

BERLIN

Angelika J. TrojnarSKI

GALERIE TANJA WAGNER

"Currently I am more attracted to sculptors than to painters. They look at objects from all sides," Angelika J. TrojnarSKI remarked, with an eye to this exhibition, titled "The Rising." The Polish-born, Düsseldorf-based painter is interested in three-dimensional moving bodies such as airplanes and ships, and in the technologies that make mobility possible. Even though she usually depicts her motifs in two dimensions, an understanding of volumes is essential to her work. In this exhibition, three larger oil paintings were combined with seven collages, a hanging fabric piece, and two small MDF sculptures.

TrojnarSKI's painting *Evolution* (all works 2017) suggests a bird fluttering in the air, caught in a moment where movement and standstill coincide. The image remains undefined, but the idea of a bird is evoked through a featherlike pattern combined with dynamic brushstrokes. The lower section of *Rising*, meanwhile, depicts what looks like fire and smoke, perhaps alluding to the explosive launch of a missile, with a more balanced fanlike shape above. The artist mixes moments from the evolution of modes of travel: A bird is like a zeppelin is like a ship is like a missile. They are linked not least by the laws of physics: aerodynamics, the resistance of water or air, momentum, and thrust.

In all her art, TrojnarSKI treats her subject matter mainly in a formal way. But while her paintings are the result of an abstract and imaginative approach and offer no articulated narrative or information, a documentary interest was evident in the collages on view here, which showed photos of zeppelins mixed with the outlines of old Viking ships. TrojnarSKI finds the source imagery for her paintings as well as these collages in technology museums, where it is usually part of educational or historical displays.

Expedition is a large piece of fabric that evokes the sail of a ship. This piece seemed more decorative or illustrative than the other works on view, which raised further questions about the role

the artist's research plays in her work. Does it really provide the subject matter of the work, or more of an alibi for painting? The latter seems more likely: The artist's thematic focus serves above all to winnow down the content of her work and to articulate form. The subject in question in this show was thus not really the aerodynamics of travel, but rather ideas such as lightness, mobility and immobility, weightlessness, energy, and elevation, all of which can be examined both concretely and metaphorically. This was most successfully embodied in the paintings, which are rich in expression even as they are more abstract in conception. They are partially sanded and reworked, and have patches of paper collaged to them. The resulting rough and scraped surface materiality gives them an overall seriousness that is enlivened by color accents. Made with a minimum of means, they present just enough visual information to achieve lift-off.

—Jurriaan Benschop

Angelika J. TrojnarSKI,
Rising, 2017, paper
and oil on canvas,
59 × 47 1/4".



ARTFORUM

FEBRUARY 2018

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

HOWARDENA PINDELL

FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER

CHRISTINA RAMBERG

A WOMAN OF INORDINATE STRENGTH



\$15.00

