



ART & DESIGN ♦ INNERVIEWS

Laure Mary's 'Spleen' is a Poetic Take on Overcoming Challenging Times

by Lisa Boudet | February 2, 2024

Delve into French artist Laure Mary's universe as she unveils the inspiration behind her enigmatic paintings and discusses the poetic essence of her latest exhibition, "Spleen." Offering a glimpse into an immersive creative process, she shares cherished memories that have shaped both her artistic expression and approaching life.

Hi Laure, it's so great to sit down with you and get to know you better. I noticed lots of landscapes in your paintings, are these inspired from your childhood and where you grew up?

Laure: Good catch! I was born and raised between Geneva and Chamonix. I remember as a child, I loved looking out of my bedroom window. The mountains outside let my imagination run wild.

The view must have been stunning over there...

Laure: Yes, the colors of the sky changed constantly, almost like the mountains were expressing their feelings. It's sort of funny because these mountains stay so still, yet every moment with them is fresh and

exhilarating. They are huge, yet delicate and fragile and they hold so much mystery which fascinates me till this day.



Were you daydreaming a lot as a kid?

Laure: I was definitely escaping time, growing up in this setting made me understand the meaning of the word “freedom”, that all roads lead to wonder and made me reflect on the ambiguous meaning of absence.

In most of your pieces humans are absent until more recently, why is that?

Laure: That’s true, the human figure has indeed made an appearance, but still remains absent in a way because it appears faceless, without a past or a future, its history still waiting to be written.

You are leaving it to the viewers to imagine these human's stories...

Laure: Exactly, they are here to appeal to our imagination. These figures are just floating in time without certainty, completely free, in a space where anguish disappears and leaves instead to their authentic self.

Talking about floating in time, if you could time-travel to any point in history, which one would it be?

Laure: I'd want to visit every single era!
[Laughs]

I actually fear disrupting the delicate balance between imagination and reality by exploring unfamiliar memories. Instead, I'd choose to revisit a personal recollection—a summer from my student days a few years ago. My

friend Marion and I, carefree, enjoyed mornings on the sandy beaches of the French Basque country. No set schedules, just the joy of simple moments where the boredom of the ordinary creates the intense sharing of an extraordinary joy.

Evenings in Biarritz were a ritual—casual strolls through vibrant streets, ending on the Casino beach, where people of all ages mingled. With the sound of a shared guitar and the sun setting, we kissed the waves. Those moments felt perfect. I wish they could last forever.



I thought you were going to say the 19th century as your new Solo Exhibition is titled “Spleen” just like Baudelaire’s *The Flowers of Evil* poeme.

Laure: [Laughs] I told you I’d want to travel back to every time in history if I could.

What made you decide to choose this title?

Laure: In this exhibition, “Spleen” evokes the rage for life and the thirst for beauty and dreams.

It celebrates venturing madly into struggles instead of choosing what is more convenient in order to enrich and enhance our potential. I wanted this exhibition to echo current events, despites these being rather dark, I try to

offer a poetic take on it by reconnecting with cherished life memories and to keep hope alive in the face of the world's challenges.

How will this translate in this exhibition for those who won't be able to attend?

Laure: You'll experience a stroll through paintings with surrealist representations and floral murals. The paintings feature elements already familiar from my work: mountain landscapes, chairs, foliage, telephone, cup... But also new elements: dandelions floating in the air, women figure and origami.



Can you tell us more about one familiar object of yours and a new one that we will discover in this exhibition?

Laure: So, the chair comes in many different ways in my work. It relates to the notion of time and its stillness as it's not subject to the ordeal of waiting. Beyond solitude, rest or hope, it is above all a fascinating object, representing the mirror of our lives, some sort of self-portrait; coveted when unoccupied, absent when in use. For the new object, the origami is first and foremost a magnificent, ancestral art. For me, it's a practice that appeals to childhood, to fun. The results are fragile, technical and simple in the noblest sense of the word.



Photo credit: Thanassis Gatos

You mentioned earlier that this exhibition talks about not choosing the easy way out, is that why you decided to give yourself more work by painting the walls?

Laure: [Laughs] It's been a few years since I last did a mural and it's indeed a challenge which I was looking forward to. I find the immersion experience and the ephemeral dimension of painted walls very interesting. This will be the very first time I've done it with gray/black colors.

Do you have any other exciting future projects you can share with us?

Laure: As soon as I get back from Greece, I'm going to start painting again for some group shows and for a solo show with Richard Heller Gallery in Los Angeles in 2025.

*Laure Mary's Solo Exhibition is currently on view at the **DIO HORIA Gallery**, in Athens, Greece, until **February 24th 2024**.*

Profile picture by: Thanassis Gatos