

Giulia Andreani, *Cold Painting*

macLYON



Giulia Andreani, *Nudeltisch II (Spaghetti, bitch)*, 2022

Acrylic on canvas - 124 x 183 cm

Private collection - Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin/Paris/London/Marfa

Photo: Charles Duprat - © Adagp, Paris, 2025

Press visit:

Wednesday, 4th March 2026

Exhibition presented
on the 3rd floor of the museum

Curator:

Marilou Laneuville

Head of exhibitions and editions
of macLYON

The macLYON invites Giulia Andreani for a solo exhibition covering about ten years of her work. Entitled *Cold Painting*, the exhibition traces the development of Andreani's painting, which explores the representation of different kinds of power in the 20th century, whether in war, art, official history, or marginal history.

With her keen sense of history, painter Giulia Andreani has brought figurative painting back onto the French art scene. Her work retraces the narratives of history and the struggles of the 20th century, which she reinterprets through political and feminist, as well as marginal, figures. Her paintings unearth vestiges of the past and highlight their resonance with current societal and political issues.

The exhibition

The exhibition is divided into three successive chapters, exploring the artist's fascination with "grand narrative" history, the big history of power and domination; "minor narrative" history, which brings to light the major social role of overlooked, voiceless figures from the past; and the incorporation of collective memory into art history. Giulia Andreani casts a highly personal, critical eye on hierarchies and the role of historical figures and artists in society.

With more than fifty works, including paintings and watercolours in a wide range of formats, on display in a specially designed scenography, *Cold Painting* reflects the socially engaged themes that are so important to the artist, as well as the often ironic humour that infuses her work. A previously unexhibited, large-scale painting crowns the research she has carried out for the exhibition and confirms Giulia Andreani's position as one of the leading artists of her generation.

The title of the exhibition, *Cold Painting*, echoes the artist's reflections on the influence of political contexts on painting, particularly the Cold War (1947–1991), a historical period that Giulia Andreani has been particularly drawn to.

'I feel very concerned about what happens around me and I often react emotionally; my painting expresses the urgency of the times. Despite the fact that I work slowly and in spite of my seemingly very smooth brushwork, it's actually the work of an angry painter.'

The artist

Giulia Andreani (b. 1985 in Mestre, Italy) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts (Accademia di Belle Arti), Venice in 2008. She moved to Paris, where she studied contemporary art history at the Sorbonne University; her Masters dissertation was on the Leipzig School, a subject of particular interest to her. In 2017, she was awarded a residency at the Villa Medici, the French Academy in Rome, where she stayed for a year. She was nominated for the Prix Marcel Duchamp in 2022.

Giulia Andreani explores the omissions of collective memory by restoring visibility to overlooked and marginalised figures from the past. Research is an integral part of her work as an artist; she carries out methodical, in-depth archival research to find photographs, texts, historical documents, letters and still images from films, studying them carefully before giving them a fresh interpretation in her paintings. Her works are inspired by forgotten fragments of history, which she uses to revive the memory of people whose faces have been wiped from the slate. With great freedom, Giulia Andreani appropriates images that have influenced history in order to invent different possible narratives and interpretations.

There is a form of defiance and protest in Giulia Andreani's works that reflects the political commitment of her approach to painting. She challenges symbolic representations of power, whether it be political, religious, military, or social, by depicting figures, images, or narrative scenes that epitomise established authority, but whose legitimacy she swiftly sets about subverting.

'Unlike Gerhard Richter, who said he wanted to use painting as a means to photography, what I want to do is use photography as a means to painting.'

The distinctive quality of Giulia Andreani's painting lies in her deliberate decision to work with shades of a single colour: Payne's grey. Developed by English watercolourist William Payne in the 18th century, Payne's grey is a colour that heightens chiaroscuro effects and the interplay of light and shadows.

- Giulia Andreani is represented by Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin/Paris/London/Marfa.



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