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26
April
—
27
May
2018

**CLOSING &
BOGATO ATELIER**

Sunday 27 May
3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Creative workshop and decoration of
pastries on Mother's Day as part of
Paris Gallery Weekend



THE MOTHER AND THE WHORE

PILAR ALBARRACÍN **ES**
PAT ANDREA **PB**
HANS BELLMER **PO**
VALIE EXPORT **AU**
CLAUDE GILLI **FR**

MICHEL JOURNIAC **FR**
ANNETTE MESSAGER **FR**
JEFF MILLS **US**
JULES PASCIN **BU**
FRANÇOISE PÉTROVICH **FR**

FRANCIS PICABIA **FR**
MARIA ISABEL RUEDA **COL**
NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE **FR**
CINDY SHERMAN **US**
JACQUES VILLEGLE **FR**
JULIA WACHTEL **FR**

Pilar Albarracín, *Saignante*, 2018



The title « The Mother and the Whore », is taken from Jean Eustache's film, a huge scandal when it came out in Cannes in 1973. The exhibition brings together the work of sixteen artists, from 1910 to the present day, both women artists and men artists, a variety of techniques and stereotypes of « feminine » images, the better to play, cross and go beyond « close-mindedness » and simplistic clichés.

We begin by going back in time to 1910, with a drawing of naked, sensuous women that Jules Pascin was so fond of, but also – and this is a lesser known side of the artist – three other watercolours of « almost » ordinary scenes of family life, parents and children united in boredom.

Francis Picabia's 1949 drawing, « La Joie de vivre », of a man's erection before a woman carrying her child, is emblematic in itself of the second principal subject of the exhibition: desire, also sketched with open legs by Hans Bellmer in the early 60s.

Around the same time, Niki de Saint Phalle confiscated her children's toys and covered them in plaster, to sculpt Doctor Frankenstein's « loaded » heart. A few years later, the lace in the garter belt of

« Lady Sings the Blues », an imposing black woman over two metres tall, does little to soften the brutality of Billy Holiday's life, to whom she pays homage here. At the opposite end of the scale is its contemporary, Claude Gilli's « La Nonne Joyeuse » (1965); a smooth, colourful image of pop icons.

It is the woman the day after May '68 that Michel Journiac portrays in his series « 24H de la vie d'une femme ordinaire » from 1974. Dressed up in drag, striking a pose, we are no less distracted from the persistent clichés of the fairer sex of that time.

VALIE EXPORT's black and white photographs look lifted from a Nouvelle Vague film, whose heroine – the artist herself – questions herself, hides, tells a story of « forms » far removed from any fantasy.

Modern pornographic sites might well have their origins in the French precursor to the internet, the pink telephone-operated Minitel of the 80s. Jacques Villeglé took posters of the women « plying » the walls of the city, coupled with their emblematic 3615. It was not a prostitution of the body, however, but of the images that would continue to unfurl in the following decades. Sexy images of pop singer star Cher might come in multiples in Julia Wachtel's large painting « You Disappear Me », but she gives way to a

Niki de Saint Phalle, *Lady sings the blues*, 1965



Maria Isabel Rueda, *La mano en el fuego*, animation video detail, 2008

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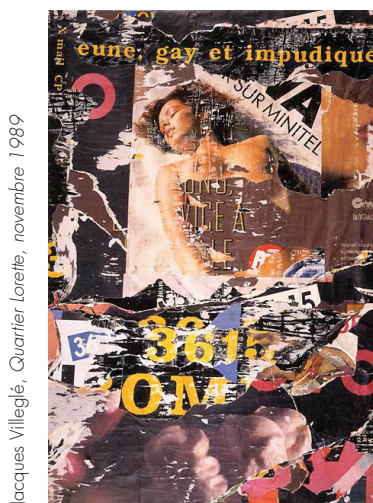
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THE MOTHER AND THE WHORE



Jacques Villeglé, Quartier Loreite, novembre 1989

ragged hastily-drawn pirate, straight out of an ordinary American postcard.

Cindy Sherman alone might embody all the images, questions and evolutions of the subject of our preoccupations, and the photograph « Mère Noël » from 1990 is a discrete but humorous marker of her presence.

We might have begun with one of the most liberated and activist women of this exhibition: Josephine Baker, who, as early as the start of the 20th century did a frenzied enactment of her « enslavement » for the racists crowds of her era.

In « The Dancer », **Jeff Mills** captured all of the energy and contemporaneity of the icon on this film. And on that subject; married a dozen times, Josephine Baker was never a biological mother, but she adopted many children of different origins, not only to satisfy her maternal desires, but also as a mark of her struggle against racism.

The exotic references in « Jane », one of the last sculptures of **Françoise Pérovitch**, appears to offer a static counterpoint to the film of Josephine Baker. Made of an unexpected mixture of bronze, cement and plants, this feminine subject recalls a classical sculpture, not without contrast with its primitive features.

The Colombian artist **Maria Isabel Rueda** carries us along with the poetic, fantastical ramblings of her cartoon, inspired by the atmosphere of certain horror films blended with a tropical environment where the

platitudes of the savage and the « civilised » rub shoulders.

Annette Messenger sets up the unlikely meeting of a heeled shoe with a snail, the two « fetishes » melt and mate in a dark material to give the sculpture a highly « appealing » appearance.

The Dutch artist **Pat Andrea** has used a similarly dreamlike repertoire since the 60s, building his work around the dismembered images of women, a « (de)construction » that he has pursued obsessively in his paintings and drawings, the heroines in constant action in their phantasmagorical universe for mysterious reasons.

Through his videos (« Tortilla a la Española » and « Furor Latino ») and his photographs, **Pilar Albaracín** finally brings together many of the key words of this exhibition:

Beauty, Cliché, Desire, Fantasy, Femininity, Humor, Maternity, Pornography, Sensuality, Stereotype, Violence...

At a time when the status of women remains the subject of violent but necessary debate, the « Mother » and the « Whore » exhibition is an opportunity to remove the constraints of these words and associate them with the strength of the works and images offered here.



Michel Journiac, L'arrivée du mari 1974, Preparatory print
Courtesy Galerie Christophe Gaillard

«The Mother and the Whore», in 2018, one must dare! Dare to say that fantasies resist regardless the evolutions of society. Dare to say that the film of Jean Eustache, *The mother and the whore* (1973) is not unsurpassable. Dare to say that artists make fun of social compartments and would have probably never thought of being associated with each other, besides under this title. Dare to say that each artist taken individually does not illustrate neither the mother nor the whore, but the whole that creates this exhibition makes us think only about this: fantasy is everywhere, the desire reigns: sassy, funny, tragic, subversive, surprising, settled as well. For men as for women -in parity here as it should be noted -, woman never stops being an object of desire constantly renewed.

Caroline Eliacheff