

suns.works

Rita Siegfried Bel Etage

September 19 – October 29, 2025
Opening: Friday September 19, 6 pm

suns.works is pleased to present “Bel Etage,” Rita Siegfried's third solo show with the gallery. Unfolding over the entire floor of suns.works' Quellenstrasse space, “Bel Etage” features recent as well as early works by the artist and showcases over twenty years of her striking painterly oeuvre. In its retrospective character, the exhibition provides a focused survey of central aspects and motifs of Siegfried's practice—a practice that is characterized by a true mastery of panel painting techniques.

Siegfried's paintings offer mesmerizing vistas into carefully constructed interiors and mysterious landscapes, invariably imbued with an atmosphere of suspense. At times fragmented, at times surreal, these psychologically charged perspectives construct imagined worlds that are never fully graspable, suspended between memory and phantasy, the familiar and the uncanny.

About Rita Siegfried

Rita Siegfried is a painter living and working in Bern. She received the Aeschlimann Corti prize in 1996 and a grant from the city of Bern in 2001. Recent exhibitions include Musée d'art de Pully (2025); 8th Yokohama Triennale (2024); Swiss Art Awards, Basel (2024/2021); Avlskarl Gallery, Copenhagen (2023); Stadtgalerie Bern (2022, solo), suns.works, Zurich (2022, solo); Castiglioni, Milan (2021, solo); Milieu, Bern (2019, solo). Her work is part of the Federal Art Collection of Switzerland and the MASI, Lugano.

Program

Opening Reception
September 19, 2025, 6pm

Artist Talk with Geraldine Tedder & Rita Siegfried
October 8, 2025, 7pm

Opening hours

Rita Siegfried – Bel Etage
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Thu – Sat, 12–6pm or by appointment

suns.works | Lorenzo Bernet
Quellenstrasse 27
8005 Zürich

suns.works | Lorenzo Bernet
+41 76 388 87 03 – info@suns.works

Excerpts About Rita Siegfried's Practice

"Rita Siegfried, born in 1964, lives and works in Bern. With a professional background as a gilder, she completed her studies in visual arts at the Schule für Gestaltung in Bern in 1999. Her technical skill and attention to detail immediately suggest the most appropriate way to approach her works, whose poetics arise from the sum of details that must be observed patiently, allowing oneself time in front of each painting." – Riccardo Conti for Harper's Bazaar¹

"In a seamless yet contrived manner, Rita Siegfried assembles fragments of interiors and landscapes, she imbricates rooms within other rooms and fabricates pictures inside other pictures. Her paintings epitomize André Chastel's idea of a 'double resonance,' which occurs through the mise en abyme of the tableau. Traditionally, the tableau within the tableau is a celebration of the intellect that glorifies the artifice of painting." – Émile Rubino²

"Collages serve as the basis of Rita Siegfried's paintings. She draws from a wide variety of sources: art catalogues, images she finds online, or museum photographs. Painstakingly combining these sources together in paint, the artist creates hermetic pictorial spaces." – Stadtgalerie Bern³

"In Asian art, copies were often made, and the copies were no less valuable than the original. The original as a concept is a modern Western invention. It also suggests that the original has more value and the copy has less value. I copy from existing paintings, such as *Blaues Zimmer* by Anna Ancher. But I leave out the girl sitting at the window and instead insert, as a silhouette/shadow, Carl Spitzweg's man listening to a blackbird. All art is, by definition, made up of previous art and is in dialogue with it. Each work is the mirror or response of another." – Rita Siegfried interviewed by Fabio Cherstich⁴

"In spite of their windows, her paintings function as boxes where she second-handedly 'gathers the universe around and in an object.' Inside these boxes she collects her favorite morceaux de peintures and reimagines the daydreams of the poets and painters whose ghostly presence populate her rooms. Filled with carefully arranged books, freshly cut flowers and delicate porcelain cups, her interiors hover between Vilhelm Hammershøi and Architectural Digest. These rooms are at once her own, and no one's—they let us project our desires for quiet retreats in the bourgeois comfort of their vacant armchairs." – Émile Rubino²

"These rooms are clearly image. By which I mean I am not sure where I would find such a house other than in a painting. Described in a story perhaps, from another time. (...) The dwelling, then, is not merely something we inhabit, but something that inhabits us. (...) In this sense, they are haunting. They accommodate fantasy, shelter memory (...). Yet these paintings are not only rooms full of subjectivity, they are also empty of it. They are materiality in their own right, meticulously painted architectural structures." – Geraldine Tedder⁵

"In general, I find the human figure reproduced in a painting in a complete, direct form a little boring. I like it when the figure is not the center of the work, but rather the environment, the landscape, the objects, and the light. Light is very important to me. That's why the figures in my paintings are revealed in parts, reflections, or shadows. Because what is not at the center arouses the curiosity of the viewer and also my own." – Rita Siegfried interviewed by Fabio Cherstich⁴

¹ Riccardo Conti for Harper's Bazaar, January 2021.

² Émile Rubino, Exhibition Text for Rita Siegfried – Entre Espace, suns.works, Zurich, 2022.

³ Rita Siegfried – Das belagerte Zimmer, Exhibition Text Stadtgalerie Bern, 2022.

⁴ Interview with Rita Siegfried by Fabio Cherstich, n.y.

⁵ Geraldine Tedder, Exhibition Text for Rita Siegfried – Ghost Game, suns.works, Zurich, 2020.