

JEFF KOWATCH

Man Jok

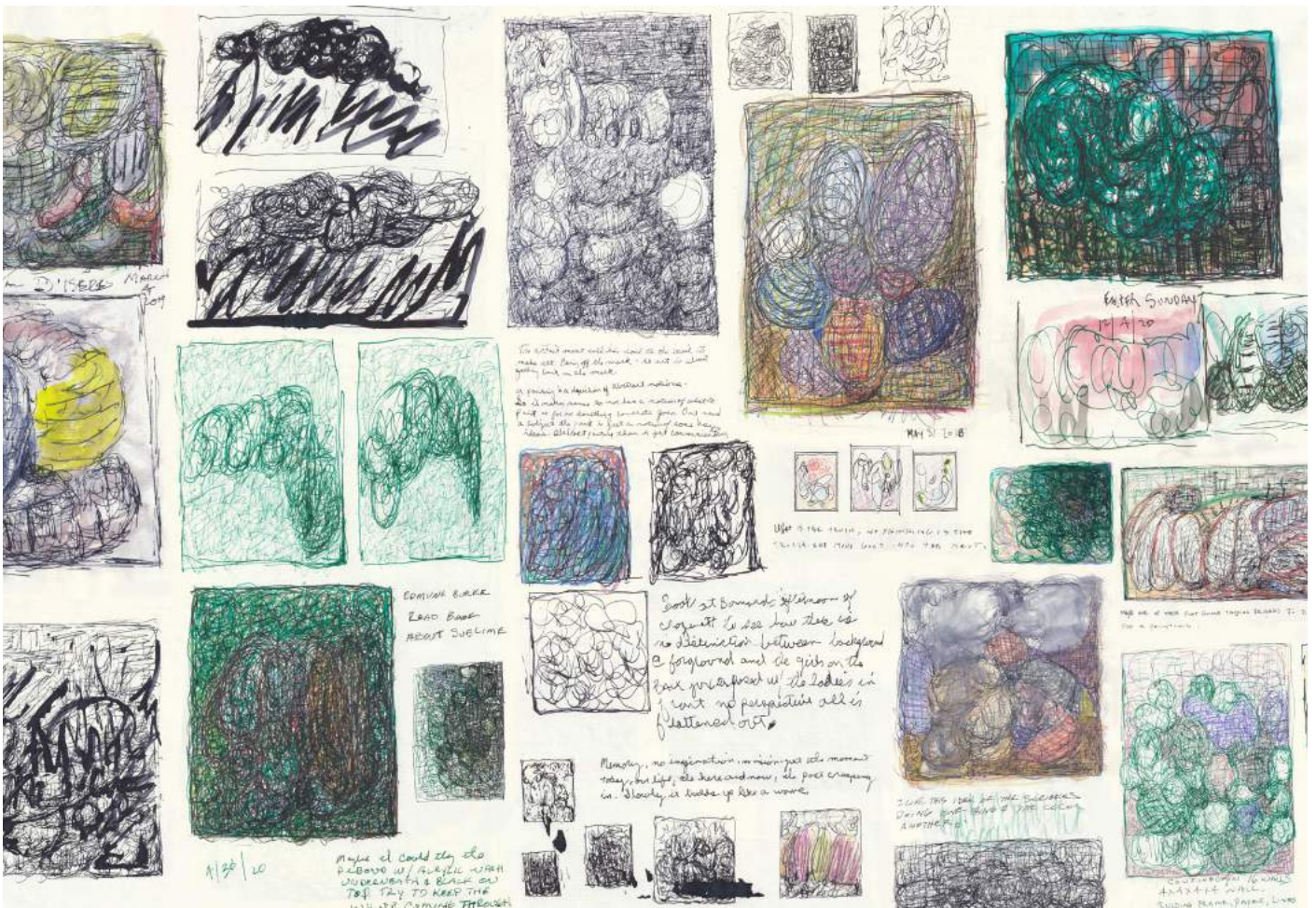
EXHIBITION

from September 9th to October 23rd, 2021

PREVIEW

September 9th 5 PM - 9 PM

An exhibition in three different places



Jeff Kowatch's Notebooks (Facsimile)



GALERIE
LA FOREST DIVONNE
PARIS + BRUSSELS

ODRADEK

SUMMARY

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Jeff Kowatch, *Work in progress* », 2018-2021 , Oil on linen, 284x203cm

1. PRESS RELEASE

An exhibition in three different places:

Galerie Faider - Galerie La Forest Divonne - Espace ODRADEK

Jeff Kowatch - Man Jok

From September 9th to October 23rd

From September 9th to October 23rd, 2021, the artist Jeff Kowatch invites visitors to circulate between three exhibition spaces: the art galleries Faider and La Forest Divonne, and the ODRADEK exhibition space. A journey through which the artist exposes himself in the diversity of his personality and his work, revealing the sometimes contradictory energies that cross both the man and the artist. *Man Jok* is the Korean name given to Jeff Kowatch during his initiation to Zen meditation in the 1990s. It means «Complete stillness», a state Jeff Kowatch seeks in his life and in his works.

The galleries Faider and La Forest Divonne will exhibit recent works by Jeff Kowatch, created between 2018 and 2021, with the novelty of confronting face to face in the same rooms the oil paintings and the oil bars on aluminum the artist calls “drawings”. These two techniques carried out in parallel are anchored in the same practice of superimpositions of layers and colors in the long time (up to three years of continuous work for some canvases). However, the impression they give off seems to be opposite: large glazes on canvas, all inwardness and padded silences on the one hand, and «drawings» full of ardor and lively energy on the other.

The ODRADEK space, a place of exhibition and debates established by philosophy professor Simone Schuiten, will present paintings of Kowatch’s youth, a selection of the artist’s notebooks and will screen the film *Going Around in Circles*. This collection of archives and documents will allow the public to get closer to the creation and to better understand what guided Jeff Kowatch through the successive stages of his career : from the rehearsal of the same Chekhov scene three years in a row, to the intensive practice of Zen meditation for fifteen years, always with painting as a backdrop, which became his sole and devouring activity throughout the 1990s. The common thread? The search for the perfect point of balance, that fragile and magnificent moment expressed in the colored plenitude of his works; whether organic, in the «drawings» or meditative, in the oils on canvas.

On the occasion of this triptych exhibition, Jeff Kowatch publishes a translation of a text written in his youth (*Rare Book* 1985-1990), which sheds light on the genesis of his art, and the first tortured steps of his artistic journey. He also unveils a short film, *Going Around in Circles* in which the camera follows him in 2021, a solitary walker on a winter evening, in the empty alleys of a large park. He confides in us about his path, from theater to Zen meditation, from learning to paint by tirelessly copying the old masters, to this first painting done for himself in 1989, entitled «Leave me alone», which will be exceptionally presented to the public at the ODRADEK space.

Through these three joint exhibitions, Jeff Kowatch lays himself bare.

2. EDITORIAL

Jeff Kowatch, in search of the universal

Very young, inspired by a mystical faith, Jeff Kowatch prays to God to give all men the same enlightenment.

Attracted by painting and the great religious themes, the young man develops a need for spirituality by symbolizing in an increasingly abstract way Christ on the cross, the Virgin Mary and the apostles.

Gaining in maturity, the artist renounces the foundations of Western mimesis to give himself, as intensely as possible, to the pursuit of a universal spirituality. Whether through meditation or the practice of Zen Buddhism, Jeff Kowatch is in search of balance and harmony to transmit through painting.

Refusing to be figurative, he keeps the subject matter, covering it with successive layers of oil glazes. The metanarratives (Moby Dick, Don Quixote,...) continue to mobilize him, just like the existential anguish that haunts him. Both are converted in his painting into points of balance. On the canvas, conflicts disappear in favor of colors full of light vibrating in unison with this quest for universality.

The exact correspondence with things, the identity to oneself are abandoned in favor of a permanent movement that circular organic forms evoke.

The colors then at work in Jeff Kowatch's thinking and practice reveal the existential dimension of his paintings. Routing and opening sight, large formats favor a conversion of our way of perceiving things.

In search of a vital energy and a form of intimacy that can be shared, Jeff Kowatch tirelessly offers us a vibratory song of weightless colors. These allow him to implant a receptive device open to the world by the matter and the light which immerse it in the unknown.

Simone Schuiten



Carnets de note et de croquis de Jeff Kowatch, © Dorian Rolin, 2021

4. JEFF KOWATCH'S BIOGRAPHY



Born in California in 1965 - Lives and works in Belgium

Jeff Kowatch, born in California in 1965, moved to Belgium 20 years ago after working in New York for about ten years. He developed a colorist painting marked by the great American abstracts, from Mark Rothko to Brice Marden and, for the technique, by the great Flemish painters, Rembrandt in particular, whose recipes for linseed oil he has reclaimed. They give his painting a particular effect of depth and transparency, typical of the northern glazes. In the oil-stick drawings on Dibond, it is energy that takes precedence over meditation, served by extraordinarily living matter.

PERSONAL EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 Expo Chicago, Galerie La Forest Divonne, Chicago, Illinois
Art on Papier, Galerie La Forest Divonne, Brussels
- 2018 Jeff Kowatch, Full Circle, Galerie La Forest Divonne and Galerie Faider, Brussels, Belgium
Jeff Kowatch, NegenPuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare
- 2016 « Apocalyptic Carnival », Galerie Faider, Brussels, Belgium
« Schilderijen », NegenPuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare
« Circus », Galerie La Forest Divonne, Paris
- 2015 « The Belgium Odyssey Paintings », Absolute Art Gallery, Knokke, Belgium
- 2014 « The Belgium Odyssey Paintings », Galerie Faider, Brussels,
« The Belgium Odyssey Paintings », NegenPuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare, Belgium
- 2013 « ...and out of Chaos came Color », Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris
« Recent Paintings », Absolute Art Gallery, Knokke, Belgium
- 2012 « New Works », Galerie Faider, Brussels, Belgium
- 2011 « Don Quixote in Vlaanderen », NegenPuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare, Belgium
« Works on paper », Art on Paper, The White Hotel, Brussels, Belgium
« Don Quixote in Amsterdam », Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, Amsterdam
- 2009 « Don Quixote part 1 », Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris
« Stratus Mountainous Cumulus », NegenPuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare, Belgium
H.U.B. at the US State Department of Brussels, Belgium
- 2006 « Stratus Mountainous Cumulus », Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles
- 2004 « Untitled », Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
- 2003 « Thou Shalt », Jeff Bailey Gallery, New York
« Salome Series », Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles

- 2001 « Salome Series », Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
 « Works on paper from the Salomé series », Paul Sharpe Fine Art, New York
- 1998 « BVM Series », Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
- 1997 « Apostles », Union Theological Seminary, New York

GROUP SHOW

- 2014 Art Paris Art Fair, Galerie La Forest Divonne, Paris
- 2017 Connected stories, , Absolute Art Gallery, Knokke, Belgium Geste,
 Galerie La Forest Divonne, Paris
 « Dialoog / Dialogue » Jeff Kowatch + Pierre Alechinsky + Bram Bogart, Negen
 PuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare, Belgium
- 2016 Passions partagées, Galerie La Forest Divonne, Bruxelles
 L'Art pour l'Accueil, Galerie Pierre Bergé & Associés, Belgium
- 2015 Pascal Courcelles & Jeff Kowatch, NegenPuntNegen Gallery, Roeselare,
 Belgium Art Paris, Art Fair, Inauguration, Galerie Marie Hélène de La Forest Divonne,
 Paris L'Art pour l'Accueil, Galerie Pierre Bergé & Associés, Belgium
- 2014 7en14, Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris
 Summer-Expo, Absolute Art Gallery, Knokke
- 2013 PAN, Amsterdam, The Netherlands Winter-Expo, Absolute Art Gallery, Knokke
- 2012 Art Paris, Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris
- 2011 Papier, Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris L'Art pour l'Accueil, Galerie Pierre Bergé &
 Associés, Belgium
- 2010 « Water, Wind, Wandelen », Centrum Ysara, Nieuwpoort, Belgium
- 2009 « Le dessin à l'œuvre », Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris Art Paris,
 Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris
- 2008 « 20 ans et plus », Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris « Honorons Honoré »,
 De Garage, Mechelen, Belgium
- 2005 Winter Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, New York « Work on Paper »,
 Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles
 Spring Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles
 « Fall Group Show », Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
 « Untitled », Galerie Kusseneers, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2008 « 20 ans et plus », Galerie Vieille du Temple, Paris « Honorons Honoré »,
 De Garage, Mechelen, Belgium

- 2005 Winter Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, New York « Work on Paper »,
Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles
Spring Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles
« Fall Group Show », Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
« Untitled », Galerie Kusseneers, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2003 « Jeff Kowatch and Vincenzo Amato », Earl McGrath Gallery,
LA Selected Prints, Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
Summer Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
Winter Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
- 2000 Paul Sharpe Fine Art, New York, « Paper », Earl McGrath Gallery,
New York Summer Group Show, Earl McGrath Gallery, New York
- 1998 « Stocking Stuffers », Earl McGrath Gallery,
New York Summer Group Show, Parts I & II, Earl McGrath Gallery,
New York 1995 John Thomas Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 1994 Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA « 1010 Small Works », New Gallery,
Santa Monica, CA Robert Art Gallery, LA
- 1993 « Art in Bloom », Long Beach Museum of Art, LA,
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, LA
- 1992 Earl McGrath Gallery, LA
- 1990 Installation One, LA
- 1989 Zero One Gallery, LA



Jeff Kowatch, *Child's play*, 2021, Oil Bar on Dibond, 115x94cm

5. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Man Jok - Jeff Kowatch
September 9th to October 23rd, 2021

Galerie Faider
Rue Faider 12, 1060 Brussels
wednesday - saturday 2pm - 6pm
<http://www.galeriefaider.be/>

Galerie La Forest Divonne
Rue de l'Hôtel des Monnaies 66/ Munthofstraat 66, 1060 Brussels
tuesday - saturday 11am-7pm
www.galerielaforestdivonne.com

Espace ODRADEK
Rue Américaine 35, 1050 Brussels
friday - saturday 2pm - 6pm
<https://odradekresidence.be/>

Vernissage September 9th 5pm - 9pm
Shuttle available between the three locations on the evening of the opening

PRESS CONTACT

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Jeff Kowatch, *Work in progress* », 2018-2021, Oil on linen, 180x372cm



Jeff Kowatch, *Que Seurat Seurat*, 2019, Oil Bar on Dibond, 235x190cm



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