

Perri MacKenzie

PERRI MACKENZIE, *Illustration Fantasy*, screenprint, 2023, courtesy the artist, photo Lola Pertisowsky



The Scottish-born artist, writer and editor Perri MacKenzie has refined a particular brand of stylised, borderline manneristic figuration, with bold outlines and vibrant hatching that betray the hand of a trained illustrator. Hands, expressive and active, are a recurring motif in her paintings; attached to figures or autopoietically self-rendering, like in M. C. Escher's iconic lithograph *Drawing Hands* (1948), they grasp various drawing utensils, most often a paintbrush (see the memorably raucous painting *Ghost Painting* from 2020, depicting an orange-gloved pair of hands holding back a witch from casting a spell in paint while holding a flanking ghost at gunpoint). Perri is self-conscious about painting, but in an enticingly playful and not self-serious way. She is also print- and medium-curious, painting on walls and unconventionally shaped canvasses and immersing herself in publishing and printing techniques through residencies (many of the printed works in the exhibition were produced at Masereel, formerly known as the Frans Masereel Centrum) and ongoing collaborations.

Her new show in Komplot, the art space and curatorial collective based in Anderlecht, titled 'What does an oracle look

like?', features paintings, drawings, screenprints and books, including a new installation of large-scale collage paintings on paper depicting the animal fountains of Sainte-Catherine, Brussels (sculpted by Georges Houstont and Godefroid Devreese circa 1895). It's the first time that the interwoven strands of MacKenzie's practice have been so conveniently represented in one place, and they establish her as consummate graphic artist, in the sense of the term that also extends to writing. For MacKenzie, voice, text, line and picture seem to exist on a continuum that is grounded in the physicality of the human body.

The show also serves as a platform for the launch of a book of the same name. *What does an oracle look like?* gathers essays and drawings made between 2020 and 2024, themed loosely around pottery painting and vocal expression. It is designed by Ilke Geers, printed by robstolk Amsterdam and published by Leaky Press. (Ezra Babski)

Perri MacKenzie, 'What does an oracle look like?', through 17 May 2025, Komplot, Brussels, kmplt.org

Musée de l'Orangerie
Paris

David Claerbout



Given the Musée de l'Orangerie's focus on impressionism and post-impressionism, it might seem surprising that David Claerbout (1969, Kortrijk) is exhibiting there. His exhibition 'spring, slowly', curated by Sophie Eloy, mixes sound, video and photography as part of their contemporary art series 'Contrepoint'. Since painting underscores Claerbout's technical savvy, his oeuvre proves a perfect counterpoint to impressionist painters who applied their knowledge of the latest vision science and colour theory, found both time and duration relevant, and aimed for a level of accuracy in depiction that some mistook as more fictional than real. For example, Claude Monet famously created scores of haystack paintings, each indicative of a particular moment of the day and a particular time of the year, in order to accurately capture the effects of sunlight and shadows befalling the landscape.

Claerbout also emphasises each scene's changing light. For example, video stills from *Backwards Growing Tree*, a video made over five years, capture distinct moments: *Backwards*

Growing Tree (Red Evening Light), *Backwards Growing Tree (Italian Winter)*, *Backwards Growing Tree (Colour Sheet for Summer Days)* and *Backwards Growing Tree (Colour Sheet for Autumn Days)* (all 2023).

Moreover, two specially-designed galleries at the Orangerie host numerous Monet Nymphéas (Water Lilies), several of which Monet gifted the nation the day after the armistice in 1918. Just as Monet's intensely detailed water lily paintings convey duration and take time to fully experience, Claerbout's videos position the spectator amidst a cinematic experience for which each viewer, not the artist, authors their own experience. Unlike cinematography, which directs each viewer's gaze, Claerbout opts for an open system that invites viewers to roam across the screen image in time, in order to 'spring, slowly' in space. (Sue Spaid)

David Claerbout, 'spring, slowly', through 9 June 2025, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris, musee-orangerie.fr

DAVID CLAERBOUT, *Backwards Growing Tree*, 2023, courtesy the artist and galleries Pedro Cera, Annet Gelink, Sean Kelly, Greta Meert, Esther Schipper, Rüdiger Schöttle © Adagp, Paris 2025