

Slick & Rough

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Press release

Kevin Rouillard
Tes prochains tableaux tu les vendras en roubles !, 2023
Container, steel
178 x 50 x 5 cm (detail)
Courtesy of the artist and Xippas.



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Putting aside abstraction, with a geometrical tendency, if we had to identify some common denominators among the works presented here, it would undoubtedly be the economy of means used by the artists and their intention to integrate notions of materiality - including the supports - into a visual and semantic language. And if we backpedal the history of this aesthetic, we should probably make a stop at the end of the 1960s, a period which gave birth to a group as brief as it was radical, known under the name of Supports/Surfaces. Hence the inclusion of some "Gazes" by Daniel Dezeuze, one of its proponents, included here to recall the influence of this group (with the exception of a political discourse).

For this group exhibition which brings together ten artists, it was tempting to borrow the term "constituents" from Dezeuze. For everything here constitutes the actual work, beyond the mediums used on the surface (mainly paint). The supports themselves carry the values intrinsic to the work: concrete, wood, metal, stitching threads, sheets, etc. For most, these are materials found, diverted or handmade. The desire to give them a voice, once driven by Supports/Surfaces, has generated a trans-generational and trans-Atlantic cross-pollination among artists over the decades. Social networks have played a considerable role in this development. Artists who cherish this line of abstraction used to belong to a niche, known to collectors, curators and institutions. Luckily, thanks to the Internet (Instagram in particular), they "followed" each other, exchanged works and points of view and by doing so have spread their reputation internationally.

Far from the easel and the constraints linked to representation, each artist develops his own writing. There is no school or movement to coin. But all would agree with the title chosen for this exhibition: "Slick and Rough". "Slick" is the efficiency obtained with only a few means, the accuracy in the use of volume and colors and their implacable sense of composition. "Rough" is the raw character of the materials used, initially intended for other less noble uses. And yet, what elegance in these works which embody a form of preciousness. This is the prowess of the artists included in this exhibition: to be iconoclast and erudite, "punk" and precise.