

Samuel Richardot

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What is striking in Samuel Richardot's work is not only the mastery of the technique but also the way his paintings hold themselves. At first glance the picture appears to fit the scale of the human body; the artist decides the size of his frames according to his own moves, working on a mounted canvas placed on the floor. This choice is neither a naive reference to history nor a demonstration, for the accuracy of the expression surpasses any forced affirmation. This way, Richardot's work seems to be driven by true asceticism: any brush stroke or image added to the canvas is a thoughtful almost risky decision. Even the most colorful and exuberant of his paintings are characterized by a paradoxical self-restraint, but he can also reduce his interventions to almost nothing. The canvas becomes a territory, a field to be constructed and built rather than explored or analyzed, a space where different forces can play together. Richardot's "operations" do not aim at establishing a closed system of predefined relations: in his paintings any connection between a form and another, the articulation of a sign and a color are a matter of fact. Therefore each motif seems to be created in and of itself and at the same time to be a precipitated result, sometimes brutal, sometimes subtle, but of a precise and concrete intention. However, one must not consider these signs as the consequence of a happy hazardous process or the side effect of a gesture, their "motivation" is essential and determines their own density as their inscription on the canvas. Each element comes from an idea, whether it is made with a brushstroke or a diluted color. On one side of the spectrum the motifs are almost formless, while on the other side figures are shapes and objects can be guessed: ranging from a sketch of a pattern to an organic form Richardot creates his own language. The construction is then combinatorial: instead of covering the canvas and taking it over the problem is to stretch its spaces, to stimulate its contradictions and instability, and to give rhythm to its surface. Logic of enunciation and elaboration of syntax substitutes a hierarchical composition. Such an approach brings up the manipulation of time, space and tools, which means, rationally speaking, control but also playfulness. And, as the whole of the operations are applied on the canvas, which redefine its space, the work serenely becomes a construction-site that has been interrupted, left here the brute splendor of a dig and there traces of the machines remain.

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