

VALLOIS

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EMANUEL PROWELLER

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

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Warsaw to Paris. It would be a one-way ticket for Emanuel Proweller, my father, to Gare de l'Est, where he arrived, stateless, with no belongings, with his wife and child. The war deprived him of his youth, stole his identity and reduced his world and family to ashes. [...] Having overcome innumerable obstacles, he explained that "vitality is made in such a way that you immediately embrace the colours of your new soil."

[...] When Proweller painted, he invited all his senses along to sing "The colour of the seasons". He never ceased to express his gratitude to life. There was no art without spirituality. He painted like others pray. Each brushstroke celebrated his unwavering belief in humanity. Whether it was abstract or figurative, any object, however modest, was worthy of being looked at and magnified, given symbolic status. Whether it was a bottle, a coffee grinder or a candlestick, they were all part of his personal "mythologie quotidienne", before its time. Colour was his credo, whereas his contemporaries were sounding the death knell for painting and creating installations.

[...] After the hell that was the Holocaust, Proweller regained his place as the subject and was no longer the object of persecution. However, it was through painting that he acquired in his own eyes his legitimacy as a survivor, with this "I" that acts as the subject of the verb to paint. "Me, Proweller, painter". He was the main subject.

06.09

09.10

2021

OPENING NIGHT

Saturday
September 4th
from 6 to 9 p.m.



Le rosier et le lézard, 1966



Champ de l'alouette, 1979

He also claimed the right to the pictorial subject. In 1948, a newly arrived refugee from Poland, he painted the "Bâton de Moïse". Renamed "La Canne" at his first exhibition for Colette Allendy, this walking stick guided him, as did his humanist faith, through arid journeys across the desert, leading him to his Promised Land, a new form of figuration.

[...] Proweller came through the black and white. For him, the "black spot" at the end of the line was the beginning of the route towards figuration and colour beyond geometric abstraction. In this way he managed to rehumanise the world.

[...] As a dead painter, he has the benefit of another life and continues to live on in his works. While they were painted in the last century, they still speak, and more and more so, to men and women today. At each retrospective or exhibition, his work surprises with its vitality, freshness and relevance. And this miracle will happily occur once again within the walls of the Galerie Vallois.

When [Emanuel Proweller] was finishing a painting, stood in front of his easel, it was only finished when he finally murmured: "It is breathing."

Elisabeth Brami-Proweller,
excerpts from the exhibition catalogue
published at Éditions Courtes et Longues