

BIENVENU STEINBERG & J

Marti Cormand

trasllat

March 30 - April 29, 2023

Bienvenu Steinberg and J is pleased to present *trasllat*, Marti Cormand's ninth exhibition with the gallery. The show conveys childhood and intimate connections through a series of oil paintings and a sculpture.

Throughout his work, Cormand has manifested the need to document and preserve against the violence of history and the limitations of our institutional and societal memory. His latest project, *They Might Be Giants*, reflected on the architecture of power through a series of large-scale drawings of monumental doors. Earlier on, his *Postcards to AZ* were symbolic excavations and distant iterations of lost masterworks during the Nazi regime.

Here, instead of evoking a distant past through the lens of nostalgia, Cormand applies an extraordinary level of attention to familiar objects until they become as alive as specimens under a microscope. Like a forensic detective, he examines particles and combines elements until a new reality emerges. He stitches the past with a brush and oil paint until the familiar becomes unfamiliar. The distance between the home lived in and the home left behind becomes a space for fortuitous encounters where household objects are painted on other household objects: used bars of soap painted on book covers become a portrait gallery rendered with meticulous care.

In *trasllat*, his most personal project to date, he materializes his family history to render the past present. In 2019, Cormand traveled from his home in New York to Barcelona to help his parents move from their apartment in the city to a family farmhouse in the country. The move required an excavation through objects accumulated over many years. On-site and then back in New York, Cormand has been painting those interconnected spaces and things ever since. Since the move, his father passed away and his mother returned to the city but the objects and spaces remain.

The largest painting in the show, *Titella 3*, is a monument to a marionette that Cormand made with his brother when they were children. The puppet is rendered at the scale of a seven years old child. Although it never worked as a marionette, the intensity of the process of trying to grasp the complex engineering of the threads is captured in the painting. Made of cloth, with the air of a James Castle character, the actual puppet is no bigger than a hand.

Memoria is the reconstruction of a specific room based on found photographs. Cormand's parents covered the wall of a room in a green chalkboard paint so that their four sons could draw without limitations, spending hours tracing and erasing tirelessly. "*From conversations with my family about their memories of their rooms, I rebuilt the space as a maquette. Memories are not partial or objective, they are affected by the external factors of the present. The inside*

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of the room can only be seen through the door, so the viewer is peeking into the secret life of the past". Reality and fiction collide, opening a path into the present.

Born in Barcelona in 1970, Marti Cormand lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Selected exhibitions include: Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2020); Gregory Allicar Museum of Art, Fort Collins, Colorado (2018); Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, CO; Wilding Cran Gallery, Los Angeles, California (2017); Galería Cayón, Madrid (2015); Galería Casado Santapau, Madrid (2014); Josée Bienvenu Gallery, New York (2013); Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Maine (2011); Arranz-Bravo Foundation, Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona; Galerie Lelong, New York (2010); Aldrich Emerging Artist Award Show, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2007). Public Collections include: Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid; The Alford Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College, Winter Park, FL; Caja Madrid, Madrid; Fundacio La Caixa, Barcelona; Fundacio Vila Casas, Barcelona.