



V1 Gallery is pleased to present

Take Care

A solo exhibition by Sofie Burgaard

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY MARCH 3. 2023. TIME: 16.00 - 21.00

EXHIBITION PERIOD: MARCH 4. - APRIL 15. 2023.

Sofie Burgaard's first solo exhibition with V1 Gallery began with the idea of the garden. These ubiquitous and humble things, often attached to little square boxes in our local middle-class neighborhoods - a bite size of Mother Nature. Not grand and public like a park, nor wild and majestic like a forest, yet the unassuming garden provides nourishment and aesthetic pleasure. Here, we grow food and flowers, take in our meals, spend time with human and non-human companions, as we cultivate and care for ourselves and others. The garden reveals the indistinguishability of culture and nature, the complex entanglements between human and non-human agencies, and manifest their mutual reliance on each other. One need not venture "out" into nature. One is always already *nature-culture*.

While new materialist philosophies offer rich ground for artistic work in the Anthropocene epoch, they tend to favor a literal treatment of mediums and materials over the symbolic and metaphorical. Burgaard's practice addresses this apparent divide by approaching representational painting as a form of composting. Made partially during the summertime in her parents' greenhouse, the artist collected cabbage butterflies (*Pieris brassicae*) and common garden snails (*Cepaea hortensis*) that had died there. These organic remains were then added into the plastic, from which she cast her frames (eg. *I Will Keep You Safe Forever/ Protective Sculpture with Pieris Brassicae* and *The Snail Collector/You Are a Garden*), in an seemingly literal, and perhaps magical, act of preservation and protection. Misunderstood and controversial, plastic was initially hailed as a revolutionary material. With some polymers projected to exceed a 1,000 years of life span, it ought to be treated in the same manner as glass or ceramics. The pervasiveness of, and harm caused, by single-use plastic is a matter of human ignorance, negligence and greed. Here, Burgaard asks us to reconsider plastic as a form of resin cultivated by humans, similar to the precious ambers secreted by certain trees.

Challenging perceived hierarchies between organic and inorganic matter, the literal and the representational, and between high and low aesthetics, Burgaard enlists Surrealism, Science Fiction and Internet culture on equal footing in this act of composting. Depictions of snails, frogs, roses and oak leaves intermingle with fairies and ghostly outlines of butterfly wings and human faces. Thin layers of shiny acrylic float on top of matt, solidly colored surfaces, while key figurative elements emerge repeatedly throughout the works, paraphrasing a kind of post-Internet, post-Photoshop, jpeg-logic. Indeed, the works in *Take Care* sees the artist's habitually naturalistic style transform into something more expressive and open-ended. She reminds us that the ideals of "high" and "pure" art espoused by the historically male-dominated Modernism are no fun. Perhaps there was never anything aesthetically "pure" in the first place, as her artistic foremothers such as Leonora Carrington and Hilma of Klint continue to prove.

Take Care presents a celebration of hybridity and bastardization, of mutations in biology, technology and culture, and the eternal churning of the material world. Playfully posthuman, Burgaard's work gives space for the ambivalent feelings of our time, for joy, care, disgust, fear and grief, and for the weight of our responsibility of caring for each other and the planet. Knowing that the moment we are conceived, we are, in fact, decomposing, only adds to the magic of *becoming-molecular*.



Sofie Burgaard, b. 1997, holds a BFA from The Royal Danish Academy, School of Visual Art. Recent exhibitions include *Dråbestøv & Vingeslag*, VÆG Gallery, Aalborg, DK (2022), *SHOPPING SPREE*, group show curated by Christine Due and Marie Vinther, Inter.pblc, Copenhagen, DK (2022), *WISH LUSH*, Curated by Elaine Tam and Arthur Gouillart, Kravitz Contemporary, J/M Gallery, London, UK (2022), *Kunstnernes Efterårsudstilling*, censored exhibition, Den Frie Udstillingsbygning, Copenhagen, Denmark (2021), and *Vi mødes under en ny sol*, Reventlow museet, Lolland, DK (2021). *Take Care* is her first exhibition with V1 Gallery.

Text by Astrid Wang.