

Christine Safa

*Noces*

9 Sep – 24 Oct 2026

39 Walker

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*All I remember is trying to fix, to immerge, carve, set, forever this peace I have here. I used to know the sound of war, sometimes the planes here remind me of them.*

*But I know peace, I have peace here. At least sometimes it feels like it.*

*Birds come and visit me*

*Planes become birds*

*Roofs are like mountains*

*The summit of the trees create an horizon,*

*sometimes I swear I can see the sea here,*

*I watch the sun move and become a moon*

*I wait for the leaves to fall and come back again*

*I try to anchor myself and be at peace and make everything coexist and layer on my paintings.*

*While I have fear and worries, I try to focus on what the light chooses to enhance and show me. It's everyday poetry - la poésie d'un quotidien - what I see everyday, what I try to remember for ever.*

- Christine Safa, writing for *Noces*, Summer 2026

Bortolami is delighted to announce the gallery's latest exhibition with French-Lebanese painter Christine Safa.

Opening September 9th 2026, the exhibition trails the heels of summer and captures the sensations and energies of this season. Safa's signature application of thin layers of pure pigments, built upon fresco-like surfaces, here accrue into vignettes and morsels of time elapsed under hot suns, across lapping seas. The artist's time spent across the Mediterranean—researching Italian churches, revisiting her home city of Beirut, and returning to her studio in France—are rendered into nearly iconographic, yet deeply personal, vistas. A friction of energies (figures emerging and receding, landscapes trapped in near dissolution) mirror the reconciliation of these sites as both political and metaphysical.

A question hovers across Safa's work: how does the entirety of a memory become a singular image? Like the sea, her paintings suggest unity via an oscillation of

settling and disappearing. The chorus of recurring characters are the artist's family and home: her husband, her pet, the view from her window. Safa renders them haloed by rainbows and coronated by sunflowers, ascending in status into the divine. The heavenly here is not nearly an allusion—it is an insistence on the sacred bond between mankind and earth grasped and affirmed through love.

*Noces*, the title of the exhibition, borrows from Albert Camus' earliest pieces of writings, which enrobes itself and rejoices in the splendors of summer, sea, and sun through a recollection of experiences of Algiers and the greater Mediterranean. Safa joins Camus in embracing an earthly poetics, locating transcendence not beyond lived experience but within the textures of landscape, light, and everyday ritual. Against a contemporary backdrop of displacement, the enduring specter of war, and the insistence on art making, Safa's paintings become tender gestures of faith: a way of amberizing life in spite of the inevitable obliterations brought on by time and violence.

Christine Safa (b. 1994, Le Chesnay, France; based in Paris) frequently moves across the Mediterranean, between her home and studio outside of Paris and her family's native city of Beirut. She paints life in motion, capturing the landscapes she passes through and rendering these sites traversed as a series metaphysical notations felt and collected by the body. A graduate of the Beaux-Arts de Paris, Safa received the 2024 Jean-François Prat Prize, a major European award recognizing emerging contemporary painters. That same year, she was shortlisted The French Ministry of Culture and the Artchidiocese of Paris for the Notre Dame stained-glass commission. Safa has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Bortolami, New York, NY; Frac Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, France; Galerie Lelong & Co., Paris, France; ICA Milano, Italy; and Praz Delavallade, Paris, France. Her work has been featured in group exhibitions held at the Centre Pompidou, Metz, France; Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France; Musée des Beaux Arts, Paris, France; MUCEM, Marseille, France Museum of Fine Arts, Caen, France; David Zwirner, Paris, France; Château La Coste, Le Puy Sainte Réparate, France; MO.CO., Montpellier, France; Fondation Carmignac, Ile de Porquerolles, France; Sapling Gallery, London, UK; and Fondation Boghossian Villa Empain, Brussels, Belgium, among many others. Safa's work has been collected by major museum and institutions, including the Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Paris, France; Fondation Cab, Brussels, Belgium; Frac Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, France; and the Aishti Foundation, Jal El Dib, Lebanon.