



Arthur Marie
Convivial Activity

November 30, 2023 — January 13, 2024

Arthur easily admits wanting to distance himself from the feverish cold that developed in his early paintings, expecting a less perfect, clinical image, to move towards a non-place; rather an emotional situation. His work isn't autobiographical; it draws from an imprecise environment, a vague principle. He says himself *hypothetical events*. Something that implies alienation, loss, that is connected to a sense of duty; school, labor, to a system of production that we already know. From what we possess before it is taken away from us. Something that loses its erotic charge, that becomes lucid. That leads to depression, loneliness, and illness.

Convivial Activity follows *Serenity* and *Struggle For Pleasure*. It's Arthur's first solo exhibition in France. It quotes a series of paintings he presented in New York earlier this year; a series of invented profiles in insensitive light, on a grey background. In an email he had sent to the gallery Director where he was exhibiting them, he expressed feeling *frustrated with the idea of a portrait as a defined event*, needing instead to follow an intention through multiples, through variations; as industrial prototypes, standard of beauty, or even psychological.

The exhibition is a series of twenty-one portraits conceived as a single work. They are as much portraits of family members displayed on a dresser as they could be mugshots, morgue photographs, or classic iPhone selfies. None of them apply to a face in memory, none. Rather a combination of several reassembled remembrances, as one would do to generate a composite sketch. The texture of each painting is worked in such a way that it resembles skin; smooth and irregular. A superposition of about ten layers. They record, classify, measure, exclude, sort. Something that has to do with lies, with the idea of a correction. That repeats itself with an objective. Pale, frail bodies. They are a bit melancholic.

Something that is arbitrary; that of an individual who finds himself in a space that is not his own, and from which he realizes the subordination to which he is subjected; to a standardization of structural violence. A repetition of these anonymous faces to the point of erasure; the loss of what is of value, what is deserving, mortal.

In his personal notes, Arthur mentions this periphery. What is reasonable, what submits, what converges, what corrupts, and what is demagogic. A portrait that would be young and old, poor and rich, disgusted nevertheless. The scene of a latent, intrusive, almost surgical repulsion. Of fatigue. Of misery; a sexual pessimism, a feeling of lack, and the absence of an envy.

— Hugo Bausch Belbachir

Arthur Marie (1996, Cherbourg) lives and works in Paris. Recent solo exhibitions include *Serenity*, *Queer Thoughts* (New York), and *Struggle For Pleasure*, Plymouth Rock (Zurich).