

Matthieu Ronsse

Memorabilia

Jun 9 — Jul 30, 2016 | Brussels

In his new exhibition at Almine Rech Gallery, Matthieu Ronsse presents an ensemble of new works which he produced simultaneously, and which were also installed for a short time in Male Castle (near Bruges). In his work, everything is mixed together: new wave music, paintings by old masters, snapshots, fashion photographs, his studio, earlier work... Together they form a fertile paint crust in which, time and again, the layerings of imagery and matter create surprising possibilities and new potentialities. While one work may blend in with its surroundings, another may very well cause a dissonant shock. The exhibition context itself can generate an extra layer of meaning to the work as well. The castle where the works briefly resided for example, was in the Middle Ages the scene of many noble intrigues, but also still bears traces of the woman's abbey which was housed within its walls in the twentieth century. A building, like a painting, carries with it its laden past, even if this only becomes visible through the imagination. Courtliness and intrigue, memory and amnesia, the eternal and the ephemeral, they are all themes around which the work of Matthieu Ronsse unfolds.

The paintings and installations of Matthieu Ronsse are fragments of a painterly discourse where experiment and the joy of creating are central. As long as the artwork is in Ronsse's hands, it remains subject to an ongoing creative process and is thus never perceived as 'finished'. Even during his exhibitions, transformations are continuously possible. For Ronsse, it is not the final image that is the focal point, but rather the essence of his work lies in the creative process along the way. The painting is simultaneously his palette: it self-reflexively contains the traces of its own production while showing the chance occurrences Ronsse encourages to evince a vigorous energy with his creative process. Fragments of work by old masters, depictions of the private sphere of the artist, and architecture and photography books are recurring subjects. Together they form the fundamental ideas of his painterly imagination in which an accumulation of images and materials create these surprising possibilities and new avenues of exploration. Experiencing Ronsse's work is beyond looking at an image: it is about the complete immersion in the creative process of the artist.

- Tanguy Eeckhout