



Photos credits © France Parsus

Joies

France Parsus

Exhibition from March 15 to May 3, 2024

Opening 15.03.2024 - 6:30pm

Concert by Paulette Sauvage - 7:30pm

S C R O L L **GALERIE**

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Free entry



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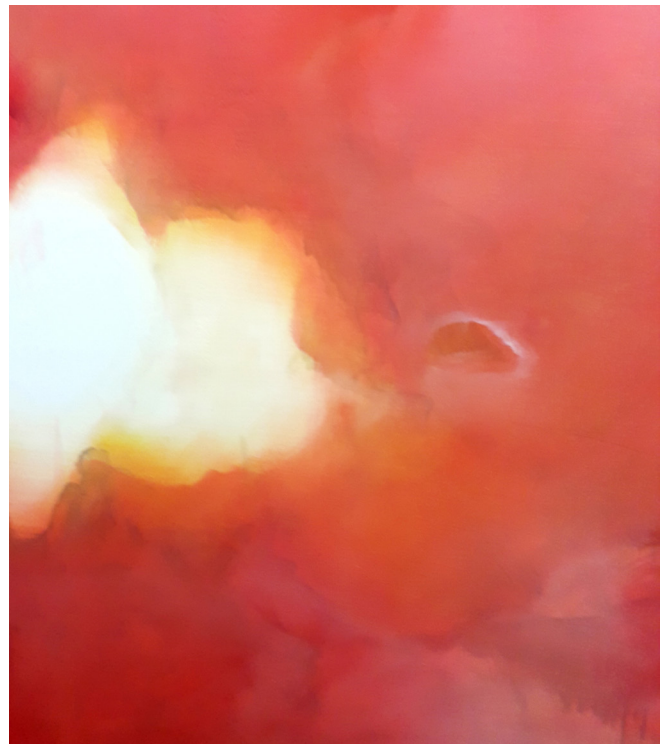
About the exhibition

Something fierce slumbers beneath these soft wisps. Should we take the time to abandon ourselves to the heart of these oily slicks? They greedily spread out over the imposing formats... A patient and gentle work offers us the promise of a candid bath in the sensuality of shapes and colors. But there is a dull torpor, a misty rattle we struggle to keep inside. Images of a consuming fire capable of moving our reborn audacity, or pure vaporous abstractions? Hard to say... There is a kind of dissolved mystery oozing through the taut mesh of France Parsus's canvases.

The same battle wages on the porcelains, devouring fragility against voracious burning. Paper soaked in slip has burned away, leaving us with nothing but the memory of its intimate story. Porcelains reveal themselves in their hollows. A slight poetic ritual takes place in silence. Leaflets abandoned in the crowd, faded receipts, small pieces of stationery and improvised incense burners for clandestine celebrations; all of them throb between the paintings that the artist waves on the walls like timid banners.

Screen, Sol, Hole, Netz, Larmes, and now *Joies*, for each of these series of paintings, we are allowed almost nothing. No clues, usually none or almost no color, perhaps a vague sensation here and there, a hint of texture, a veil that settles over an already troubled form. Almost nothing, except a word, a title that sounds like an enigma, like a slogan chanted half-voiced in reddened darkness. A word that tells us everything and nothing at the same time. *Joies*. We must penetrate the depths of the paint, let it melt into the veins of our bodies like smoke into our lungs, and into the hollow of each of our pores. This seems to be the only way to really look at France Parsus's landscapes: arm outstretched, a smoke-bomb at the very end of tip of our fingers.

And yet, beneath the thick layers of this abstract smoke, which we would be wrong to believe soulless, lies all the candor of the crowd, all the mutual tenderness of these federated bodies, all the life raging spirit of our dissident generations. France Parsus is an artist who paints the hectic landscapes of our protests. She surveys activist streets and spaces of collective resistance to extract snippets she calls "portraits". These formats, from which we would expect to see faces, are covered with deep, gleaming red or acid slicks. Unrecognizable, the figures fade away, leaving only dreamy clouds flooded with opaque light. It's not a question of identifying the actors



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of social struggles, but rather of translating the shared energy of our struggling bodies. A tribute to our warrior souls protesting for a fairer and more cohesive ways of living together, France Parsus's portraits preserve the intimacy of our faces while conveying the fervor of our discourse with a burning pride. The artist meticulously selects photographs of demonstrators, cutting them up to retain only certain landscape-spaces. They are shaped by smoke bombs, those modest tools of counter-power that dare to oppose the acid swarms of tear gas. Objects wielded to reclaim the almost magical place of the center of attention in public space; to express the joy of victory at the end of a soccer game; to express the power of something that warms us as well as what destroys us: they reveal everything about the movement, beauty and hope that can come from making visible our bruised realities. In contrast with the riot porn aesthetics of some protest shots, which tend to magnify the balance of power, France Parsus' smoke bombs impose their own atmosphere. They allow us to slip into the intimacy of their troubled time, suspended between two wisps of smoke.

Elise Bergonzi

This exhibition is supported by a visual arts project grant from the Pays de la Loire Region.

www.franceparsus.com
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