

# miriam cahn

devoir-aimer

Exhibition from April 29 to June 17, 2017

Opening on Friday, April 28, 2017

Open from Tuesday to Saturday, from 11 AM to 7 PM, and by appointment.

For her fourth show at the Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Miriam Cahn has decided to present her most recent work, with the paintings and drawings of *devoir-aimer* (must-love).

After being deeply struck by the fighting of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia, Miriam Cahn is now pursuing her examination of conflicts associated with war; and in particular those that have shaken up the Middle East and Syria.

The hanging of her paintings bears witness to the profusion of images which we receive from conflicts, the media treatment of war, the questions that result from the flood of refugees in Europe, and the frequent debates that result. Miriam Cahn's work can even sometimes evoke a number of military, or humanitarian operations (such as MARE NOSTRUM) which did not receive the means they needed to be put into action.

Her figures are fleeing, with scared faces turning around, to see for one final time what they are leaving behind; amputated bodies which can, even distantly, evoke an ancient classical statue; raped women whose bared bodies are put before all of our eyes, bearing witness to their extreme vulnerability.

Miriam Cahn has chosen to direct her gaze at these faces which have been barely sketched out in a rudimentary, primitive style; these scared, hallucinatory, shocked, rigid stares; these static or moving bodies, with phantom-like or straying figures.

The paintings are hung on the wall at eye-level, like a movie shot where the screen grasps the viewer; in this way, visitors are directly confronted with the characters' eyes.

The colours can be bright, or pale, almost absent, as in the great disaster canvas in which the light is so strong that the colours seem to have been whitened.

In the second part of the space, Miriam Cahn has placed a large set of 22 drawings, which form a single work. The title *8 tage (raum)* suggests that the series was produced in 8 days, between 13th October and 15th November 2016. The drawings have been hung chronologically: each group, of 2, 3 or 5 drawings, represents one day. However, this installation also features a great liberty in its presentation, because the order of the drawings made during the same day can vary. But their association as a group remains primordial while offering the possibility of multiple interpretations, reflecting a constantly evolving topicality.

On a small shelf can be found two sketch pads and a photo which has been reworked with the artist's crayons. The sketch book *o.t., 19.12.14 - 25.9.16* picks up on the themes that recur in the show, such as portraits, still lifes, landscapes, and architecture. The other, smaller pad (*vergessen und rekonstruieren (ordnungsversuch) (zitate), 20.3 - 6.4.2014*) deals with forgetting and reconstruction. Ranging from 11 September 2001 to architecture, while taking in the realistic depiction of nature, as a break, these pieces attest to the diversity of Miriam Cahn's work, in the subjects and her choice of media, which are constantly being re-examined or associated.