
SUPERZOOM @ NEW GALERIE • YUKI_SNOW_IN_JULY
CHARLES HASCOËT



@yuki_snow_in_july

Upon receiving its invitation from the New Galerie, superzoom presents a personal exhibition by Charles Hascoët: *yuki_snow_in_july*. The project consists of a series of small formats painted in oil that reproduce “from a photo” the Instagram posts of a cat: yuki_snow_in_july.

Instagram has seen a blooming of sets of memes, selfies, and trends tending to promote people by themselves. Among the paradoxical successes of this 2.0 distribution: cats.

In a certain tradition of portrait painting, the series is based on biographical elements of the artist and the model. Three years ago, Charles Hascoët gave Marion Dana, who runs the New Galerie, a little white cat, named Yuki.

Like many cat owners, Marion Dana has chosen to create an Instagram account for her cat, Yuki. Marion Dana is part of a “cultural” tradition of cat person(s): authors, musicians, gallery owners ... whose cats were more or less flaunted and exhibited during the 19th and 20th centuries: on a desk, during an interview ... It is well known how cats slip into private, public, sentimental - or just narrow - spaces. Yuki eventually slipped into the gallery.

Charles Hascoët positions himself in the context of portraits of patrons ; the latter being both the subject and the object of the painting. But who is putting on a performance, who flatters who, who sees himself in whom? Yuki in Marion in Charles? Or vice versa.

The compositions of the paintings use the formats of Instagram photographs, relatively standardized, since the image is intended to be “viewed” on the screen of a mobile phone. The artist also continues this game of transpositions: he titles the paintings by using the captions from the account, hashtags and emojis included.

The rare times a human appears in Charles Hascoët paintings, he is “cut out,” we do not see his face. Like the animal visions of Tom and Jerry type cartoons, where the only aspects of the owner are his slippers, like an ad hoc call to reality.

The entire series was painted during lockdown, the artist’s studio work echoing the “inactivity” of a master who only had his cat to take care of.

It seems that the presence of pets has contributed to some improvement in the mental health of the population during this period of lockdown. But the portraits echoing Yuki, Marion and Charles seem more to evoke questions of what to do with yourself (and your cat).