

October is a bad month for the wind, the month where breathing is difficult and the hills blaze up simultaneously. There has been no rain since April. Every voice seems a scream.
– Joan Didion, "Some Dreamers of the Golden

Société is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new work by the American artist Petra Cortright.

Cortright's digital paintings combine expansive and seemingly limitless layers of information found while surfing on the internet. She is less concerned with the content of her source material than the colors, surfaces, and textures that she finds there, which she wields as digitally sourced paints using Photoshop to create complex and ebullient compositions comprising up to several hundred layers. The exhibition *BALEAF GYS AKADEMIKS maamgic BROKIG* presents a series of recent landscape paintings on aluminum, as well as a new video work.

Cortright makes no secret of her affinities with the American west. "Growing up in California," she says, "I have a West-Coast color palette, and in some paintings, I try to achieve the depth and vastness that is present in the landscapes here. You can see for miles and miles, there are huge mountains and a big ocean, and a lot of different biomes. All of these things seeped into my brain, and it shows up in my aesthetics." In her newest works, Cortright portrays a series of ruggedly beautiful, invented landscapes that seem to bristle with a sense of foreboding. One painting layers transparent renderings of wintery peaks with bald brown hills that seem to bake in the summer sun. In the foreground vast thickets of agave bloom from negative space, their spiky appendages executed in hot reds and oranges reminiscent of infernal flames. In another work, a turbulent composition of electric-colored mountains and wind-swept trees are practically subsumed by scratches, roiling lines, and splashes of white. Below, entangled configurations of plant life bleed into layers of thorny-shaped cutouts that reveal the substrate of the image. Geographically impossible mashups that collapse space, distance, and weather into one composition, Cortright's accumulations of pristine snowcapped mountain ranges, rolling hills, and great expanses of agave and whale's tongue seemed poised on the precipice between heaven and hell, unlocking the dual sense of exaltation and terror inherent in the sublime.

Petra Cortright (b. 1986, Santa Barbara) lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Doota Plaza, Seoul; LIMA, Amsterdam; UTA Artist Space, Los Angeles; University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh; and Depart Foundation, Los Angeles. She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions at international venues including the MoMA New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Ludwig Museum, Budapest; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; KM – Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Kunsthaus Langenthal, Langenthal; New Museum, New York; 12th Biennale de Lyon, Lyon; and SJ01 Biennial, San Jose.

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