

In the French language, the word "cadre" is used to refer to different things. First of all, there is the frame of the painting, the material object that encloses the work and which is, as Louis Marin defined it in 1984: "an ornament (...) but a necessary ornament: one of the conditions of possibility for the contemplation of the painting" (1). Then, with Marijke Vasey, there is also the question of her surroundings, which is changing in 2018, moving from London to Beaubery, a small town in the Saône-et-Loire region. And finally there is the frame as a structure, as a boundary that we draw between ourselves and what is outside us, often in a desire to control the things and events that collide with our existence.

In the series presented for her first solo exhibition at DS Galerie in Paris, Marijke Vasey explores, deploys and gives form to these three meanings of the word "frame", continuing her plastic research into the margins and the decorative, but also revealing a more assertive gestures, a search for movement and physicality that extends to the choice of formats for her canvases.

The question of movement in Marijke Vasey's paintings is already apparent in her working methods. Indeed, the artist, steeped in iconographic references ranging from François Boucher (1703-1770) to Tomma Abts (1967-), first works with collage, whether physical and/or digital. It is from this preparatory work that she modifies and articulates her compositions. Her compositions took a decisive turn in 2019 when the artist decided to focus specifically on the edges of her canvases, pushing all figurative images and motifs to their limits and recreating a frame. This process allows her to create liminal and decorative areas on a surface whose centre is supposed to contain the image, the main message of the painting. "At the centre of Marijke Vasey's works, there is above all emptiness, but a coloured emptiness, a surface that oscillates between "colourfield painting" and sketches of skies in the style of William Turner (1775-1851).

In the context of this series, these gradients at the centre of the compositions, are a reference to the different seasons and the changes in light that result from them, as the titles suggest (Spring, Summer, Winter). We note, however, the absence of autumn, thus collapsing the temptation of a system, like a thumbing of the nose at the programmatic order of painting, like a kind of anti-cycle of the seasons of Nicolas Poussin (1660-1664) for whom these representations were also a way of delivering a philosophical analysis of the world.

However, the absence of a programme does not mean that the artist's canvases are devoid of objectives. And if there is one that particularly attracts our attention, it is Marijke Vasey's ability to create composite images, whose characteristics are to be double or even multiple. In this way, she combines figuration and abstraction, warm and cold tones, rococo motifs and digital textures, aerosol and palette knife to produce images that are ambivalent but resolutely attractive. As she herself puts it, "the mixture of different pictorial languages deployed serves to create gaps or openings (...) Accentuating the notion that a painting can contain multiple realities is intended to remind us that different worlds can be created every day" (2).

Finally, Marijke Vasey's formal and conceptual exploration of "frames" allows her to move freely, both physically and mentally. By organising her canvas between figurative elements and abstract empty space, the artist creates paintings whose tension acts on the viewer both as a space for reflection on painting and its history, and as a surface for personal reflection on the reasons that drive us and have, for many centuries, led us to stop for several minutes or a lifetime in front of a painting.

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(1) MARIN Louis, *Du cadre au décors ou la question de l'ornement dans la peinture*, Hors Cadre, n° 2, Paris, 1984, pp. 177-200.

(2) Quoted from written exchanges with the artist, January 2024.

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