



Artist Residency at Annexes,  
Bourglinster  
**BOURSE FRANCIS-ANDRÉ**

Visual Arts

**Artist-in-residence 2018**

Suzan Noesen

From October 1<sup>st</sup> to  
November 8<sup>th</sup> 2018

**Jury**

Damien Deroubaix  
Francis Feidler  
Gabriele D. Grawe  
André Schoup  
Francis Schoup



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# BIOGRAPHY

With a fascination for cross-media practices and an affinity to narratives and stories, Suzan Noesen has shaped her practice in various forms from painting and video installations, staged photographs to, more recently, artistic fiction film. She currently holds a special interest in the relationship between mental and “real” spaces, the body and movement and the social dimension in gestures, language and visual patterns.

Suzan Noesen studied Fine Arts at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague (KABK), in the “autonoom” section with a focus on conceptual, interdisciplinary and performance art. She also followed voice training workshops and physical theatre courses at Theaterschool Amsterdam (AHK). After her BFA Suzan Noesen worked as an independent artist based in Berlin and spend several months at a research residency in the Ecovillage “Sieben Linden”, where she was trained in different community communication and decision-making techniques. After her stay in the former East German rural area, she continued her postgraduate studies in Fine Arts studies with a focus on painting at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig (HGB). Suzan Noesen lives and works in Luxembourg.



Suzan Noesen Foto © Suzan Noesen

Suzan Noesen's work has been displayed in exhibitions, screenings and performances in the Netherlands, Germany, Russia, Luxembourg and Austria, for instance at Casino Luxembourg - Forum d'art contemporain, Grimmuseum Berlin, Sammlung Lenikus Wien, Cercle Cité Luxembourg, Galerie Triumph Moscow, Forum Kunst Rottweil, Galerie van Gelder Amsterdam, Kulturstiftung Bayer, Bükü Leipzig.

Her artistic research and work has been supported by the Œuvre Grand-Duchesse Charlotte Fonds stART- up, by the Luxembourg FilmFund and by the EU Leonardo Fund. In 2018 she was laureate of the FOCUNA Bourse Francis-André, as well as Bourse CNA, in 2019 she was nominee for the Lët'z Arles start-up exhibition at Les Rencontres d'Arles and the International Edward Steichen Award.

I had the great honor to be chosen laureate of FOCUNA's Bourse Francis André, after responding to the residency call with a project development proposal called "blindfolded": *"BLINDFOLDED is the search for a narrative, story, thriller, that grows slowly from paintings as narrator fragments around the question of the sell-off of sensibility as an insidious, accidental murder: politics of hiding, showing, seeking."* (extract of the project submission)

In the following text I'd like to convey the experiences, positive, unfortunate and instructive ones, that I gratefully gained through the residency's autumn 2018.

The residency studio at Annexes Bourglinster granted by the Bourse Francis André was a bliss: a large space with own water connection, tile floor, windows and two straight large walls, as well as a separated space for office work and/or sleeping – it was easy to settle in this great working conditions and it was a great starting point for deepening my research on blindfolded and preparing spatial measurements for up-following projects.

As the residency's exhibition got scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> November, with a residency start on 1<sup>st</sup> October, it gave me a very short time slot for research, development and production of the project, whose development I had submitted to the three month residency call. Beside the problems, that I will evoke later, this tight frame involved me into a very concentrated working bubble, in which I worked in a very fast, rushy way, realizing first thoughts and sketches from scratch. I managed to work 12-14 hours a day and next to sketches and photographs I created nine paintings in three weeks, amongst them a large sized work of 270 x 250 cm.

The time setting made me prioritize the painting instead of developing a multimedia concept that would integrate paintings afterwards, as I had planned previously. However, I could hereby focus on deepening my pictorial approach and technique as well as my choice in material.



DEBEST (Squatting Kit), 2018, Exhibition view, Kunschthaus beim Engel  
DE01, 2018, Oil on nylon, 140 x 110 cm  
Process photograph, 2018  
all images © Suzan Noesen

During my concise research around the project idea “blindfolded” I dived deeper into the subject and narrowed it down to two starting threads:

- the right and accessibility to a personal space for aesthetic perception and reflection, that I interpreted through different spatial motives, either narrative, representational, performative or installative.
- transparency and overexposure as a public social topic, that I interpreted through aesthetic qualities of material and color.

Departing from these ideas I developed motives representing different kinds of spaces, all functioning like a gate to a state of sensible perception and reflection: allegoric dark space, intimate space, the legal material requirements for space occupation, nomadic temporal space, social status connotation in space, second skin. In my choice of color I used pale shades inspired from overexposure in photography, light yellow for instance. With skin tones this created a marble, plaster and sculpture-like effect.

The pictorial research in the frame of the Bourse Francis André led me to the implementation of new textiles for my paintings, based on their haptic and translucent qualities, like silk, nylon and other transparent fabric. This was a material discovery to me that opened a more spatial and layered approach in working with painting. A practice that I continued after the residency, for instance for the paintings of “Libera Paginal”, an exhibition installation presented at Cercle Cité in February 2019, in collaboration with Casino Luxembourg-Forum d’art contemporain, in the context of Luxembourg City Film Festival.

Beside my painting practice I documented my process in the studio with photographs, as I am used to do.

The size and the set-up of the studio had a kind of theatrical connotation, which led me to an autonomous photographic work “The Servant”. It includes a citation of Vermeer’s “Milkmaid” as a reflection on the transgenerational repetition of working attitude, relating domestic service to artistic service.

The reclusion and concentration in the studio gave my process photographs a more integrated but also better image quality. They deepened my awareness about the space (the process space) existing between my own aesthetic perception, and the one that my works aim to trigger. I continued my research about this space after the residency, giving these images a more important place in my body of work.

A further milestone was the opportunity for an online publication of my work which turned into the set-up of an online work archive and the conceptualisation of a custom-made web format, in collaboration with Amel Kemmerich and polynr.



From the other side of the glass, 2018, Oil on canvas, 56 x 90 cm  
© Suzan Noesen



Coming to the downsides and learning aspects of the residency experience, I get back to the short time between the residency's start and the residency's exhibition. Due to the lack of time, I had to scale down and desist from deepened research and exchange during the residency, as my main focus came quickly to immediate production. I regret somehow the short-notice decisions I had to take for scenography and display of the works in the exhibition. After my first intensive two weeks of production I would have liked to make a choice among the started pieces and develop further towards one completed installation. Instead of this I decided to give an overview of the first research.

There was a certain unclarity about the curation of the exhibition and the status of the residency's exhibition as it was going alongside another exhibition in the same venue. The absence of a curator, unclear technical circumstances and a lack of communication led to misunderstandings with the artist that was exhibiting at the same time. This created an uneasy atmosphere after an exhausting production run and exhibition buildup.

Unfortunately, there was very little press reaction to the exhibition and residency, despite my own efforts of sending invitations and despite the positive feedback of exhibition visitors. I have little insight in the press and relational work of the organizers. The coverage is in striking difference compared to the response to my following "Libera Pagina!" exhibition and the release of my film "Livre d'heures" beginning 2019.

Nevertheless, some interesting exchanges around the exhibition were happening. In succession of my newsletter and invitations a visit and exchange took place at the exhibition in the framework of Luxembourg Art Week, with Bettina Heldenstein, the curators Dr. Petra Roettig, Marc Wellmann and Christiane Rekade. Further, a visit of the exhibition was organised by «Les Amis des Musées Luxembourg» on the invitation of Francis and André Schoup and I had an exchange with visiting curator Stilbé Schroeder on these early works around the blindfolded concept.



Spaceship Pieta, 2018, Oil on canvas, 75 x 60 cm © Suzan Noesen

The Glass, 2019, Diasac © Suzan Noesen

Guided tour for «Les Amis des Musées», Les Amis des Musées



The Servant, 2018, Diasac, 177 x 100 cm  
 Milkmaid, 2018, Oil on canvas, 55 x 66 cm  
 all images © Suzan Noesen

As a conclusion I would say that the residency was a success regarding the deepening of my pictorial development, whereby scratching the surface of its installative qualities. The research laid a base for the further positioning of painting in my pluridisciplinary practice, consequently visible in the up-coming exhibitions in 2019, and started a new body of work, that I am still building on.

Following the exhibition experience of the residency I would in the future try to negotiate for more autonomy in the artist's choice of choosing a presentation that is appropriate to the residency's time schedule and the nature of the submitted project.

The residency's benefits were the great spatial and material facilitation for research, development and implementation of a new project, whereas the aspects of promoting exchange, network and visibility could be improved to let the residency's result and potential come fully into one's own.

Visit the website [www.suzannoesen.com](http://www.suzannoesen.com), that has been realised in the context of Bourse Francis-André.



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