

TEMPLON

II

Press release
14 June 2024

BILAL HAMDAD
Reflets

12 September – 31 October 2024



Lueur d'un Soir II, 2024, oil on canvas, 245 x 200 cm

Galerie Templon's Brussels space is inaugurating the new art season with an exhibition of work by ultra-realist painter Bilal Hammad.

Born in 1987, Bilal Hammad trained as a painter in Sidi Bel Abbes before moving to France to study. He graduated from the Beaux-Arts in Paris in 2018, and quickly made a name for himself with his strikingly naturalistic canvases exploring contemporary solitude. He borrowed to socialist realism to develop a body of work marked by a long process of observation and exploration of society. Often haunted by the question of isolation in the public space, his paintings tackle crowd phenomena as well as themes of intimacy, sharing and mixing.

The artist unveils a dozen brand-new canvases, including four large format and a handful of medium format pieces. Created during his residency at Casa de Velázquez in Madrid, Hammad found inspiration in the Spanish masters - Velázquez to Goya - as well as artists influenced by Hispanic culture, such as Rubens and Manet. Reminiscences of their works - café scenes, opulent draperies, ghostly figures - appear in disturbing chiaroscuro effects. By combining scenes of urban gatherings with the issues of the great masters, Bilal Hammad builds bridges between past and present, and opens up his painting to a multitude of interpretations. Beyond the homage, his canvases evoke visual palimpsests of a new kind that question both the ambiguity of our times and the relevance of painting today.

Address: 13 Rue Veydt, 1060 Brussels. Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 11 am - 6 pm
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Bilal Hamdad's work has featured in a wide range of solo and group exhibitions, including at the Louvre Lens (2024), Mo.Co Panacée, Montpellier (2023), La Biennale de Paname, Paris (2023), Le Suquet des Artistes, Cannes (2022) and École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (2018). His art has been awarded numerous prizes, including the Prix Fondation François Schneider (2023) and Prix Fondation Colas (2020), and features in several collections, including at the Fondation François Schneider, Wattwiller, northeast France (2023), Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris (2022), Fondation Colas, Paris (2020) and The Sarr Collection (2019).

An exhibition of his work at the Fondation François Schneider will open on 25 October 2024, and in November 2025 his piece Rive droite will be shown as part of an exhibition celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Musée de l'Immigration collection.