

« *A fleur de peau* »

Why an exhibition about drawings? To this question, I simply answer because I love it! The first artwork I ever bought was an enhanced drawing, a piece I still own and that is standing on the edge of the fireplace in my living room. It is a very fragile work, nearly invisible, mixed with other drawings including three African reliquaries and two small coloured sculptures.

Years after years, I realized I was often showing works at the gallery that were similar to drawings or at least the idea I had about drawings. Nothing of this was ever premeditated: on the contrary, it is only *a posteriori* that I really perceived what was happening: afterwards the conscience I could have about it, enlightening consequently part of my choices.

Drawings don't try to trick you, which is a reason why I like them so much. Without artifice, it is the shortest way from the spirit to the result, the fastest vehicle to realising an idea. I keep in mind what once said to me an architect to whom Le Corbusier showed a minuscule drawing, a first burst, and in which you can see, as the author told, the Ronchamp's Chapel. A drawing, to me, is in direct contact with the soul: and I guess here a reason why today, the drawings of Great Masters have such a success. A drawing crystallises an action, I would say it precipitates it. It has the need of a tenuous interface and even sometimes there is none: I think of the prints or of the artworks of Gabrielle Wambaugh who made them using her fingers as a tool. Consequently, the result is shown as a repository for gesture and thought, melted into the same operation.

Using either charcoal, pen, pencil, gouache or even digital material, the drawing inhabits beforehand the space that it offers to us. That this last one can be a paper sheet, a plasma screen or even simply a wall, this space stays the first witness of our controlled emotions, which have passed by.

We'll be able to see in this exhibition a perfect example of this idea through artworks very different by their form as much as their medium. Next to charcoal drawings, we will discover two videos of **Yasid Oulab**: '*Le Souffle du récitant comme signe*' et '*Percussion graphique*'. In the first video, four smoked verticals and parallel lines are disturbed by the breathe of the soufists reciting and singing verses of the Koran, and producing this way stales as many ephemeral drawings. In the second video, using a builder pen, the artist draw during many minutes on a paper sheet, a simple line which depicts also the first letter of the Arabian alphabet, *A* or *La*. Under the glass roof, we will discover an iron string sculpture by **Laetitia Legros** standing out of the walls' gallery.

The drawing is not exclusively in the medium carrying it from its origins, it has successfully enlarged its domain to invest new ones showing that its history and potential are unlimited.

Even if the body is more or less implicated, the drawing is before anything else a *sensitive gesture*. What counts is the trace left: comparable to the process (as simple or complex as it can be) of the accountant and its accounted results. We will also discover in the gallery the drawings of sculptor **Gabrielle Wambaugh**, in which body and nature are suggested only by allusion or metonymy; with **Micha Laury**, this time the body is closest, it is the base of these artworks exhibited here; the drawings of **Claire-Jeanne Jézéquel** show spaces on paper which can organise themselves as an image of a pomegranate or a poppy plant or still but in a less identified way, as these sketches which are taking aside the angle of the sheet becoming sculpture indulging under the emprise of gravity.

Damien Cabanes and **Erik Dietman**'s drawings have sometimes in common to draw after nature, the self-portrait when nothing else than the mirror is between you or also models invited to pose when times and weather are better. Other like **Myriam Mechita** and **Emmanuelle Rapin** are more attached to small everyday mythologies expressed through their little notepads, which for Mechita becomes a real diary. In the gouache of **Jean-Marie Biwer**, we also find this autobiographical aspect. Besides these intimate images, we'll find the dreamlike partition of **Marine Joatton**, the childhood memories of **Kotscha Reist** or the transcended stories of the Israelite artists **Gil & Moti** who are telling their love story with a young Palestinian. **Ruth Barabash** chooses her subjects to give a very personal and ambiguous vision amongst toys magazines or travel brochures. Two artworks of **Carlos Kusnir** complete these little everyday mythologies associated to three drawings with bitumen of **Raphaëlle Paupert-Borne**. In counterpoint of these intimate tales, other mythologies, more universal, will be at test for the simple pleasure of the eye and the senses, the pastels of **Paul Pagk**, the drawings with colored shadows of **Siobhan Liddell**, the constructed representations of **Wilson Trouvé** and the feather drawings of **Didier Mencoboni**. In these last works, it would be useless (not to say vain) to look for in our immediate world the signs of what we are seeing – here everything is a matter of equivalence; these art pieces are only here to touch and to push us to contemplation.

At the time of which drawings are occupying the place that should be theirs, I could not miss to share a reality, which touches me and which tells as much of my time as of my own vision.

Eric Dupont