

To select a group of Ann Craven's works to organize an exhibition seems simple at first since all works originate from an identical process, are crossed by recurring motifs, and share a style that is immediately recognizable. One considers selecting the works randomly by bringing together subject, motif or format. It then strikes us the exceptional amount of work produced by the artist, and it comes to mind

that the only valid exhibition would be to gather all, to show everything. Again a problem, the warehouse gallery is not large enough ... Once this first hypothesis was dismissed with regret, we chose to highlight several fundamental ideas in Craven's work: time, profusion, system and attachment.

Time

A fundamental aspect of Craven's work lies in its ability to register itself within time. Behind each canvas, we irreparably find the same information: year, month, day, and even the hour of completion of the works. A futile attempt to secure the passing of time, to retain the evanescent memories, to feel once again the emotions that had accompanied the brush. The exhibition brings together the whole collection of works painted in 2013, hung in the order of their production. This objective chronology partially structures the exhibition.

Profusion

The exhibition features over 200 works by the artist; it is her most substantial exhibition. This quantitative element cannot stand as a critical argument, although it helps to understand the intensity of the work, both the abnegation and voracity of the artist, and gives a new dimension to the idea of series, paramount in her work.

A Seamless System

Painting is often a history of systems and the one set up by the artist is impressive. Ann paints in series, motifs found on the spot at first, as the moons painted outdoors in her native Maine. These primal works are what she calls her laboratory, a collection of paintings that serve as her reservoir. These paintings are reinterpreted, reframed, resized in the studio to make new works emerge. The paint used is recycled into diagonal stripes on other canvases and the palettes also become paintings. Everything is recycled and a distance to the original subject is created, while keeping its memory. An attempt to empty the subject from its meaning, from its original story, to reduce it to the state of

motif.

A Sustained Sympathy

Despite the systematic activity and infinite reproduction of subjects without an a priori quality, a sustained sympathy establishes itself amidst Craven's works. A persistent affection operates in front of each canvas, as if each one of its flowers, its moons, its birds and its trees referred us to a love gone, a friendship lost or a loved one that we remember with nostalgia and goodwill.

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