

## CLAUDIO COLTORTI

### DIVARIO

07.06.2019 – 20.07.2019



#### Divario By Julie Crenn

In Naples, Claudio Coltorti studied ancient and modern literature at university. He got bored and worked in bars and restaurants. In 2010, he left Naples to settle in Paris. He ended up back in bars and restaurants. In the evening, he would draw. Small formats, ink on paper, splodges intertwined with pencil drawings. Encounters took him to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris where he studied for five years. In Jean-Michel Alberola's studio, Claudio Coltorti was surrounded by painters. Seduced by the curiousness of this medium, he took to brushes and to colour. At the same time, he was really shocked by the discovery of Francis Bacon's works at the Pompidou Centre. These bits of his story give an introduction and some perspective to his pictorial exploration.

At the Maia Muller Gallery, Claudio Coltorti brings together a collection of paintings made in 2019. Two slightly older works infiltrate the selection. *Uomo di niente* (2018), "the man of nothing", was his first attempt to represent the human figure in his work. Until then, he drew and painted objects; "what surrounds the human"<sup>1</sup>. He observed and depicted the elements of a daily decor that implied a human presence. This presence was simply suggested by a cup of coffee or an enigmatic screen. *Uomo di niente* features an orange silhouette arranged in a defined space. Even if the silhouette, expressed as a line, is clearly drawn, the body is just colour and abstraction. The piece heralds a new pictorial exploration that mixes the figurative and the abstract with work like *Curtain* (2019) and *Peppè the fishmonger* (2019). Here, the curtain and the kitchen are pretexts to explore materials, colours and light. Work with the human figure leads him to paint scenes that he recalls from his own memories, or sometimes invented or well-observed situations. Without models, he paints with a certain distance to these subjects. Through the series of work, he builds a directory of motifs: a cigarette, heavy hands, a notebook, ankle boots, a cup of coffee.

Inspired by Renaissance art, ancient Greek sculpture and the works of artists such as Louis Fratino or Lenz Geerk, Claudio Coltorti seeks to achieve "painting that belongs to painting". Painting that is not only defined by the era in which it exists, but instead within a history of painting without defined time limits. He says he is looking for "a temporality that is similar to ours in order to see reality differently". It is through this gap in perception, memory and time that one finds the poetic dimension of his work. The paintings – on canvas, wood or paper – present scenes of daily life: a person sleeping at the counter in a cafe, a couple embracing, the bottom of a skirt, a woman who smokes. Still through this gap, we find the clues of our time: a smartphone, a football field, the metro, the pattern of a cloud printed on a sweater, a car, a computer. The artist works with the light generated by screens; the way it radiates on faces and objects.

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes are from a phone conversation with the artist on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

The light is never brilliant, or aggressive, on the contrary, it is almost completely dimmed. It exists enough to define the feature and to reveal bodies and objects. It plunges us into an intimacy and an interiority that is intensified by the choice of extremely small formats. "The paintings are objects, they fit in the hand". Between the historical and the contemporary, between the sfumato and the thick smoke of a cigarette, Claudio Coltorti works the complexity of a painting that exists in the gap, that of an almost indefinable space-time open to our subjective narratives.

## CLAUDIO COLTORTI

Born in 1989. Lives and works in Greece, Athens

### Expositions:

2018 : *Beaux Amis*, Wendygallery, Paris

2018 : *Claud'lo*, duo show with Io Burgard, Galerie Maïa Muller

2018-: *La ligne rouge, chapitre 3*, Galerie Maïa Muller

2017 : *Seconde Ligne*, Galerie Maïa Muller

2017 : *Hôtel Europa*, Vilnius Art Fair. Curator: Théo-Mario Coppola

2016 : *Group show*, Global Art Project, Château de Chambord/ Exposition du Prix Showakai 2016, Galerie Nichido, Tokyo, Japon

2015 : *FFCOMEBLOT*, Clovis XV, Brussels, Belgium

2014 : *Confort Moderne*, Clovis XV, Brussels, Belgium

2013 : *Space Capsule*, Galerie Vanessa Quang, Paris

2011 : *Exposition Prix du dessin David Weill*, Académie de France, Paris

Formation : DNSAP, Congratulations of the jury, Beaux-Arts Paris

Prix : Felicità 17, Paris, Multimedia Award.