

Nicky Broekhuysen

The Wind in High Places

May 18 – June 24, 2023

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 18 | 6:00 – 8:00pm



Davidson Gallery is pleased to present *The Wind in High Places*, an exhibition of new paintings on linen by Nicky Broekhuysen (b. 1981, Cape Town, RSA). While she has not abandoned her signature use of 1s and 0s, this show – Broekhuysen’s third with the gallery – marks a shift in her practice. That shift was initiated in 2019 when she moved from Berlin to the French Pyrenees. The change from the city to nature was also a move from noise to quietness. In the quietness of the mountains, Broekhuysen found new things to hear and new conversations to have.

In the years since adopting her use of binary code as building blocks for her work, much has changed. As we move from a binary world to a world of quantum computing and artificial intelligence, that notion of a binary world must move too. Broekhuysen’s work has always been about change and the possibility for change inherent in the potential of the one and zero of binary code. By placing the ideas of ‘binary’ to the side, the artist began to see the 1 and 0 more in terms of their original forms: a line and a circle. The line began to embody the idea of the individual or separateness – quite literally “I” – and the circle as a representation of the connected whole.

Change from the perspective of living in a city can often appear rapid and brutal. In nature, however, there is a subtlety to the way that change reveals itself. There is a slowness to the passing of time: one has to pay attention to catch the many subtle moments of transition as the colors change from one season to the next. In *The Wind in High Places*, light, form, and color meld to create barely perceived land- and skylscapes. Mountains seem to emerge from mist as background colors combine with Broekhuysen’s pointillist method. The palette used in this exhibition captures the metamorphosis of the mountain slopes from the coolness of winter to the first vibrant green moments of spring. For in nature, we indeed feel home and as we locate ourselves (the “I”) within the circle, we again feel ourselves as part of a collective world plugged into the network of nature.

Nicky Broekhuysen was born in 1981 in South Africa. At the age of 13 her family moved to New Zealand where she completed her studies. After graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from Auckland University, she moved to Shanghai, China in 2006. It was in Shanghai that she first began working with binary numbers 1 and 0. In 2008 Broekhuysen moved to Berlin, Germany where she continued to develop her language of binary code, exhibiting both in Berlin and internationally for the following 11 years. Recently, in 2019 she has relocated her studio to The Pyrenees in France to be closer to nature and where she continues to create and exhibit.