

VALLOIS

GALERIE
Georges-Philippe
& Nathalie
Vallois

JACQUES VILLEGLÉ

Graffiti Politiques (1962-1991)

BRASSAÏ

Graffiti

OPENING

Thursday 5 June 2014
from 6:00 pm

EXHIBITION

06/06 - 19/07
2014



« In appropriating bits and pieces of torn urban posters, Jacques Villeglé fulfilled a graphic and political (hi)story of the street. This seemingly simple approach, or one which at the very least can be summed up in an exclusive gesture, makes it possible to ask all sorts of questions about the status of the painting-as-object(...). Given the medium the approach makes use of, it obviously has a socio-political significance, starting with the act of tearing itself, which involves defying a ban. On the artistic level, it reflects the graphic systems and colour charts of propaganda and advertising posters in the successive periods of these lacerations. It also gives its initiator total freedom, without confining him within a unique manner which he would dare stray from at the risk of no longer being identified(...). The *Graffiti* section and its complement with the *Drippings* have a distinctive feature which sets them apart from all the other families identified by Villeglé to describe his method. This is that, in fact, another person intervenes after the «Anonymous Tear» to make what will become a work signed Villeglé. This latter reframes a section of bill-posting made up of layers of overlaid paper, which are then kneaded by anonymous hands come to tear fragments of some, lacerate others, etc. But an additional action is introduced, a third hand in a way: it consists in blue-pencilling the surface, or writing slogans, insults and political acronyms on it. »*

For the seventh solo show of the artist at the gallery, we will explore the theme of the *Political Graffiti*, one of the most pictorial series of the artist - sometimes even abstract -, and also paradoxically one of the most representative of our society's history, the posters acting as historical witnesses.

In the 1930s, Brassaï, not yet a photographer, but already a compulsive « stroller », observes and takes notes on the traces of a society in complete mutation, the dark corners of which he loves to explore. « He tracked down plots of wasteland, favourite places for lovers and children, leaving the signs of their love and their games on the walls; he observed buildings being demolished, in search of the limbo of lives abandoned by their former occupants, following with curiosity the blackened flues of chimneys, but above all, like a butterfly catcher for whom the quest for a fragile and fleeting life remains just as much a scientific principle as a philosophical one, he would flush out Parisian graffiti for almost 40 years. » Very soon, Brassaï realizes that his notes and drawings would not suffice to convey the ephemeral character of graffiti, and he decides to freeze their image through photography.

For more than 20 years, he collects dozens of images for which he quickly designs a very precise classification system with a determined order and denomination: *propositions from the wall, the wall's language, the birth of man, masks and faces, animals, love, death, magic, primitive images*. This true *catalogue raisonné* of a parietal art emerging from the dark intimacy of the polis constitutes one of the most important chapters of Brassaï's oeuvre.

The similarities in the framing, in the classification and recording system, of the strolling as a method, between Villeglé, the Anonymous Tear, and Brassaï, are so evident that it only comforted us in our desire to confront the black and white photographs of Brassaï and the colourful ripped posters of Villeglé, beyond the common theme of the graffiti.

À VENIR / FORTHCOMING

ALAIN BUBLEX

Project Room
JEAN-YVES JOUANNAIS

02/10 - 08/11
2014

RICHARD JACKSON

14/11 - 20/12
2014

On the occasion of this exhibition, the gallery is publishing a catalogue, prefaced by Alfred Pacquement* and Agnès de Gouvion Saint-Cyr**.

