

yves bélorgey

La Mémé, La Maladrerie, Bois Le Prêtre, Spinoza, Rue des Pyrénées

Exhibition September 6 – October 4, 2014

Opening starting at 3 pm on September 6th

Since the 1990s, Yves Bélorgey has focused on modernist architectural heritage and mapped urban and suburban landscapes. His paintings and drawings incorporate a rich and polymorphic visual, which surpasses mere objective documentation of modernist residential architecture.

Yves Bélorgey's fourth exhibition at the Xippas Gallery continues in much the same vein as his retrospective exhibition at the Mamco and the ensuing catalog edited by the Geneva museum. Distancing himself from Bernd and Hilla Becher's definition of objectivity, the artist adopts a more subjective point of view by moving ever closer to his subjects. This up-close approach transforms the exterior of the building *La Mémé* (2012) into a geometric grid. In *Tower Bois-le-Prêtre* (2013), he enlarges the field of vision to include trees and other elements surrounding the building. The windows shine with reflected sunlight and shadows drawn around objects privilege a particular temporal dimension. The composition of *La Mémé 2* (2013) centers on a tree, shifting the building itself into the background. The distance in question further diminishes in his depiction of *Marc Pataut's studio at the Maladrerie* (2014), where an open door invites us to peek inside. The painting functions like a fiction. The artist explains that, "through this fiction, I speak to the residents. The residents, spectators, or resident-spectators, and the painting's public, are the natural players."¹

The graphite drawings in the series *Rue des Pyrénées* lead us down a particular path. The artist invites us to rediscover one of the longest streets in Paris by suggesting stops in front of emblematic buildings and in hidden nooks that often escape our notice. By peering into a pharmacy or a post office, Bélorgey remains faithful to his representation of reality all the while introducing poetry into everyday life. All the composition's details are taken directly from real life and are captured by the artist's camera before he draws them on paper. The artist then fuses the black and white vocabulary of the photograph with the language of drawing. Photography is at the core of his work and serves simultaneously as a tool of creation and as a plastic language. Exhaustive photographing is his first step when assembling an artwork. Next, the artist compiles several images from different points of view to create a "photomontage" of his subject. This collage is then set on a sheet of paper (a reduced size of the canvas) and acts as a preparatory sketch. The artist fills in the gap between the "photomontage" and the paper's edge by drawing possible extensions of the photographed images. This back and forth between photography, drawing, and painting, between documentation and interpretation, between the real and imaginary, renders Yves Bélorgey's work both intriguing and powerful.

Yves Bélorgey was born in 1960. He lives and works in Montreuil. It was in 1993, during a residency at studios belonging to the city of Marseille, that he made his first architectural paintings. Today his work is part of numerous institutional collections. In 2012, the Regional Museum of Contemporary Art of Languedoc-Roussillon in Sérignan, France, and the Künstlerhaus Ulm in Germany dedicated solo exhibitions to him. That same year, the Mamco in Geneva organized the first retrospective to his artwork, including nearly a hundred pieces.

¹ Yves Bélorgey, *Intérieurs aux Avanchets*, Summer 2013. Text published for his exhibition at Mamco.