

A MEETING WITH...

...**Tristan Rain** (born in 1972) who has been living and working in Paris since 1995. This is the coherent path of a painter, situated between music and architecture, that offers a virtual meeting with the artist.

Impressions. In each of Tristan Rain's series flat surfaces of concrete give rhythm to a space that is closed onto itself, tightening around the figure—solitary here, double, even doubling elsewhere—of a body. There is a first impression of balance in a cold immobilized world, before letting oneself be drawn into the painting, because the architect's touch leads us into a world of material and musical vibrations, fragile and tenuous—multiple...

Impression of balance: Firstly, one is struck by the extreme precision of construction which emanates from the work—sign of a stifling rationality, of a kind of hyper-structured modernity which is seemingly invincible. And yet Tristan Rain gives it life. It is not merely that he draws concrete in a way that is very fragile, as thin as a piece of paper, because the perspective is also a complex game of paradoxical juxtapositions of scale. A paradox that continues even in the movement of lines—vertical and horizontal—which invites the eye to set its own tempo. A music of lines, of urges...

What Tristan Rain shows in his work are expressions of silence, of paralyzing emotions, and yet it explodes with presence : the presence of solitude. A solitude which the body cannot escape and which seems to be imprinted on it by the places themselves. This is reflected in the series "Human Relations," in which the body becomes covered in places by geometrical divisions. Yet, in this, there is also an expression of desire, a kind of energy (even as characteristic of illness?): answering this body, coming up out of the background, is a strange silhouette, green and veined in red. The lines of the veins improvised as if to better indicate a possible regeneration...

Style. A form of expressionism? Outside of the possible simplistic aspects of this classification, there is the question of language. If, for Tristan Rain pictorial work is always operating around "the same thing", the choice of language corresponds directly to the way in which the artist positions himself in relation to the object. This idea concretely expresses the notion that language does not exhaust the possibilities of the object, but that the object can exhaust the possibilities of a language. This is the whole of the difficulty in expressing, saying, communicating, conveying. PICK ONE!

Inspiration. "Everything!" ...but with nuances. Firstly musical influences, for the most part classical and jazz (from Ligeti and Bach to Coltrane), and then archeology, architecture (in particular the Japanese architect Tadao Ando, himself a great admirer of Le Corbusier), experimental cinema, paintings of the Middle Ages... And then there are also the painters Arnold Böcklin, Degas, Schiele, Ernst, Beckmann, Rainer, Still, Rothko, Reinhard... Neither can we forget what touches us in life, "everything that happens around us" ...But as a Vian song might have concluded "this kind of list doesn't lead anywhere and seems to me devoid of interest."

Materials. Oil on canvas for the most part. Sometimes working with wood, cotton, even glass-fiber fabric.

Colors. If over time the range of colors has been refined—variations of blue, black, white, gray and green—red is becoming more and more present. This red is found in particular in the series, “Ritual,” as if to better affirm the presence of a new world?—an archaic one?—in a simplified environment. And one might wonder if it is not this kind of environment that is auspicious to conjuring up the awakening of this world...

Research. The relationship between space and matter guides a large part of the work of Tristan Rain. The choice of structure, from a single painting to splitting up into polyptychs, as well as an analysis of the theme treated in series, permits him to intensify this exploration. The viewer of such a work finds himself implicated in the position taken by the artist, which reflects, like a mirror, the physical relationship represented.

(Pascale Dechamps, journalist, December 2000, published on the Internet in an article by the French government about contemporary art)