". You didn't expect that, did you? My musing led me to the concept of density expressed in the layers of meaning to be found in Poppe's work, as in the case of her latest "happy loud in your face" flower depictions. They too can seem "easy" to look at but when you step closer you can sense an instant change in atmosphere – that is if you are willing to let yourself be consumed by them and see the decay appearing on the bright peach-colored petals (the image of a flower bouquet that has started to decompose on a fresh grave

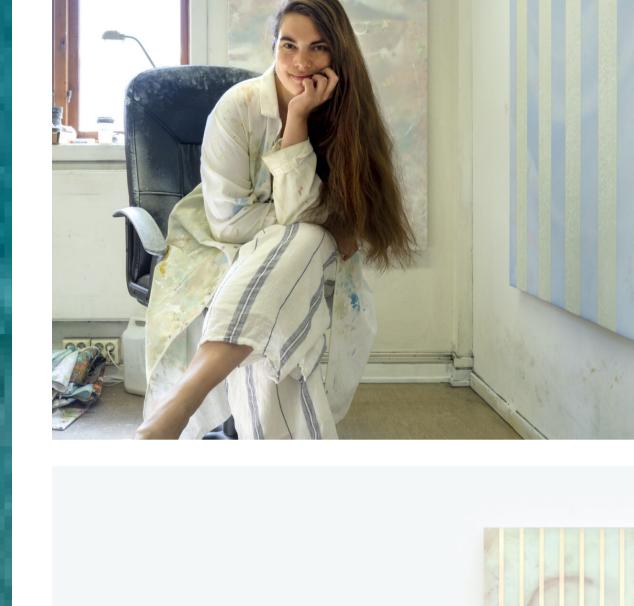
Since interviewing the Norwegian artist Martine Poppe, I have been reflecting on her answers and also her well-known cloud paintings, which I first encountered a few years ago when the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery opened in Berlin Mitte (and which today form part of the UK Government Art Collection). Among the thoughts passing

flashes before my inner eye). These different stages of density mirror the fragments of the sharp-edged and melancholy writings of Irish poet and author Rosemarie Rowley that Poppe has woven into her work on show at the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery. In case you haven't heard of Rosemarie Rowley, her "Sea of Affliction" published in 1987 is considered one of the first works of ecofeminism, so go read it! The exhibition's title – "Peering at the Edge of Daydreams" – is borrowed from Rowley and illustrates Poppe's ongoing interest

- Those who are willing to see know that art is truth. Which of these elements (space, air, fire, water, earth) would you choose in relation to your practice and/or yourself, and why?

sailcloth.

in climate and ecofeminism, two issues that she lets clash ferociously "with the tropes of bubble-gum minimalism – vivid colors, flowers and sunshine."



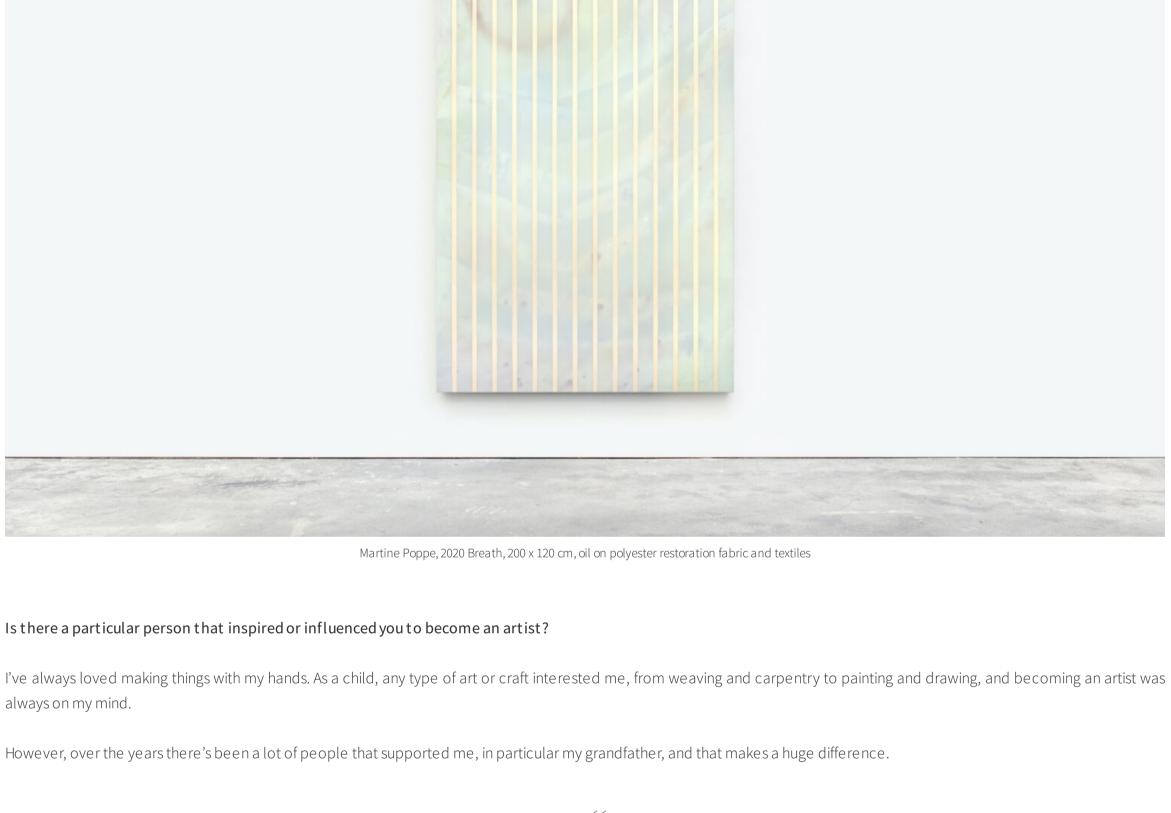
As a child, I spent a fair bit of time sailing and at

I'd probably have to go with air and water, seeing as I paint on polyester restoration fabric, which is more or less the same as

the sailmaking factory my father ran with my uncle at Fornebu Marina by the Oslo fjord.

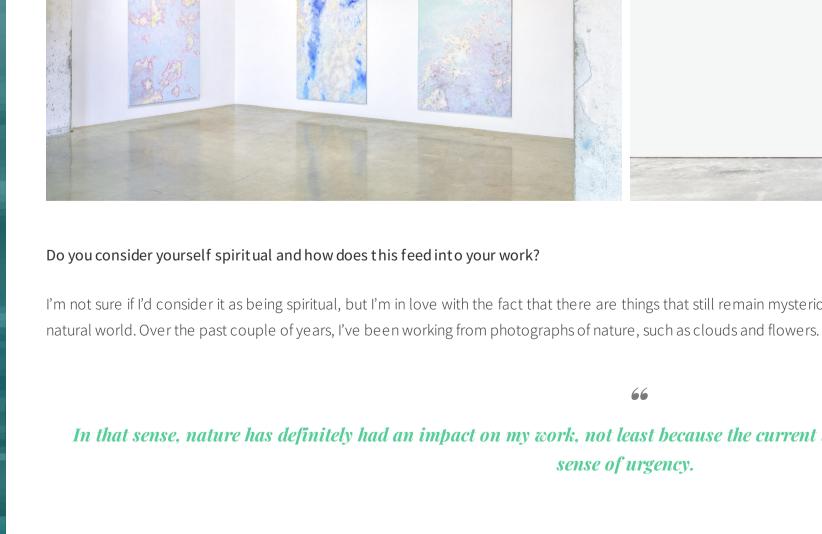
I think that's why I became so interested in working with polyester restoration fabric in the first place – it's a material I've been playing with since I was very young.

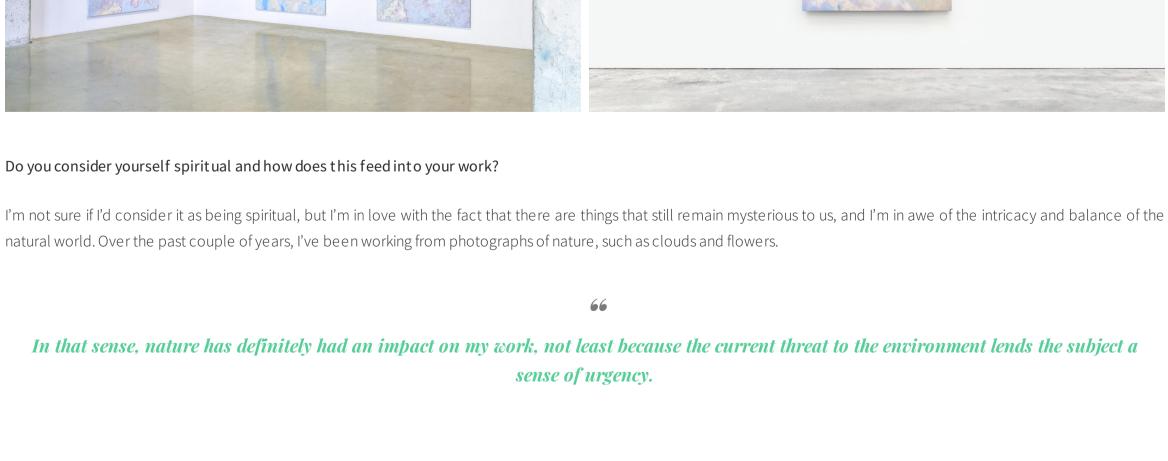
Also, I do paint a lot of clouds. Image: Martine Poppe, Studio Portrait, 2020

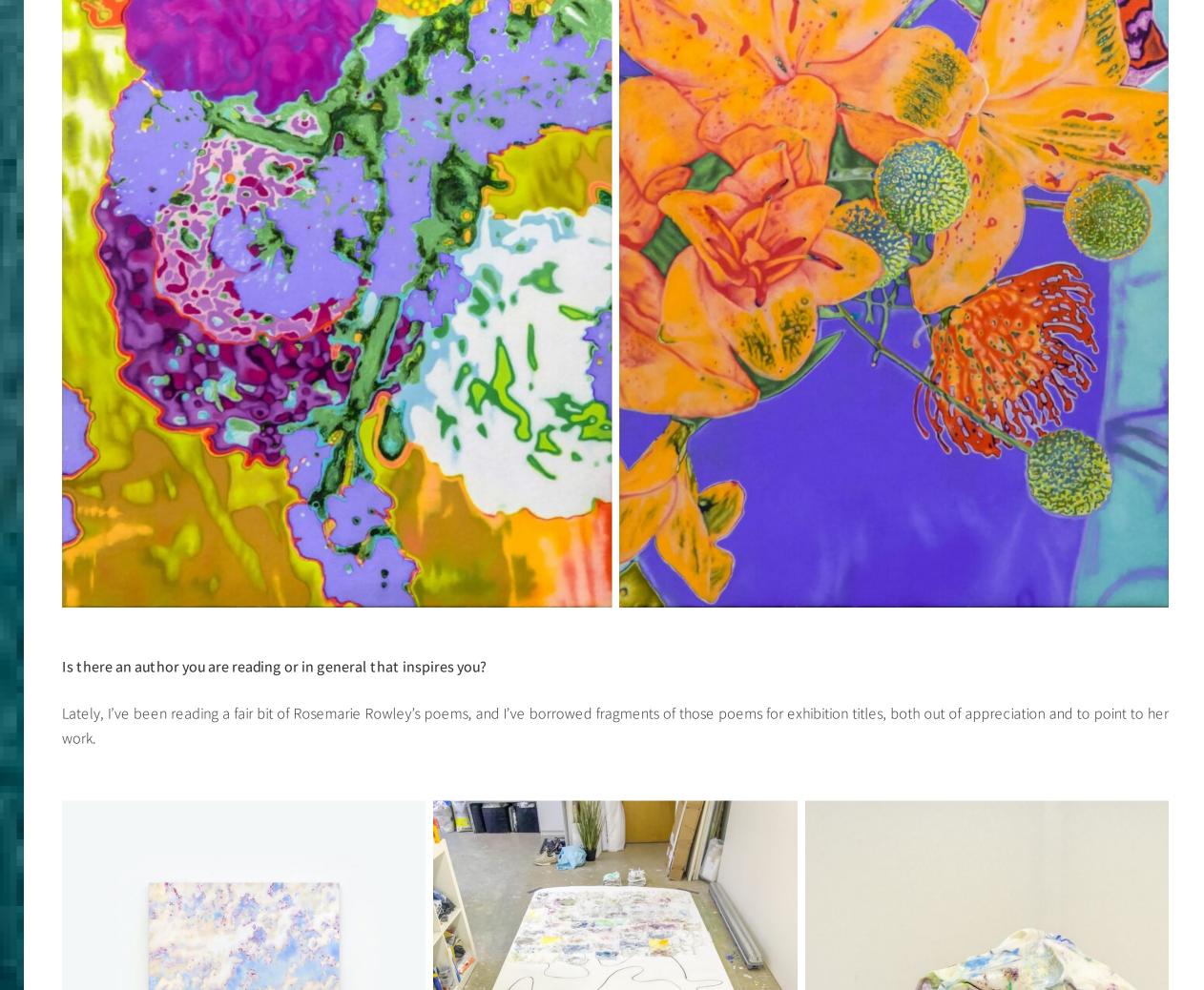


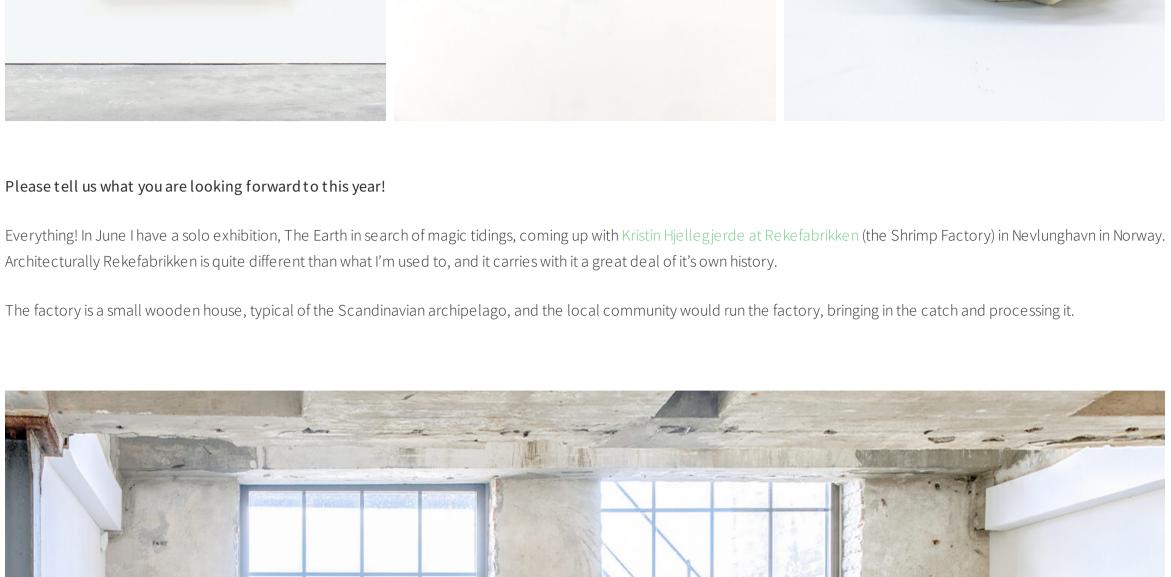
Sadly, my grandfather died before I began studying art, but I think that crisis in my life is part of what gave me the impetus to choose to

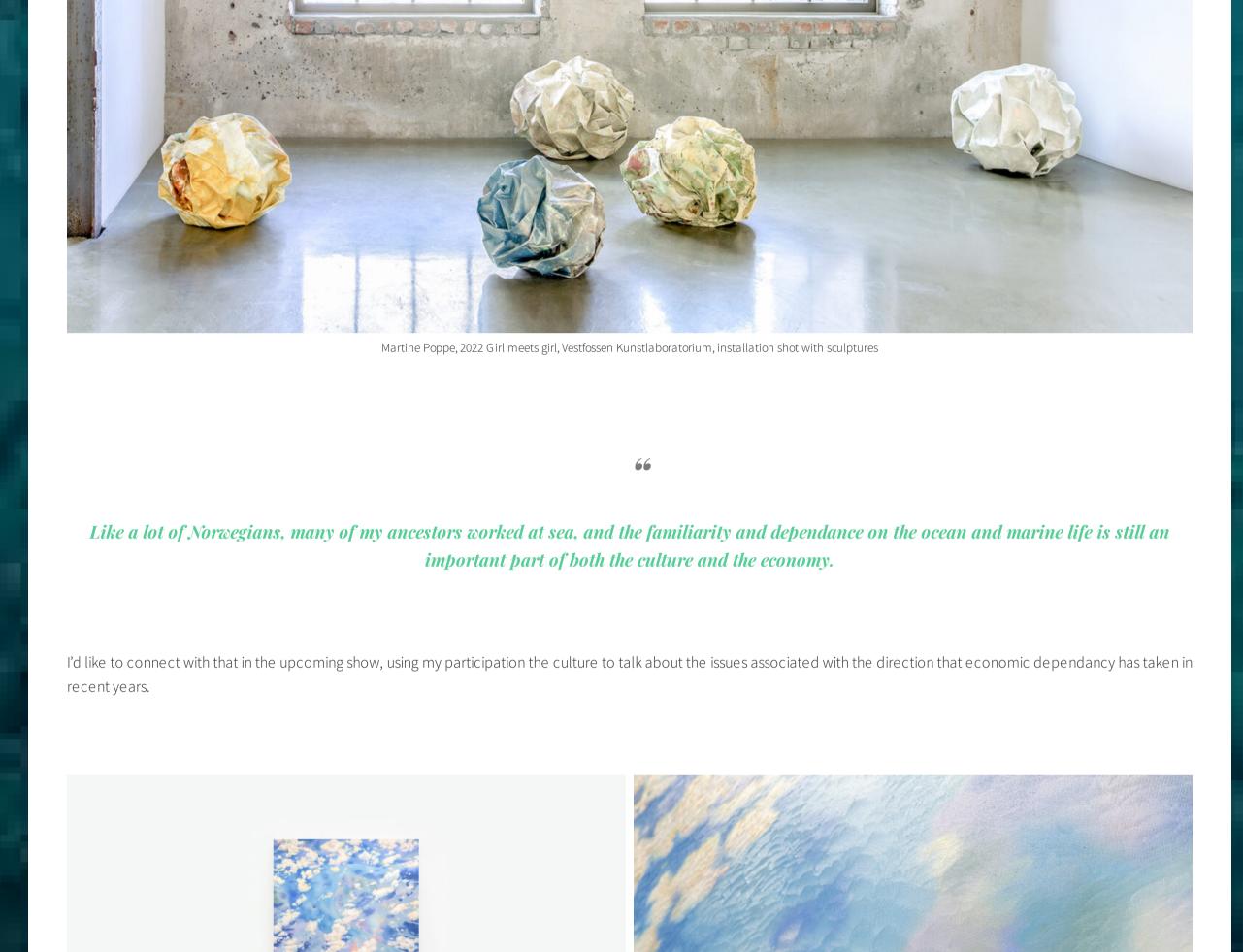
become an artist, despite being aware of all the challenges that it might entail.











Growing up I spent a lot of time sailing with my family around the Scandinavian archipelago, and preserving the environment that I grew up with is important to me.

Where do you find inspiration, how can we imagine your process while creating work? I start every show by taking photographs and processing them digitally,

I work quite intensely towards my exhibitions, and during that process I usually have ideas that don't fit with the body of work I'm making. Sometimes they pass, but when the ideas

stick I develop them into new works and exhibitions.

twisting the colours until the image is at the brink of dissolving.

with the image through paint.

the painting until it's complete.

and later made into sculpture.

fabric, 160 x 110 cm

The process gives me a starting point that motivates me to work further

Once I begin painting, I only apply one layer of paint, and prefer to stay with

After that, the source photograph and other leftover materials, such as baby wipes and the textiles I cover my clothes with, are put to one side

Martine Poppe, 2022, Detail, Peering at the edge of daydreams, oil on polyester restoration

Aesthetics and Process aside, which emotions you want to trigger

I always want each person who looks at my work to have their own

In that way, my aim is for the work to be a catalyst

that lets the viewer have a moment to catch their

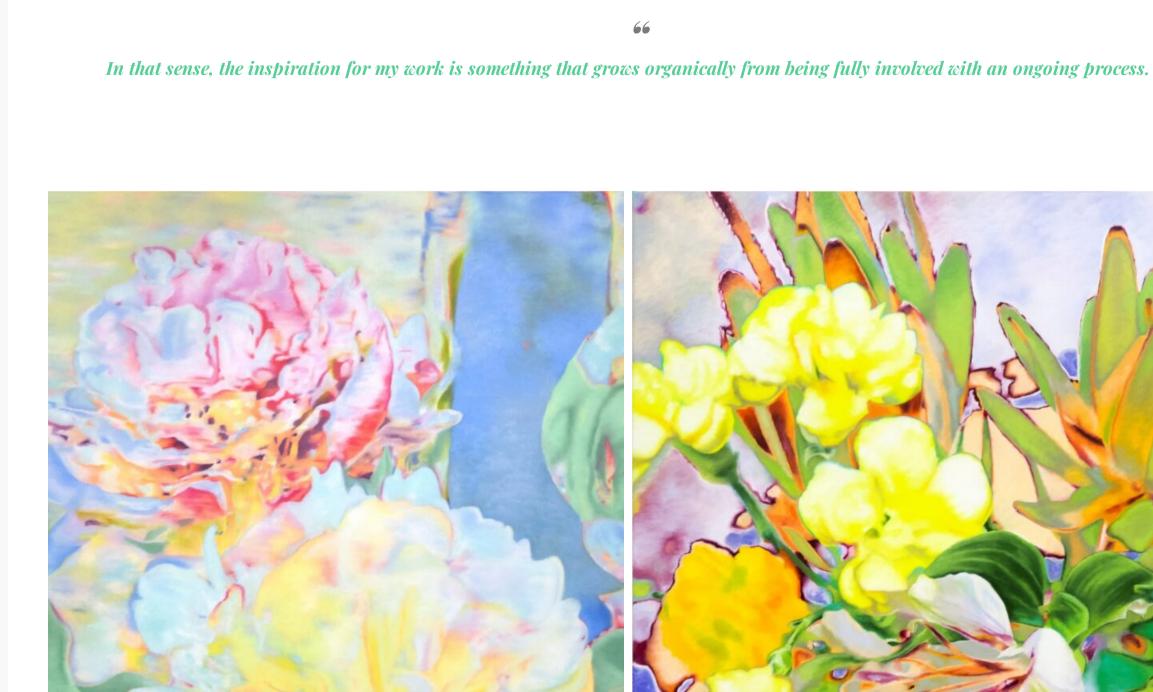
Martine Poppe, 2022, Silver, oil on polyester restoration fabric, 160 x 110 cm, 160 x 110 cm,

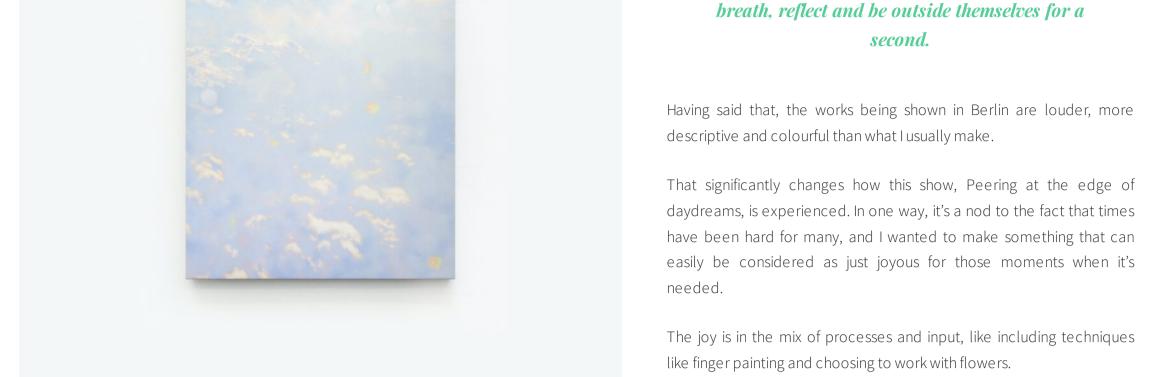
with your work and why?

oil on polyester restoration fabric

experience of it.

I'm excited at the prospect and challenge of bringing some of my experiences and a bit of that innocence with me when making this show.





Simple pleasures aren't necessarily so simple, and even something so innocent as a bouquet of flowers is a part of an economic system

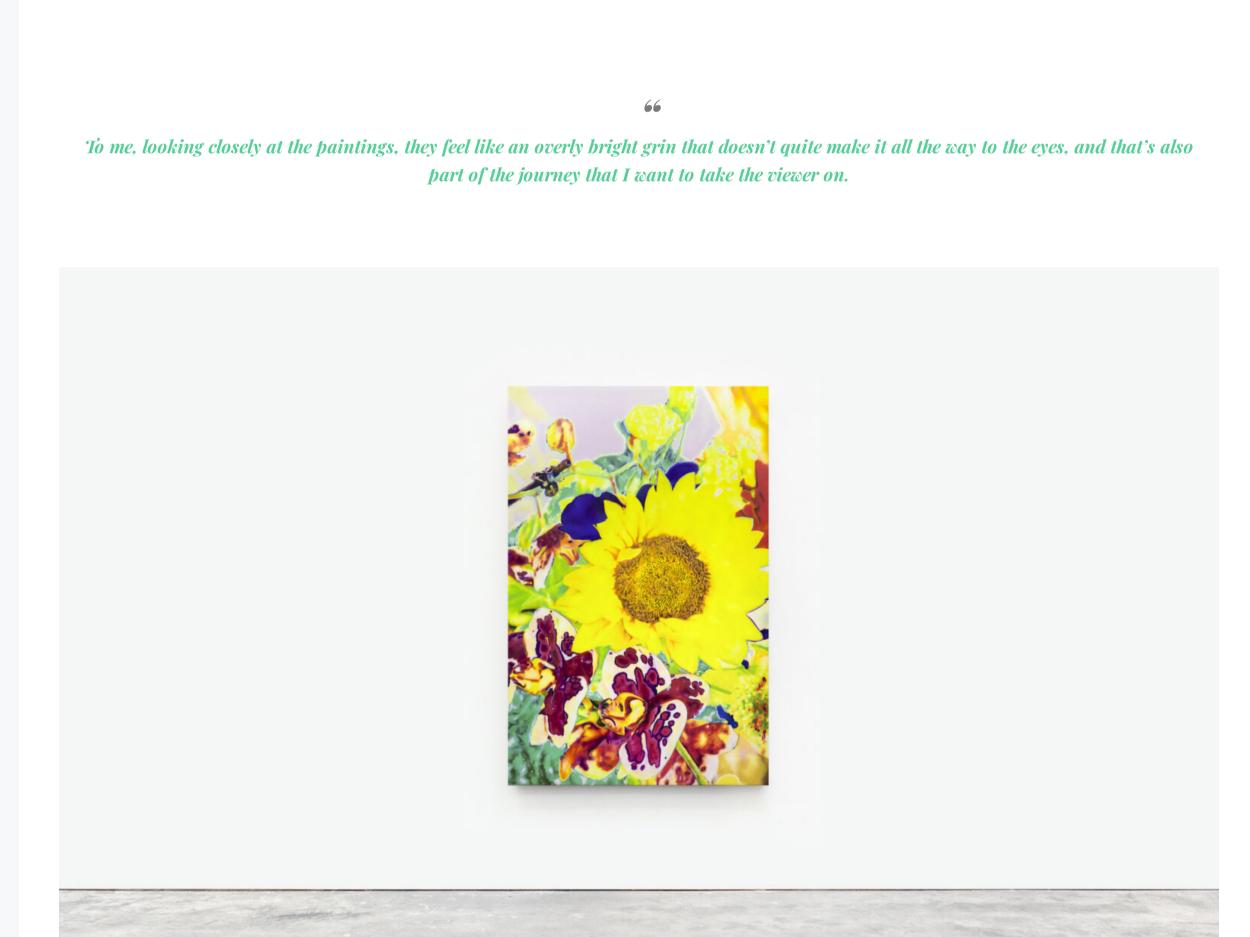
that exploits.

However, the works are executed with an abundance of control, the colours are twisted out of balance and the choice to use bouquets of

flowers as a motif inevitably creates ties to memento mori painting, not to mention the fact that the production and export of cut flowers

has a negative impact on the environment.

Installation shot, Peering at the edge of daydreams, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin, Germany, 2023



The future is ..? 66

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If you could, what would you change in the art world/market? First and foremost I'd magic up more funding for the arts on every level, from education and institutions to galleries and artists. More funding would mean more space for diversity, experimentation, different outlooks and expressions.

Martine Poppe, Smile harder, 2022, 160 x 105 cm, oil on polyester restoration fabric

New, unwritten, daunting and exciting.

In short, more funding would make the process of defining what art is and should be, more open, accessible and inclusive.

Follow Martine on Instagram or find out more about her work on her website!

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Intro: Esther Harrison

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MARTINE POPPE – PEERING AT THE EDGE OF DAYDREAMS is on view till February 18th at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin