

FRIEZE

Must-See: Iulia Nistor Questions Our Perception

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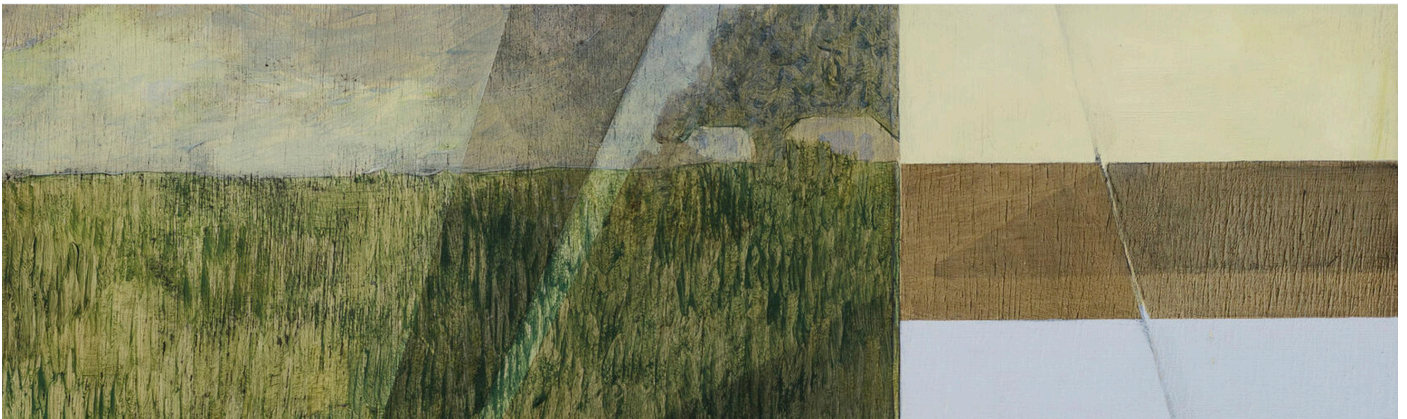
By Louisa Elderton

Must-See: Iulia Nistor Questions Our Perception

In her latest solo exhibition at Plan B, Berlin, the artist's work pushes the boundaries between actuality and abstraction



BY LOUISA ELDERTON IN EXHIBITION REVIEWS | 23 SEP 24



*This review is part of a series of **Must-See shows**, in which a writer delivers a snapshot of a current exhibition*

Framed by sizeable pages of shiny acetate, the A4 worksheets that sit next to Iulia Nistor's oil-on-wood paintings are both related and unrelated – though certainly not incidental. Per the title of her current exhibition at Plan B in Berlin, 'paintings and propositions', the annotated texts seemingly offer reflections on the relationship between the artist's intentional acts of depiction, related material objects and our ways of perceiving the physical realm through pre-existing schemata. Yet they also read like pencil-scribbled musings that reflect quite *generally* on the philosophical nature of perception and its representational thread. For example, in one worksheet, Nistor wonders if 'the process of individuating / an accidental, non-propositional property can make us aware of the implicit concepts of our perception', or in other words, how we might become aware of the meaning we impose on things, and in turn, 'question' or 'discard them' altogether: her subject is the inherent push and pull between actuality and abstraction, and just where anything really *exists*.



Iulia Nistor, *Evidence L7 W5 P8*, 2024, oil on wood, 50 × 40 cm.
Courtesy: the artist and Plan B Cluj, Berlin; photography: Nino Andrés

Cue my perception of the painting *Evidence L7 W5 P8* (all works 2024), which layers an *ombré* of aqua-blue that looks like a close-up of rippling water atop a ground of florescent tangerine. Nistor has scratched into it with markings that could be random scrawls or, equally, symbols of significance emerging from the beyond. Or there's *Evidence E5 F9 P2*, in which delicately rendered circular forms are overlaid with stark horizontal stripes of cornflower blue. Ultimately, these are not really about any kind of content or even illusionism but, instead, are propositions about the *act* of representation itself. They are 'evidence' of the contingent properties of objects, and the chance moments of our perception. Totally over my head were Nistor's structural interventions into the gallery's physical space which mimic architecture. Apparently, they were there, and yet I didn't register them, so seamlessly did they blend in – a perceptual tick that left me wanting to return to consider her work all over again.

*Julia Nistor's **'paintings and propositions'** is on view at Plan B, Berlin until 26 October*

Main image: Julia Nistor, Evidence L/E0 F4 P2, 2024, oil on wood, 50 × 40 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Plan B Cluj, Berlin;

photograph: NinoAndrés



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Louisa Elderton is a Berlin-based writer and editor. She is currently the Managing Editor of ICI Berlin Press, and was formerly the Curatorial Editor at Gropius Bau and Editor-in-Chief of *Side Magazine* at Bergen Assembly.

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