

Orazio Battaglia, Martine Bedin, James Siena

Derrière la mémoire

01.12.22 → 23.12.22

Press release

Xippas Geneva

Rue des Sablons 6
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Tuesday to Friday:
10am to 1pm and 2pm to 6.30pm
Saturday: 12pm to 5pm

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Opening December 1st from 6pm to 8pm

For this group show, Xippas Gallery in Geneva has brought together three artists who, on the face of it, are very different: Martine Bedin, James Siena and Orazio Battaglia. Nothing seems more distant than their practices, their everyday worlds, their biographies, their networks. Yet there is something obvious that this exhibition reveals. Their works touch on what we would like to distinguish behind our memory.

Here, the artists seem to be trying to reconnect with our lost perceptions, as if our dreams were a cracked mirror between us and our memory. In James Siena's drawings, Martine Bedin's objects and Orazio Battaglia's paintings, the strange sensation of *déjà vu* that sometimes arises in our lives is expressed.

James Siena's drawings all seem to be full of a simple but discontinuous structure. A gesture unfolds through repetition in a system that goes beyond their small size. The artist, who claims to be in search of visual algorithms, brings out chance, rhythms and forms from a continuum. His concentration seems to be fixed on a detail, which he follows to transfer to the whole. For James Siena, memory could become a reservoir of possible projections, a logical outgrowth of reality. Pulsations, curves and visions disintegrate in a space that they hollow out by themselves.

Martine Bedin's works seem paradoxically totally familiar and simultaneously remote. The artist places seemingly simple objects on the tenuous border between the already seen and the already dreamed. If the lines are fluid, the materials and techniques play with their reflections on us as close as possible to their structural limits. Martine Bedin knows that our memories are built up over time. She deploys drawings in exile, suspended moments, things outside themselves.

Orazio Battaglia reconstructs by night the city he travels through by day. On small canvases, Rome becomes what it has always been for a part of us, a mirror of our common memory. The walls, the cracks, the perspectives slip behind the colours. Orazio Battaglia mocks the long time that makes us believe in history, to keep only our sensations and the feeling of a continuous incandescent lightness.

This exhibition follows us. It accompanies us in the synapses of our memories. It plays with what we think we know. There is no colour, no tone that is not slightly deceptive, no curve, no line, no texture that does not double up. We are challenged by our nostalgia and melancholy. We have all felt what this exhibition evokes. However, it is not a question here of breaking with our memory, but rather of reminding us that we construct its uses and forms day after day. If sensations are destined to have a lasting effect on us, art surely contributes to their reactivation. The reflections of our desires have the shape of the present. — *Samuel Gross*

Born in 1977 in Modica Sicily (Italy), Orazio Battaglia lives and works in Rome.

He has exhibited in public institutions and private galleries including: “Nomadologie(s) #1. Storie di una galleria in viaggio” at Palazzo Bertalazzone Di San Fermo, Turin (2005); “Indicazione 0/0” Galleria Ugo Ferranti, Rome (2011); “Say yes to it”, Concorso Nazionale Nastro Azzurro, Teatro Parenti, Milan, (2013); Castello di Rivara (TO), Equinizio d'autunno (2013); “Cinque Mostre 2016 - Across the Board: Parts of a Whole, The Picture Club”, American Academy in Rome, Rome (2016).

His solo exhibitions include: ““PPS//Meetings #3” Magick” Orazio Battaglia and Duncan Marquiss curated by Helga Marsala and Emanuela Nobile Mino, RISO Museo d'Arte contemporanea della Sicilia, Palazzo Belmonte, Palermo (2011); “M'N S” curated by Emanuela Nobile Mino, Motesalieri, Rome (2009); “Casamatta”, curated by Marta Casati, Laveronica arte contemporanea, Modica (2007); “Battaglia”, text by Samuel Gross (ProjectRoom), Galleria Alessandra Bonomo, Rome, (2022).



Orazio Battaglia, *Roma, Santa Maria degli Angeli e Dei Martiri* (detail), 2022

Born in 1957 in Bordeaux, Martine Bedin lives and works in France.

In 1977, she studied architecture in Italy at the Facoltà d'Architettura in Florence and became an architect in Paris at the UP 6 in 1983. In 1978, she collaborated with Adolfo Natalini of Superstudio, a leader in radical design. In 1979, invited to the Milan Triennale, she built La Casa Decorata and created a chair which is now in the collections of the Centre Pompidou. There she met Ettore Sottsass and in 1981 became a member of the founding avant-garde group, MEMPHIS. In 1982, Martine Bedin opened a design, architecture and art consultancy agency in Milan. She teaches and lectures in many countries.

Her work as a designer has been rewarded with several prizes and she was named Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by Jack Lang in 1985. The summer of 1991 marked her return to France, to Bordeaux, but also her withdrawal from the industry. From then on, her creations would be unique pieces. In 1994, she built a "Maison Rouge" in Bordeaux. In October 1995, she exhibited a monumental work in the great nave of the Centre d'arts plastiques contemporains de Bordeaux (CAPC): Les Quatre Maisons. In 2002, Martine Bedin returned to live and work in Italy, in Rome, where she created unique marble and ceramic vases which were exhibited in 2007 at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

In 2013, she set up her studio in Paris for the first time, and since then has produced and exhibited her creations and drawings in numerous galleries, museums and foundations, such as the Speerstra Foundation in Switzerland. She now teaches drawing at the Camondo School. Since 2022, Martine Bedin has also directed the design office of the architect Jean Nouvel.



Martine Bedin, *Construction I* (detail), 2008

Born in 1957 in Oceanside (California, US), James Siena lives and works in New York.

James Siena is a seminal artist on the New York art scene. His work, by turns lithographs, engravings, drawings and paintings, involves complex geometrical abstractions established on the basis of a set of rules or “visual algorithms”. The mathematical rigour of the process does not, however, exclude the presence of the artist’s hand and the fragility of a gesture which is constantly repeated.

Siena’s work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Miles McEnnery Gallery, New York (2022); Baronian Xippas Brussels, Belgium (2021); Dieu Donné, New York, USA (2014); Galerie Xippas, Paris, France (2019, 2014); Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, USA (2015); Pace Gallery, New York, USA (2019, 2017, 2015, etc); Pierogi, Brooklyn, USA (2014); The Print Center, Philadelphia, USA; and the University Art Museum, University of Albany, New York, USA (2007); among others.

His work is in numerous institutional collections including the Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.



James Siena, *Untitled (#1)* (detail), 2009