

Galerie Cécile Fakhoury is presenting an exhibition dedicated to the Algerian artist Dalila Dalléas Bouzar for the first time in Abidjan. *in her room* brings together her different series of paintings and drawings considering her bond with personal and collective memory through portrait, architecture and cartography. Resonating with widely expressed history and one that is experienced by individuals who are actively involved, artworks by Dalila Dalléas Bouzar create new contours positioning memory in a principle of vitality. She uses documents, realistic images and photo archives that she reinterprets in her paintings.

The *princesse* series is inspired by photographs taken by Marc Garanger during the Algerian War in internment camps, and commissioned to create identity cards enabling the French army to control population shifts. The women were obliged to lower their veils for the camera. Dalila Dalléas Bouzar captures this testimony of the War of Independence. She can identify with these women in the photographs from her country. Beyond their beauty, she shows their dignity confronted with their position as victims by appropriating these images. To see these remarkable women glorified and adorned in gold creates a feeling of looking at timeless icons.

*Taboo* is a series in which the artist satisfies her obsession with pink: pink skin and pink flesh. “*Since I began painting, I have painted self-portraits, as if it were a declaration or to convince myself of my existence*”. The skin is seen as a sign of resistance here. This element is hidden underneath and lost in the hollowness of the shadows and the abyss. There is an urge to devour this flesh. Dalila Dalléas Bouzar underlines the adoration part pushed to its paroxysm: to eat oneself. An ode to individualism and to cannibalistic egocentricity, and the return to shamanic meanings lost in the forgotten fringes of the world.

In translucent light, transparencies connect the body fragments shaping the figure and the traces of its existence. The invisible part is present in her formal experiments, fragments of reverie and impressions of the extensive world of childhood. Through the depiction of her son in the series *Soléman*, she explores finery, dressing him in outfits and transforming him. In her canvas she links invention with magical invocation, a digression from what is feasible at this age. The regalia is sewn or sealed directly to the body and the playful moment becomes eternity. The states of being gather together to form an image at the junction between supernatural narratives and a depiction of reality.

If Dalila Dalléas Bouzar raises the question of identity, she lets it speak through the flesh, traces on the skin. In gentle reliefs, in the quivering brushstrokes, graphics and oscillations of her painting, her confident gestures are sometimes disrupted. The images therefore reveal her fragility; the figure keeps her movement in equilibrium. With restraint, each character wears an unresolved expression that forms with the passage of time and historicity. The black in contrast forms matter from which the light emanates in a classic style reinvented over the course of the emotions rendered. The voids left and the unfinished strokes in places cause melancholy and the urge to reshape a part of oneself, to listen to the resonance that they disseminate. The deep black chasms place the subject in a box, a setting made of silk and velvet. The mysteries that infiltrate transfigure the intensity of the hidden world, of the cosmos and myths.

In the series of drawings *Algérie Année 0, où quand commence la mémoire*, Dalila Dalléas Bouzar looks back at the history of her country. She develops a reflection about the history of violence from documentary archival images of the War of Independence and the Algerian civil war.

*Topographie des Terrors* is a series of drawings inspired by the Berlin museum that chronicles the rise of Nazism. Here she questions the concept of place, and or space, a bedroom for example, as a potential tool for terror. The interior is linked to privacy and comfort. More impersonal and functional hotel rooms act as a laboratory for all projections. The teetering of the account reflects the level of intrigue here, between sombre and passion, calm and horror.

In the exhibition *in her room* Dalila Dalléas Bouzar produces a performance that is included in a video installation. *Inner Past* deals with disappearance, an internal revolution. The artist elevates her drawing: *La maison*. Like an initial drawing, the box contains the family environment, a refuge for memories where everyday youth scenes are played out. *La Cabane*, a precarious, ephemeral structure, accommodates the artist's personal archives, her assumed personal notebooks. In a role-play she arranges, steals and dissolves the material to preserve the memory indefinitely. The artist is in turn victim and guilty of the disappearance of these traces of her past.

The series of portraits and of places painted by Dalila Dalléas Bouzar outline the idea of encounters, mingling and branched trajectories. *in her room* is the movement inward, the act that probes and takes the time to understand to make common sense.