

Marie Losier

GALERIE ANNE BARRAULT

Faithful to her windup 16-mm Bolex, Marie Losier takes cues from the experimental filmmakers of New York, where she was based for two decades. Since returning two years ago to Paris—where Georges Méliès, another important influence for Losier, realized his pioneering work in silent film and special effects—she has begun to move her cinematic work to the exhibition space, presenting her films inside crafted carpentry and together with drawings, sculptures, and installations. “I wanted to make boxes for my films,” she explained, “like in the early days of cinema, with all of the rotoscopes, the magic lanterns, but with my outtakes.”

In her recent exhibition “Eat My Makeup!” this new way of working was evident in *Dance Tony Dance*, 2019, which featured outtakes from the film *Tony Conrad-Drea Minimalist*, Losier’s 2008 tribute to her longtime New York mentor, flicker in a rotoscope box exhibited in the heart of the show. Another work, *Lunch Break on the Xerox Machine*, 2019, likewise incorporated footage from an earlier work—in this case, Losier’s *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, 2002—a quick, two-minute sequence of black-and-white photocopies of the artist’s face pressed against the glass. “Me squashed into a Xerox machine,” as the artist describes it. Here, Losier has turned the box into a dynamic self-portrait: A dark-brown wig sits on the box’s top, a face painted in rosy makeup—“a little bit me,” she told me—adorns the front and the eyes are the peepholes through which the viewer watches the footage.



Marie Losier, *David Legrand*, 2019, oil stick on rice paper, 38 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 24"

The tug of loneliness evident in that early film of Losier’s is singular and quickly resolved in her highly spirited and social practice, fueled by her connections to creative producers she pictures in a dozen portrait drawings, “a bit like a family tree.” For these works, Losier spreads a layer of black oil stick on Plexiglas, backs the sheet with rice paper, then marks the oily surface with the hard end of a paintbrush. She draws while her eyes remained locked on her subjects, so the final image is “always a surprise,” she said, “like my films.” In an example from 2019, she captures a bow-tied man named David Legrand. He holds a camera, while a second figure’s arm reaches into the frame, pressing a second camera against his temple. Her subject’s big-eyed gaze is gentle, but the composition hints at the potential violence of the filmed image. Nearby, *sans titre (dessin + film)* (Untitled [drawing + film]), 2019, is a collection of “family” portraits projected onto a large-scale drawing in

black oil on multiple sheets of rice paper. The projected images flash over the drawn image of a black cloud that balloons from a projector fed by film extending from between the legs of a headless nude, seemingly pregnant with cameras and film equipment.

Eat My Makeup! (gâteau) (Eat My Makeup! [Cake]), 2019, filmed on the roof of a warehouse in Long Island City, New York, lent the show its title. Projected onto a thickly iced vanilla cake, footage of Losier’s original full-length version, *Eat My Makeup!*, 2005, reveal exuberant scenes of the artist and her friends dressed in pastel party frocks and flowered bathing caps and enthusiastically throwing shaving-cream pies in one another’s faces. Like the oil-stick works, the film and its installation foreground the tactile. As if in anticipation of fingers tempted to dip into this work’s sugary-looking screen, Losier displayed *Untitled*, 2019, a ceramic sculpture of a camera with a hand reaching out from its lens, in a nearby countertop vitrine. The piece reveals an urge to “caress my subjects,” as Losier reflected, to cling to them or to push them onto the screen.

—Lillian Davies