men in gold
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This exhibition features two recent video installations by one of Switzerland’s most celebrated and innovative artists, Sylvie Blocher. Blocher has been working exclusively with video in an attempt to avoid the limitations of traditional painting and sculpture. Her work often involves the use of multiple participants as authors of the experience. Blocher’s videos explore the idea of the self as a fragmented entity that can only be understood in the context of a larger social and political framework.

For Blocher, the picture “thus becomes a request for inclusion that affects someone else or someone else’s point of view. As a result, the picture becomes a necessary condition for effective communication.”

It is through the act of framing that Blocher creates a sense of agency for her subjects, allowing them to demand their rightful claim to subjectivity in portraying people.

In her latest works, Blocher has used her own body as a tool for framing. In her video “Living Pictures,” she asked each subject to select a phrase with which he or she preferred to be associated. She then filmed the subjects one at a time, capturing a moment of inclusion. Then she edited the segments into a compilation, creating a group portrait. Blocher’s videos are a reflection of her own personal contribution to a much larger social-practice project that aims to change the perception of the self and the group.

For Blocher, the act of framing is an act of abandonment. In fact, her subjects often say after viewing the video: “I am ashamed of you,” “I’m ashamed of you,” or “I cannot afford to speak of myself.”

The act of framing is an act of exclusion. It is through this process that Blocher creates a sense of agency for her subjects, allowing them to demand their rightful claim to subjectivity in portraying people.

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