

TOM ALLEN

Præternatura

Exhibition from November 28, 2020 to January 30, 2021
43, rue de la commune de Paris 93230 Romainville



Tom Allen, The Day, 2020

Air de Paris is pleased to present a solo exhibition of the Los Angeles-based painter, Tom Allen.

Tom Allen has a singular, if unusual relationship with nature. More chthonic than Arcadian, the so-called natural world he depicts in his paintings is in fact anything but natural. Indeed, if what he does could be considered an idealization of nature, then it is an idealization that goes the wrong way, to the point of excess, of perversion. The infernal flora that populate his paintings seem to not only preclude any kind of return to Eden, but more importantly, betoken a toxic landscape that is probably not even fit for human existence. What he makes doesn't even seem made for the human eye; as vibrantly colored as they are super saturated with information, they might be mutations meant for a more evolved optical capacity. This general quality of excess has deep roots in fin-de-siècle France, or the French decadents, specifically in the work of Édouard Vuillard and Gustave Moreau, the novels of J.K. Huysmans, as well as the Art Nouveau objects of Louis Comfort Tiffany and René Lalique. Synthesized with his long standing interest in mysticism and love of Heavy Metal, this frame of reference informs the crucible from which he produces his unique and preternatural vision of the world.

The six floral portraits presented in his show at Air de Paris were painstakingly crafted, often times with surgical precision, over the course of the last year. They see him pushing his medium to new, hallucinatory limits. From his black iris on orange paisley ground in VI to his fantastical rose and canna lily, the sheer density of information achieves new heights of retinal opulence. Meanwhile, the pair of double orchids, which represent day and night and which contain over fifty colors, could be seen as the twin poles around which this manifestation of Allen's universes revolves and visually explodes.

–Chris Sharp

Tom Allen (b. 1975, Springfield, Massachusetts) lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions include: Là-bas, Lulu, Mexico City (2019) and The Lovers, Bel Ami, Los Angeles (2017). Recent group exhibitions include: (2019) Dreamhouse vs. Punkhouse, Serious Topics, Inglewood, CA; (2017) Symbolisms, Cooper Cole, Toronto; Witch-Ikon, Mortlake & Company, Seattle; Therianthropy, Laura Bartlett Gallery, London; Ruins In the Snow, High Art, Paris; (2016) A Change of Heart, Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles; Outside, MiM Gallery, Los Angeles. His work can be found in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Sweeney Gallery at the University of California, Riverside, and in numerous private collections.



Tom Allen
VI, 2020
huile sur toile
94 x 55,9 cm
unique



Tom Allen
Red and Black, 2020
huile sur toile, châssis bois
71,1 x 58,4 cm
unique



Tom Allen
Serpentine Night, 2020
huile sur toile,
71,1 x 58,4 cm
unique



Tom Allen
VII, 2020
huile sur toile, châssis bois
45,7 x 35,6 cm
unique



Tom Allen
IV, 2020
huile sur toile, châssis bois
43,2 x 43,2 cm
unique



Tom Allen
The Day, 2020
huile sur toile, châssis bois
33 x 28 cm
unique