

## SILVERTON

Exhibition by Anna Munk

9<sup>th</sup> of March - 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2024

W, Av. Weber, Pantin.

Candy colored houses adorn the main road in a former mining town in Colorado. Mountains cradle the town, and those mountains were bursting with gold, that's what people thought when they built their houses. They were right. Metals for gilding and silvering dragged out of the landscape for a century until the town stopped being a function and started being a sight. Sights need preservation and so the toy-bright facades are new. Some humans prefer to reconstruct what's worn down instead of restoring it. Or we only grace the most precious objects with restoration's attentive devotion.

Skillfully composed landscapes adorn canvases and this fact is timeless to a point where painted meadows and dusks and delightful clearings have grown into something other than motifs. That particular juicy oak or that stretch of sun clad coastline drama, those myth-looking cliffs, what are they? Nature becomes a trope when it's painted. Some humans prefer to translate the beauty that flood their hearts by duplicating it. You could perceive this inclination as sentimentality or romance. And probably also due to romance and sentimentality we take good care of the most sensational paintings. Age is an unambiguous asset here. At the cusp of potentially eternal oblivion, crusty canvases of former greens are sprinkled with band aid. They are meant for preservation, and they make an 18<sup>th</sup> Century dawn look like deadpan modernism. The older the painting, the more crucial to preserve. How does this circumstance affect new paintings.

Maybe to paint is to be haunted by conserving impulses. Any new painting will immediately become old: any lush forest floor, any night sky with a velvet or blood like density have always already been painted. Museums are thick with this well-behaved regularity of flat squares made scenic by oil or gouache. And we conserve the squares, so we can keep looking at them and so we can keep repeating them. But eventually, the ultimate anticipation of painterly conservatism: to simply apply the repairing language from the beginning. What if the patches of gauze applied to old canvases by certified conservators are replaced by patches of silver applied to frail pieces of paper by the artist's own hands. Is it hyper restoration or is it the rejection of restoration and does a rejection of restoration equal a sincerely new painting.

Text by Nanna Friis