

# NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021

[nightgallery.ca](http://nightgallery.ca)

Claire Tabouret in conversation with Sarah Moroz, "Interviews: Claire Tabouret," *Artforum*, October 19, 2021.

## ARTFORUM

INTERVIEWS

### CLAIRE TABOURET

October 19, 2021 • Claire Tabouret on risk, love, and her new work in Paris



View of "Paysages d'Intérieurs," 2021. Perrotin, Paris, 2021. Photo: Tanguy Beurdeley.

*Claire Tabouret's art has a feverish feel, something fervid roiling below the grave expressions of her composed subjects. Often inspired by internet deep dives, the French-born, Los Angeles-based artist's recent paintings, drawings, and sculptures circle a sense of disquiet, be it hushed vistas or the charged group dynamics particular to youth. New work by Tabouret currently inhabits three Parisian venues. Almine Rech's "L'Urgence et la Patience" features self-portraits and a series of people painted "in absentia," as floral metonyms. "Paysages d'Intérieurs," at Galerie Perrotin, ascribes naturalist panoramas with a state of mind. (Both shows run from October 16 to December 18.) Nearby, Tabouret's bronze sculpture of an adolescent bather, on view through December 15, sits in the Hôtel Salé at the Musée national Picasso.*

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**I'M ATTRACTED TO DISCOMFORT.** When something starts working, my impulse is: Well, okay, let's put it upside down, make it different. I've done this for twenty years. What I learned in this last year was that slowing down actually led me to take more risks. Before, I had an unpeaceful relationship to time. When your deadlines are too crazy, you go back to what you know how to do, and that's really not interesting to me. But when you have time to fail, you invent your own way. You can experiment with blending your life and your work. In fact, my sculptures are being presented on tables and furniture my partner made—he's a woodworker. We work next to each other, and this is a collaboration between our two worlds.

Living in Los Angeles, in a different culture . . . I like this a lot. It creates doubts constantly. It's challenging. But it would be very hard for me to come back to France and live here. My education at the Beaux-Arts in Paris during the early 2000s created a strong separation between art and everything else. I don't want to limit myself. I recently worked with Ugg and Dior, two very different brands! I've wanted to do that for a long time. It's not very French. It was probably a bit of provocation. I'm interested in body language in relationship to public space, in thinking about how clothes could be like a moving painting.



Claire Tabouret, *Paysages d'intérieurs (bleu)*, 2021, acrylic on fabric, 84 x 144".

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For the Perrotin show, I was working on synthetic faux fur—I call it fluff. It doesn't allow much of a margin for layering or mistakes. For me, it was a way to really talk about texture. I thought of Monet's *Water Lilies*, that kind of painting where you're completely surrounded by colors and textures close up, and when you step back, you can read a landscape.

During the pandemic, with museums closed for so long, I went back to looking at art in books, how I used to when I was a teenager—that was my first relationship to art. These past few months, I often took the point of view of teenagers—maybe because I was living with my partner's daughter. During the pandemic, young people were forced to freeze in time. The difficulty of that, when you're in bloom. . .! I think it's a powerful reminder of your relationship to your body. The posture of the bronze fountain in the Musée Picasso is very teenager-y.

Before I made the work in the Almine Rech show, I'd never painted bouquets before. There's no human presence, but it's still a kind of portraiture, because when you gift flowers to someone, it tells about the relationship between giver and recipient. These monoprints were made from pictures I kept as memories: like my grandpa giving flowers to my grandma, where she put his little handkerchief underneath. . .



Claire Tabouret, *Bathers*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 41 x 73".

Almine Rech represents me in Paris and Perrotin represents me in Asia. Two gallery shows together in the same city is uncommon. I'm pregnant—twenty-one weeks along—so rather than doing one show in Paris and then one show in Asia in three months, having this happen together made sense.

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For a previous generation of women, I think you had to be extremely defensive about family love; it was dangerous and career-ruining. That's a bit how I was brought up: Artists and parents were put in contradiction. I always heard that becoming a parent is a selfish impulse and generating art is a generous one—but I think the reverse can be true. I think being a parent could be very inspiring for my work! It's not just an interruption or a waste of time, as Tracey Emin put it . . . I understand it was hard for a different generation, though. My whole life, I thought I needed to be as independent as possible and have no responsibilities. But I'm learning that with this responsibility comes unconditional love. It's beautiful. I'm stoked that many artists don't see love and family in competition anymore. We can joyfully choose whatever we want.

— *As told to Sarah Moroz*

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