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The Upset

Benjamin Senior

12th June – 18th July 2015

Preview 13th June, 11 am – 6 pm

Opening & Zurich book launch 13th June, 6 – 8 pm

Sunday 14th June, 11 am – 5 pm

For his second solo exhibition at BolteLang, Benjamin Senior takes the visitor on an urban journey. The larger format oil paintings in the exhibition *The Upset* highlight life in the city. People in the streets en route to unknown destinations, sitting in busy arcades or playing games in front of their homes – both protagonists and their surroundings are in movement, visible by objects being stirred up by the wind.

Reminiscent of the street scenes by Gustave Caillebotte, Senior captures fleeting moments, that are often overlooked as we are absorbed in a city's turbulence. The composition of the paintings, often cropped, occasionally zoomed in on specific objects or characters, show instances that are usually only held by photographs – ephemeral moments caught on canvas.

In the streets the entire world is present at once, past and present, local and exotic, interior and exterior. Wrought iron garden gates offer a curvaceous, fractured lens through which to view passers by. Senior's recent paintings continue his exploration of the possibilities of painting offered up by its rich history. The "worm's eye view" of *The Arcade* leads to unexpected arrangements and shifts of scale as figures walk along the bottom edge of the painting, a device inspired as much by Mantegna as by Tintin comics.

The umbrella is a recurring motif in modernist painting, appearing in Manet, Renoir and Jean Helion. It is comically inverted by a strong wind in Senior's paintings *The Gale* and *The Upset*. The frozen stillness, which has pervaded Senior's paintings is still there, but is challenged by an invisible force that kicks up leaves, ruffles the pages of a newspaper and lifts scarves to become streaming ribbons of colour. The "upset" of the show's title refers not to an unhappiness but rather to an overturning and inverting, such as the tumbling figures in *Cartwheels*. This exhibition marks an overturning in Senior's iconography as he shifts from exercise-inspired themes to the urban setting of the street.

The Zurich launch of Benjamin Senior's first monograph will take place during the exhibition opening, 13th June 6 - 8 pm.

Benjamin Senior (born 1982, lives and works in London) received his MA in painting from the Royal College of Art, London. Recent exhibitions include: solo: *Enclosure*, Grey Noise, Dubai (2015), *Fate of Forms*, organised by James Fuentes LLC, New York (2014), *Benjamin Senior*, Studio Voltaire, London (2013), *Benjamin Senior*, Monica de Cardenas, Milan (2013), *Healing Fields*, Discoveries, Art Basel Hong Kong, with BolteLang (2013), group: *Suspicion*, curated by Dan Coombs, Jerwood Space, London (2014)

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