

CHATEAUSHATTO

JACQUELINE DE JONG
Billiards, 1976-78

June 8 – July 20, 2019

Since the 1960s, Jacqueline de Jong has evolved a complex and versatile body of work that is articulated through varied forms and formats, finding its greatest concentration in painting. De Jong's practice makes contact with several touchstones of the post-war avant-garde but also forges its own counter-narrative, one that is distinctly shaped by her intellectual vigor, aesthetic acuity and irreverent spirit. At its core, de Jong's work is an account of what she recognizes as three dominant ingredients of humanity: eroticism, humor and violence.

Billiards, 1976-78 marks Château Shatto's second solo exhibition with Jacqueline de Jong and the first occasion that the artist's 'billiards' series has been the subject of a dedicated exhibition since the paintings were initially shown. The exhibition opens concurrently with de Jong's retrospective at the Stedelijk Museum, which also includes examples from this series.

In the game of billiards, many of de Jong's intrigues align: structurally, it is a game with an underlying system determining rules of exchange; semantically, it is rich with innuendo and the suggestion of sex; and formally, the billiard table reproduces the rectilinear plane of a painting. What is depicted in these works is not the tactics or outcome of the game, but the latent tensions and interpersonal dynamics that play out in this 'wordless theatre'.*

While the game itself doesn't require dialogue, it's the names given to the objects and actions of billiards that account for at least some of de Jong's attraction to this subject. In a catalogue from a 1977 exhibition of 'billiards paintings' at Gallery Brinkman, Amsterdam, de Jong remarks: *Billiards is bursting with eroticism: a game played with cue and balls, with terms such as massage, piqué, touché. The cue tip, which is twisted into the blue chalk.* The space between visual representation and linguistic expression concerns de Jong throughout the span of her six decade practice, and is neatly inflected in these works

The first decade of Jacqueline de Jong's painting practice ran alongside her involvement with the Situationist International (1960-1962) and subsequent expulsion, and the editing and publication of her seminal magazine *The Situationist Times* (1962-67). De Jong's first serious efforts in painting take place in the early 1960s and are characterized by emphatic and abstract gesture. Her alliance with Gruppe SPUR and exchange with Asger Jorn are evidenced in these canvases.

In the mid-1960s, figures begin to emerge in de Jong's dense and impasto compositions, and towards the end of the 1960s, the artist begins to explore narrative figuration. At this time, De Jong migrates the editing processes of producing graphic layouts for *The Situationist Times* across to painting. This becomes a useful strategy as she grapples with interpreting an increasingly-saturated media landscape. De Jong's hinged diptychs realized during this period are the inventive and intelligent byproducts of this quickened processing.

De Jong's 'billiard paintings' are also the first occasion in which figuration is harnessed in service of realism in her work. In the late 1970s, she shifts from a hallucinatory glut of images consolidated in painting towards something deeply observational and precise with space. This transition speaks to de Jong's increasing affinity for allegory and suggestion; for undercurrents. With accomplished composition and technique, de Jong is able to explore the social, systemic and semantic depths of an activity as quotidian but semantically charged as billiards.

*Ed Wingen, *Jacqueline de Jong Undercover in the World of Art*, 2003.

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Jacqueline de Jong was born in Hengelo in 1939. In 2019, she was awarded Prix AWARE for Outstanding Merit, presented at the Ministry for Culture in Paris, France. De Jong's work is currently the subject of a retrospective at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, following a survey of her major works at les Abattoirs, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Toulouse, in 2018. Solo exhibitions of de Jong's work have been presented at Malmö Konsthall, Malmö; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Torpedo/PUB, Oslo; and onestar press, Paris. Her work has been included in exhibitions at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; MAMCO, Geneva; Kunsthalle Bern, Bern; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Museum of Contemporary Art, UMASS, Amherst; Simon Lee Gallery, New York; Petzel Gallery, New York; Mendes Wood DM, Brussels; and The Club, Tokyo.