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ARTFORUM

Petra Cortright

CARL KOSTYAL | LONDON

12A Savile Row

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To call Petra Cortright an internet or post-internet artist would be similar to calling Matisse and Monet paint artists. They were painters all right, but that's not really saying much, is it? There is, in Cortright's work, a mesmerizing core of formalism, a newly relevant medium specificity for the cognitive gluttonous distraction of the brazenly immaterial.

"ORANGE BLOSSOM PRINCESS FUCKING BUTTERCUP," Cortright's first solo exhibition at this gallery's London location, brings the manifold beguilements of her digital steamrolling into a tightly delightful showcase of canvases and flat-screen videos. And "flat-screen" is the operative word here. Cortright composes her pieces by layering their copious constituent files into final pancake of Photoshop "mother files." Such works flatten the layered and immersive aspects of the digital economy, simultaneously parading and exacerbating its manipulative properties. Cortright's mother files are built up from the endless iteration of what are profoundly private visual, temporal, and spatial entities. They are the wet-dream actors of adolescent sexual rehearsals, solipsistic webcam posturing, and distracted-browsing self-indulgence. Would you ever act out a real-life equivalent to an emoji in a conversation? Of course not. Cortright's works disrupt the comforting stability that would confine the digital to the servilely personal, and make a frantically gorgeous show of it.

Where Impressionism's heyday hypnotized us with its dynamic vibrancy in indulging the wondrous relish of the ordinary, Cortright's new digital formalism unmoors the cognitive comforts of the private in a seductive sumptuousness of pageantry and inexhaustible possibilities.



Petra Cortright, *royal-chat—dispatchesSCANFERLA{ROM-adventures4tattoo-gun}.resx*, 2016, digital painting on Sunset Hot Press rag paper, 42 x 30".