

2020 — Interview de Marc Renard par Alexia Van de Velde

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This week, abstract artist Marc Renard does us the honour of answering our questions about the secrets of his universe. Who is he? What are his inspirations? His message? Let us find out...

Tell us a little about your background:

I was born in Uccle in 1963. I started painting in oils at the age of 13, in my parents' home. At 15, I took art classes at IATA in Namur, where I graduated first in my class with great distinction. Afterwards, I attended the Brussels Academy of Fine Arts for six years. Art has always been an integral part of my daily life, from a very young age. I currently work in a studio in Brussels that I have occupied since 1990.

What are your inspirations and references?

At one time I was influenced by American abstract painting, particularly that of De Kooning. Later, my inspiration turned towards the German painter Gerhard Richter. Since around 1990, bright colour has become an obvious choice for me, allowing me to work and express myself through fluorescent colours.

How would you define your style?

My style lies between Action Painting and geometric abstraction. I have moved from one to the other, but recently I realised that my work reflects more of a fusion of these two styles, which I like enormously. In this way, I erase the frustration of having to choose.

Today, I define my style by this term: Geometric Action Painting.

What do you want to express in your work?

Through my works, I would like to convey dynamism and energy through very vivid colours and strong, even violent gestures. This, in my view, corresponds to the equation of Life.

What material do you like to work with?

I like acrylic paint because it has fluorescent tones that I particularly enjoy. Moreover, this paint dries quickly, which allows me to superimpose layers of colour rapidly while remaining within the action of the painting. I think that today it is more difficult to innovate in abstraction using oil paint, because acrylic allows effects in painting that the former does not. This is why I abandoned it. However, it is true that oil paint is a noble and living material, which is not the case with acrylic. It is a choice to make...

What is the creative process behind one of your works?

All my life, I have made preparatory projects before tackling the canvas. Recently, I have been painting directly on it without any project, and the result is striking! The work feels more alive, more accurate, closer to who I am inside. I would even say that I have truly freed myself from a lack of self-confidence that had followed me all my life. I stick tapes (adhesive strips) of different sizes onto my canvas, then I paint over them while scraping the colour, and then I remove them and stick others on, until I am satisfied with the result.

Does colour play a major role for you? How do you work with it?

In my work, colour obviously plays a major role! I think colour, I eat colour. I have great respect for it. Colour is my whole life! I work with it in flat areas or in thickness; I scrape it, scratch it, caress it...

What message do you wish to convey through your works?

What I would like to share through my painting is love and honesty. I want it to provide well-being to the spectator who looks at it. The ultimate goal would be for the colours, forms and materials present in my work to penetrate the soul so that happiness may emanate from the person contemplating it.