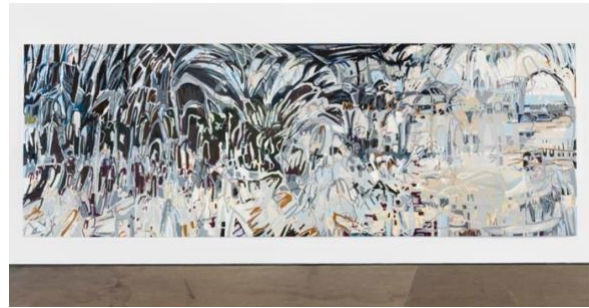


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# Forbes

## Janaina Tschäpe's Latest Work Captures The Parts Of Nature That Elude Your iPhone



Janaina Tschäpe, "Between Veils of Blue and Grey, a Forest," 2021, casein, oil stick and oil pastel on canvas, 116 1/2 x 335 1/4 inches PHOTO ADAM REICH

Janaina Tschäpe was lucky, during the pandemic, to escape the suffocating pull of domestic work — cooking, cleaning, shopping, arranging. Instead, she spent much of her time away from her home in Brooklyn. First, she spent five months in the mountains of Brazil, on a farm her mother owned; and then, she spent part of the winter and early spring in a studio space owned by her gallerist in the Hudson valley in New York. "Being out of my domestic situation gave me a different space to think," she says. "I was painting all day long, at night, on Saturdays and Sundays." The experience, she says, felt like being a true artist.

It also allowed her the time and space to produce large scale canvasses, which are currently on view at "Balancing into the Deep," [an exhibition of Tschäpe's work](#) at Sean Kelly gallery in New York through August 9, 2021. The canvasses, Tschäpe says, break down the barrier between painting and drawing. They are made with oil paint and color sticks Tschäpe bought when she traveled to Paris in September of 2020 to open an exhibition of her work at the Musée de l'Orangerie. There, she says, she had time to ponder Claude Monet's Water Lily series, also on view at the museum, without the interference of tourists, who were restricted from the museum due to the pandemic.

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Janaina Tschäpe, "Blue Moon," 2021, casein and oil stick on canvas, 116 x 155 inches PHOTO ADAM REICH

Back in New York, in the Hudson Valley, she immersed herself in these new materials, and also, in the nature that surrounded her. Some mornings, fog rolled in across the mountains, obscuring her view of the forest. "When the fog started dissolving, you could see other things underneath crawling up," Tschäpe says. Other days were sunny, causing light to flicker and change in patterns on the earth. "The light creates shapes and patterns," Tschäpe explains. "Then when you face the canvas, you have all of this information to access; forms, lines, colors patterns to digest and interpret."



Janaina Tschäpe, "Pale Yellow Summer," 2021 casein and oil stick on canvas, 116 x 157 1/2 inches PHOTO ADAM REICH

The process of making each canvas, Tschäpe says, was like putting together a gigantic puzzle. The vocabulary of patterns and signs utilized had to stay consistent throughout the whole space of the composition. "I had to conquer the length of it in one field of vision," she says. "I carved a painting out of the fog," she continues. "I made decisions with confidence."

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Janaina Tschäpe, "Valley 2," 2021 casein, oil stick and oil pastel on canvas, 81 x 95 1/2 inches PHOTO ADAM REICH

The resulting works are an argument for why painting must always exist, because it can capture the qualities of life that elude photography. *Blue Moon* (2021) harnesses the purple inkiness of the sky lit up by ambient light, along with the moon. *Valley 2* (2021) captures the flickering light of the sun on crags of rocks, covered in moss and left over from glaciers that dragged across the Hudson Valley. *Pale Yellow Summer* (2021) is the exact quality of the sunlight moving across a clearing in the early morning. *Bocaina 2* (2020), named for a locality in Brazil, is gray, teal, peach; Tschäpe's marks are frantic and abbreviated. The painting is so evocative of a thunderstorm that you can almost smell the pavement once the rain starts to evaporate.



Janaina Tschäpe, "Bocaina 2," 2020, signed and dated by the artist, verso watercolor and colored pencil on paper paper, 60 3/4 x 52 inches PHOTO ADAM REICH

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In the absence of human contact due to social distancing requirements, Tschäpe notes that many people had more time than ever to spend with themselves. For Tschäpe, that time was productive. “The whole experience of the past year gave me more space to feel where I was as a painter,” Tschäpe says. “I went further.”