

TEMPLON

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PHILIPPE COGNÉE

Eye of the Storm

9 September – 23 October 2021



White Chair in Studio, 2021

Galerie Templon is kicking off the new season in Brussels with the return of Philippe Cognée. In *Eye of the Storm*, the French painter, famous for his inimitable blurred wax technique, unveils a series of fifteen canvases flirting with abstraction.

Created over the last year during the pandemic and keeping pace with the successive waves of lockdown, these new series alternate indoor and outdoor scenes. Views of a deserted but strangely serene studio contrast with a number of large impetuous landscapes, drenched in a nature bubbling over with life.

Philippe Cognée has long used his painting to explore the shifting contemporary perception of the most ordinary features of our environment, from motorways and supermarkets to anonymous hotel rooms and dreary suburbs. Drawing inspiration from photographs, videos or images garnered online, he questions our relationship to the image and the capacity for

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painting to transcend our vision of an increasingly uniform world. The wax-based painting he has been practising for over 20 years opens the door to a wide variety of experiments. Crushed, projected, melted and scraped, the surface he works on, similar to skin, reveals unexpected aspects of his sometimes unrecognisable subjects.

By choosing to set up a contrast between depictions of the studio – here a solitary chair, there a pot of paintbrushes or handful of abandoned cloths – and of nature in all its sublime but untameable glory, Philippe Cognée is tackling far more than the issue of isolation. Each canvas becomes an examination of the purpose of painting, the role it plays in the long pictorial tradition, and its ability to represent and enchant the world. Formal questions centring on empty and filled space, on shadow and light, subtly create a metaphysical interrogation of the condition of modern humanity and its insatiable thirst for beauty.

Born in 1957, Philippe Cognée works between Nantes and Paris. A Villa Medici's laureate in 1990 and nominated for the Prix Marcel Duchamp in 2004, Philippe Cognée worked at the Paris Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts for many years where he taught a whole generation of young painters.

His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including at MAMCO (Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art) in Geneva (2006), the Haute-Normandie regional contemporary art collection (2007), Musée de Grenoble (2013), Château de Chambord (2014), Fondation Fernet-Branca de Saint Louis (2016) and Domaine de Chaumont-sur Loire (2020). His work features in many museum collections, such as at the Musée National d'Art Moderne - Centre Pompidou, Fondation Cartier and Collection Louis Vuitton in Paris as well as the Museum Ludwig in Cologne and Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne.

Forthcoming museum solo exhibitions are scheduled for next year: Collection Lambert in Avignon (25 June 2022), Musée Bourdelle in Paris (23 November 2022) and Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris (March 2023).

Philippe Cognée has been represented by Galerie Templon since 2002.