

Diana Cepleanu

Now

kaufmann repetto is pleased to present the work of Diana Cepleanu (b. 1957, Romania) in *Now*, the first solo exhibition of the artist in New York. The exhibition takes an atemporal lens to seventeen paintings made over the last three decades: each work holds the weight of its own against time, each its own 'now' of Cepleanu's complete immersion in a moment. Like the quiet discipline of Renaissance still lifes, Cepleanu's compositions privilege attention over spectacle, repetition over climax. Her practice is rooted in a dynamic oscillation between detail and whole: a process of zooming in and out, deeply embedding her observation in the materiality of painting itself, each brushstroke claiming absolute focus. Whether portraying her children, herself, or fragments of the natural world, Cepleanu's works reveal a sincere attention to her daily life in Bucharest.

Freed from the strictures of her academic training in Soviet Romania during the 1980s, Cepleanu's devotion to the studio developed as she dedicated her attention to her immediate surroundings in a time of scarcity, often painting her children and domestic spaces. Much like the painters of the Renaissance who treated humble objects as vessels for metaphysical inquiry, Cepleanu's subjects – family, foliage, light – are rendered with reverence, allowing their ordinariness to become transcendent. In reference to the exhibition *Now*, Cepleanu remarks "The place from which even distance is no longer a stranger," suggesting a place of grounding – like a home, or an inner sense of belonging where one feels familiar – can allow what is faraway to be part of that same continuum. This quiet, meditative impulse – so central to the still-life legacy – is what lends her work both its immediacy and timelessness.

Across her oeuvre, and particularly in earlier portraits, Cepleanu maintains a precise, almost ascetic approach to her application – painting directly, without revisiting or layering – a method shaped by her limited studio time as a young mother of five with fleeting moments of stillness. Her commitment to capturing a distilled present moment links her practice to Morandi's serenity through restraint and Vermeer's sensitivity and generosity with light. In more recent works such as *Self-Portrait* (2023) and *Garden with Daisies* (2023), Cepleanu introduces a process of scraping away layers of pigment, evoking an archaeological gesture through which the painting reveals its own stratified history. These excavated surfaces open a second life for the work: not erasure, but renewal. In both methods, a deep consideration for the surface renders the subject in full contemplation – echoing the still-life tradition not only in sincere observation, but as a philosophical exercise in the tension between permanence and change.

Diana Cepleanu (born 1957 in Bucharest, Romania) lives and works in Bucharest. Selected exhibitions include Paltim Timisoara, Timisoara (2025); Alison Jacques, London, (2025); Art Chosun Space, Seoul (2024); Plan B, Berlin (2023); Lutnita, Chisinau (2023); Villa Magdala, Nice (2020); Galeria Anticariat Curtea Veche, Bucharest (solo exhibitions, 2019 and 2014); Arcus Cultural Center, Sf. Gheorghe (2019); 5th International Biennial of The Art of Miniature, Ruse (2015); Târgu Jiu (2010); Desenzano del Garda (2010); Il Gazebo di Gaeta (2010); Il Borgo Gallery, Milan (2009); Galeria Muzeului National Cotroceni, Bucharest (2007); Galeria Anticariat Curtea Veche, Bucharest (2007); Galeriile Artexpo, Bucharest (1996).