

GALERIE UNTITLED 1983

BOTH DIRECTION AT ONCE

DUO SHOW

BY KAROLINA ORZELEK & THOMAS LESIGNE

GALERIE UNTITLED 1983 is delighted to present *Both Directions at Once*, an exhibition of works by the Polish painter Karolina Orzelek and French painter Thomas Lesigne. The show features a collection of oil paintings by Orzelek and works on paper by Lesigne created during a period of residency at GALERIE UNTITLED 1983 in Geneva in the early months of 2021.

The exhibition takes its title, *Both Directions at Once*, from the Lost Albums of jazz saxophonist John Coltrane, with a nod to the untold possibility of improvisation and collaborative emergence.¹ The album, discovered after Coltrane's death, is described as occupying space somewhere between 'moving backward' and 'surging forth'. It is through this non-linear motion that Orzelek and Lesigne set out to create an entirely new body of work that explores the tension between experience and memory.

Through a layered process that begins by gathering analogue photographs taken by the artists themselves on travels, Orzelek and Lesigne create an archive of places, moments and memories. In an age where images are so easily harvested through digital means, the decision to create a physical collection and to transfigure their source material by pencil and then paint, reflects a remarkable preference and appreciation for the tactile process.

Lesigne's aquarelles are ethereal, calm and pensive. They convey a powerful sense of solitude. A figure moves unconsciously through a blurred physical world, swathed in the shadow of a branch's bough. The viewer is led to wonder whether we are observing, or being asked to observe ourselves. Contemplative moments become all the more searching in a mirage that extends slowly and silently. Lesigne's painted environs visit deserted landscapes, stones and water, often under the influence of light and especially weather. In his mosaic works, soft edges and undefined lines depict large-scale landscapes that upon a closer gaze dissolve into total abstraction.

In contrast, Orzelek drops us in surreal hyper luminous landscapes of florescent foliage, apricot skies, flames at dusk and malachite green shadows. Her paintings are carefully staged and mysteriously silent, giving the viewer the perception that they

¹ Collaborative emergence is a term coined to describe the collective social process in which jazz was improvised by several musicians at once during a performance. Sawyer, Kieth R. *Improvisational Cultures: Collaborative Emergence and Creativity in Improvisation* (2009).

have arrived upon a scene in which the subjects have just left. Playing with notions of presence and absence, she leads her audience to wonder what might have happened or is about to come. Colors that pulse and burn compliment the uncertainty of the moment, highlighting the duality or perhaps, the affinity between dream and fantasy, fear and desire.

In *Both Directions at Once*, Lesigne and Orzelek conjure a contemplative space that compels us to rediscover remembrance, illusion and the purpose of our own gaze.

Thomas Lesigne is a French artist born in 1989 in Avignon and Karolina Orzelek is a Polish painter born in 1992 in Bielsko-Biała. Both attended the L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 2020, Orzelek won the prestigious Sisley Beaux-Arts de Paris Prize. They work and live in Paris.

Text by Lucie Olivia Smith

OPENING : March 11th 2021

EXHIBITION: March 11th until April 15th

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19, Rue du Nant

Geneva

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