

Stoppenbach & Delestre



17 Ryder Street, St-James's
London, SW1Y 6PY
www.artfrancais.com
contact@artfrancais.com

Storytelling

Stoppenbach & Delestre is pleased to present 'Storytelling', our first exhibition dedicated to contemporary practice, on view from 16 November 2019 to 11 January 2020. The exhibition features three artists - Clémentine Bruno, Georgia Sowerby, and Marine Wallon - whose works investigate the function of storytelling in relation to painting.

The act of storytelling is prehistoric. Here, it can be defined as the weaving together of signs, semiotics and signifiers into an account of a thing – whether factual or fictitious – to spin new stories from old. Mediated through language and imagery, narrative is inherent to every structure from the personal to the political - ultimately delineating our lives both visibly and intangibly.

The oral tradition is the earliest form of narrative. Pre-dating written language as a means of transmitting information, painting is perhaps one of the last oral traditions alive in the West. It is a medium that is not generally learnt from books, but rather taught through experience and discussion. This process encourages unreliable narrators and mistakes, a means to create necessary fictions to make a picture. Conversely, the latter half of the 20th Century has come to be defined by abstraction, conceptualism and minimalism - movements that have sought to rid themselves of the vestiges of narrative. The exhibition of works presented here seeks to add an ulterior perspective to that story.

In this show, each artist uses paint as a tool to question the use-value of narrative by subverting, shifting and complicating the relationship between image and meaning. Wallon uses archival material from corporate videos to form ambiguous figures within liminal landscapes, disintegrating the original context of the images. Similarly, Sowerby uses appropriation as a method to investigate the authority of an image, stealing from painting's hegemonic art history to intertwine fragments into her own aesthetic language. Questioning authorship is equally central to Bruno's practice, which plays on the presence/absence dichotomy of the painter. Her works employ a constellation of ghostly phrases which subtly undermine painting's relationship to its own mythologized history.

The works presented here address the semiotic structure of painting, challenging its self-perpetuating narrative to offer their own approaches to storytelling. Once ingested by the viewer, their stories become our own - insinuating a hybridized, ambiguous space between imagery and meaning.

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Clémentine Bruno (b.1994 lives and works in London), received her BA in History of Art and Fine Art at Goldsmiths University before she went on to obtain her MA at the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2019.

Her praxis explores the historical and conceptual meanings of painting to question 'the play between the presence and absence' of the author while addressing the medium's specificity.

Recent group exhibitions include Project Native Informant, London (2019) Space 52, Athens (2019), and Studio 59, London (2018). She was awarded the NEON Contemporary Art Exhibitions Grants Program in 2019.

Marine Wallon (b.1985 lives and works in Paris), studied at the Beaux-Arts Paris, where she graduated with an MFA before achieving a Post-Graduate diploma with professor Philippe Cognée. In her practice, the artist captures shots of anonymous travel agencies or travelling documentaries of individuals, which she translates through paintings, rendering the uncontrolled character of nature. Addressing her work as 'not seductive but rather turbulent and vibrant', she invites the viewer to reflect on the elusive movement that escapes direct visibility.

She was recently awarded the Moly Sabata prize at the Salon de Montrouge 2019 and had a solo exhibition at the Point Commun, Contemporary Art Centre in Annecy in 2019. Recent group exhibitions include 'Some of us', Kunstwerk Carlhutte, Budelsdorf, 2019.

Georgia Sowerby (b.1991 lives and works in London), graduated with a BA from Wimbledon College of Art in 2014, and in 2018, with an MA from the Slade School of Fine Art in London.

Georgia's practice revolves around the relationship between language and paintings. Looking at the medium and its history from a distance, she intelligently and playfully investigates the boundaries of visual representations, engaging with the legacy of the medium.

Recent exhibitions include SansTitre, 2019, Paris, SET Space Bermondsey, and Belmacz Gallery, in London. She was awarded the Almacantar Studio Award in 2018 and the Felix Slade Scholarship in 2016.