
Marie Hugo

Promenons-nous

Canvas and Totems



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Exhibition

from Thursday 22 September to Saturday 22 October 2022
from 10:30 am to 6:30 pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

Galerie du Passage - Pierre Passebon

20/26 Galerie Véro-Dodat, 75001 Paris.

La Galerie du Passage - Pierre Passebon

From 22 September to 22 October 2022, the Galerie du Passage will host the exhibition Promenons nous by Marie Hugo.

In the Galerie du Passage, the artist proposes, through thirty or so paintings and ten or so large totems, a stroll through nature over the seasons. With her works created especially for this exhibition, Marie Hugo delivers her personal vision of the forest and its undergrowth. Through her work, she wants to make people aware of the essential role of trees, symbols of life, which are under threat today.



The Tree

"Born at the foot of the great trees; childhood lasts as long as it takes to cross the avenue of cedars. Against the swaying of their branches and under their dark caps, the light of the hard skies of the Midi softens, breaks and flows in pools to the ground. There are the games, the laughter and the silences of human life. There have appeared the visitors sitting at the table under the cool arches of the old house, those whose words have mingled with the dry grass and now inhabit the familiar landscape. There the beloved dead have gone into the shadows.

(...)

In autumn, everything that bears foliage gives up the splendour of its greenery. The great nakedness of winter is announced in the burning of the yellows or the burning of the reds. In the light of the cold mornings the old mulberry tree still seems to have abandoned itself to die. Its naked branches are black roots in the sharp light of the sky.

(...)

It is one of those mornings when the branches, still black from winter, are covered with the songs of wildly cheerful birds. The air dances then, it looks like a river and foam.

The tree does not call, it watches, a slow fountain: through it the deep waters of the earth rise, through it the sky is sown with clouds, the very clouds that come down in rain, fertilise the earth and awaken the seed from its dormancy. He tempers the humours of the earth. He breathes. And he drinks in his breath to other living beings, animals and men, those strange animals who do not recognise themselves. He was there and he remains, witness to the life of which he is a source, beyond time. In it the opposites are mixed: it shelters and attracts, and protects, and in its perfect impassivity it is not saddened, deaf with all the thickness of its bark. It is the perfect friend, it fulfils its task of fidelity to heaven and earth; it is the clock of the world which it gives birth to with its breath. Many more living beings are yet to come. In the presence of the tree, all that is not extinguished by the bitter darkness of the wills to coerce, all that can still open to reverence, to veneration, all rises up, waiting for the tongue of heaven. And then it begins to grow, this inner tree, this brother tree.



To paint a portrait of a tree is to confront the height, to set out towards the invisible, to call beyond one's strength, to try to celebrate the liturgy of day and night, of winter and summer, to stand on the edge of the mystery. "Do not pass under the tree: it cries for a sweetness too heavy to bear! And with a single stroke - with a single leaf that has fallen to the ground - to speak the silence of beauty."

Henri de Pazzis, 2020



Marie Hugo

Marie Hugo is an Anglo-French artist who lives between London, Paris and the Midi. Born into an illustrious family, she grew up surrounded by artists. She expresses herself through a variety of techniques with, however, a predilection for Indian ink on canvas or paper.

After completing her training in France, she lived in Asia for a long time, fascinated by its landscapes. Her style and inspiration are reminiscent of traditional Chinese art and her work can be described as a marriage between East and West.

Marie Hugo was born in the Petite Camargue, on the edge of a nature reserve and on a wild land where her family has lived for generations and where she still likes to go. She studied lithography and engraving at the École des Beaux-Arts in Montpellier, and also learned a lot from her father, the painter Jean Hugo. If her black and white ink work reveals her training as an engraver, she has illustrated the Fables of La Fontaine for the Imprimerie Nationale thanks to her great mastery of colour.



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In the 1980s she painted what she calls "interior landscapes" in tempera, as well as large murals for public places and hotels in the Far East.

In the late 1990s, she returned to work in her father's studio, painting with ink, water and pigments. This experimental way of expressing herself proved to be a new beginning for her. Leaves, bamboo, insects, lotus, stones, water and twigs became the central motifs of her art.



Playing with the fusion and incompatibility of ink and water, her research targets the balance between full and empty. Her artistic expression oscillates between figuration and abstraction. Her work has also taken a sculptural form, in three dimensions. She creates installations, which she calls "forests of light", composed of her large canvases mounted in square columns, while a metal mesh sculpture "Medusa" seems to play with air and light.

In 2014, she was invited to participate in the contemporary art festival Art in the Park, in the Botanical Gardens of Kuala Lumpur, creating a bamboo structure housing her installation "Pantun Forest".

In 2015, she created a monumental work on the sand of the Roman Arena in Arles for the Corrida Goyesque. Marie Hugo's work drawn on the sand was completely erased by the hooves of the bulls and horses, symbolising, like a mandala, the ephemerality or impermanence of life.

In 2016, Marie Hugo spent much of her time in the house of her famous ancestor, Victor Hugo, on the island of Guernsey, researching its decoration. Her discoveries led to the publication of a book "Hauteville House, Victor Hugo decorator" published by Paris / Museum.

More recently, Marie Hugo has been examining the pond in her childhood garden and has created a new series of photographs, The Three Hundred Days of the Lotus. This series is a logical progression in her artistic career as it brings together water, the natural world and her childhood, recurring themes in her work since the beginning.

Today, she continues to be inspired by nature and is developing a new series of large paintings on canvas forming a forest of trees with Indian ink, walnut stain and colour pigments.

Pierre Passebon

As a collector, he opened the Galerie du Passage in 1991 in one of the most beautiful covered passages in Paris: the Véro-Dodat gallery with its neo-classical decor dating from 1826. This art gallery offers furniture and objects from the 20th century to the present day. Pierre Passebon also regularly presents temporary exhibitions dedicated to 20th century and contemporary artists.



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He is also director of the Obsession collection at Flammarion. His latest publication: [Obsession Masculin](#)

"This is Pierre Passebon: witty, erudite and blessed with two of the most demanding and daring looks in design. Pierre Passebon grew up on a 15th century farm in Touraine and attended the Jesuit College in Poitiers. "From the age of fourteen, I fell in love with art antiques," says the dealer.

Although he first started out editing books by Chester Himes and Pascal Bruckner at Editions des Autres in Paris, Passebon quickly turned to antiques. At the age of 25, he had a stall at the Clignancourt flea market.

In 1991, Pierre Passebon opened the Galerie du Passage in the Véro-Dodat gallery.

(...) He is at the origin of the rediscovery on the market of Jouve's ceramics, Royere's furniture and Noll's sculptures, which were languishing in the shadows 15 years ago.

He has also been collecting valuable 20th century design works for many years at the prestigious "Biennale des Antiquaires" and "Design Art London" fairs. "What I like about Pierre is the lightness and freshness of his taste and his choices" said Karl Lagerfeld. "He knows how to create the atmosphere of an elegant bohemian past, the way he mixes things is never retro. It's always done in the spirit of the present.

Excerpts from "French Connection" by Brook S. Mason, Departure. April 2008

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