



GALLERY ARTS

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*Kitchen, 2016, oil on canvas,
25.5 × 31.8 in*

For immediate release

SHADOWS IN THE MIRROR | HENNI ALFTAN

Artist Reception: Thursday Apr. 6th 2017, 6PM - 8PM

On View: Apr. 6th - May. 8th 2017

*Gallery Hours: Tue - Sat 11AM - 6PM And by appointment
102 - 1688 West 1st Avenue, Vancouver, BC Canada
info@zgalleryarts.com*

**Z Gallery Arts presents Henni Alftan's
First North American Solo Exhibition:
- *Shadows in the Mirror* -**

***Toying with perception, Finnish artist's oil-on-canvas collection
offers alluring, poetic lexicon of the everyday***

VANCOUVER, BC – Z Gallery Arts presents Finland-born artist Henni Alftan's first North American solo exhibition, ***Shadows in the Mirror***, on display from **April 6 – May 8, 2017**. This exclusive collection of 15 original, oil-on-canvas works explores the mimetic relation of paint as material and the image. Through striking, figurative pictures composed with careful framing, ellipsis, light and shading, Alftan plays with the observer's gaze, inciting the viewer to take a deeper look at everyday objects and scenes that are not what they seem.

"I have had my eye on Henni Alftan for some time, having seen her works presented with critical acclaim in Helsinki, Paris, and New York," says Zohra Bonnis, curator & owner, Z Gallery Arts. "Capturing what initially appear to be mundane settings – shadows of a chain link fence, light peeking through foliage, the reflection in a rearview mirror – she finds something rich and nuanced in every scene in which to engage the viewer. With her exquisite skill and unique perspective, I am thrilled and honoured to represent Alftan, and look forward to introducing many more artists of her caliber from around the world to Vancouverites."

Born in Helsinki, Finland in 1979, Alftan studied at École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, and the Edinburgh College of Art. In 1998, she moved to Paris, and was first featured in a group exhibition in Lyon in 2001. Since that time, Alftan's immense body of works have been displayed in more than 20 exhibitions throughout Europe, including 10 solo presentations within her home country of Finland.

Through calculated brushstrokes, Alftan evokes the semblance of actual objects with subtle deviations from reality. As a result, the object inversely begins to refer to the painting itself as an object. Her mastery over this style is credited to her intricate knowledge of the rules and codes of image making.

In 2016, Alftan's paintings appeared alongside works by Henri Cueco, Gaël Davrinche, and Nils-Udo in *J'ai des doutes. Est-ce que vous en avez?*, an exhibition in Paris focused on notions of doubt and perception. The previous year, Alftan enjoyed a six-month residency at New York's prestigious International Studio & Curatorial Program.

Alftan's work can be found in collections at Finland's Helsinki Art Museum, and Kunsti Museum of Modern Art, as well as the Famille Durand-Ruel gallery in Paris, France, among others.

Drawing inspiration from painting's history and progression, Alftan spends much of her time reflecting on iconic works in galleries and museums in Paris. She cites her contemporary influences as figurative painters Luc Tuymans and Alex Katz, as well as Vancouver's own photographer Jeff Wall.

Artist Statement – *Shadows in the Mirror*, 2017:

I paint pictures.

These pictures are the consequence of my observations of the visible world and its representations. Small perceptions of the everyday will merge with reflections on **looking, painting and image making**: the motif of my works is equally painting itself, its history, the paint as a physical substance, the tableau as an object. **Painting and picture often imitate each other.**

In painting one can see **how a picture appears**, for it is in our nature to see images in a simple stain or a few hasty brushstrokes. **Our gaze seeks** constantly to interpret, **to give meaning** to what it perceives. When is that moment, when begins or ends the resemblance? I'd like to see that moment, when the paint starts to refer, to resemble something other than itself. That is why I seek to give only the necessary amount of indications. **I hint.** (What you think you see is often hidden from view.)

There are no photographs on the walls in my studio. I prefer to employ observation and deduction. I look at people, at **the world and its representations in pictures**, painted and otherwise. My paintings are constructions of lines, colors and proportions. The way I paint is predetermined in the sketch, the plan. **But my images are not new.** I did not really invent them. **It is as if they were already there.**

Henni Alftan

About Z Gallery Arts (zgalleryarts.com)

Located in Vancouver, Z Gallery Arts is dedicated to fostering the work of emerging and internationally established artists. Founded by curator and owner Zohra Bonnis in 2016, the gallery aims to promote and support intellectual and visual dialogue with artists from around the world while embracing diversity across the industry.

To learn more about the artist, contact Zohra Bonnis: +16043120991 | info@zgalleryarts.com