

Press Release**14 September – 4 November 2017*****Morning Defeats*****Marie Jacotey****with *Nights of Poor Sleep*****by Rachael Allen and Marie Jacotey, published by Test Centre****supported by Arts Council England**

“Meeting you in the first place was great though”

We are excited to present to the public *Morning Defeats* an exhibition of new work by **Marie Jacotey**. The installation comprises some 30 drawings in dry pastel on Japanese paper, together with a large-scale work on fabric, measuring 3.5 x 10 m with drawings directly made on the surface with textile pens, crayons and dyes.

In all these new drawings we find extreme violence, rawness, brutality in combination with intimacy, sensuality, tenderness. These are the kinds of environments we have come to associate with Marie Jacotey's work. It seems that for Marie the drawing offers up space for the setting of a tension, with its anchors either in relationships - be these specific or symbolic – or in the opposite experiences of loneliness and solitude.

There are many mediums (drawing, painting, sewing, printmaking) on and through which Marie Jacotey has imposed her preoccupations and messages. It puts in play a kind of system of correspondences where unexpected associations between elements set new light on each one of them. Marie's perspectives – though insistently manual in their making – reference the world of cinema and slo-mo, the photographer's point and shoot, identifying an artist who has come of age in the smartphone world with its prevalent verbs – zoom, scroll, tap, drag, swipe etc.

To date Marie has always used coloured pencil on paper or plaster blocks of varying sizes. She has worked on Japanese paper several times and its porous surface is an ideal recipient for dry pastel, giving rise to the velvet texture and vibrant colours in these works.

The audience will find a rush of different sources in the new drawings. In the landscapes alone is rural Normandy, the English Coast at Seven Sisters, Brighton, and Hastings, the grandeur of the Scottish Highlands and its remote seaside towns. Austere architectures of what seem to be sprawling prisons or asylums are a tangled combination of Mies Van der Rohe, Charles and Ray Eames, American Standard motels, even Alcatraz. All of this makes a loose scrapbook of real places, a combination of memories kept and photographs taken and saved.

Similarly, the repeated patterns of wallpapers, vases, textiles and other surfaces are a collage of influences, some with very definite sources (Ken Price, Guy Bourdin, Voysey demonstrate the variety) while others are the work of Marie's imagination or derive from her absorption of images online. There are three clear series within the larger body of work - "tennis court", "stained glass", and "abstraction jubilatoire" - sub groups where Marie returns to a particular patterned iconography a number of times, creating free variations from maximum zoom. Marie has always been interested in abstraction and a clean break from pure figuration at times, she says, paradoxically helps her inform it. In the exhibition context, the combination of nonrepresentational works with narrative serves as a respiration between scenographies.

In this world of broken souvenirs, sleepless nights, horizons ahead burning, no last kiss, and a dawn loaded with fear, as one might imagine the portrait makes infrequent appearances. The exhibition however includes a few, and Marie's only self-portrait to date. These particular drawings behave in the body of work - and in the show - like the small identity pictures we used to carry in our wallets of loved ones - stiff gazes lost in a void.

Alongside her own practice Marie has always sought out alliances in the worlds of architecture, fashion, poetry and other disciplines and from these have come an additional strand of her practice. Continuing Marie's long-standing embrace of collaboration (she has made drawings for Assemble for their Turner Prize winning Granby Workshop project, she was commissioned by McQueen to make new works to complement their accessories, and by The Guardian Review for the front cover of their Saturday Supplement) the new pastel works have been specially mounted and framed for the exhibition by designers Soft Baroque.

The exhibition also coincides with the publication of *Nights of Poor Sleep* a collaborative publication between Marie Jacotey and poet Rachael Allen. The book is an extended series of responses and engagements between the two artists' work, showing a critical and creative engagement between the interconnected forms and processes of drawing and writing poetry. Treating image and text with equal weight, and illustrating how one informs and builds upon the other, *Nights of Poor Sleep* plays with traditional formats and contexts of reading/viewing, offering a fascinating and illuminating insight into the work of these two young female artists. Published by Test Centre in a limited edition run, and designed by Traven T. Croves, the book continues and expands Test Centre's engagement with interdisciplinary poetic practices and commitment to experimentation in poetry publishing.

Marie Jacotey (b. 1988 Paris) has exhibited her work internationally. This is her third solo show at the gallery here in London (following *Everything I used to love about us is dead* in 2015 and *Dolly* in 2014). She is working on her first animation *Filles bleues / Peur blanche* (*Blue girls / White fear*) written by Lola Halifa-Legrand. The animation won two awards at the Annecy Festival in June 2017 and will be produced by MIYU productions in 2018. She is also included with a newly commissioned work in Marcelle Joseph's group exhibition *You see me like a UFO* (9 Sep through 7 October).