

HAGAR SHCMIDHALTER

Ears on Eyes

30 September 2022 - 20 January 2023

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We first met on the street in Paris. I recalled walking towards a bench on a hot summer night.

On the other corner a woman seemed to wait. I noticed she was gazing sharply, her eyes shone like a razor while she smoked. She did not look but she was aware of my presence.

When she finished her cigarette she took out from her golden box another one and almost without looking at me asked if I had a light I said no, "I do not smoke" I said, she smiled and commented to me how fast the crowd was passing through the night.

She said: "some people crossings the streets looked glamorous shining like stars in a summer solstice night", and I replied: "well, only here in Paris could we find this rare and fragrant mixture of old and modern without disheveling" she said: "not sure".

Her remarks were beautiful and we started a conversation, I noticed even more her deep voice which resonated with mine.

The gold of the jewelry worn by the nightwalkers sparkled like the tiny lights of a plane in the sky. This was a thought I did not share but she looked at me and smiled again. I was sure she was listening to my eyes.

We both wanted to remember all this beauty which was offered to us in that moment.

The lively voices melted with the warm air of the city at midnight and whispered an evocative spell which made us feel sleepy while waiting on the street. We both were suffocated by the lavish smell released by the hot asphalt of the streets.

Two strangers entangled in that bench which had become a temporary ship. Seated there we navigated, timeless, through the dark skies and the city lights.

The mixed smell of food, the distant rotten aroma of fruit of a 24h open shop, the alcohol and the cheap and expensive perfumes of the nocturnal wildlife, created the most extraordinary essence. We were both alone, waiting, thinking, watching and registering every excitement like a scanner.

My friends appeared. I stood up and said good bye, she said: "wait, Dries van Noten?" I smiled and answered her back "Balenciaga"? We both smiled.

*Hagar Schmidhalter (Raron 1968, Switzerland) based in Basel. Exhibitions include: Between Ears New Colours, CRAC Alsace (2020); Hidden Bar, Art Basel (2019); Swiss Art Awards, Messe Basel (2017); Fuji Colour Garden, SALTS Birsfelden (2016); Emmy Moore's Journal by Quinn Latimer, SALTS Birsfelden (2013); Vitrine Gallery, London (2013); Kunsthalle Palazzo Liestal (2012); The Thing Itself, Abbt Project, Zürich (2012); Regionale, Kunsthalle Basel (2009); Set Against a Blue Sky with Clouds and Water, Kunsthau Baselland (2009); Fragile Monumente, Galerie Bob van Orsouw, Zürich (2009); The Eternal Flame, Kunsthau Baselland (2008), Filiale Basel (2004).*