



The light through the window

by

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in

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The Light Through the Window

Artist Statement

We are in a field. It is dark outside and the only sounds are of the trees and grass rustling in the wind. A vigilant light is visible from a house window. It stands out in the darkness. We are drawn to it. The point of interest is the window itself and its capacity to show both the exterior as well as the interior world. The window is the point where both realities coexist.

-Noemi de Bruijn

Dualities are a common part in the complexity of life. A story always has more than one perspective. Each side is worth being told. I draw from my personal experiences of belonging and displacement as a Mexican/Canadian individual. The sense of floating in between cultures and location is part of my everyday reality. Concerns with issues such as immigration, war, displacement, and culture correlate with ideas of safety, or the illusion of it. I intend to provide an alternate narrative to cultural and environmental issues. By combining methods of painting and drawing I emphasize distinct elements that exist in each picture and how they attempt to coexist. Juxtaposing reality and imagination as well as interior and exterior spaces helps us re-evaluate how we understand and inhabit place. Each composition includes elements from reality; as they would exist in the imaginary world, thus story-telling becomes essential to the work. The dualities of the spaces in these paintings both complement and oppose each other. The values associated to each space form a complex dialogue.

I am interested in phenomenological spaces that have been occupied and lived in. Ideas of displacement and belonging are reflected in the rooms we occupy as well as our interactions with vast landscapes. Standing in front of the window is a metaphor for evaluating inner and outer values in our current culture. The way we live in quiet private places mirrors how we inhabit our natural landscape. It leaves marks and residues that create references to history and memory. I think specifically of forests, which are a predominant type of landscape that exists in North America. Forests occupy 1/3 of the

world's landscapes. Using charcoal and a select color palette references climate change issues such as fires, alluding to the precariousness of this type of environment. Fire has a dual nature, with the potential for destruction and regeneration, much like the duality of our own human nature.

A recurring image in the work includes a variety of shelters. I would like to confront the idealized concept of 'home'. We are vulnerable where we live. In the words of Donna Haraway, "we are at stake living in each other's company." We all live in consequence of each other's actions. We are not separate, but rather unified beings. The drawn shelters reference spaces that have been occupied by people: Idealized home spaces, bunkers, bomb shelters, and refugee or homeless sites. The abstract forms allude to the human body and reference glands that are attributed to a sensory experience of memory such as smell, sight, and hearing. These forms serve as an embodiment of ideas, questions, experience, and presence.

Gaston Bachelard writes in *Poetics of Space*, that "we are never real historians, but always near poets, and our emotion is perhaps nothing but an expression of a poem that was lost." My process stems from observation and intuition, but overall it is expressive. I am concerned with a universal sense of being human and the elemental concerns that drive us. The window becomes a metaphor for self-evaluation and awareness of our environments, both inward and outward.

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de Bruijn_001 **Ghosts** 2016 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 72 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_002 **Tree house** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 60 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_003 Installation shot



de Bruijn_004 **Pillbox Bunker** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 60 x 48 inches



de Bruijn_005 **I would miss my bed the most** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 60 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_006 **Cuckoo Clock** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 60 x 48 inches



de Bruijn_007 **Grandpa's Chair** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 60 x 48 inches



de Bruijn_008 Installation shot



de Bruijn_009 **Biswanger Hill** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 72 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_010 **Flowers for no one** 2017 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 72 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_011 Installation shot



de Bruijn_012 **Visitation #1** 2016 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 72 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_013 **Visitation #2** 2016 Acrylic, oil, charcoal and Graphite on canvas 72 x 60 inches



de Bruijn_014 **Study Board** 2016-17 Ink and Graphite on paper 48 x 36 inches



de Bruijn_015 Installation shot

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