

## PAR LES BRETelles

ARPAÏS du bois

Opening: Sept 4th from 6 pm

Show: Sept 5th until Nov 8th 2014

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FIFTY ONE

For her first solo-show at Gallery FIFTY ONE, Arpaïs Du Bois (BE, 1973) takes us on a journey of daily observations and comments through a series of drawings of different sizes.

In this series of works characterized by her well known uncluttered, pure style, her precise lines, her faded, somewhat smudged colours, her biting yet poetic texts, she evokes the world as she observes it from a distance. On the crossroads between figuration, abstraction and illusion.

If, in her previous exhibitions one could still read and see a certain compassion, a timid amazement, a tango danced with the subjects, today her tone is getting tougher. Her stand is clearly taken. Subjects are treated more directly. And the analysis that she throws back at us is sometimes puzzling. Absolute doubt and surrender seem to compete with each other. We find ourselves in a palpable universe where we smile but also twist our fingers. The humor of certain drawings thankfully comes to us as oxygen bubbles in a somber and by times suffocating whole.

In this constant flux of work made in her studio(s), the escapes or time outs she grants herself become more meditative but still powerful drawings. Let's call them 'reveries'. These works, where she no longer only deals with her own demons, make a perfect confrontation with the more concrete ones, without contradictions.

Even if there's no narrative structure, one roams about the mapped paths of the exhibition.

Her more marked position is partly a result of several work-stays abroad that Arpaïs Du Bois made this current year. Once the daily constraints were wiped away and it became possible to stand back from society and close circles, the conditions were created to make such drawings as the one that gave the title to this exhibition: 'RETENIR LE MONDE PAR LES BRETelles'. Which means nothing less than holding back the world. The feeling of living in a world spinning far too fast, preventing us from thinking thoroughly about things that really matter, pushing us into superficiality, crossing out the word 'fully' of our everyday life is still a major source for her work. She tries to manage that permanent sense of urge by a slow and methodic approach. The patience needed to untangle each drawing from the ones that precede and follow it ( ADB works in bounded books most of the time) and to reassemble it with others, thus forming a heavier counterweight to futility can clearly be seen as an act of resistance to the 'speed and shallowness'.

We have to emphasize the importance the artist attaches to the creation and construction of her exhibitions. We particularly keep several recent landmarks in mind ranging from a radical presentation (like the decision to show the totality of a one-year-production without any possible hiding away, any censorship ('Trois Cent Quatre-Vingt-Onze, deux mille sept cent quarante huit', Galerie van der Mieden, 2011) over a perfect dialogue ('where we met', Gallery Fifty One, 2012) to yet a metaphorical composition to underline the global theme of the exhibition ('noyade sèche', Galerie van der Mieden, 2013). Every time the venue, the site becomes more than the repository of the displayed work, it is being besieged, like transformed and thus it determines the reading of the works. Here too Arpaïs Du Bois demonstrates her great sensibility to space, which comes about every time again within the frame of her small scale drawings.

Once more she questions herself and interrogates us. She pushes us into a listening modus of a world she filtered. But in a poetical way. Which means in an even more touching an absorbing way.