ALMINE RECH

The Weeds

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«Next to your lordly wall, in dignity of enclosure, comes your close-set wooden paling, which is more objectionable, because it commonly means enclosure on a larger scale than people want. Still it is signiἀcative of pleasant parks, and well-kept ἀeld walks, and herds of deer, and other such aristocratic pastoralisms, which have here and there their proper place in a country, and may be passed without any discredit».

John Ruskin, The Work of Iron in Nature, Art and Policy (1858), in The Two Paths (1859)

«Misled by so much lightness and the apparent ease that reigns therein, one's eye seeks in vain, through careful attention and repeated exploration, to discover the secret; it fails, loses itself in your touch; and, tired of its eἀ orts, without ever being satis ed with its pleasure, it distances itself, comes closer, and leaves only after pledging to return».Louis-Guillaume Baillet de Saint-Julien, Caractères des peintres français actuellement vivants (1755)

26th Dragons

Wild Flowers have invaded the surroundings of the studio in the former barracks of the 26th Regiment of Dragoons in Dijon. For one or other reason, it was necessary to move out and nd a new location. Located on a small winding road deep in the département of Bourgogne, next to a river, the warehouses of an abandoned rope factory were just what they needed. From now on, I&W, the «dual painter», will live in Dijon and work in Diénay. In the mornings, they keep an eye out for does leaping across the road, while in the evenings, they watch out for the huddled families of wild boar which can unexpectedly shoot across the road. Between the two? The almighty kingdom of painting.

Savageries of Diénay

In the late 1970s, a series of erotic-pornographic lms were made that were set in nature. It was probably a way of capturing a lost dream, a long-forgotten ideal, a longing for a communal utopia – probably also a way of recovering the first experiences of the «Nordic» Films that had triggered so many fantasies. These films created thoroughly unreal scenes: dazed game, dumbfounded squirrels and curious deer observe the lovemaking in its most frivolous to most ritualized forms. Perhaps one of these images of insouciance lies beneath the white grids of I&W – perhaps, on occasion. Spectators are liable to lose themselves, and their quest for meaning can be frustrated. What is hidden in these paintings, and should we seek it out? Are we not faced with an abstraction? What, for heaven's sake, is there to be seen?«There will be girls and landscapes»

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is the last thing I was told about this exhibition. «Girls and landscapes »for viewers to watch or get a glimpse of, but also animals, and things that grow spontaneously, like weeds. how important is this modest dramaturgy? No response. Or else: it's the painting viewers must see. There are those gridded, metallic, misleadingly grey visions, with hidden secrets; there are also the small wild flowers, and girls, of course, which are now clearly visible. One of them, seated naked on a piece of wood, is greedily swallowing spaghetti – or is it linguine? – al nero di seppia -, the ink staining her smile. The feast is set before one of those fake idyllic landscapes found in cheap little eating-houses (I'll have to have another look at the Mona Lisa). The two other girls, in watercolours, have been extracted, torn from their magazines, and stare out at us, just as they stare fixedly at the gridded canvases. I&W are not only interested in pornography, eroticism, icons, decorative objects or optical illusions. It is obvious that there is something more beneath all that.

Burgundian nostalgia

Squirrels observe the painters at work through a glass roof in the new studio. The artists are preparing their first exhibition at the Almine Rech Gallery in Brussels. This kingdom of painting is bathed in an atmosphere that contrasts sharply with that found in the canvases, presenting a clash between the visual and the mental, a discrepancy between the container and the contents. Maybe they recall that Diénay was once the scene of a dispute, a real dispute in the history of art. In the autumn of 1890, edgar Degas visited his friend, the engraver Georges Jeanniot, who was residing in Diénay. This is where Degas carried out his first monotypes, based on recollections of landscapes glimpsed on board the train. upon seeing these monotypes, the writer Ludovic halévy told Deg as they were wonderful «états d'âme», or «states of mind». This only stirred up Degas' temper. «States of mind», «states of mind»... halévy, Degas responded, had understood nothing, and it was absolutely vain to use such pretentious language. There are only «états d'yeux», Degas claimed, or «states of eyes»... Mysterious ocular candyThe works of Ida Tursic and Wilfried Mille are deceptive, like traps consisting of pure paint. We have here a small overview of the medium's range of possibilities and irresistible force of attraction. The subject is equally important and self-eάacing. Viewers can be enthralled by a gaze or by a texture. A mystery unveils itself in one canvas, but then a thick stroke disrupts our vision. everything is painting, but nothing is so at random: a page torn out from a magazine, the reproduction of a print covered in paint and then burned, a pict ure of nature, an erotic image, a landscape in the picture, a fence... It is up to each viewer to recover the right 'state of eyes', to enter into these pictures, these mysterious candy-like works imbued with savagery, eroticism and nostalgic derision. The pleasure of creation, the pleasure of contemplation.

States of mind, states of mind... There are only states of eyes.

–Jean-Marie Gallais

Born in 1974 in Belgrade, Serbia for Ida Tursic and Boulogne-sur-mer, France for Wilfried Mille. The artists live and work in Dijon, France. In recent years they has taken part in several exhibitions, among which « come in Number 51 » (2010) at the Almine Rech gallery. In 2011, « Decade » at Frac Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand and « It was the dirty end of winter » at Musée des Beaux-arts in Dôle. In 2009 they are awarded the prize of the Ricard's enterprise Foundation.