

L'œuvre de la semaine : Aveuglé

Guy Gilsoul, Focus Vif / Le Vif, 15 October 2016

It is rare to encounter a painter so much of a researcher. Marc Renard is one of them, and his fierce determination to produce, one day, the masterpiece is matched only by his despair. So he searches, questions yesterday's painting, searches again, until breath and reason are exhausted.

Then, alone in his Brussels studio, the 53-year-old artist turns the music up full blast in order to extinguish the fires in his mind. Alone, but with the computer carrying him out to sea across websites and the new spaces of computer-generated imagery. The painter has thus rooted himself, roots underground, in the turbulent heart of his time, while keeping at the corner of his eye a search for documentation on everything that has already been done and is being done today in the world of abstract painting. Because he wants to be alone. The only one. The only one to travel through frenzied perspectives that intersect and carry the eye into a vertigo, where it catches on frames, straight lines, mined surfaces, grids and cracks.

But this is not enough. His small notes, sketches and preliminary projects (there is, fundamentally, a fairly classical preparatory method in his work) gradually call for brighter, more blinding colours. Hence the use of fluorescent tones that throw their luminous intensity into the spectator's face. Or engulf the spectator. Perception is put to the test, held hostage between several systems of reading, several forms of writing, a trapped perspective and a few chromatic screeches.

And yet, at the end of this struggle with space (with himself), Marc Renard, using a strategy not far removed from Picasso's paradoxical, both destructive and reconstructive approach, imposes a totality in which nothing can be removed or added except for the worse.

Brussels 1000, MM Gallery. Cour de la Place du Jeu de Balle, 68. Until 30 October. Friday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.