

DORIAN COHEN

GALERIE PARIS-BEIJING
Romain Degoul

Bien que cela soit naturel

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Opening on Saturday 23rd January 2021

Galerie Paris-Beijing is delighted to announce its collaboration with Dorian Cohen and the artist's first solo show in Paris "Bien que cela soit naturel" will take place on 23rd of January 2021.

For this first solo exhibition in Paris, the painter confirms his desire to construct a genealogy of urban narratives. Here, he reveals about fifteen oils on canvas, alternating between urban landscapes and genre paintings.

A pregnant woman clutching her belly in fear, the sadness of a man posing in an artist's studio, the melancholic silence of two thirty-somethings in a restaurant: Dorian Cohen evokes the genre painting by bringing a naturalistic perspective to the dramas of urban life. The artist offers a contemporary interpretation of the fundamentals of this 19th-century literary and pictorial movement fashioned around the work of Émile Zola: a natural representation without concessions to society life.

A very ordinary meal between friends is metamorphosed by the painter, who dramatizes the scene by playing upon an anachronism between the representation of a very current subject and a treatment of the image that references classical painting. The characters eat together but seem alone with their thoughts. The painter makes visible their psychology but also offers a social critique of our society's progressive individualism, which renders us mute even in places intended for socializing.

In *Le Tunnel des Artisans*, the painter plunges us into the daily life of a man preparing fruit and vegetable orders – the new shadow-worker of the big city. The theatrical, even cinematic, treatment in chiaroscuro of the worker's back, tortured by the repetitive carrying of crates, recalls the farmers in scenes by Jean-François Millet, another naturalist influence for the painter.



© Dorian Cohen, *Le restaurant de sushi*, 2020
Courtesy Galerie Paris-Beijing, Photo credit : Suzan Brun

The painting *Mère et Fils* seems to be the culmination of the narrative cruelty, inspired by Zola, that the artist seeks to express. In a bedroom filled with old furniture, a man in his seventies sits in front of his mother, over ninety years old, in her walker. Here, Cohen evokes a generation of men who, in the calm of retirement, once again become the children of their aged but living mothers, as they live out the twilight of their relationship. The sadness of this contemporary scene is magnified by the softness of the dusk light in shades of blue that gently caresses the furniture in the scene.



© Doian Cohen, *Mère et fils*, 2020
 Courtesy Galerie Paris-Beijing <

In his other series begun in 2015, *Les Urbanités*, the painter describes banal urban spaces where beauty is not evident, nor ugliness flagrant. Through the full glory of oil paint, he reveals the pictorial potential

of these places. Thus, the heap of plant pots in a Parisian courtyard is staged in a flowerbed within a checkerboard of lozenges, worked with the perspective of 15th-century Italian painting. The jumble of façades in various materials within the clusters of Parisian buildings transforms into the competing wallpapers of Vuillard, contrasting with the enthusiasm of the residual vegetation in this suffocating minerality.

If the social commentary of the painter's oeuvre is undeniably tinged with a faint pessimism, it is only the logical mirror of the disenchantment of a generation faced with a very uncertain future, between climate, ecological and health crises. It is a similar feeling to that which we find in the naturalistic painters and writers of more than a century before, as they faced the social determinism of their era.



Artist portrait in his studio, © Doian Cohen, Photo credit: Julien Cresp

Dorian Cohen is a young French painter born in 1987. He lives and works in Paris. He has a degree in urban design and engineering and is self-taught as a painter. His paintings were revealed to the art world in 2017 during the 62nd Montrouge Salon. In 2018, he won the Colas Foundation Award and in 2019 he was nominated for the 10th edition of the Sciences PO Contemporary Art Award.