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Lou Masduraud *Skin to Skin*

Opening: 17.09.2026, 18:00-21:00
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As part of her first solo exhibition at Galerie Mezzanin, Lou Masduraud presents a significant body of copper wall works. As tall and wide as doors, these pieces impose an immediately relational scale: they stand between the viewer and the architectural space, functioning less as paintings than as thresholds, whilst, at the centre, *Self Street* marks the boundary between public and private space. This exploration of the boundaries between the social and the intimate is not new to the artist. In the past, she has already diverted urban elements — from street lamps to fountains — to reveal their porosity. Whether with *Active Substances Fountain* (Villa du Parc, 2019), which diffused an anxiolytic mixture, or with her hybrid sculpture combining a Rococo fountain and a communal urinal (MAMCO, 2023), she systematically blurs the function of these installations, substituting the conventions they convey with promises of freedom.

At Galerie Mezzanin, the artist takes this logic a step further by directly confronting the history of modernity. By affixing these richly decorated panels to the gallery walls, she challenges the fundamental premise of the contemporary art space: the “white cube”. Adopted in the 1960s for its supposed neutrality (Brian O’Doherty, 1976), this white cube nevertheless traces its roots to the Viennese critique of ornament and German functionalist architecture (Weissenhof, 1927), which had itself appropriated Mediterranean architecture (Partha Mitter, 2005). By reintroducing complex ornamentation where modernity demanded emptiness, Lou Masduraud situates her project within a politics of space and the gaze. At the center, *Self Street*: the two posts placed on the ground, one on top of the other, lose their inherently ambivalent function. Stripped of their protective and coercive roles, these posts become a *ready-made*, modified by the addition of a pocket mirror. Here, she extends the ambiguity of the post through that of the pocket mirror, an accessory that may reinforce the social control to which we submit, as well as through which we emancipate ourselves by performing our own identity.

The copper panels (168 x 100 x 3 cm) straddle the line between painting and household door, and mirror the proportions of the human body. Here, copper was chosen for its physical qualities, particularly its sensitivity to touch, which results in traces of oxidation. In an anthropomorphic context, it becomes as sensitive as we ourselves can be (Masduraud). In an almost iconoclastic manner, oxidation serves as decoration, while laser-cutouts remove material to create a second layer of patterns. This layering evokes lace, once a precious ornament and now an accessory that plays on an ambivalent interplay of opacity and transparency. The titles—*Briefs, Bra, Scarf, Short, Suit, Dress*, among others—definitively anchor the work in the realm of the body. Lace evokes the mechanics of the gaze and desire: the active desire to see, and the passive desire to be seen. These processes lie at the heart of our relationships with images and seduction, but also of the development of an embodied subjectivity. Through this optical interplay of push and pull—ranging from a glossy surface to an oxidized depth—Lou Masduraud points to a gaze that is no longer that of modern, neutral rationality, but rather an eminently embodied gaze, inscribed within a subjective system. *Skin to Skin* is not to be viewed from a distance and reminds us that architecture, like clothing, is an interface through which we can redefine our relationship to the world.

Lou Masduraud (Montpellier, FR, 1990) lives and works in Geneva.

She graduated in 2012 a bachelor degree at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Lyon, France and in 2024 a Fine art master degree at the Haute Ecole d’Art et de Design, Geneva, Switzerland.

In her practice of sculptures and installations, Lou Masduraud proposes forms of reversals and alternatives to dominant realities. Approaching the network of human activities as a complex system of managed infrastructures, Lou Masduraud develops a body of work that functions as formal and conceptual investigation of specific elements such as fountains, basement windows and street lamp posts which belong to the daily experience of the public and the private space, exposing the relations of power and desire that underlie them. Masduraud not only blurs the boundaries between the function and the ornament, craft technique and conceptual practice, the outside and the inside, but eviscerates the skeleton of the structures we inhabit with an interpretive and voyeuristic take, questioning normative regulatory systems and enabling counter-narratives for public life.

Lou Masduraud was awarded in 2023 the Geneva Manor Art Prize and in 2024 the Federal Price; Swiss Art Award in Basel.

Recent solo exhibitions include: 2025; Le Grand Café, CAC, Saint Nazaire, FR; 2024; Kunsthau Langenthal, CH; Institut français d’Allemagne, Berlin, DE, ADA, Rome, IT ; Kunst Raum Riehen, Basel, CH. 2023; MAMCO, Prix Manor, Geneva, CH. 2022 ; CAN, Centre d’Art Neuchâtel, CH; May Day, Basel, CH. 2021; La Maison Pop, Montreuil, FR. Recent group and collective exhibitions in European institutions include Musée d’Art Moderne et Contemporain de Genève, Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Villa Medicis Rome, Centre d’Art Contemporain de Genève, CAPC Bordeaux, Fondation d’Entreprise Ricard Paris, Kunsthau Hamburg, MCBA Lausanne, MO.CO Montpellier, CRAC Alsace, Kunsthalle Basel, Biennale de Lyon, Moscou Biennal.