

**LES FLEURS DE L'ÉTÉ SONT LES RÊVES DE L'HIVER RACONTÉS LE
MATIN À LA TABLE DES ANGES**
5 September – 26 September 2020

**Carlotta Bally-Borg, Pauline Bazignan, Mireille Blanc, Gaëlle Choïsne
Maude Maris, Mélanie Matranga, Camila Oliveira Fairclough, Christine Safa**

Summer, two vowels with a double consonant in the middle, a simple word but one which holds such promise. An intense word, evoking as it does a season bathed in light, heady fragrances, scorching hot days and vivid colours. During this period favoured by poets and writers, time seems to slow down and stretch out in endless days and delicious moments. Synonymous with the pleasure of letting go and a state of mind that opens the doors to other worlds, summer allows us to see the world as artists see it.

This September, Praz-Delavallade is inviting eight artists to take over the walls of the gallery, eight figures who generously treat us to their new offerings. Nothing in particular connects them, except perhaps a common need to remind us of the sense of urgency that underlies their inspirations, the vibrant call of a deep, interiorised need that gives pride of place to the power of the imagination. Together they question the very meaning of visible phenomena and the way we apprehend the world. Their art is the echo of this, filtered through the prism of the political, scientific, cultural and ethical values that they defend, as they thumb their noses at the traditional rules of pictorial representation. Above and beyond the aesthetic diversity on display in this exhibition, the dominant value for each of these artists is definitively to be found in their ability to assert their choices. "The object is not to paint life, but to make painting come alive." (Pierre Bonnard).

Some works convey an immediate impression of urgency, the urgency to speak, to act and to see once again and thereby slide down the steep slope of a moment in time that is only truly revealed when seen from below. Anchored to the rock face, **Carlotta Bailly-Borg** challenges this temporal gravity, repositions the horizon and looks straight up at this mountain from which we were born. And so we realise that all of that is painting and all of that is life itself. Her works, which draw their themes from the history of art, mythology and culture, systematically go up against the image and break its power of illusion. The impossible physics of floating bodies is resolved by simply adding sticking plasters; a clear line pre-empts any illusion of volume created by a gradation; and the studio space distorts our perception of a painting, which is part of device that has already distanced it. Carlotta Bailly-Borg does not free herself from history, not does she assimilate it by means of a posture, but rather by her very positioning. Figuration, abstraction, realism and minimalism combine in a practice that embraces them all without hierarchy. (Extracts from a text by Guillaume Benoit).

Pauline Bazignan condenses the expression of time in her paintings and sculptures, carrying out pictorial experiments guided by the colours she applies and removes. If there is a definite floral vocabulary at work in her artistic practice, her idea is not to paint flowers, but rather to allow shapes to

appear and, in so doing, express the notion of time and a certain evanescence. Her paintings refer both to concepts of blooming and the finite quality of nature. Her work evolves out of a process by which she makes things appear by erasure. By watering her paintings, she encourages them to blossom whilst simultaneously making them disappear. Already in her early works, lines and threadlike shapes were apparant. The round shape was born out her exploration of monochrome subjects, appearing as a result of a chance paint run that became a stem around which the circular form turns, echoing a temporal cycle. (Extracts from a text by Pauline Lisowski. Sept 2019).

Mireille Blanc works with notions of perception, rendering and emotion. Working from images that she reworks and reframes and guided by her intuition, she obtains motifs in slightly dated (and even rather twee) colours that provide the reference material for her paintings and drawings. The resulting paintings, some of whose elements are definitively blurred, evoke an imaginary world as seen through the filter of times gone by and reveal the enigmatic side of reality. "I paint the strange and familiar way in which everyday objects appear to me", she explains. Starting from personal or found photos that she mainly chooses intuitively, she considers in depth how an image is made by reworking the photos and taking them towards an in-between state where abstraction meets a sort of intimate aide-memoire. (Extracts from a text published in Point Contemporain No 17).

Gaëlle Choisne tackles the contemporary issues of catastrophes, the exploitation of resources and the vestiges of colonialism in opulent installations that are a combination of esoteric Creole traditions, myths and popular culture. Both a sculptor and video artist, she finds the materials that make up her installations and films during her travels. Mercantile exoticism, the imaginary worlds of literature and beliefs comprise the themes of a dynamic, generous and social body of work. In the form of landscapes in perpetual movement, Gaëlle Choisne deploys resources, processes and arrangements of cultural and environmental issues in micro-narratives, stories that have already been written or which are still taking shape. Her works are made up of open symbolic meanings, which are also informed by her own life story. (Extracts from texts written for the Biennale de Lyon 2019).

Maude Maris made a name for herself with her silent creations at the crossroads of landscape painting and still life, an ensemble of unique works in which painting, sculpture and architecture enter into an intimate dialogue. Her approach is a singular one: Maris moulds small objects in plaster, objects that she either buys from flea markets or finds in the street. This process lets her play with her finds, allowing chance accidents and unexpected results to occur. Each of her creations is the result of an elaborate process: she collects objects, moulds, designs a composition and takes photos, before finally using the photo as a basis for her painting. Each step adds distance, blurs the edges of objects and creates a detachment that is reinforced by her pictorial technique as, using discreet brushstrokes, she portrays each item in artificial pastel colours. (Extracts from a text by writer and curator at large Nanda Janssen).

It takes time to adapt to what **Mélanie Matranga** presents for our consideration, not an intellectual or theoretical adaptation, but rather the need to tune in on an emotional and sentimental level. Crisscrossed with threads, flows and

affects, her works give rise to a distance that has to be crossed, one which electrifies the interstice between the private sphere and the public space, between privacy and being together, between introspection and what we reveal of ourselves to others. The painting/sculptures on show are codes that are used to display a social role, the structures of a collective private life and the signs of a non-verbal, but very loquacious communication system that acknowledges our individual, collective, sexual and social identities. Just like clothes, words are tools that allow us to present who we are, exchange with others and express our personalities and emotions. They become allegories for words that only represent the most banal aspects of things or our feelings (extracts from a Fondation Pernod-Ricard text for Art Contemporain).

Camila Oliveira Fairclough borrows her forms from the visual culture of her surroundings, expressing reality in a familiar and yet highly personal artistic language by transforming words into images. Her “found abstraction” deflates modern art’s heroic narrative by making room for elements of lesser importance, day-to-day life and the irregularity of the manual gesture. By a strange twist of fate, the abstract forms of modern art – that aimed to be independent from the real world – have finished by conquering the codes of urban signage, design and packaging. In what is a complete turnaround, it is now real life itself that provides the “abstract” shapes for art to appropriate. Camila Oliveira Fairclough’s paintings have the capacity to evoke these abstract shapes that have now become familiar figures, whilst gently and ironically breaking away from the classic oppositions between radical abstraction, pop art and appropriation art. (Extracts from a text by Pedro Morais).

Christine Safa uses subtle colours ranging from ochre to blue that she applies in smooth or slightly powdery layers. Her paintings are suffused with the specific light of the Mediterranean, which she knows so well thanks to her regular trips to Beirut, the hometown of Etel Adnan, an artist whose landscapes and abstract compositions inspire her creativity. For her, painting is an analysis of emotional states informed by the colour, weight, substance, lightness or heaviness of light. Light gives weight to the painting; the sun reaches out over figures and landscapes like a trembling and dusty twilight. Colours are superposed, merging and becoming darker, whereas the use of marble powder allows Safa to make the sun’s power tangible. Each painting is the declaration of a given moment suspended in time, an instant of tranquillity. (Extracts from a text by Marc Desgrandchamps).

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