

MARIE BOVO

STANCES

3 - 21 September, 2019

Marie Bovo's "Стансы (Stances)" series, which was first exhibited at the Rencontres d'Arles in 2017, was created over a series of long train journeys across Russia during winter. Bovo invites us to follow the unfolding of a journey with no aim but itself, between past and present, in a universe of solitude and poetry, appearing always the same and yet never exactly identical. With each stop, Bovo captured the landscape that offered itself to view in the frame made by the open doors, then through the closed windows of the Russian trains. With this method, which plays on the obturating movement of the camera, Bovo has developed the investigation into space and framing that she began with her series on the courtyards of Marseille, and on windows in rooms in Algiers.

The "Стансы (Stances)" series projects us from inside the train to the exterior, without threshold or intermediary, into landscapes of winter snow. The snow, covering everything with a white veil, modifies the structure of the places it falls on, erases the horizon, effaces all landmarks, eliminating every anecdotal or too easily identifiable aspect. Borders, quays, and roads all disappear, giving way to a unity, an integrity of the landscape from before or beyond human presence. A radical abstraction, which, if it evokes Malevich, also lends an unheard of materiality to space. In Russia, snow acts like a weapon, a protective barrier. It's an immobile ally.

In the second group of photos, the windows are at once frame and subject. On each of them, it is possible to read an inscription in Russian, in a variety of typographical characters: "Не прислоняться" (Do not lean out). This trivial interdiction becomes superimposed on the winter landscapes, partly dissimulating them and giving them a subtitle. The glass in the windows contributes a wealth of effects, reflections, and distortions to the different backgrounds, which appear transparently, having passed through this filter. And if it is true for the "doors" series that the shots are subject to the contingencies of the train's itinerary, here the train, as Régis Durand notes, "is no longer the tributary of its 'freeze frames', it produces more space, but as if this was folded back on itself and on its own history." The Soviet system, based in part on restriction, hosted innumerable, Ubuesque lists of interdictions ("Do not paint your car in two colours", for instance). There was more that was restricted than was authorized. Today, restriction remains interiorised in everyone, whether as self-censorship, paranoia, apathy, or recourse to the "inside enemy".

The exhibition « Stances » by Marie Bovo is accessible from Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm at 51 Brook Street, London.

For further information, please contact Marie-Sophie Eiché-Demester, Claudia Milic, Jessy Mansuy, or Emma-Charlotte Gobry-Laurencin by phone: +33 1 56240363

or by email: galerie@kamelmennour.com

Press contact: Jeanne Barral

jeanne@kamelmennour.com

For her fifth solo exhibition at kamel mennour, Marie Bovo draws us into

the heart of Russian Europe, the Europe of the borderlands. In the dynamic melancholy of this journey, each image, as Anne-Valérie Gasc highlights, “is like the ‘blockade’ that transforms a place of weakness into a stronghold, into an enclosure in space-time, into a site where everything is there, clearly identified, in the self-evidence of its reality and its place, a seat in the quasimilitary sense of the term.”¹

Jeanne Barral

1. Spatium – L’architecture comme laps de temps, Interview with Marie Bovo and Anne-Valérie Gasc, ENSA-M Edition, May 2017.

Born in 1967 in Alicante (Spain), MARIE BOVO lives and works in Marseille (France).

Marie Bovo works with images, both video and photography. Her photographs play with duality and antinomy. Deeply rooted in reality, they sometimes raise geopolitical and social issues.

Her work reveals a dual perspective on things, making a simple and unique situation express a universal dimension, where the past meets the present, where different cultures, especially those of the Mediterranean world, connect to each other.

Marie Bovo’s work has been shown in solo exhibitions for the Rencontres de la Photographie d’Arles and at venues including La Chambre, Strasbourg; La Fondation Fernet-Branca, Saint-Louis; the California Museum of Photography, Riverside; Frac Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur and MAC–Musée d’Art Contemporain, Marseille; the French Institute, Madrid; MEP–Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; Luis Serpa Projectos, Lisbonne and the ERA Foundation, Moscow. Her work has also appeared in several group exhibitions at L’Institut Culturel Bernard Magrez, Bordeaux; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Maxxi–Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Roma; MEP–Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; MAC–Musée d’Art Contemporain, Marseille and on the occasion of the Busan Biennale, Korea.

In 2016 Marie Bovo was nominated for the ICP Infinity Awards in New York, for her exhibition “La danse de l’ours” at Frac Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur.

She will have a solo exhibition at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson in Paris this winter.