

# rodolphe janssen

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**THE ARMORY SHOW 2022**  
*Solo project Thomas Lerooy*  
BOOTH S16  
09 > 11 SEPTEMBER, 2022

The oeuvre of Thomas Lerooy is characterized by an inherent duality: it attracts and repels at the same time, it is recognizable yet alienating, it is humorous and serious, intimate as well as grotesque.

In the last 15 years, Lerooy has made a name for himself with his sculptures and drawings. His paintings are a recent development that came out of a necessity. Lerooy stumbled upon the limits of his maniacal drawing technique and the constraints gravity imposes when working in bronze. He started painting over his works on paper more and more. For Lerooy, painting is the greatest good, the pinnacle of art history; it allows him to give shape to emotions he didn't dare to touch upon before. Where paper took up a lot of space as a matter in itself, the canvas in his paintings becomes almost invisible. They are standalone frames that offer a view on a non-existent reality.

Whether Lerooy draws, sculpts or paints, he is always searching for the limits of his medium or his subject. His enigmatic works challenge the logic of the viewer and leaves the interpretation to their imagination. He uses recognizable motifs that he manipulates and thus undermines. The various recurring themes throughout his body of work, become active participants rather than passive backdrops. These elements play, frame, conceal and reveal. They often function like veils behind which lie other layers of meaning, making it unclear what the foreground and background is, what the subject or direct object is, and where this meaning lies. Like Baldessari, Lerooy hides just that part where, perhaps, the action takes place.

Lerooy investigates and breaks through the codes of painting, which manifests itself in a tension between abstraction and figuration, sharpness and haze, structure and smoothness. They are light-hearted and charged at the same time, and thus put themselves and the reality from which they arise into perspective.

## **About the artist:**

Born 1981 in Roeselare, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

His work has been the subject of several institutional solo exhibitions in recent years, including *Behind the Curtain* at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium (2019); *Vanity Fair* at Gaasbeek Castle, Gaasbeek, Belgium (2018); *Playground* in Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium (2017); and *Beauty in the shadow of the stars* at the Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Paris, France (2015).

Lerooy's work is included in public institutions such as the Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Province of West Flanders, Belgium; Belfius Art Collection, Brussels, Belgium; City of Brussels, Belgium; City of Puurs, City of Knokke, Belgium and Zuzeum Art Centre, Riga, Latvia.