

# Lotte Keijzer – Chloro Galore at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

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By Mark Westall

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*Lotte Keijzer, Bottoms down, 2023 | Acrylic, pencil and sand on canvas | 100 x 140 cm / 39 3/8 x 55 1/8 in  
Courtesy the artist and gallery*

For her first solo exhibition with Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, titled *Chloro Galore*, the Dutch artist Lotte Keijzer transports us into a colourful, chlorine-filled world where carefree childhood memories are filtered through an anxious adult perspective to create an uncanny disconnect between youth and ignorance, nostalgia and guilt.



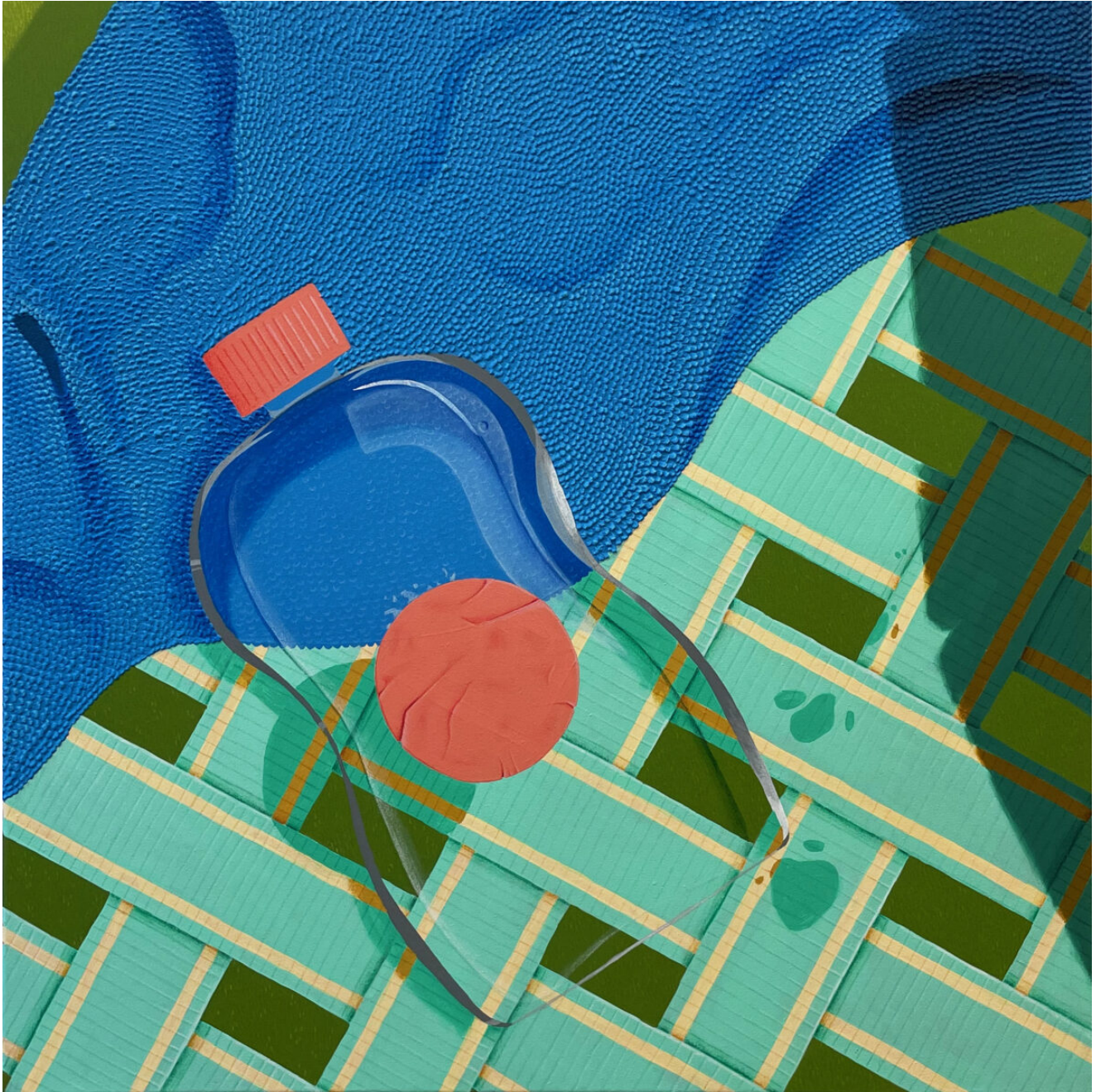
*Lotte Keijzer, Röntgun, 2023 | acrylics, pencil, sand and varnish | 80 x 80 cm / 31 1/2 x 31 1/2 in, Courtesy  
the artist and gallery*

Growing up in the Netherlands in the 1980s, Keijzer has strong memories of time spent at swimming pools – of brightly coloured parasols, the smell of fried food and chlorine, the slipperiness of the metal steps, the roughness of the pool edges that scraped her elbows as she pulled herself on to the side, the scratchy texture of towels washed without softener, a feeling of total euphoria. ‘It was the freedom of childhood, but it was also a privileged time,’ she says, ‘Back then, people seemed unaware of environmental issues or the danger of skin cancer. They would rub olive oil on their skin and spend hours sitting in the sun.

‘It was as if there was plenty of everything for everyone and forever.’ Keijzer’s paintings capture both the sensuous details of these memories through precise textures, such as the bobbly surface of a blue towel, and a blinkered perspective. The close crop and the flat, graphical style of the imagery creates an almost claustrophobic effect. This is perhaps most apparent in the painting of a water slide, where the bending curves of a pink and red striped flume fill up the canvas to leave only a small pocket of blue sky. In many ways, it is a joyful image – as if we are seeing through the eyes of a child craning their neck upwards and blinking into the sun, but at the same time, there is something vaguely ominous about the bulk of the slide and its’ never-ending form. In the painting of a pink water gun lying on the floor of a swimming pool, the zoomed-in perspective has a more startling effect. Water guns, as Keijzer, points out, are a very common poolside toy, but they are also replicas of a much more sinister object and yet this association is somehow forgotten or overlooked when children are chasing each other around screaming and shooting out jets of water.

The physical absence of figures in these paintings heightens our awareness of these kinds of narratives. Undistracted by faces, movement, sounds and smells – the everyday chaos of poolside scenes –, we are forced to reflect on the wider consequences of our actions. Should we really be consuming sugary ice creams? Buying cheap plastic toys that resemble weapons? Basking in the sun while the world around us is, quite literally, burning? ‘Or is it okay,’ asks Keijzer, ‘to sometimes be oblivious? Are there moments, in adulthood, when we can relax, without having to think about the wider picture or is that something that is only allowed in childhood?’





*Lotte Keijzer, Sizzlin', 2023 | Acrylics, pencil and sand | 80 x 80 cm / 31 1/2 x 31 1/2 in, Courtesy the artist and gallery*

The title of the exhibition Chloro Galore makes playful reference to this dilemma by associating the toxic substance of chlorine with the joyful feeling of abundance just as the intense colour palette of Keijzer's paintings creates an alluring aesthetic while also highlighting the unreality of the world perspective that she is creating. Rather than offering any solutions to questions she poses, Keijzer invites us to simply reflect on how we view and pass judgment on the world.

**Lotte Keijzer**, Chloro Galore, 6th January – 3rd February, [Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery](#), Wandsworth

**Private View:** Saturday the 6th of January 3 – 6 pm

## About the artist

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**Lotte Keijzer** (b. 1983, Texel, Netherlands) lives and works in Haarlem, Netherlands. Keijzer studied Graphic Design at the Graphic Lyceum Amsterdam, graduating in 2005. In 2009, she also completed a degree in Production Design from the Dutch Film and Television Academy in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Lotte's bold, colourful work has been inspired by the numerous stories and legends from the Dutch island of Texel, where she was born. Keijzer uses her youth experiences as an inspiration in many of her works. Her pieces can often evoke paradoxes feelings of sadness or humour. Lotte Keijzer says about her work, "I am not a patriotic Dutch person at all, but I find it very funny that it is so typical, people recognise themselves in my works. Often my paintings are feelings or experiences I've had." The overarching theme is scenarios that linger on everyday life memories such as being ready for summer; about standing still; feeling loose, friends' nights out, too much wine, about experiencing grief, and waves of sadness.

**Solo exhibitions** include (Upcoming) *Chloro Galore*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London, UK (2024); *Situations*, Marian Cramer Projects, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2022); Open Studio, Part of Kunstlijn Haarlem at the 'Onder de Toren' complex, Haarlem, Netherlands (2021); 30ML Rotterdam Centrum, Rotterdam, Netherlands (2020); *De Twaalf Balcken*, as part of De Lange Juni Maand, Den Burg, Netherlands (2020); *De Twaalf Balcken* as part of De Lange Juni Maand, Den Burg, Netherlands (2019); Open Studio, Part of Kunstlijn Haarlem at the 'Onder de Toren' complex, Haarlem, Netherlands (2019).

Group exhibitions include *Thought Forms*, Paris +, Marian Cramer Project, Paris France (2023); *Where the Wild Roses Grow*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Schloss Görne, Berlin, Germany (2023); *Near / Far*, Oever Gallery, Ostend, Belgium (2023); *Sunset Pop Up*, Marian Cramer, Los Angeles, US (2023); *Twice upon a time*, Gallery 46 and SR Gallery, Romain Guérout & Xavier London, UK (2023); Addition to Paris +, Marian Cramer and Aout Gallery, Paris, France (2022); *The Flats*, Tales Of Art Gallery, Imola, Italy (2019).

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