

SKIN takes as its point of departure the artistic exploration of materials that have different capacities for catching the light. Light is thus the necessary immaterial component. In the second 'windowbox,' Dutch–South African sculptor *Claire de Jong* accepts the invitation to enter into visual dialogue with Mechelen artist *Kaat Van Doren*. They find each other in their vision of the 'image,' in which light plays a generative role and at the same time becomes the subject of experiment. In their work, light unapologetically evokes 'purity' and 'wonder,' and yet takes on the hidden essence of a fragile and transient world. Both artists accomplish this in series and variations. Their respective oeuvres rely on a modernity that does not shy away from the sensory.

In the exhibition SKIN – visible from the street – *Claire de Jong's* white gesso sculptures and *Kaat Van Doren's* monumental linocuts capture the changing light and shadows of the day. *Claire de Jong's* fragile, upright bodies – deliberately unsteady and uncertain on their pedestals – are full of white angles, edges and curves. Sanded to such a degree that they acquire a voluptuous skin, veined with mirrors in search of light. Body and image: bold and uncertain, vulnerable and wounded, her animistic sculptures seek – as in a ritual – the healing light in order to share it with the other works and with the viewer.

The delicate power of these timeless, totemic variations contrasts with *Kaat Van Doren's* exploration of the temporary. How to translate the (un)predictability of the momentary and transient into material form? She is equally fascinated with differences in the capture and reflection of light, to the point of darkness even. White on white, black on white . . . black on black . . . The (un)predictable result of other angles of incidence on the sheerest of surfaces, on the blackest of blacks, on the texture of paper or linocut relief fascinates. As does the cadence of her long accordion sculpture in which the linocut image rhythmically appears and disappears.

The eternal dimension in *Claire de Jong's* sculptures and the ephemeral in *Kaat Van Doren's* linocuts keep one another in balance. Paradoxically, the underlying fragility of the sculptures stands out, and the linocuts thereby reveal their hidden eternal darkness. Both artists reveal, literally and figuratively, the tension between light and darkness. Because light caresses surfaces into skin. Without it there is NOTHING.

Windowbox # 2 **SKIN** – Kaat Van Doren & Claire de Jong

2 February - 23 April 2017

Studio Kaat Van Doren, Guldenstraat 17 2800 Mechelen (opposite parking Lamot) – Belgium
Vernissage Thursday 2 February 18:00 – 21:00 // Finissage Sunday 23 April 14:00 – 18:00

- Curated & text by : Frank Herman
- The exhibition is visible from the street
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- www.kaatvandoren.com
- www.clairedejong.be