

CLAIRE ADELFFANG

LA PETITE ÉCURIE

PARIS MARAIS

20 May 2017 - 17 Jun 2017



Opening: Saturday 20 May, 6-8pm

The artist will be present.

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac Paris is pleased to announce the fourth solo exhibition of Claire Adelfang.

Claire Adelfang's photographic practice—notably recognizable through the square format of her images and the frontality of her compositions—unravels the strata of history. Over the course of her exploration of the Château de Versailles domain, the artist was able to enter the Petite Ecurie, home to the Louvre Museum's fascinating collection of casts and sculptures. They appear as gods and allegories of fossilised gestures, as if imprisoned in the depths of the Tartarus. In a manner similar to that of her renowned predecessor, Eugène Atget (1857-1927)—who walked the domain's many paths capturing the silent and still statues for 25 years—the artist seems to pay particular attention to the suspension of time that has now taken hold of the emblematic hallways, as well as the paths that have been deserted by power and its courtiers. If Claire Adelfang's photographs are in fact located in this legacy of recording the traces of civilization, they are nonetheless extracted from a documentary process in order to deliver a humanistic message. The photographer fiercely emphasizes the silence that gives tangible form to historical transformations and the temporality of power.

Unbeknownst to them, the casts and sculptures I have tried to photograph stage a scene and even lend themselves to narrative composition. Some of these photographs evoke a sort of chaos, close to apocalyptic images. Other images, on the contrary, call for dialogue, dreaming, and contemplation.

Through these photographs, we are also allowed a view into our history—that of Antiquity, and in particular the Greek and Roman civilization, which constitute as a real mirror for humanity. The casts, which are present in the Gypsothèque at Versailles also form the memory and testimony of lost civilizations.

The presence of the giant—the Dioscuri of Quirinale—accentuates the monumentality of the Petite Ecurie and emphasizes even further the quasi-mystical atmosphere that reigns there. In this place, which is bearer of secrets, the light and shadows contribute to the theatricality of what plays out between the characters, and, thus, this oneiric place exerts real magic.

Claire Adelfang is a 2010 graduate of Paris' ENSBA. Her work has already been exhibited in several public and private institutions such as l'Institut Culturel Bernard Magrez in Bordeaux and the Musée des Beaux Arts d'Orléans, which held her first retrospective in 2016. Her photographic work has been noted, particularly for her Prix Meurice 2013 and Prix Mastercard 2013 nominations. Her video entitled *Les Forges* was the subject of an installation in the Louvre Oratory during the Nuit Blanche 2013.

The photographs, which form this series, were commissioned by the public establishment of the museum and the national domain of Versailles.