

SOPHIE VARIN

Adventurer

June 30 - July 31, 2020

FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE, NYC

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by appointment

Fortnight Institute is pleased to present *Adventurer*, a solo exhibition of twelve miniature paintings by French artist Sophie Varin.

While exploring ideas around the gaze, curiosity, and witnessing, I ended up thinking about situations where one can look without being seen. One way to do this is by attempting to merge or dissolve into your surroundings. These ideas led me to think about mimicry. What I find compelling in mimicry and camouflage is the ambivalence and disguise in both attack and defense. Thinking about a relationship to the world in those terms implies a negotiation with the real that is driven by an imaginary of both the hunt and the hunted. - Sophie Varin

In this new series of oil paintings, an adventurous figure wanders vibrantly colored landscapes saturated in malachite greens, subsuming blues and intoxicating reds. Varin's paintings might be small but her worlds are not limited to the confines of the canvas. The paint wraps and bleeds around the edges of the canvases as its character inhabits immense spaces as both the hunter and the hunted. In the paintings, *The Last Lure 1* and *2*, Varin's adventurer glows like an apparition in a gossamer-like veil of greens and blues, fading and disguising into the cloak of nature. The circumstances in which this character finds itself is inspired by the last sentences of *La Tentation de Saint Antoine* by Gustave Flaubert, where he wishes to disappear or become the nature that engulfs him. He believes this transformation will save him from the temptation of all kinds of desires.

A dreamlike radiance permeates throughout the paintings with the energy of subtle uncertainty and eeriness. It is not definitive, there are no answers, it's a feeling. These landscapes are not what they seem. A painting that can fit in the palm of your hand feels like an extension of your body, you merge and dissolve, if only for a moment.

Sophie Varin was born in Saint-Doulchard, France in 1993. She earned a BA from the Beaux-Arts de Paris and MFA from the Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam. She currently lives and works in Brussels. Recent exhibitions include a solo at CunstLink in Brussels; Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille; Galerie Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam; Salon, Madrid; Glassbox, Paris; Galerie De Kromme Elleboog, Rotterdam. She is currently working on a solo project in London and a group exhibition in Antwerp.