

AUDREY NERVI FT. REBECCA BOURNIGAULT

Oxytocin

Exhibition: April 27, 2024 – June 8, 2024

Private View: Saturday 27 April, 3-8PM with both artists in attendance



Audrey Nervi

Elsa vs Marie - France, 2021
Oil on canvas
19,7 x 11,8 in.



Rebecca Bournigault

Selfie BN (detail), 2023
Watercolour on paper
56 x 42 in.

« *My paintings zoom in on the world as I see it.* » — Audrey Nervi

« *I try to reach the human being at a given moment, whether he is a model or a spectator of my work.* » — Rebecca Bournigault

Gallery Virginie Louvet is delighted to invite Audrey Nervi and Rebecca Bournigault, two artists of the same generation with very similar sensibilities and subject matters, to come and bring their work in dialogue for the very first time in its exhibition space rue de Penthièvre.

While one works with oil, the other with watercolour, one on thick fames, the other on thin paper, the two women can be brought together through their similar relationship to the multiplication of images, their use of photography as a tool and the quasi-documentary treatment of subjects in their painting. They both belong to a line of painters for whom photography presides over their pictorial work.

For Nervi, the scenes drawn from her many travels are mostly set outdoors, in the heart of marginal communities or in the intimacy of a corridor. These are 'off-camera' subjects, stolen moments that escape the vigilance of the eye as night falls, but which, through Audrey Nervi's brush, exist as a cry of revolt against a society that is all too often conformist. Bournigault's figures are often depicted alone in the fragile emptiness of paper, their eyes riveted to those of the viewer, as if to confront them.

While the practices of both artists have long been coloured by the socio-political events that have accompanied their respective careers (the fight against AIDS, anti-AfD demonstrations, riots), here we bring them together around a more personal and intimate subject to which the title «oxytocin» refers. Oxytocin is, among other things, a hormone secreted during orgasm; it brings us back to the feeling of fulfilment that the artist may have while painting.

When hung, their works take on the appearance of narrative 'sequences', sharing with us reality in its raw state. Naked, asleep, bound, masked or dressed in fatigues, the mostly female figures standing before us can only express their desire for emancipation. There is an obvious political dimension to their works, while they simultaneously retain a highly sensitive, even tender, approach. For both Nervi and Bournigault, painting becomes an invitation to enter into the intimacy of the moment, and a means of portraying a femininity torn between thirst for freedom and precariousness, pleasure and suffering, gentleness and violence, construction and destruction.

— Agnès Biro

Audrey Nervi was born in Lyon in 1974.

She is a graduate from the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at 9BIS in Saint-Etienne, Confort Moderne in Poitiers and the French Embassy in Berlin, as well as several group exhibitions abroad (Czech Republic, Switzerland, Finland, Turkey, Slovakia). Nervi took part in the Lyon Biennial in 2003. Her work can be found in the collections of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Fonds d'art contemporain - Paris Collections and the Cnap.

Rebecca Bournigault was born in Colmar in 1970.

Rebecca Bournigault was spotted at a young age by Harald Szeemann in the 1990s and took part in the fourth Lyon Biennial (1997) under his curatorship. In 1999 she was nominated for the Marcel Duchamp Prize, and a few years later exhibited at the Palais de Tokyo (2006) under the curatorship of Nicolas Bourriaud and Jérôme Sans. She has taken part in numerous solo exhibitions in France and abroad. Her work can be found in the collections of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Fonds national d'art contemporain (Fnac), and in several private collections in France (Pinault), Canada, the United States and Japan.