ALMINE RECH

Farah Atassi
Genius Loci

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Genius Loci is a Latin expression that translates as 'the spirit of the place.' In Roman mythology it referred to a deity or protective spirit that inhabited a certain place but in a more modern context the term is used to describe the particular atmosphere of a place, whether a physical, cultural or even emotional environment. Hence for Marjolaine Lévy, Picasso's spectral presence in this exhibition could be defined in the following way: 'Picassian ghosts intrude into a world which is not their own, that of the stage, and even when they are not on the theatrical stage, they inhabit mysterious places where the curtain persists.' The exhibition's title thus invites us to imagine that Farah Atassi's works exhibited at the Museo Picasso Málaga start to acquire a life of their own, charged with a subtle energy that transcends the visual forms.

The exhibition is divided into four sections. It starts in *The studio*, a theme chosen by the artist as a reflective space in relation to the conventions of painting. Female models are seen resting alongside empty stretchers and unpainted canvases in works that feature the characteristic grid with which Atassi balances many of her canvases. The works in *The mechanical cabaret* depict female bodies in motion in a synchronised choreography of legs, hoops and balls. The section *The shore* includes exterior scenes of bathers sunbathing on a beach represented by solid horizontal colours evoking blue sky, turquoise sea and beige sand. Finally, in *Through the window* the canvases show the female figures surrounded by flowers and fruit next to windows looking onto cloudy skies and starry nights. The works present in *Genius Loci*, which often seem to be constructed in the manner of an architectural form, are not seeking a faithful reproduction of reality: the precise lines and the objects represented seem to belong to a parallel world where time has stopped, arousing a sense of mystery in the viewer.

Genius Loci brings together a series of works created between 2015 and 2025 in which the artist continues to challenge the conventions of pictorial space.

Farah Atassi (born Brussels, 1981) is a Belgian artist living and working in Paris. Her pictorial output is characterised by its contemporary reinterpretation of the artistic tradition of modern art, fusing elements of abstraction and figuration. Atassi is inspired by masters such as Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger and Georges Braque, incorporating geometric patterns and grid structures that evoke Cubism and geometric abstraction. Her unique style combines the tradition of figurative painting with a clear Cubist influence and a very personal approach to the representation of an artificial space of confused scales and volumes.

Over the course of her career Atassi's work has been seen in numerous prestigious solo and group exhibitions. Among the most notable are her exhibition at the Musée national Picasso-Paris in 2022 and her participation in *The Echo of Picasso* at the Museo Picasso Málaga between October 2023 and March 2024. She has also exhibited in galleries such as Almine Rech in Paris, New York and Shanghai, and François Ghebaly in Los Angeles. Atassi's works have also been presented at institutions such as Le Consortium in Dijon and the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lyon.

Atassi's work offers a reflection on the history of art and representation, reinterpreting its visual languages through a contemporary focus that explores theatricality, incorporating geometric patterns and a particular relationship between figure and background. Her meticulous approach, together with this ability to fuse historical references with a contemporary aesthetic, have established her as a prominent figure in the current artistic scene.

Farah Atassi, a promising figure in the field of contemporary art, has created a body of work that is markedly influenced by geometrical forms and spatial interplay. Atassi, whose work establishes dialogues with great masters of modern art such as Pablo Picasso, will be presenting an artistic proposal that is not simply a reinterpretation of the Cubist tradition but rather an exploration of the expressive possibilities of space in contemporary painting.

Born in Brussels in 1981, Farah Atassi studied at the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts in Paris and has been acclaimed for her unique style, which combines the tradition of figurative painting with a clear Cubist influence and a very personal approach to the representation of space. In the exhibition *Genius Loci* she explores a series of works created between 2015 and 2025 in which she continues to challenge the conventions of pictorial space.

Atassi's painting, which frequently seems to be constructed in the manner of a building, does not aim at a faithful reproduction of reality. The precise lines and objects represented in her paintings seem to belong to a parallel world where time stands still, evoking a feeling of mystery. The exhibition's title, *Genius Loci*, suggests a connection with the concept of the 'spirit of the place', where the spaces created by the artist take on a life of their own, charged with a subtle energy that transcends the geometric forms. The exhibition is curated by art historian Marjolaine Lévy.