

GLASS

Eva Nielsen's *Insolare* shines a light on a changing landscape at Paris Photo

Derby Jones November 23, 2023 Art, Exhibitions, Feature

A UNIQUE coastal region in southern France led artist Eva Nielsen to create 'Insolare'—a striking photographic installation that was recently exhibited at the prestigious Paris Photo fair.

The multi-segment work, which explores the Camargue region in the Rhône delta, was conceived as part of the BMW Art Makers programme—an annual initiative that supports an experimental visual arts project which responds to present-day environmental issues.



Nielsen, who lives and works in Paris, developed her project in collaboration with her long-time friend, curator Marianne Derrien. Consisting of several, large-scale panels, which combine painting and photography with silk-screen printing, the images on display documented the changing natural phenomena of the Camargue. Famous for its varied flora and fauna, and unique agriculture, which has been under pressure for some time by the presence of humans.

Examining the extent of this geographical and geological change, Nielsen made many trips to the area, taking hundreds of photographs. “During my three stays there, I photographed vast expanses between land, sea, and sky...the transition between the city, industrial areas, and marshlands,” she explains.

“Usually, I methodically map the terrains I plan to photograph, but this time, I set off each morning somewhat at random, ready to encounter the unknown.”

The images Nielsen took were later printed onto textiles (namely curtains), as well as transparent paper, before being superimposed onto other photographs taken in the Camargue.

The resulting installation of twelve images shown at Paris Photo, therefore, was one that highlighted the powerful quality of hybridisation, with new visuals being created from mixing multiple mediums. In line with the complex methods utilised by the artist to make her work, ‘Insolare’ could even be understood as mirroring the constantly changing landscape of the Camargue, which remains far from stable.

Nielsen was struck in particular by the diversity of the region, describing it as “simultaneously so enticing and yet hostile; swampy, yet affected by drought; natural yet industrial at its fringes.”

The artist certainly managed to instil this multilayered atmosphere in the finished artwork: walking through ‘Insolare’ could even be described as a sensory experience.

The network of photographic panels produced varying visual textures and tonal qualities, which often created different effects depending on how far or close you were standing to them.

Displayed within a stark metal grid-like structure, the luminosity and fragility of these images, which ultimately lament the loss of nature, was felt even more strongly.

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BMW ART MAKERS 2023 winners. Eva Nielsen (artist) and Marianne Derrien (curator) © Damien Guillaume