

Ana Viktoria Dzinic

The future is now for the German-born artist and photographer, whose work explores contemporary culture's uneasy relationship with the image

Leather dress Loewe, cotton socks Ashley Williams, stylist's own shoes



Would Wood (Femme Fatale)
Acrylic on old lino kitchen cabinet
58cm × 58cm

Growing up in Germany, 32-year-old Ana Viktoria Dzinic felt that the future was rarely presented as something to look forward to. Climate collapse, financial crises, terrorism, war: as far back as she can remember, every horizon was accompanied by a cautionary tale.

One image in particular stayed with her. As a child, Dzinic watched a lecture by Al Gore, in which he described the apocryphal frog that remains in slowly heating water until it is too late to escape. “It gave me the feeling that catastrophe doesn’t necessarily arrive as an event,” she says. “Sometimes it arrives as normality.”

A tension between belief and construction, reality and performance, runs throughout Dzinic’s work. She is preoccupied with the images that organise contemporary life: the photographs we trust, the stories we inherit, and the visual languages through which power is performed. Her exhibitions often feel less like presentations than systems of circulation, where images migrate between mediums, acquire new identities and return disguised as something else entirely.

This autumn, NiCOLETTi will host a new solo exhibition by Dzinic. The title, *Fundus*, is a word discovered from an interview with German painter Michaela Eichwald, who used the word to describe her archive. Anatomically, it describes the furthest point of a hollow organ; in the eye, the fundus is where the optic disc creates a blind spot. In German, it refers to a theatre’s storage room, where props and costumes wait to be called back into service. Both definitions are characteristic of Dzinic’s imagination: a place where vision falters and old narratives await their next performance.

Dzinic largely taught herself to paint through YouTube tutorials, an autodidactic route that remains central to how she thinks.

“Painting became exactly that exercise,” she says. “Learning through publicly available instructions before earning the right to ask more complicated questions.” That curiosity animates works such as *Wood Would* (2026), a series that began with the simple challenge of painting convincing wood grain. Becoming bored once she’d mastered the illusion, she instead tried imagining wood as a protagonist: a material attempting to reinvent itself through tutorials, self-improvement rhetoric, and increasingly elaborate acts of performance. Across the series, engraved slogans, masking tape and visible traces of labour interrupt the illusion, exposing the mechanics beneath the image.

Questions of cultural inheritance recur throughout Dzinic’s practice. The ongoing Trust Fund Junkie series examines what she describes as modernism’s “vast cultural legacy”, an inheritance artists, collectors and institutions continue to draw on long after its founding promises have begun to fray. “Modernism is perhaps the largest trust fund ever established,” she says.

If the paintings are concerned with the afterlives of images, her new film *Open Casket* turns towards the afterlives of progress itself. Influenced by the sociologist Andreas Reckwitz, the work considers what happens when societies organised around growth encounter forms of loss they cannot easily process. Rather than offering answers, Dzinic remains interested in contradiction, ambiguity and unresolved feeling. “An artwork can’t solve loss,” she says. “What it can do is hold ambiguity.”

Ana Viktoria Dzinic exhibits at NiCOLETTi from September 17 and at Frieze London October 14–18



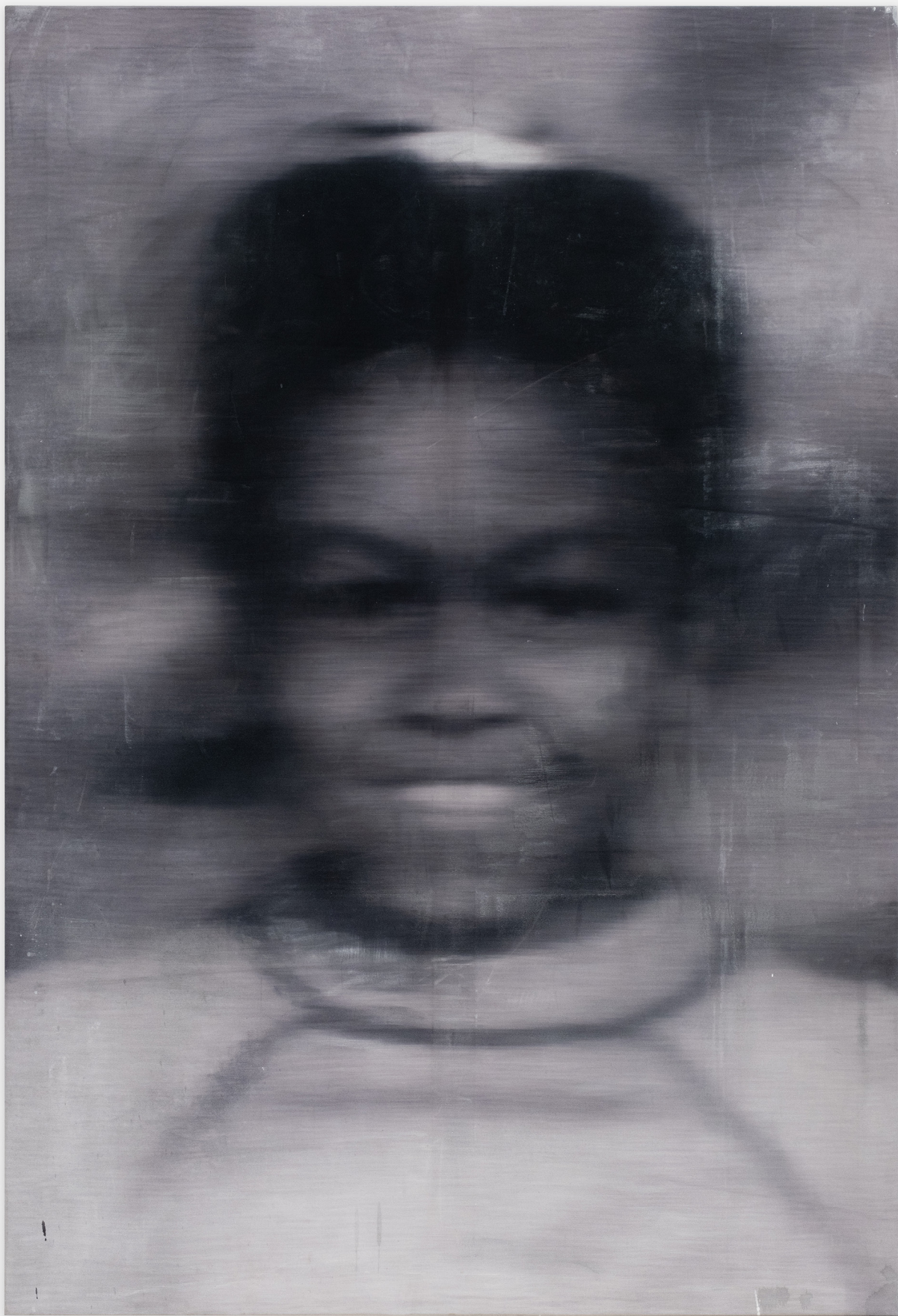
All clothes and shoes Prada



Would Wood (Model)
Acrylic on MDF
17cm × 87cm



Would Wood (Ideal Idea)
Acrylic on MDF
15cm × 60cm



Romantisch (Angie fuer ein Deutschland,
in dem jeder alles werden kann)
Acrylic, soft pastel on dyed linen
190cm × 135cm



Romantisch (Michael)
Acrylic, soft pastel on dyed linen
190cm × 135cm