

## Critique de Clémentine TEDMAN en anglais

Jean-Marc Pouletaut is a French artist inspired by the Supports/Surfaces movement. His artistic career has principally been in France. One of his exhibitions happened in 1988 at the Villa Arson in Nice and another in 2001 in Cagnes sur Mer at the *Maison des artistes*, with Michel Gaudet, member of the international art critics association. There is a strong link between his interest for the Supports/Surfaces movement, which is comprised essentially of French artists like Louis Cane and Claude Viallat, and his career in France.

Pouletaut was born in 1958 in Paris. He studied in the Ecole Pilote Internationale d'Art et de Recherche, which is a part of the (Villa Arson, Nice), from 1986 to 1989. During this period Louis Cane mounted his exhibition "Pictura Loquens, 25 Years of Art in France" at the Villa Arson, which also holds a Museum of Contemporary Art. Also during this time, Claude Viallat created a series of illustrated posters in Nîmes, not far from Nice, where the Villa Arson is situated. Therefore during this time these artists, after 20 years, had been able to become important pillars of contemporary art. And so, the influence of these artists on Pouletaut comes as no surprise. In the same year, as I mentioned before, Pouletaut exhibited in Cagnes sur Mer.

Supports/Surfaces is defined by pushing the limits of art materials as art materials and not as tools to create a figurative or symbolic image. The movement's first exhibition was called "Peinture en question", meaning "Questioning Painting". In 2001, the Pompidou Centre dedicated a part of the museum to works of this movement.

Having taken knowledge of this, someone could criticize and think Pouletaut is just under the influence of the Supports/Surfaces artists, and that he is in their shadow. Nevertheless, Pouletaut proposes a possibility to go further in their way of thinking. He names his paintings with simple titles, in French, naming them after the colors that we see, for example, "Blanc, noir, rouge, vert" or "Rouge, vert, bleu, orange".

Before painting the subject, often artists would first of all paint a base from specific medium. For example, El Greco mixed a very dark red-brown ground, made from oils, gesso and glue size. This primer prepares the canvas for the pigments that will be then painted. This layer has also an effect on the paint and the colors that are painting onto it. For example, in Turner's work, his ground made his painting luminescent, thanks to the oils and waxes he

used. Contrary to this, throughout Pouletaut's work, there isn't any ground. The colors are painted directly on to the raw canvas, mosquitoes net. This canvas, even if it is raw, is different from others that we find in art or textile shops. It is delicate, but at the same time, it has a loose threading. There are types of canvas that are loose threaded, but they are often not very delicate. Although in Pouletaut's work we can see this, thanks to the artist's conscious choice and the industrial manufacturing the net has been through.

For his painting entitled "Hypertrophic canvas" the inseparable relationship between the manners of which Pouletaut paints on the canvas and the canvas itself is evident. As spectators we can feel Pouletaut's rapid, stable and casual way of painting using his foam paint roller. The traces of light blue paint on the side of painting, touching wooden frame are also remarkable. A repetition forms across the surface of the canvas, as though the manner of which Pouletaut paints was absorbed by the canvas in the exact same fashion each time his roller touched it. Little holes, cells, forms appear thanks to excess of the paint and the way of paint was used. A repetitive pattern forms. This is in part due to the eye of the spectator. The eye has a natural and unconscious way of searching order and form, even if the image is completely abstract. Therefore, in conclusion, Pouletaut's work relates two important elements together: the material of a work of art with the matter, the material substance, of a work of art. His work is research into this material substance, this matter, created from a mix of canvas and paint, and how it can have an effect on the eye. Meaning, how a painting can communicate to sensitivity of the human eye, as well as the brain's rational sense, but also how we can understand and analyze these two aspects of the human being through artistic material and matter.