

ARMAND JALUT



Michel Rein Paris is proud to present Armand Jalut's 7th exhibition at the gallery, following Palagonia POV (2016) ; Just say hello and leave it behind (Brussels, 2015) ; A piece of lace (2014) ; Armand Jalut (2011) ; Doigts, cannelés, chaton (2008) and Armand Jalut (2006).

« Shop the Most Beautiful Things on Earth » reads the homepage of the website that artist Armand Jalut has been browsing, gathering ideas and motifs for his newest series of artworks by zooming and cropping images, studying their descriptions, taking note of their characteristics and their defects: small rub mark, hidden side zip up the side, button closure at waistband, pencil silhouette, incredible dramatic pleated curved...As he navigates his way through the website, the algorithms build an underlying thread, which will haunt all future connections with images of skirts and boots. Popping up on both sides of the screen as spectres of past searches, their slightly disturbing chromatic quality creates vivid visual melodies, which find their way into the work of Armand Jalut.

The artist's new painterly subjects echo some of his previous work, and most notably his series of paintings of sewing machines, celebrating the pop-erotism and the mythology of the prêt-à-porter made in Los Angeles. With *Browsing History* the artist tackles a new type of merchandising item – boots and vintage skirts – in order to call into question their appearance and their visual branding. Drawing on sociological studies, among which *The Economic Life of Things* by Luc Boltanski and Arnaud Esquerre, Armand Jalut explores the marketing strategies implemented by e-commerce platforms in order to promote these items, from storytelling techniques upholding the myths of rarity and authenticity, to elaborate presentations. As a response to the slightly unsettling experience offered by algorithms in anticipating our desires, the artist creates artworks that function as distorting mirrors, denouncing the process of sexual and economic fetishization that these items, very much like works of art, are subjected to. The serial representation of leather articles serves as a pretext for an experimentation with dimension, materiality, colours and light. Influenced by the experimental cinema of Kenneth Anger (*Puce Moment*, 1949) John Waters (*Polyester*, 1981) or Mario Bava, the artist elaborates a visual vocabulary playing on the ambiguous nature of luxury objects, between seduction and vanity.

The repetition of motifs, presenting only slight variations in disposition, contributes to creating an effect of redundancy and symmetry, giving the compositions their peculiar rhythm. The paintings are conceived as shop windows, where items of an exaggerated scale, boldly affirm their presence through their striking textures and their odor. Fragments of previous artworks, that the artist cut up and used for new compositions, (*Work Well With*) serve as a counterpoint for the paintings presented here. These image/objects, re-evaluated through the use of an organic medium and stylized in order to conjure a manufactured form of expressiveness, are randomly juxtaposed, animated by their own, intrinsic ambiguity.

Armand Jalut (b. 1976, lives and works in Paris) has shown at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Palais de Tokyo (Dinasty) (Paris), Centre d'art contemporain La Halle des bouchers (Vienne), Perm Museum of Contemporary Art (Russia), Musée de l'Abbaye de Sainte Croix (Les Sables d'Olonne), Les Abattoirs - Frac Midi-Pyrénées (Toulouse), Le Creux de l'Enfer (Thiers), Galerie Édouard Manet (Gennevilliers), CNEAI (Paris).

His work is held in the collections of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Fondation d'entreprise Colas (Paris), Musée de l'Abbaye de Sainte Croix (Les Sables d'Olonne), Fonds Municipal d'art Contemporain (Paris). Armand Jalut took part in the Paris//Los Angeles F.L.A.R.E. residency program.