

Estna's erotic spring at Hobusepea Gallery

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Merike Estna's *Voyeur*
Hobusepea Gallery until 25 April

Merike Estna's exhibition of paintings opened last week at Hobusepea Gallery bears the curiosity-tickling title *Voyeur*. Her series of two large-format and a number of smaller paintings fills the gallery with a burst of spring freshness.

Estna's previous personal exhibition *Untitled* at Art Depoo Gallery led the viewer into a long snowy winter period, whereas now the season has changed both in the calendar and in Estna's paintings. The colours are entrancing: pink, blue, broken green, rose ash. And what is depicted on them is much more than (happy?) people enjoying one another's bodies behind the trees. Estna has mastered her art superbly, she is a truly professional painter, but not only that. The sketchy nature of her paintings, a light impression of hurrying, playing around with compositions, convey the emotion in the depicted situations, there is an inkling of mystery, touching the borders of the permissible and overstepping them, the nature surrounding people both conceals and frightens.

A naked female figure and its exploitation, the artist's position, semblance and reality – these topics have been present in Estna's work for years. Here, too, we see naked bodies, men and women, and inadvertently find ourselves in the position of a voyeur. Merike said: "I hope that when people look at these pictures they never quite know whether what they see is actually what they should see." True enough – walking from one picture to the other, you hear questions bubbling up in your mind: what has the artist depicted here, what more could there be beyond this, is it really as it seems at first glance. Estna's wish has certainly come true. And I am also at a loss to describe precisely what it was I saw. But I do know that I liked it very much.