

Christian Mayeur: What are your current themes?

Jugnet+Clairet: We're currently working on the series *Cue Marks* again, with the idea of making sculptures this time.

The *Cue Marks* or *cigarette burns* are these marks that furtively appear in films, most often on the top right of the screen, to signal to the projectionist that a film reel change is imminent. This mechanism comes from film history, from the copy, the machinery of cinema, the physical weight of images. It's a legacy, a relic. Today, films are digitized and transmitted on a cable. These marks no longer have a reason for being but are still present, escaping general attention.

What is often at play in our work is that which escapes ordinary attention in the surrounding world and refers to, for us, to the intimacy of art history or cinema. Everything that is imposed by the sudden, the strange, the dazzling.

We noticed these marks in kind of double awakening, reminding us of the experience we had of the shutting off of a television screen, and which must have led us to the *Switch* series. This series dealt with the memory of the televisual image, a reverberation, a last sign before disappearing.

We established a working method by watching a number of films on the American channel TCM. We first put together a collection, and then established a chronotypology of these marks in order to produce several films and video installations with a specific montage in function of the mark categories. We also made paintings and neons based on these *Cue Marks*.

The form of the *Cue Marks* evolved with time. They were first, in the 1930s, black circles surrounded by a white border, then in the 40s and 50s, colored stars. Beginning in the 1960s, with cinemascope, the *Cue Marks* followed the elongation of format to become an oval. Sometimes more rough *Cue Marks* were superimposed, the projectionist's marks, creating a tension in the image field. Sometimes the film gel melted, creating improbable multicolored runs.

Incidentally, in parallel we are working on another series - language paintings, *Les atomes crochus*, *Les futurs antérieurs* et *plus que parfaits* (*Hooked atoms*, *Past future* and *Pluperfect*).

CM: You chose to live in New Mexico. Why?

J+C: When we lived in Paris, two times a year for four to six weeks we would visit the American Southwest by car, and from motel to motel, build our collection (fill up) of the turning on and off of screens.

Our first paintings at the end of the 90s and the beginning of the 2000s, entitled *Séries américaines* (*American series*), were produced based on maps of desert cities (Tucson, AZ, Las Vegas, NV). During our first trip, we bought a map of Tucson in a supermarket: the pages correspond to the edges of the city, where information becomes scarce, even non-existent, only showing large flat yellow squares in a red grid with zip codes as reference, also in red. We immediately thought of American painting (*Colorfield*) augmented by a conceptual reference.

Back in Paris, we made the series “*Séries américaines*” where the title of each artwork corresponded to the territory of the reference map page: *Manville, Winchester, Henderson, Clark County, Sloan, Overton, ...* All of our imaginary comes from the Southwest. Our knowledge of American cinema is also present in this journey across territory.

Next we came to live in the landscape of our paintings, we moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico in 2005. We then began a first series of paintings entitled *Sunset*, in which we were looking at the sky as our new screen (our last *Switch* paintings are from 2004). We then made a series of clouds in marble based on photographs taken from our house. Then, we became interested in the places and mythologies of New Mexico: the UFOs, the atomic bomb, Indians, Roswell, White Sands, Los Alamos, Acoma...

With the UFOs, we made our first paintings that tended to be seemingly figurative, based on unidentified objects. This doesn't mean, as some have suggested, that our *Switch* paintings were “abstract”. In our work, the image is always in question.

We next explored still life with objects acquired at the Black Hole, the Los Alamos National Laboratory surplus.

We scanned these transparent objects with a two-dimensional scan - to do this, we raised the upper plane with wedges, which makes black borders appear in the image on the computer screen. These black borders determine the space between the upper and lower areas of the scan. Here, we replaced the table on which we set the objects by the scan at the interior of which we introduced objects. A new space, planimetric, is drawn out. The depth of this restrained space is approximately the thickness of the object. On the table, the objects are lit and this creates shadows, which are inscribed in the space. In the scan, the light sweeps the plane with the object; the traces on the field of the scan are those that produce the particular form of the object by the passing of the light. The depth of information is dependent on the nature of the object. It is a question of reflections. This displacement of “on the table/under the scan” seemed pertinent to us. This other space is not observable to the naked eye, but is revealed in a process of analysis. We decided to paint everything: the space of the scan, the object, and the traces of the object resulting from the light.

The paintings we will show at Mayeur Projects, entitled *Square Roots*, are also related to New Mexico. They refer to the frescos at the Acoma church, where Aby Warburg was to produce an exceptional ensemble of photographs in 1895-96.

CM: What does your collaboration with Mayeur Projects incite for you?

J+C: When we were about to leave Brussels to move for the second time to New Mexico, we received in an old email inbox an invitation to Zoe Crosher's opening at Mayeur Projects. We responded: “We are coming”.

Las Vegas, NM is a city we always liked for its movie set architecture, its antique stores, its hotel, its grace...And then, during this first opening, we liked you right away, your residency project and the exhibition space. We have in common our desire to share our love of art and of New Mexico.