

APALAZZOGALLERY

A Way of Living

Varda Caivano, N. Dash, Josephine Halvorson, Chris Martin, Nathalie Provosty

APALAZZOGALLERY is pleased to announce the first group show of the new season featuring works of Varda Caivano, N. Dash, Josephine Halvorson, Chris Martin and Nathalie Provosty.

The show is accompanied by the publication of a book in two volumes: the first volume, preceding the exhibition, contains dedicated interventions by the five artists, and a text by the American writer Barry Schwabsky; the attentive dialogue conducted by the five artists will then be documented in the second volume containing the images of the show. The book is published by Moussepublishing.

The title, ideated by Barry Schwabsky for the show and the book, identifies the act of living as a way of painting and the act of painting as a way of living:

*Some of those who read this publication or who see the exhibition of which it is a part will recognize that its title is taken from a talk the Dutch-born American artist Willem de Kooning gave at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1951 called "What Abstract Art Means to Me." No one who knows de Kooning's work, with its always slippery, always doubtful relation to such categories as "abstract" or "figurative," would be surprised at the ironic and skeptical tone of the painter's remarks. "Nothing is positive about art except that it is a word," he said. This funny nominalism wound down idiosyncratic discursive pathways that led, eventually, to a surprising dig at Henri Matisse, who many years earlier—in 1908, to be exact—had notoriously compared painting to a "good armchair" in which every "mental worker" could escape fatigue. De Kooning instead insisted, "Some painters, including myself, do not care what chair they are sitting on. It does not even have to be a comfortable one." Painters like himself "are too nervous to find out where they ought to sit. They do not want to 'sit in style.' Rather, they have found that painting—any kind of painting, any style of painting—to be painting at all, in fact—is a way of living today, a style of living, so to speak. That is where the form of it lies."**

The show has grown in the last few years through an intense confrontation among the artists, who have effectively intertwined their own "ways of living", their styles of living and painting. This intense confrontation finds its realization in the spaces of APALAZZOGALLERY, where the multiple events of the fruitful dialogue undertaken by the artists finally "get on the wall" as pictures, to become events again in the eyes of the beholders.

For, as Barry Schwabsky perfectly states:

*It's true that, by the time an event gets onto the wall, it has become something like a picture—and yet the painter's art is precisely that of producing a picture that becomes, again, in the eyes of the alert beholder, an event. It would be risky to say that anyone has found his or her modus vivendi, but that some of us are seeking it through art is very much part of what de Kooning called its form and what Rosenberg called its function. That's exactly what makes it uncomfortable—why the style of such art is always just the one that makes it so hard to "sit in style". For the painter, that discomfort, that unease is painting (or at least the material of painting) whenever it is experienced, whether in the studio or elsewhere. The poet John Godfrey once put it this way: "What goes through your brain when you're walking around is like paint. You're going to use it when you do your work."**

*quotes from Barry Schwabsky, Modus Vivendi, or, The Open Question of Form in A Way of Living, 2016, Moussepublishing

Opening Thursday 29 September 7 pm
29 September – 15 November

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