

Abigail Janjić has been tracking and playing with images for over ten years. Whether she is painting, scanning, cutting up or printing, she challenges and confronts us with her collages, using this elusive, shapeshifting, pseudo-evidence that is the image.

Abigail Janjić gently teases images taken from magazines, fabrics, canvases and colour blocks. Her scanner, which she says she uses “like turpentine”, is covered in stains, and her source materials which she spreads out and reworks using Photoshop, are for her like a “distilling vessel”.

Dilution, distillation, and copying are some of the filters through which she puts her source materials hoping for a stratification which only her decisions can pinpoint for a moment.

Her studies have led her from Geneva to Stockholm—officially in textile design—and then to Lausanne. She has, in a simultaneously tenacious and relaxed way, cut up, cut out, deformed then reconstructed forms, which then exist through fragmented installations and paintings. A fragmentation of bodies and of forms.

What we are led to see is a temporary suspended state, in which elements are always revisited, reworked and in turn reintegrated into subsequent work, with another status, on a different scale.

Her work moves incessantly between surfaces, walls and floors, connected by thin delicate filaments, threads that are like so many lines in space, directing our eye. Her work is delicately balanced. Here black modelling clay is coloured, shaped, but is also a way of capturing an image; there an orange thread restrains a canvas which curves and bulges out, held by its own weight. Often the result is a happy balance between chaos and elegance.

There are hints of the baroque in her work, one medium which becomes another, the mimic (apparently) plays his role. For us, space and its representation become like an image which reveals itself in turns, but never all at the same time; two profiles or one vase. Are we inside or outside?

The collages take part in the same process: extraction and reassembling of details (in the literal sense of cutting and distilling).

The body, her body, embarks upon a more compelling (nuanced?) venture, a style of expression, a more direct method in terms of creating, encompassing fewer elements.

Their formats are contained on purpose, but nothing indicates nor excludes that they can be sooner or later reinvented as source images, once more succumbing to the cross-pollination process that Abigail Janjić imposes upon our viewpoint.

Ambroise Tièche
Artist / Visual Arts Teacher /
HEAD Geneva