



*Sans titre, 2018, Oil and wax on canvas, 220 x 140 cm, Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres*

Djamel Tatah

Vois-là...

From May 18<sup>th</sup> until June 15<sup>th</sup> 2019

PRESS KIT

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## Djamel Tatah Vois-là...

From May 18<sup>th</sup> until June 15<sup>th</sup> 2019 at Galerie Jérôme Poggi  
From May 17<sup>th</sup> 2019 at the Musée des Arts et Métiers

Jérôme Poggi is pleased to present the gallery's first solo show dedicated to Djamel Tatah (France, 1959), who officially joined the gallery in September 2018. In partnership with Ben Brown Fine Arts, the exhibition gathers a body of recent works.

Djamel Tatah has also been invited by the Musée des Arts et Métiers to create a unique project in the chancel of the Saint-Martin-des-Champs Priory. Set in the church choir, the large-scale installation was produced with Atelier Michael Woolworth.

*«This exhibition is a glimpse in eight works of my experience as a painter, which revolves around recurring themes (war, solitude, aimlessness) that express my relationship to the world.»*

- Djamel Tatah



*Sans titre, 2014, Oil and wax on canvas, 200 x 600 cm, Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres*

Facing the world.

## Djamel Tatah and the eloquence of silence

Djamel Tatah is a 21st-century pictorial pigment painter working in a pixelated and virtually connected society. Using a classic and 'academic' medium, seen as obsolete by some, Tatah insolently expresses the significance of paintings anchored in a contemporaneity that is defined by increasing levels of interconnectivity and immediacy. Yet his paintings emphasise a certain solitude achieved by assembling selected fragments of isolated human figures that suggest the need to calmly take a critical introspective view in this modern and bustling world.

Rather like a film-maker, Djamel Tatah assembles selected sequences from the physical and virtual world. From his personal image bank, made up of his own photographs and common iconographic sources collected from the internet and the press, his artworks are inhabited by life-sized figures, who are created and called upon to accompany the artist's reflections on the world. Tatah reworks these sources by directly projecting them onto the canvas in an attempt to transcribe and embody, through the act of painting, a different relationship with the world.

Far from wishing to condemn, his works ask us to think calmly and intensely about these reflections on canvas with and against the screen of time. Looking at Tatah's work, we are overwhelmed both by the scale of the life-size watching subjects but also by the sense of isolation, and the striking and manifest silence. This meditative silence and solitude is reminiscent of the suspended time expressed in Edward Hopper's works. Yet the artistic approach of this Franco-Algerian artist is not the same; here, the realism of the setting is outside our frame of vision favouring large coloured, sometimes binary areas, where the pale bodies, always dressed in dark garments, are placed solely to preserve the structure of the canvas on a human scale. The painted characters and watching individuals are painted side by side - but not completely together. Thus a paradox emerges when our gaze is directed in front of or against these paintings, creating a catharsis and a Brechtian distancing effect, which is both familiar and distant, and singular and diluted in this preoccupying world.

Following an invitation from the Musée des Arts et Métiers, Djamel Tatah has once again created an artistic intervention somewhere in between - between a fall and flight. On lengths of coloured fabric, the artist has depicted bodies draped in black that are bathed by the light that floods the nave of the Chapelle Saint-Martin.

These engraved bodies, references from his artworks painted in the 2010s, are recreated using a technique that combines painting, block-printing and sculpture. Looking at these two-dimensional surfaces, the viewer's gaze can turn to either side of the lines of highlights of colors where the light bends. There are no idols here but rather a corporeality shown at the heart of its human condition yet suspended in time and space in this place of contemplation. The floating bodies, distanced and overhanging the looking subject, are thus halted at a certain moment in their elevation - threatening to land on us.

From the Galerie Poggi, the experience of the gaze itself plays with a variation of scale, focal points and framing and it is perhaps the identification of the figures and the salient details that guide us towards identifiable spaces. From the silence of the isolated figures thus emerges the eloquence of being in the world. Without entering into an ethereal or highly philosophical analysis, what the experienced viewer sees here is the Dasein order formulated by Heidegger; being in the world where existentialism provides an entry point for the appreciation of the subjects, *Untitled*, and a priori out of context. But if you look closely at the six paintings chosen by the artist, this exhibition takes us to the heart of history and what is happening in the world today.

The source images from which Djamel Tatah draws his inspiration come from non-hierarchical reports of contemporary tragedies. A jumble of suggested and inhabited figures appear: a "man of the streets", - homeless in New York photographed in 1992 by the artist -, a mask removed from a sculpture of Palmyra destroyed by Daesh, a lie extracted from a photograph of the war in Iraq, a dead body "resuscitated" from the detail of a fresco by Piero della Francesca, or hitists [NB: a term used to refer to loitering youths in North Africa] outside the framework of time, and who are always and inexorably rejected on the edge of the city. The artist repeats motifs, he reframes and reacts with other sources and other coloured screens, as if to find a way to decompose and deconstruct a certain social, political and gregarious violence that silently drives the world.

The artist is not informed by nostalgia but rather 'a positive energy', a relational melancholy (D. Tatah, Art Press, 2004) highlighting the anxiety of an oppressive world that he calmly tries to understand through the silence of painting.

The eyes of these characters, sometimes a reference from great works of art history, sometimes taken from the theatre of contemporary tragic reality, are alternately fleeting, closed or focused on the spectator reminding us that they too sometimes look at us but, above all, might - like one of these figures - touch us with their fingertips, or even catch us ...

Emilie Goudal  
March 2019



*Sans titre*, 2016

Oil and wax on canvas

80 x 60 cm

Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres

## | Djamel Tatah

Born in 1959, the Franco-Algerian artist studied in France at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Saint-Etienne from 1981 to 1986. He has taught at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris since 2008. He lives and works in Provence, France.

Tatah has presented his works throughout France and over the world, including Salamanca Arts Centre (Spain), Guangdong Museum of Art (China), MAMAC Nice and Château de Chambord (France), Villa Medici (Italy), Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Algier (Algeria), Fondation Maeght and Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Etienne Métropole (France).

Tatah's work is included in prominent private and public collections such as Barjeel Art Foundation (UAE), The British Museum (UK), Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, MAACAL (Marrakech), and Fondation Maeght (France).

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Recently, the Lambert Collection in Avignon dedicated an important solo show to Djamel Tatah, creating a dialogue between his works and those from Yvon Lambert's prestigious minimal art collection. The Matisse Museum in Nice will present a personal exhibition of the artist in Summer 2020, at Claudine Grammont's invitation.

*« My painting is silent, and imposing silence on all the chaos of life is almost like making a political statement. It allows one to step back and examine their relationship to others and to society as a whole »*

- Djamel Tatah





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Oil and wax on canvas

220 x 140 cm

Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres





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*Sans titre*, 2014

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200 x 600 cm

Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres



*Sans titre*, 2018  
Oil and wax on canvas  
160 x 100 cm  
Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres



*Sans titre*, 2018  
Oil and wax on canvas  
120 x 100 cm  
Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris & Ben Brown Fine Arts, Londres

## Galerie Jérôme Poggi

2 rue Beaubourg – 75 004 Paris – France  
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Mar. – Sam. 11.00 – 19.00  
Tue. – Sat. 11 am – 07 pm

## EXHIBITIONS

| Sidival Fila - solo show  
Jun. 22<sup>nd</sup> - Jul. 31<sup>st</sup> 2019  
Galerie Jérôme Poggi, Paris

| Paul Mignard- solo show  
Oct. - Nov. 2019  
Galerie Jérôme Poggi, Paris

| Bady Dalloul - solo show  
Sept. - Oct. 2019  
Galerie Jérôme Poggi, Paris

| Bertrand Lamarche - solo show  
Nov. - Dec. 2019  
Galerie Jérôme Poggi, Paris

## FAIRS / EVENTS

| PARIS GALLERY WEEKEND (FR)  
May 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> 2019  
Djamel Tatah - solo show

| ART-O-RAMA (FR)  
Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> - Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> 2019  
Maxime Bondu, Bady Dalloul, Nikita Kadan

| FIAC (FR)  
Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> 2019  
Paul Mignard and Marion Verboom

| ART BASEL - Unlimited (CH)  
Jun. 13<sup>th</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> 2019  
Kapwani Kiwanga

## ARTISTS

| **Babi Badalov** (AZ, 1959)  
| **Fayçal Baghriche** (DZ/FR, 1972)  
| **Anna-Eva Bergman** (NO/FR, 1909–1987)  
| **Maxime Bondu** (FR, 1985)  
| **Julien Crépieux** (FR, 1979)  
| **Bady Dalloul** (FR, 1986)  
| **Larissa Fassler** (CA, 1975)  
| **Sidival Fila** (BR, 1962)  
| **Yona Friedman** (HU, 1923)  
| **Nikita Kadan** (UA, 1982)

| **Kapwani Kiwanga** (CA/FR, 1978)  
| **Bertrand Lamarche** (FR, 1966)  
| **Paul Mignard** (FR, 1989)  
| **Wesley Meuris** (BE, 1977)  
| **Sophie Ristelhueber** (FR, 1949)  
| **Société Réaliste** (FR/HU, 1982/1972)  
| **Djamel Tatah** (FR, 1959)  
| **Georges Tony Stoll** (FR, 1955)  
| **Marion Verboom** (FR, 1983)  
| **Kees Visser** (NL, 1948)