

From the catalogue Marenne Welten, *It is not alright*, Museum De Pont, Tilburg, Netherlands, 2014/2015

Indefinable Places

In her paintings Marenne Welten examines the way in which emotions, associations and memories can influence our perception. These are small icons of ordinary, nameless places, imbued with mysterious light that seems to penetrate from the back of the canvas. She paints her motifs—a traditionally arranged living room, old-fashioned furniture, perhaps a human figure—as though this needs to be done in semi-darkness, as she senses her way toward the right form. Her painting is a way of describing what she depicts, usually one color for each part and apparently creating the image in one go. Although she does go back and rework certain places with the brush, in order to give the color a bit more weight or to add another one, this occurs only rarely. For the most part, things immediately hit home, and all of it seems to come about in a rapid succession of descriptive painterly gestures. Her maneuvers with the brush are easy to follow, yet it remains unclear as to where these begin and end. We might think that her approach, the whole of which seems to be the sum of small fields of color that have been applied in transparent strokes, should lead to a complex mosaic, but this is not at all the case. Even though every part of the painting has been painted in a nearly identical manner, with brushstrokes that seem to comply (or 'sympathize') with the depicted form, there nonetheless arises a surprising spatiality that yields a readable image. What we can see or experience in this remains uncertain, and that makes the act of observation all the more interesting. For the viewer, the interior spaces of Marenne Welten's paintings are nice places to be, but whether the same holds true for those who inhabit this world is another matter.

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