



The large-scale paintings by Noah Kohlbrenner revolve around the Aletsch Glacier and the Märjelen region, a landscape closely tied to his family history. At first glance, these works appear as abstract pictorial spaces that resist immediate interpretation. Only over time do their surfaces begin to reveal fragments of this landscape. This delayed recognition is essential: the paintings challenge the idea of landscape as a distant view and instead point to an understanding of it as something alive.

One point of departure are the Valais legends about spirits and "poor souls," stories that helped people make sense of floods, natural disasters, and existential threats. The glacier was not seen as an inert mass, but as a force that could react. It was feared and personified. Within this worldview, life, death, and transformation are deeply intertwined.

In the work *Walking into silence with pockets full of dust*, this exploration becomes particularly condensed. Archival images of gates form the starting point for a pictorial space that moves between reality and transcendence. The gate does not function merely as an architectural detail, but as a threshold: between visibility and invisibility, between the present and memory. The figure of the ghost does not appear as a narrative illustration, but rather as a form of persistence — as something that remains stored within the landscape, even as it physically withdraws.

Kohlbrenner uses glazing techniques reminiscent of Renaissance painting. Through multiple translucent layers, he creates pictorial spaces of great depth in which different moments of time overlap. Historically, this technique referred to painting as a "window onto the world." In his works, however, this „window“ becomes unstable. It no longer opens onto a single, clear reality, but onto in-between spaces where past, myth, and present appear simultaneously. The layers thus function not only as a painterly method, but also as a structure of memory itself.

Within the intimate setting of this apartment presentation, the focus begins to shift — away from the glacier and toward the margins. In *weeds grow apace 1 & 2*, the thistle appears. Not a decorative floral element, but a plant considered a weed, growing at the edges of monocultures, where systems of control begin to break down. The two additional small-scale works *Cardsharp & swindler* extend this zone further. Figures appear in the scene alongside the thistles without clearly belonging to it. Protagonists or antagonists. Observers or intruders. The portrait carries a subtle echo of **The Cardsharps** by Caravaggio — a play of gazes, deception, and staging.