

## SYLVIE FLEURY

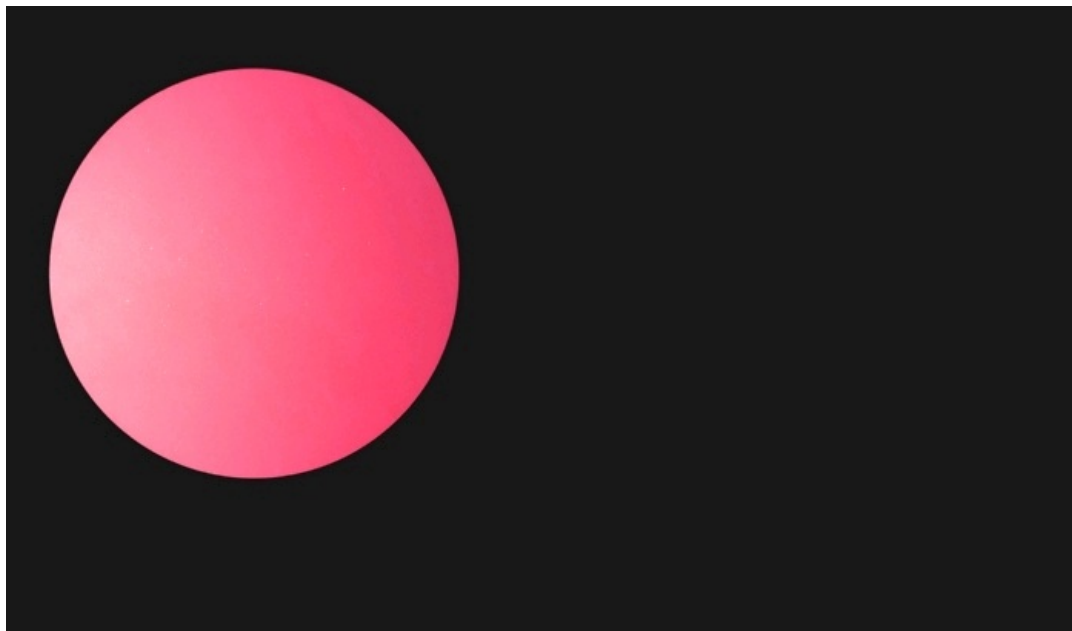
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### PALETTES OF SHADOWS

PARIS MARAIS

27 Nov 2018 - 05 Jan 2019

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**Opening: 27 November 2018, 6-8pm  
with the artist present**

*I've always wanted to transform reality, to transform everyday objects. That's perhaps why I am interested in fashion. Fashion trends reflect our time, but also produce codes that I've always wanted to appropriate and play with.*

Sylvie Fleury

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Sylvie Fleury. Delving into the tradition of the ready-made and borrowing visual elements from Pop and Minimal art, in this new series the artist further explores the codes of femininity and masculinity and those of art and fashion in the light of contemporary consumerism. With her monumental makeup palettes, Fleury questions the structures of desire and power attached to cosmetic objects and investigates the grey areas of a pictorial genre often considered as a hybrid between painting and sculpture: the shaped canvas.

A self-proclaimed feminist, her new paintings are intended as a feminist counterpoint to the paradigm defined in the exhibition organised by Lawrence Alloway at the Guggenheim Museum, New York in 1964. Entitled *The Shaped Canvas*, the exhibition featured works by the advocates – all male – of this new trend: Paul Feeley, Sven Lukin, Richard Smith, Frank Stella, Neil Williams.

The minimal language, which here translates into the repetition of the same elements, the reduction of forms and the use of industrial materials, is in line with the practice initiated by her male predecessors. The different colours contained within dedicated zones of varying depth contrast sharply with the background in a manner not dissimilar to Colour Field painting. They also express a sense of duality and balance that connect them to Taoist principles. "Throughout my work and exhibitions I have used principles of Taoism – yin and yang, masculine and feminine – as a source of inspiration, more than my personal life. [...] I have often turned toward American Minimalist art because it abounds with machismo and emblems of good taste."

Since her early *Shopping Bags* installation (1991-96) of readymade sculptures, where she displaced luxury brand bags out of their original context, her interest in appropriating objects has always been a striking feature of her artistic practice. "I've always wanted to transform reality, to transform everyday objects. That's perhaps why I am interested in fashion. Fashion trends reflect our time, but also produce codes that I've always wanted to appropriate and play with." Hung on the wall like abstract paintings, the works are also a critical response to mainstream art historical narratives and a commentary on the systems of recognition and legitimacy at play within the art world itself. "When I used bags from places where it was cool to shop at the time, it was also a way to refer to the art market and to the fact that gallery only exhibited artists whose names appeared in Artforum," Fleury recalls.

To this, Fleury adds a critical note on the increasing customisation of our lifestyle: "Everything is custom-made today. Exhibiting your work is almost like customising a space - wearing clothes, applying makeup, getting a tattoo...these activities allow us to customise ourselves. [...] Today, fashion is just another tool that I can use when talking about feminism, politics, and fetishism, or if I want to add a slightly macho, frivolous tone to an artwork's voice."

These new paintings fully embrace their hybrid status, between customised objects and serious art. Beautifully streamlined, their sleek, yet sensuous and at times glittery surfaces eventually engage with strategies of seduction, while leaving open the question: for what reason do we find an object attractive?

Biography:

Sylvie Fleury (b. 1961) lives and works in Geneva. Her work is present in the world's most prestigious collections, including The Museum of Modern Art (New York, USA), Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), MAMCO (Geneva, Switzerland), Haus Konstruktiv (Zurich, Switzerland). The Swiss Institute in Rome will organize a solo exhibition of her work in the spring of 2019. In 2018, Sylvie Fleury was awarded the Prix Meret Oppenheim.

[WATCH THE EXHIBITION VIDEO](#)