

MARION BATAILLARD

Notre corps

EN

07.09.23 — 21.10.23

Opening on September 7th

PARIS-B is delighted to welcome Marion Bataillard for her first solo show in the gallery *Notre corps (Our body)*, where she reveals her new group of paintings.



Place de la Réunion, 2023. Tempera on wooden panel, 213 x 400 cm

In this new cycle of paintings, Marion Bataillard represents architecture and dance. Transfigured urbanity, expressive bodies, vibrant colors, the concrete framework of large cut-out panels... From the outset, their geometrics form a frame, serving as a counterpoint to the movements and expressions of the utterly human figures she shows. Because nature doesn't make straight lines, the rectilinear brought in by man both balances and constrains the irreducible meandering of the body.

This is precisely what the deployment of spaces seems to emphasize: our bodies, affected in different ways. Marion Bataillard's characters are intriguingly polysemous. Tinged with ordinariness and brimming with desire aching to be fulfilled, their attitudes hint at a symbolism requiring interpretation. Calm, smiling, or suffering, their countenances offer an unsettling presence that captures the gaze. Could it be that these faces are the real subjects of her paintings? At times, their grotesque grimaces evoke the *tronies* in Dutch painting of the Golden Age.

Through its raw and rudimentary treatment, architecture appears as an obvious symbol of our times, the default habitat of *Homo sapiens* where the lives of most of us now flow. But in the centerpiece of this new exhibition, *Place de la Réunion*, the built environment is also based on another principle: the City, center of our existential situation. Illuminated by a sun-like hole in

the central panel, the whole scene turns mystical. Somehow, it inaugurates an unprecedented sacred conversation between characters who yet seem familiar, allowing transcendence to emerge in the public square. One is tempted to see in this social mysticism an altered, almost science-fiction version of Soviet realism, or its dialectical echoes in a certain German painting of the 1990s.

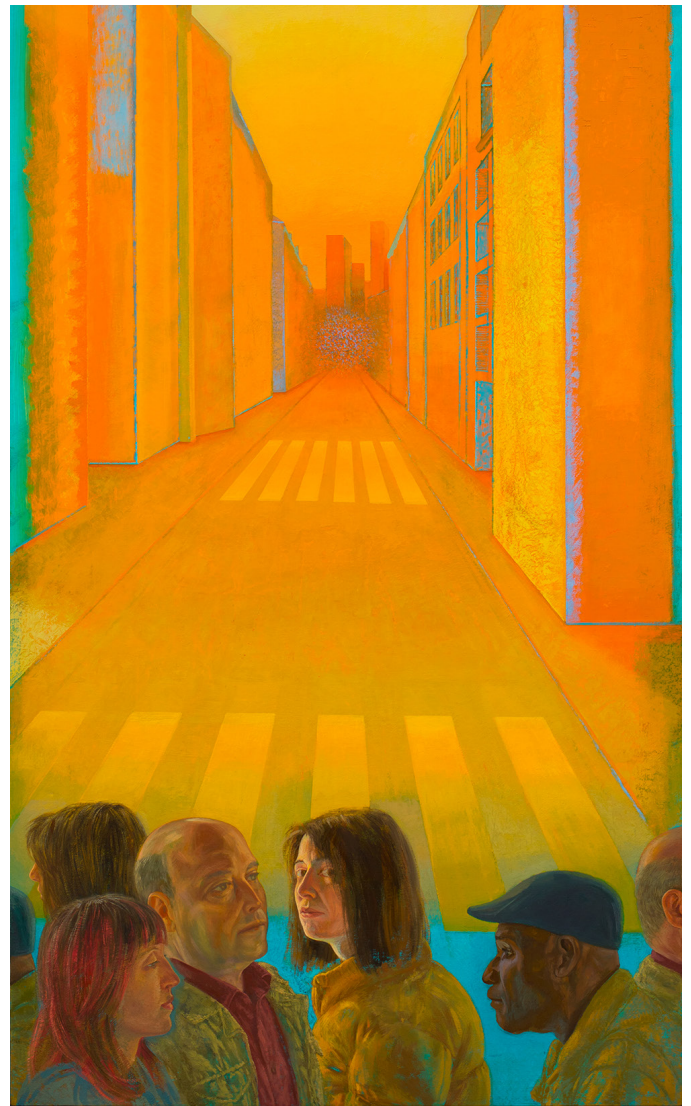
If Marion Bataillard is clearly concerned with situating her art in history, she is also engaged in a pictorial process that leaves room for the unknown and for experience. The idea is conditioned by a format, by the singularity of a model she invites to pose, or by the uncertainties of her current technique, *tempera*. Her material is increasingly pigmented, matte, and solid. The colors are bolder than ever, even becoming autonomous within their expanding fields, opened up by the singular shapes of the panels.

Surprisingly, a work like *Travail de l'ombre* summons the *shaped canvases* of American minimalist abstraction from the 1960s, while also connecting with the much older tradition of early Renaissance church painting when frescoes had to accommodate the constraints of architecture — before the art of representation, by now a portable commodity for bourgeois enjoyment, froze into the rectangular shape.

But while in one way or another, we frequently encounter the classical figures of Western painting, the artist's aim is not to parody forms, make pastiches, or produce yet another reinterpretation of thematic and religious imagery. "These are not images of images", as she puts it herself. The ancient naturally engages with the contemporary. Just as the timeless interacts with the temporal, the serious with the funny, the synoptic with detail, *Eros* with *Agape*, chosen perspective with the elusive ontology of the subject. Within the paintings and from one canvas to another, we travel through *seemingly* disparate realities, mirroring the entangled chaos of life where everything appears disorderly, unexpectedly, or as the English expression goes, "everything everywhere all at once". The thing's felt, and we feel that too.

- Hillel Schlegel

Marion Bataillard is a French painter born in 1983. She studied at the École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Strasbourg under Manfred Sternjakob and Daniel Schlier, then at the Leipzig School of Art in Neo Rauch's class; she lived in Berlin until 2013. In 2015, she received the Grand Prize of the 60th Salon de Montrouge. She now lives and works in Ardèche. In a few years, Marion Bataillard has risen to the forefront of young contemporary French painting.



Espace ouvert, 2022. Tempera on wooden panel, 180 x 95 cm



Marion Bataillard in her studio. Photo: Pierre Calvat