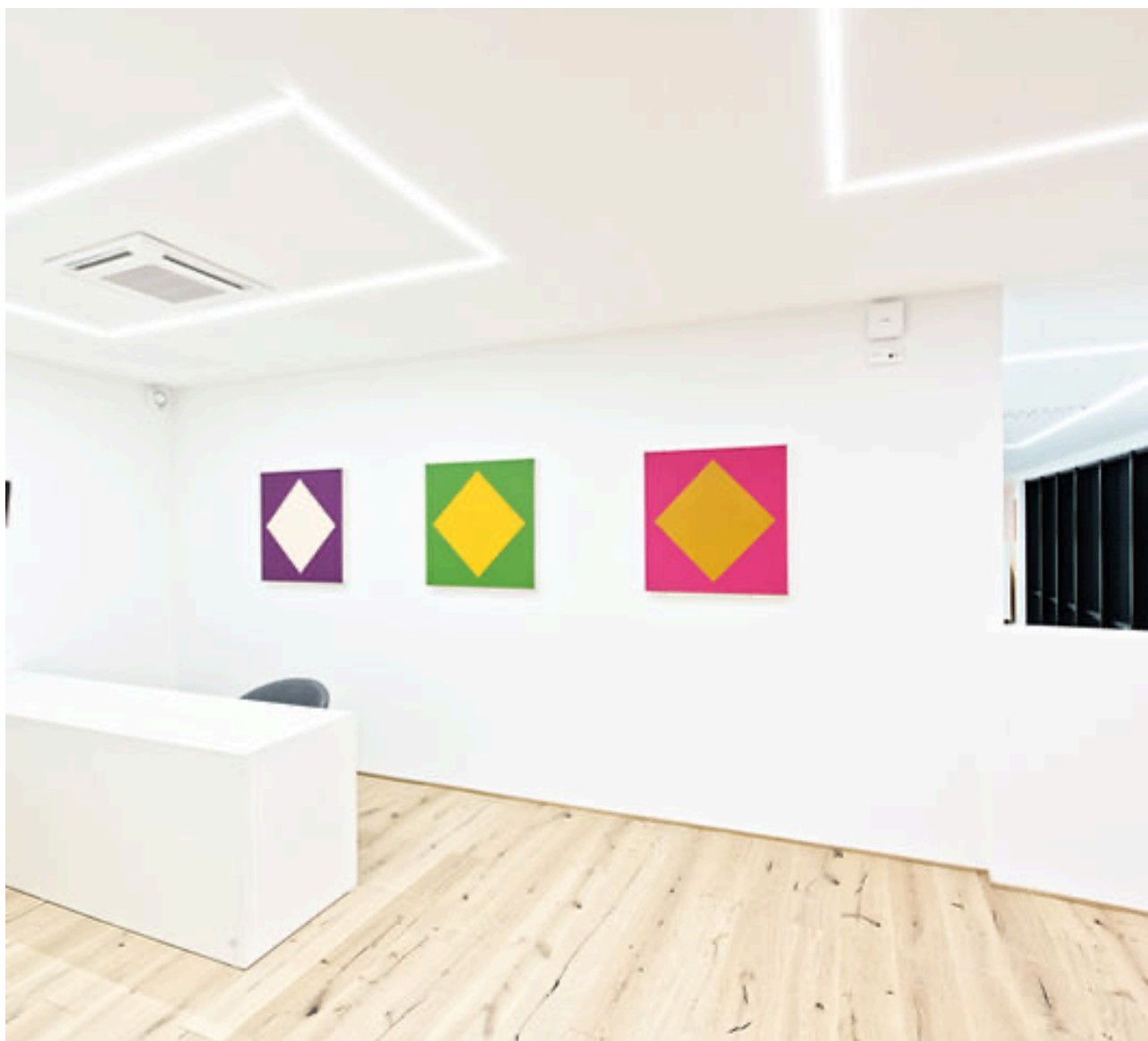


THE INTERVIEW: MARIE CEYSSON, GALLERY OWNER



INVENT, REINVENT, AND NEVER STOP AT WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE; THAT IS THE ADAGE OF LA MAISON DE LA MAILLE. AFTER THE RECENT LAUNCH OF ITS “PLAID MERVEILLEUX” (MARVELOUS THROW), THE BRAND IS BACK THIS FALL WITH A COMPLETELY NEW PROJECT, BOTH DIFFERENT AND EXTREMELY BOLD: REPRODUCING THE WORKS OF MAJOR CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS ON THE HOUSE'S THROWS AND SHAWLS. HOW DID THIS COLLABORATION COME ABOUT? WHO ARE THE ARTISTS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT?

MARIE CEYSSON, GALLERY OWNER, ENLIGHTENS US.

MARIE, CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR GALLERY?

I WORK AT THE GALERIE CEYSSON & BÉNÉTIÈRE WITH MY HUSBAND. IT WAS CREATED IN 2006 IN ST ÉTIENNE, WHICH IS WHERE WE HAIL FROM. AND WE HAVE EXPANDED INTO SEVERAL STRATEGIC LOCATIONS IN THE ART WORLD: NEW YORK, LYON, PARIS, GENEVA AND LUXEMBOURG. WE RECENTLY OPENED A NEW 1200M2 SPACE IN ST ÉTIENNE THAT HAS A RESTAURANT AND OUR FIRST STORE IN A GENUINE DEDICATED SPACE, CALLED “LA SUPÉRETTE”.

HOW DID THE IDEA FOR THIS PROJECT COME ABOUT?

HERE AT THE GALLERY WE HAVE ALREADY WORKED WITH ARTISTS ON PRODUCTS THAT ARE ALIEN TO THE ART WORLD IN THE STRICT SENSE OF THE TERM. IN PARTICULAR, WE HAVE PRODUCED HERMÈS SCARVES AND A LINE OF SERGIO ROSSI BAGS WITH THE CONTEMPORARY ARTIST CLAUDE VIALLAT. WE WERE ALSO INVOLVED IN A COLLABORATION BETWEEN CLAUDE CAILLOL AND MARNI. ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, I HAD ALREADY KNOWN CHARLOTTE, THE FOUNDER OF LA MAISON DE LA MAILLE, FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, AND IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT A THROW WOULD BE THE IDEAL FORMAT FOR A PROJECT LIKE THIS.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THIS TYPE OF PARTNERSHIPS?

I AM THRILLED BY THE IDEA OF BEING ABLE TO EXHIBIT ART WORKS IN A NEW WAY. IT IS A WAY OF OPENING UP THE ART WORLD TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND OFFERING A TOTALLY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE. AND ALTHOUGH WE ARE AWARE THAT NOT EVERYONE CAN AFFORD A THROW COSTING 1200 EUROS, OUR STORE ALSO HAS MUGS, NOTEBOOKS AND JIGSAW PUZZLES FOR KIDS, AMONGST OTHER THINGS. MAKING ART ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE IS SOMETHING THAT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE. NOT TO MENTION THE VISIBILITY IT GIVES TO THE GALLERY AND ALSO TO THE ARTIST.

WHY THROWS?

BECAUSE I BELIEVE IT IS A PRODUCT THAT IT IS IDEAL FOR A COLLABORATION OF THIS KIND. IT IS A SUBLIME PRODUCT, PARTICULARLY THE THROWS MADE BY LA MAISON DE LA MAILLE, AND I SEE IT AS A KIND OF EXTENSION OF A WORK OF ART. YOU CAN HAVE A PAINTING ON THE WALL AND A THROW ON THE SOFA AS A CONTINUATION OF THAT. I LIKE THAT IDEA A LOT.

WHICH ARTISTS HAVE YOU DECIDED TO WORK WITH?

GIVEN THAT THIS PROJECT IS OUR FIRST FORAY INTO THIS AREA, WE HAVE SELECTED JUST TWO ARTISTS; ORLAN AND CHRISTIAN FLOQUET.

ORLAN IS A MAJOR ARTIST FROM THE 1970S, 80S AND 90S. SHE IS KNOWN FOR HER VIBRANT COLORS AND HER HIGHLY GEOMETRICAL WORKS, BUT ALSO HER PERFORMANCES AS A PLASTICIAN, HER EXPERIMENTS WITH THE BODY AND THE DIFFERENT FORMS IT CAN TAKE. HER BIGGEST CHALLENGE WAS TO DEMONSTRATE IN THE 1970S THAT A GEOMETRICAL PAINTING COULD BE JUST AS POWERFUL AND AESTHETIC AS A FIGURATIVE WORK REVELING IN DETAIL AND TECHNIQUE.

AS FOR CHRISTIAN FLOQUET, HE IS KNOWN AND RECOGNIZED FOR HIS VERY (VERY) LARGE FORMAT, MONOLITHIC WORKS. HIS GOAL AS AN ARTIST IS TO INVEST THE CANVAS WITH VERY SIMPLE GEOMETRICAL COMPOSITIONS BUT ALSO TO SHOCK THE EYE BY COMBINING POWERFUL, DARING AND SOMETIMES EVEN GRATING COLORS.

WITH ORLAN WE HAVE CREATED A THROW AND WITH CHRISTIAN FLOQUET WE HAVE WORKED ON A THROW AND TWO MODELS OF SHAWLS. A VERY STRUCTURED THROW, WITH CONTRASTS IN BLACK AND WHITE, ONE SHAWL WITH A DOMINANT YELLOW AND ANOTHER WITH A DOMINANT VIOLET.

WHAT DO THE ARTISTS THINK OF THE PROJECT?

THE ARTISTS WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE IDEA OF PARTICIPATING, BUT THEY ALSO HAD THEIR DOUBTS. THEY WAITED TO SEE THE RESULT BEFORE COMMITTING TO IT; WE INSISTED ON THE HIGHEST STANDARDS, BUT IT IS THEIR WORKS WE ARE TALKING ABOUT AND THEY DON'T WANT TO SEE THEM MISREPRESENTED. AND WE OBVIOUSLY UNDERSTAND THAT 100%. THEIR NAME IS GENUINELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROJECT AND EVERY ITEM SOLD WILL HAVE A CERTIFICATE BY THE ARTIST. WE ARE VERY HAPPY THAT THE FINISHED PRODUCT WAS ABLE TO MEET THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

ARE THE WORKS KNITTED OR PRINTED?

KNITTED! THIS BRINGS ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS, BUT THE RESULT IS SUBLIME. FOR EXAMPLE, WE COULDN'T CHOOSE A WORK WITH MORE THAN FIVE COLORS, BECAUSE WE HAD TO ADAPT TO THE DIFFERENT LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY THE KNIT, BUT WE ARE VERY PROUD OF THE RESULT.

WRITTEN BY LAURA ISAAZ

SUBSCRIBE TO LA MAISON DE LA MAILLE:

THE VERY COSY LETTER