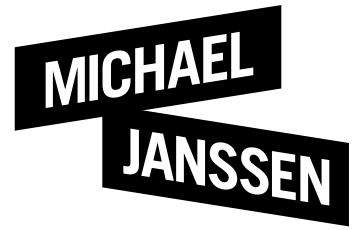


JADE VAN DER MARK

COLLECTION JADE VAN DER MARK SPRING/SUMMER



30 September—11 November 2023

Opening: 29 September 2023, 6—9 pm

White elastic Calvin Klein waistbands embrace the enticing curves of the modern goddesses of fertility and abundance, whose tanned thighs and robust breasts seem at odds with the brand's minimalist aesthetic. The faces of the five women, which share a family resemblance, are portrayed in an erratic expressionist manner, distorted and asymmetric features contoured by chaotic shadows. Their gazes — directed straight at the viewer — exude detachment, conveying a sense of ennui characteristically present in those who seem to have everything.

Taken from a Calvin Klein ad campaign featuring the Kardashian sisters, this painting by Dutch artist Jade van der Mark will be on display at her debut solo show at Michael Janssen, „Collection Jade van der Mark Spring/Summer 2024.“ The exhibition delves into the emotional yearning of consumerist society through the subject matter of fashion collections and luxury brand campaigns, effectively capturing the ever-shifting zeitgeist. With a background in fashion, van der Mark conducts artistic research on the themes, imagery, and messages employed in marketing to mirror the values and ideals that resonate within contemporary mass culture at a given moment in time. The protagonists of her paintings include celebrities, fashion show attendees, and models —the holograms of late capitalism, instruments through which new sensory frameworks of collective fictions and cultural identity are forged.

The artist utilizes large-scale formats to convey the megalomaniac spirit of the fashion industry, which indoctrinates consumers through expertly calculated branding. Human-size canvases enhance the sense of heightened reality, allowing viewers to immerse themselves in the scenes depicted on a deeper level. This format is also reminiscent of fashion campaigns prominently displayed on billboards, featuring contemporary icons who exert influence from above—disproportionately large and seemingly flawless, the deities of today's superficial modernity.

Jade van der Mark observes a society consumed by the idea that personal happiness is predicated on purchasing and owning material possessions. She often visits the department store Selfridges with her sketchbook to draw inspiration and „look for faces that would speak to her.“ In contrast to the neurotic fashion industry's tendency to conceal and mask anything deemed insufficiently glamorous, van der Mark's canvases boldly portray its controversies, embracing exaggeration and unveiling rather than hiding. Her works are characterized by abrupt vividness and maximalism, featuring rich colors, meticulous accents, and ornate detailing. They possess an inherent dynamism and depth, accentuated by the use of the Impasto technique, which imparts a sculptural quality. When standing in front of a van der Mark canvas, the viewer can sense the physicality of the piece, achieved through the multi-layering of oil paint, creating a haptic, textural feel as if the painting were a piece of clothing.

Through her insightful works, Jade van der Mark reveals the fashion realm as „a political economy of the performative self,“ as Charles Baudelaire eloquently put it. The industry operates as a powerful tool for shaping collective identity, conveying and, at times, imposing values, aspirations, and even political affiliations. In this context, fashion campaigns transcend mere advertising status; they become tools of ideological influence and cultural artifacts in equal measure, mirroring and shaping the shifting landscapes of culture and aesthetics over the decades.

Text: Karina Abdusamalova