

A BIT OF PURE TIME

Marian Breedveld was born in 1959. She studied art at the Tilburg School of Art, then at Ateliers 67 in Haarlem between 1985 and 1987. Today she lives between Rotterdam and Tilburg where her studio is, and teaches at the Rietveld Academie, in Amsterdam. Jérôme Boutterin was born in 1960. After studying Fine Arts at the Villa Arson in Nice, in the Environment department, he studied Landscape at the National School of Landscape in Versailles, where he teaches.

So, they belong to the same generation. They both stayed at the Villa Arson as artists – Marian Breedveld in 1987, and Jérôme Boutterin in 1993-1994 – and started showing their work roughly at the same time. Actually, they regularly share the space of Parisian gallery Bernard Jordan, who's been acting as their merchant for several years. Through extremely specific approaches, they both question painting in itself and for itself, with joy, energy and intensity.

The works they present together at the FRAC (regional collection of contemporary art) Haute-Normandie perfectly illustrate the profound jubilation they find in still painting today, with sincerity although there is a certain determination and gravity. Therefore, they know everything about the painter's knowledge, in the most classical sense of the term; about the question of dots, lines and plans; about going from line to stroke, from stroke to shape, from shape to figure, from figure to pattern, from pattern to surface, from surface to depth, etc. Beyond the "painting" as a subject, it is also about matter; about the colour and the light that are carried by this "painting" matter which they both endeavour to never immobilise but, on the contrary, to suspend its running, its speed... as if, to them, it was about experiencing the physicality of this "painting" matter, about taming the space of these "images-matters paintings" in order to raise the conditions of wonderment. So, the canvas or sheet of paper becomes the territory of an experiment of duration as well as of space: of time as the artwork's space; of space as the dimension we can give to light, matter, colour, movement. Therefore, whatever their props or proportions, most of their works have dimensions that compare to their respective bodies: their own height, just a little too big or way too small, so that the arm that carries the painting brush goes in one single movement to the limit of the amplitude, concentration or exhaustion of the gesture... Putting the eye, the gaze and the thinking, at the tip of the arm. An imperfect, vibrating, quivering arm.

Thus, the canvas records on its expanse the passing of the brush, the passing of the lines, the passing of the colours, the passing of time, the fluctuation between presence and disappearance, persistence and fragility, the advent of figures and shapes. A "floating" world of suspended horizontality in Marian Breedveld's work which, little by little, layer after layer of spreading and stretching the "paste", reaches incredible levels of colour fluidity, sometimes very violent ones, accentuated, sometimes almost invisible, below and beneath the surface. A "floating" world of writings escapes them as soon as they go beyond the single question of formal resonances in order to find their own rhythm, just as you would say "find your own breathing". For example, in Jérôme Boutterin's work, there is this impurity of the image: it is as rough, harsh as it is fragile and he wants us – him – to play with it in order to spot the vanishing or flawed lines, the zones of flow or intensities which give them all their strength and character. There is indeed nothing of the illusionist in their works – the appearances of reality are always deceiving; only sensation matters, as Marcel Proust showed us. "Let's be wary of this accepted idea according to which painting should translate what is perceptible rather than creating a perception of what is translatable", Pierre Bazing instructed in 1985, on the occasion of the *Un certain paysage* exhibition at the Dieppe Museum. So, Jérôme Boutterin and Marian Breedveld's works don't frame the world, they don't welcome any

story, but they try, through painting, to open it. For Eugène Leroy, painting was a way of “getting a gaze closer to the time and fragile moment of appearances”. In other words, placing oneself on poetry’s side, on the side of this state of existential vigilance and of this impossible desire to thwart the insufficiency of the visible in favour of the sensitive. So, when we think we know everything about art, Jérôme Butterin and Marian Breedveld’s works reveal to us that it is, of course, art that knows everything about us.

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