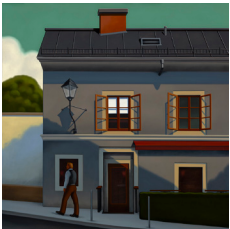


KENTON NELSON
NEW WORK

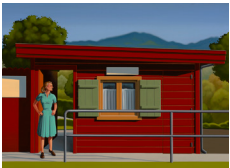
20th July - 30th August 2018



MANIKIN, 2017



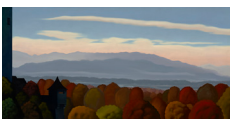
DROUGHT, 2018



THE DRAW, 2018



THE PROJECT, 2018



STRATH, 2018



WORKHORSE #2, 2018

In his new exhibition, **KENTON NELSON** (*1954, Los Angeles) focuses on Austrian and Bavarian motifs captured on camera during his last visit to Salzburg and the surrounding area in 2016. The images remind of bygone days: the lifestyle of the 1950s and 1960s experiences a revival. Conforming to today's retro trend, sensual women in ski attire prepare to descend down the slopes (*Bourn*) while exuding intense graveness, giving the scene an air of solemnity. The paintings are reminiscent of snapshots: odd body parts are cropped, stay hidden and are left to the viewer's imagination (*Manikin*). In *Devoir* one sees a woman in a traditional Austrian costume hanging up laundry in her garden, which gives way to a view of the Bavarian Alps. **KENTON NELSON** says about its making: "Devoir was inspired by my last visit to Salzburg, when Nikolaus Ruzicka and I took a trip to the countryside, which was like a day in paradise."

Besides the Alpine scenery, the architecture of painted buildings (*Drought*, *The Draw*, *The Project*) and the vista from the Kapuzinerberg on to Salzburg (*Strath*) do not fail to amaze: Out of his studio in Pasadena, California **KENTON NELSON** has managed to masterfully put Salzburg's cultural landscape on canvas in a meticulous manner. His studio workday starts at 7:30 a.m. with an inspection of his photo archive. After the artist has selected a suitable motif, he first conveys it as a drawing and then with acrylic paint onto canvas. The brush strokes are neatly sanded off to create a perfectly smooth surface: a reference to Christian Schad, a main representative of the New Objectivity. The works' lighting resembles one found in Hollywood movies and commercials of the post-war era: glistening sunlight, an interplay of sharpness and blur create contoured outlines that evoke clarity and calm (*Workhorse #2*). The artist's years of work as graphic designer and illustrator in the advertising industry unveil. Outside could be a template to a film poster: set in soft red evening light, sharp silhouettes of male figures stand against a diffusely outlined forest.

A nebulous source of light makes **KENTON NELSON**'s works enigmatic. The interlude of light and shade have been a suitable means to add suspense since the Baroque period. Caravaggio was one of the first of his contemporaries to irritate with excessively dramatic staging in extreme "Chiaroscuro" (light/dark). **KENTON NELSON** "seduces the observer with the help of his old master technique to take a look beyond the attractive surface and give way to the narrative elements of his pictorial snapshots."¹

Katja Mittendorfer

¹ Cay Bubendorfer in „A Game, narrated in Space“, Kenton Nelson, Exhibition catalogue Galerie Haas, Berlin, 2008