

Kathe Burkhart

Bloom and Doom

22.03—10.05.2025

Ellen de Bruijne PROJECTS is delighted to present *Bloom and Doom*, the first solo exhibition by Kathe Burkhart in the gallery. Kathe Burkhart is an interdisciplinary artist and writer based between New York City and Amsterdam. Working since the early 1980s, Burkhart has consistently and frankly engaged gender roles, sexuality, celebrity, and language in an interdisciplinary practice that encompasses painting, video, photography, installation, and writing. The content of her work deals with the visual and verbal articulation of the radical female subject, through the juxtaposition of fiction and nonfiction, text and image, power and powerlessness.

Since 1982, Burkhart has been working on the ongoing conceptual project The Liz Taylor Series. Drawing on depictions of actress Elizabeth Taylor from film stills, publicity portraits, tabloid shots, and other visual sources, the works in the series merge provocative imagery and text to critique patriarchal, die-hard systems of (bio)power. For Burkhart, Taylor is a central motif through which to explore intersections of fame, gender, sexuality, and identity, both on societal and autobiographical planes.

Through vibrant, mixed-media works with bold colour and graphic patterns, Burkhart reimagines Liz Taylor as both an object of desire and a symbol of power, challenging the commodification of women and gender-nonconforming people, and channeling outrage in a forthright and direct way. Words play a key role in Burkhart's work. Most often in English and Dutch, Burkhart inserts swear words, insults, and other epithets, creating headlines that, in combination with her characters, imitate the sensationalism found in movie magazines, in which women's lives have historically been reprimanded and exploited.

Since the beginning of her artistic practice Burkhart has foregrounded concerns about representation through a feminist lens. By taking Taylor's image and constantly recontextualizing it, Burkhart asserts her control over the image and its meaning, giving her an agency that challenges the original portrayals of Taylor. Resisting both victimology and essentialism, Burkhart deconstructs the language of curses and appropriated media images by exploding female stereotypes, representing a dominant female subjectivity.

In the backspace of the gallery, Burkhart present *Out of Time* (2025), a video work dealing with the passage of time as one ages and finds oneself in different locations. The video was shot primarily in Times Square, New York City, and Keukenhof, the most famous botanical garden in the Netherlands, both iconic and highly touristic locations which, despite being stationary remain nonetheless in perpetual movement bordering on liminality. Journeying across these locations, going both forward and backward, Burkhart reads from her own journal entries and poems in combination with an excerpt from T.S. Eliot's famous poem "Burnt Norton" and fragments from Martin Heidegger's "Being and Time".

Kathe Burkhart has widely exhibited nationally and internationally, including the Whitney Museum, the Venice Biennale, PS1 Contemporary Art Center/MoMA, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam Museum, SMAK Museum, Kunsthalle Fribourg, the New Museum, Baltimore Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, and the Chicago Art Institute, among others. Her work is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, the SMAK Museum, Ghent, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and the Amsterdam Museum, among others.

She is the author of four books of fiction, *Dudes*, 2014, Participant Press, NYC; *Between the Lines*, Hachette, Litteratures, January 2006; *Deux Poids, Deux Mesures* (The Double Standard) Participant Press 2005 and Hachette Litteratures, Paris, 2002, and *From Under the 8 Ball*, (LINE, 1985). She has been anthologized in *Writers Who Love Too Much* (NY: Nightboat Press, 2017) *Love, Always* (Oakland: Transgress Press, 2015) and has also been published in *Artforum*, *Hyperallergic.com*, *Evergreen Review*, *Esopus*, *Women and Performance*, *Cultural Politics*, *Purple Fiction*, *FlashArt*, and *High Performance*, among others. Regency Arts Press published a monograph of her paintings, *The Liz Taylor Series: The First Twenty Five Years* in 2007. Her papers were acquired by the Fales Collection of NYU's Bobst Library in 2015. This acquisition was accompanied by a solo exhibition and installation in 2023.