

## **Mathilde Rosier**

(Paris, 1973)

Mathilde Rosier moves casually between a wide range of expressive languages in which painting, video, installation and performance come together in an interplay of references and self-citation. Her main source of inspiration is the world of dance, of music and of theatre, with a repertoire of costumes, choreography, masks and codified rituals. The characters featured in her portraits and the subjects that appear in the scenes take their viewers by the hand and lead them into a suspended reality which calls for intimacy, silence and a certain length of time in order to be appreciated. Concerned with offering an unusual point of view on the everyday conditions capable of wrong-footing a number of our certainties, Rosier often proposes figures hanging head down: a dimension that moves away from any form of logic, which destabilises us and makes us wonder whether the portraits depict dancers or acrobats about to fall into the void. While painting and collage afford her greater freedom to experiment with the representation of movement, in her performances she does however try to replicate the undertakings of her protagonists. In *Abstract Attraction* (2014) two dancers move, crossing steps, exploiting the blocks of colour of their tights to simulate the intersecting of bodies and adopt positions at the very edge of possibility. In the video *In Revolution* (2016), it is instead the rotation of the camera that gives the impression that the performers are dancing on the ceiling, at the end of a sensational struggle with the force of gravity.

The hiding of faces is a recurrent element in the French artist's production, carried out by blurring the strokes with quick and undefined movements of the brush, or in her performance works, by providing the dancers with masks and head coverings. This allows her to do away with any definition of identity, time or space, and to operate with greater spontaneity in an upside-down world. A similar strategy is also deployed in the series of painting works *Blind Swim* (2016–2017), characterised by the presence of strange anthropomorphic figures. They are beings midway between men, animals and plants: some have their facial features cancelled; others have heads that are shapeless protuberances, while yet others have none at all. In these works there is still a strong echo of dance, as may be sensed from the arms and legs in movement and the feet on tiptoe. Nevertheless, apart from the presence of the limbs, their bodies feature precious few human attributes. Instead they are covered in something rather like feathers, leaves or shells, and once more some are depicted head-down, as if floating against the light-blue background of the sea or sky. It is unclear whether this is their usual state or whether the work captures them during a process of metamorphosis. Indeed, in the world painted by Rosier, everything seems to be something else and never the same twice, for it is enveloped in a state of profound alteration that turns the tables on rules and habits.

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