

The River, The Forest, and the Korrigans



Exhibition by Bernard Demiaux, July 2015, Le Pouldu

Primarily known for his pionnier digital artistic work, the artist Bernard Demiaux has basically returned to painting for a few years now, so that one can believe that his work turned to a merely graphical search. Nevertheless, in Demiaux's work, the pictural side does not only deal with the surface, it also deals with Past, History and Legends. By dipping into his data base, (a kind of art memory base), The artist re-encodes bits of art works and combine them with his own paintings he has realised *sur le motif*.

Along with the series like *Reflets de Nice*, or *Paris dans ses quartiers*, Demiaux already questioned our relationship to heritage. And now he pursues his deep search through his immersion in the legendar Brittany. As he walks along the Laita river and its wooden paths, from the city of Quimperlé to the little Pouldu Harbour, he begins a simple conversation with the mythologic creatures named Korrigans – farfadets' cousins - and also with the famous painters of the end of XIXth century that stayed at the village of Le Pouldu, not far from Pont-Aven (The most famous one being Paul Gauguin).

By sketching on his tablet the outlines of trees, hill tops, small streams, Demiaux intents to let place to nature and suggests, in these unchanged and still wild places, that past is everywhere : indeed, one can easily imagine Gauguin crossing the woods and painting the colors and the soul of the place. But if History, which is fed with deep traditions and beliefs, is also an expression of the

Sacred, in that aspect, the irruption of some of Gauguin's characters in Demiaux paintings is nothing inappropriate. History, Myths and Landscape form together a mysterious *alchimie* the colors of which are a celebration of the american painters of the Color Field Movement. In the end, Demiaux proposes an initiatic trip where history has a specific sense. Moreover, his pictural hybrid search (a synthesis between manual movement of sketching and reinterpretation of shapes through digital programmes) does not surge only from his nature watching. In fact, the memory of the place meets the memory of the artistic work. Because of the unchanged aspect of Brittany landscapes, the artist works deal with the questioning of time, that very time that, along with digital and new technologies, as we know it, never stops transforming.

by Olivier Zattoni - June 2015