

## *THE NIGHT THE WIND LEARNED TO DANCE*

**FANNY ALLIÉ**

Curated by Chiara Ianeselli

Opening on Thursday 24.4 at 19.00

24.04 - 25.05.2025

Galleria Giovanni Bonelli is pleased to present *The Night the Wind Learned to Dance*, the first solo show in Italy of **Fanny Allié** (Montpellier, 1981).

Her work is characterized by an intensive use of unexpected materials, including found and discarded fabrics, originating from contexts—and possibly purposes and destinies—that are vastly different from one another. Precious fabrics like brocade, silk, and Egyptian cotton meet denim in a horizontal combination of identities. Sewing thread, jacquard, lamé, Belgian linen, crêpe de chine, velvet, organza, taffeta, chiffon, tartan, tweed, gabardine, georgette, rayon, mikado, neoprene, viscose, piqué inhabit the works. These materials become the substance for creating labyrinths, vases, bushes, landscapes, and characters—clothing itself, in a continuous play of perspectives and textures. Tiny, precious treasures sometimes nestle within the stitching, hidden in plain sight.

The artworks, volatile sci-fi storyboards, dense with the purest fantasy, depict scenes from a suspended world where characters, always in dancing, swaying poses, tell the story of a human condition that exists between the past and the present, among wizards, lap-dance dancers, and pseudo-drones. These bodies, always full of an awkward grace, move as if prisoners of memories and desires, yet also as bearers of shared, almost cinematic experiences. Scenes coming from life in a large city like New York, where the artist has lived for decades. Masked men look at the stars, perhaps heroes, while their colleagues in the tapestries perform Olympic dives not yet allowed, or ancient choreographies in majestic bows. Sometimes, windows or transparencies open in the works—almost gateways that allow entry or exit from the scene. The curtain rises and falls.

The pieces, delicately traced with a combination of color and sewing thread, also become delicate silhouettes, their shadows lost in time. A contemporary reflection on abandonment and the recovery of materials, memories, and identities, expressed through a poetic language that flirts luxuriously with the purest abstraction. Fanny Allié invites us to reflect on shared, invisible, mythologies born in an urban context, immersing us in the power of collective memory and contemporary fairy tales. But who is the storyteller, if not the observer themselves?

Often populated by human characters, in some cases they become instead pure geometric spaces: houses that have gone mad, traces of conduits, or architectural structures: cartographic tapestries yet to be inhabited. *Partition #1* and *Partition#2* and *Interiors*, made in 2019 present precisely a strongly abstract character, accentuated even by the titles themselves. Here, the composition becomes architectural: frames and contours trace and in turn generate rooms, compartments, relics of domestic spaces. Textile textures, small works themselves, hold stories, while objects and fragments with different patterns - hands, faces, lace - surface like apparitions. Titles, in the artist's world derive from details, real or imaginary, that can be seen in the work.

Stitching is for Allié a way of drawing, and the fabric is not only support, but the very body of the image. This act of describing the world is transformed into an act of reconfiguring it through the reuse of materials. These works are inscribed in the tradition of contemporary textile art, in which the artist breaks down and renews technique through a kind of repair of the existing. Amending, sewing, becomes in Allié a dimension that is totally active and not devoted to contemplation. As described by Rozsika Parker in *The Subversive Stitch* (2017), the extraordinary femininity of sewing holds a millennial history, in which the artist consciously inserts herself.

Allié's work engages with a rich genealogy of textile art, drawing connections to pioneers such as Anni Albers, Louise Bourgeois, Marisa Merz, and Maria Lai, while also resonating with contemporary artists who are critically reconfiguring the technique, including Sheila Hicks, Amelia Bennett, Tschabalala Self, Maria Madeira, Małgorzata Mirga-Tas, and Britta Marakatt-Labba. In *Fray: Art and Textile Politics* (2017) Julia Bryan-Wilson has emphasized the role of reappropriation of extraordinarily complex issues in the queer and postcolonial sphere that weaving art is. In Allié's work, engaging with textiles becomes an act of spatial appropriation and regeneration—a deeply political gesture rooted in a commitment to the collective dimension. Other works such as *Sunflower, Halo, Angels, 200* are constructed on a different medium, a mesh, a grid that becomes at the same time, as in Rosalind Krauss' text (*Grids*, 1979), a tool both for understanding the world and for its reinterpretation.

Her works are subtle, yet powerful narratives, echoed in the cracks of the streets, the forgotten alleys, the bodies dancing in front of fire hydrants or in abandoned subway tunnels. Each dance step, each salvage fabric is an act of resistance, a silent struggle against oblivion, an invitation to imagine the reconfiguration of a labyrinth. And within this maze it is possible to feel the steps of that secret dance that the wind has learned to dance.

## **Fanny Allié**

Fanny Allié was born in Montpellier, South of France. She received her Master's Degree from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie in Arles, and in 2005 she moved to New York City.

Her work has been exhibited in group exhibitions such as Princeton University, Equity Gallery, Hyatt Centric (Philadelphia), DOT Art, A.I.R. Gallery, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, Fresh Window, Chashama and St Eustache Church (Paris, France) have organized solo exhibitions and public installations of her work. Tappan Gallery, Owen James Gallery, NYU/Gallatin Gallery, Dorsky Gallery, Freight + Volume, BRIC Rotunda Gallery, Dekalb Gallery/Pratt Institute, UConn University, Mana Contemporary Hamburg Museum of Arts and Crafts, The Bronx Museum, Teachers College Columbia University.

Fanny Allié is the recipient of various fellowships and residencies including AIM (Bronx Museum), BRIC Lab Fellowship, Emergency Grant (Foundation for Contemporary Arts), A.I.R. Fellowship Program, Robert Blackburn Printmaking SIP Fellowship, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts Studio Program, Yaddo Residency, Dieu Donn  Workspace Residency, NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship (Craft/Sculpture), MacDowell Fellowship, Puffin Foundation Grant, Wildacres Residency and National Arts Club Artist Fellowship.

Her work has appeared in the New York Times, The Guardian, Time Out, ARTnews, NY Magazine, Brooklyn Magazine, Hyperallergic, Le Monde Diplomatique, Blouin Art Info, DNA Info, Marie Claire Italy, AM New York among others.