



Claire Fahys

*RODEO*

April 28th - May 28th 2022

Claire Fahys' career is as acrobatic as the rodeos she paints today. She has traveled extensively, and her multiple lives in London, Berlin and Mexico have nourished her painting. Her new paintings depict a global phenomenon, which crystallizes both aesthetic concerns and a desire for rebellion. These meetings, commonly called rodeos, and associated with large suburban complexes, are held in the four corners of the planet. The participants broadcast and relay their respective exploits through photos or videos posted on social networks. It is thus a real bike life that explodes on the surface of the canvas.

The movement would have started in Baltimore or Harlem, then it spread to other countries like France. It has established a repertoire of figures - wheelies, 12 o'clock... - performed on a motocross bike (forbidden on the road), quad or scooter. This is a subversive and extremely dangerous discipline, for those who practice it but also for the others. Of course, the helmet is optional.

Rodeo requires a maximum commitment, much like art, otherwise it's guaranteed death; and nobody, obviously, wants to die. It is a question of self-affirmation, as when, as a teenager, one comes to write hip hop texts, self-staging. Bike life enthusiasts compose a community which has its own culture, its codes, which draw undergrounds networks.

Claire Fahys wonders: how to translate this life impulse into painting? She represents the speed, paints as fast as her models rush in the rearview mirror. She captures their choreography, a certain grace of movement, the virtuosity of the rear wheels and the search for a point of balance. This universe has modified her painting. Her relationship to speed, but also her palette, because streetwear, the saturated colors of motorcycles, all aspects of the bike life are very codified, a bit like the Palio horse races in Tuscany.

Moreover, the term rodeo raises questions, and the analogy between the horse and the mechanical mounts will not have escaped anyone. The word "rodeo" comes from the Spanish "rodear", which means to turn, to encircle (around the cattle that one wanted to gather, mark and sell). Today's aficionados go on long "barode" through the city, a modern form of urban rodeo. Welcome to a world where the smell of burning tires and overheated carburetors wafts through the air.

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