

## Hervé Mikaeloff, guest curator for the focus on the French scene at Art Paris 2021 “Portraiture and figuration, a focus on the French scene”



© Mazen Saggar

Since 2018, Art Paris has been supporting the French scene by asking an exhibition curator to turn a subjective, historical and critical eye on a selection of specific projects by French artists presented by participating galleries. After François Piron in 2018, Camille Morineau and her association AWARE in 2019 and Gaël Charbau in 2020, it will be the turn of independent exhibition curator Hervé Mikaeloff to share his perspective on the French scene as part of the 2021 edition of Art Paris that will be held in the new ephemeral Grand Palais on the Champ-de-mars. Entitled “Portraiture and figuration, a focus on the French scene”, it will bring together some twenty artists around the theme of the portrait and the renewal of figurative painting in France.

According to Hervé Mikaeloff: *“In a “post-medium” era, art is more than ever questioning its relationship to the image. In my focus on the French scene, by choosing the theme of portraiture I am aiming to show the renewal of figurative art. Above and beyond a simple stylistic effect, portraits are a means by which artists can develop a new relationship with the world. They act both as a standard bearer for each person’s differences and an instrument of integration. In his thinking, Emmanuel Levinas distinguishes between form, the subject’s anatomical aspects and the face, which rends the sensible. Its appearance does not divulge everything and yet sometimes it is through the artist’s brushstrokes that we can make out fragments of truth. The face is the starting point for considering how we think about our relationship with the other; behind the other’s face there is all of humanity. At the end of the day, by portraying Man we are looking into the nature of our own responsibilities to the world”.*

Hervé Mikaeloff is an independent exhibition curator and consultant for numerous private collections and companies in France and abroad. As part of his focus on the French scene, Art Paris 2021 has invited him to write a text about each artist that will situate their work in terms of the history of art.