

An abstract painting with a rich, textured background. The palette is dominated by warm, earthy tones like ochre, sienna, and terracotta, interspersed with cooler hues of dusty rose, pale blue, and muted green. Bold, expressive brushstrokes in deep purple and magenta sweep across the composition, particularly in the upper right and lower left. Delicate, swirling lines of white and light pink suggest movement and depth. Small, vibrant dots of orange and red are scattered throughout, adding focal points of energy. The overall effect is one of dynamic, organic form and emotional resonance.

EMMA MCINTYRE

«Up bubbles her amorous breath»

AIR DE PARIS
à partir du 9 janvier 2022



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« Up bubbles her amorous breath »

From January 9 2022

43, rue de la Commune de Paris

93230 Romainville

The gesture is determined, never letting up from start to finish. It makes use of multiple depths, filters and wet and dry surfaces that butt up against each other. Emma McIntyre liberated herself long ago from the modernist grid¹. Her painting is, first of all, the product of an alchemy that has been put on hold, the fruit, even, of a suspension of time. Her palette then rejects uniformity, its tendency sometimes vivid, sometimes atmospheric and sometimes sombre. The patches of colour enter into dialogue with the brush marks and occasional handprints. Time becomes muddled, the film goes out of focus. The image is sometimes so blurred that we no longer know where to look, so rich is the chronology. To start with, the canvas is laid out horizontally and the first layer is applied. This is followed by a shift to the vertical, where the concern is with structure, composition, the exercise of painterly preference. This shift spawns a physical relationship with the picture. We are enfolded by the painting today just as it wrapped itself, not long ago, around the artist. Wherever we look, our eyes are met by a canary yellow (*Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 2021), a geranium pink in the midst of a storm (*Up Bubbles Her Amorous Breath*, 2021), reserves of white that have resisted being covered over (*Pink Cut Pink*, 2021) or a poppy red somewhere between flesh and blood (*Vamp*, 2021).

From time to time, top notes break free, an updraught of sky blue, sea green, violet or even sienna. The body is engaged, directing the line and causing the ink to flow. The canvas is affected in that it activates a flood of emotion. We think of Audre Lorde's words: 'For the erotic is not a question only of what we do; it is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing.'² The erotic is action. It dissolves the conflict between body and mind, fostering a celebration of the act of painting. The erotic is a state of struggle and ensues from long rhythmic confrontations with the canvas, in the course of which the fluids brim over without imposing the authoritative sense of a direction in which to read. Subsequently, the small- and medium-format pieces come to even out the clash and offer the work a different materiality. This is achieved, in particular, through breathing, through actions that are more direct, through zones of entrainment opposed, in a sense, to the more complex choreographies of the panoramic. The eye is swallowed by the sign. The response is emotional, the route quotational – both enthralling and transhistorical. To this end, McIntyre reconstitutes a gestural archive of the history of painting. We think we recognise Mary Heilmann's splotches³, the emotional recall of Joan Mitchell's landscapes⁴, the scratching and double exposure of *Fuses* – Carolee Schneemann's 1968 film manifesto, paid homage to in one of the artist's recent works⁵.

The chemical relationships set, fixing the painting, which then breaks free of its oceanic side as the wave covering the surface moves further and further away. If the landscape is too present, the artist disrupts it using shapes that resemble writing to upset both the obviousness and the predominance of the motif. After all, what doesn't relate to landscape in painting? The landscape is always apparent, in fact, but more as the memory of a landscape painting. Abstraction is desire, longing, joy. It succeeds in re-enacting the feelings borrowed from its history, thus reproducing the affective quality of a brushstroke, of a line, without triviality or artificiality. In this sense, the vitality in the young painter's abstract approach comes as a surprise. The abstraction becomes a **transitional object** moving towards the acceptance of art as a vehicle for affect. In the words of Sara Ahmed, 'To be affected by something is to evaluate that thing.'⁶ Wouldn't the question then be less about the action of affect in painting and more about how to evaluate it?

Born in Auckland in 1990, Emma McIntyre lives and works in sunny California, where she has just finished her studies – most notably with Bruce Hainley, Richard Hawkins, Chris Kraus and Laura Owens at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena. Entitled *Up Bubbles Her Amorous Breath* (after John Keats), her first solo exhibition in Europe is on view at Air de Paris from 9 January 2022.

Arlène Berceliot Courtin, December 2021

(Translated by Simon Cowper)

1 Interview with the artist, December 2021, private archive.

2 Audre Lorde, 'Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power', in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984), 54..

3 Including the bloody red of *Rosebud* (1983) – a slap in the face administered to the masculinist formalism of American painting.

4 In particular, the North American landscapes and the area around Giverny where Mitchell lived for more than thirty years: 'My paintings repeat a feeling about Lake Michigan, or water, or fields... It's more like a poem.' From Marion Cajori, *Joan Mitchell: Portrait of an Abstract Painter*, documentary film, 1992.

5 Emma McIntyre, *Fuses*, 2020, oil, oil stick, Flashe and acrylic on linen, 56 × 64 inches.

6 Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 23

About the title of the exhibition

The title of the exhibition is borrowed from the poem «On a picture of Leander» by John Keats published in March 1817. An adaptation of Keats' poem about the figure of «Hero» and «Leander», which also refers to some historical painters (Twombly and Turner, among others). In Greek myth, Leander was a young man in love with Hero, a priestess of Aphrodite. Leander spent a summer swimming across the Hellespont (a narrow strait in Turkey) to see her in her tower, guided by his lantern. But at the end of the summer, the weather changed and, on a stormy night, the wind blew out the light of Hero's lantern. Lost in the waves, Léandre drowns.

On a Picture of Leander

*COME hither, all sweet maidens soberly,
Down-looking eye, and with a chastened light,
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,
And meekly let your fair hands joined be,
As if so gentle that ye could not see,
Untouched, a victim of your beauty bright,
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,
Sinking bewildered 'mid the dreary sea:
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death;
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary lips
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her smile.
O horrid dream! see how his body dips
Dead-heavy; arms and shoulders gleam awhile:
He 's gone; up bubbles all his amorous breath!*

Mars 1817
De John Keats (1795–1821)



Emma McIntyre
Up bubbles her amorous breath, 2021
oil and oil stick on linen

72 x 84 inches
unique



Emma McIntyre
Sweetbitter, 2021
oil, oil stick and india ink on linen

72 x 84 inches
unique

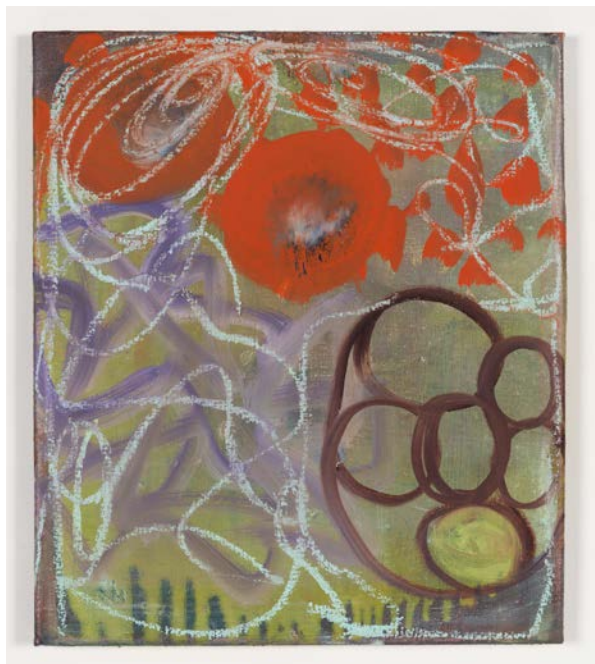


Emma McIntyre
The light of ambivalence is a heavenly one, 2021
oil an oil stick on linen

84 x 72 inches
unique



Vue d'exposition © Marc Damage



Blood moon, 2021
oil and oil stick on linen
16 x 14 inches
unique



Arcadia, 2021
oil and oil stick on linen
18 x 20 inches
unique

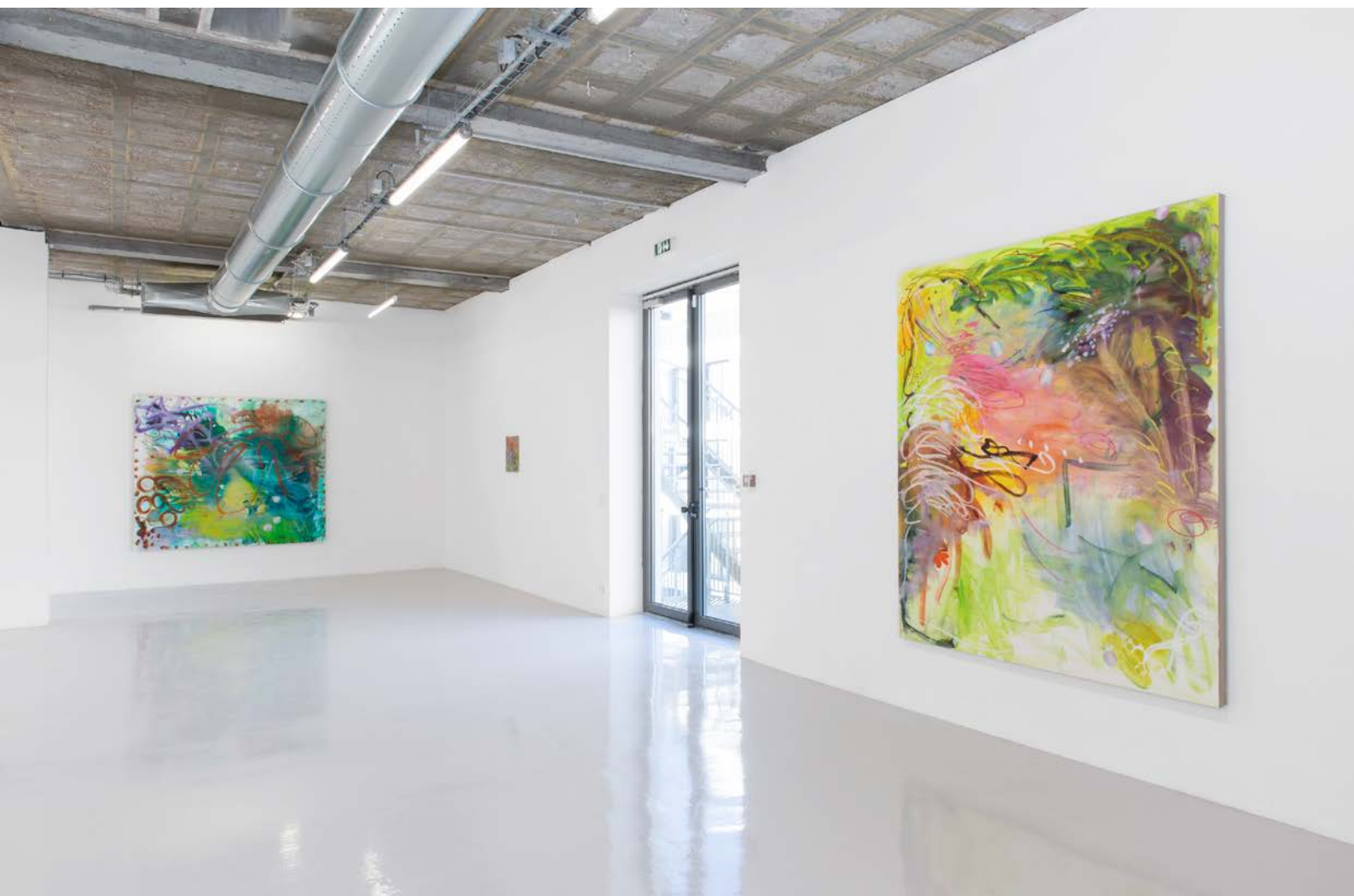


Spirits that lend strength, 2021
oil, oil stick on linen, iron oxide and graphite
12 x 11 inches
unique



Rose on red, 2021
oil and oil stick on linen
12 x 14 inches
unique

Emma McIntyre est une peintre néo-zélandaise née à Tamaki Makaurau en 1990. Aujourd'hui, elle vit et travaille à Los Angeles. Depuis 2012, elle a fait partie de plusieurs expositions collectives en Nouvelle-Zélande. Sa première exposition solo "Loop the Loop" au 30upstairs à Wellington a ouvert en 2016, l'année même où elle a obtenu son diplôme de l'Elam School of Fine Arts de l'université d'Auckland. Depuis, son travail a été présenté dans de nombreuses expositions à travers la Nouvelle-Zélande. En 2021, l'année de son deuxième diplôme de l'ArtCenter College of Design en Californie, la Chris Sharp Gallery de Los Angeles, en Californie, a organisé sa première exposition personnelle en dehors de la Nouvelle-Zélande.



Vue d'exposition © Margot Montigny



Vue d'exposition © Marc Damage



Seven types of ambiguity, 2021. Oil and oil stick on linen, 72 x 138 in, unique. © Marc Domage