

Frederique Rousseau, Lefranc Bourgeois Global Director at Olivier Masmonteil studio.

The visit to Olivier Masmonteil's Parisian studio. What a revelation!

Olivier has developed an organisation akin to a traditional Italian Renaissance master's studios, passing on his expertise like the "golden age of oil painting". His contemporary artworks are often inspired and derived from historical masterpieces from all ages. An entire wall exhibited all his close friends' artworks, revealing the artist's attachment to authentic relationships... We met his friendly younger disciples getting up the stairs and could feel their pride and passion manipulating a fresh artwork up staircase. I was touched by this genuine sense of community and teamwork spirit!

Then, entering the artist's main studio, I felt blown away facing the vibrant intensity of his huge Tanzanian landscape. It was like diving into an infinite ocean of poetry and harmony. The foreground's colour lines inviting the eyes to travel to their subtle, harmonious softer tones in the enlightened sky and misty mountains. The power of eternity was striking!

It was a pleasure to listen to Olivier explaining his unique creative process. From his vocation to become an artist as a child, anchored in the Limousin authentic, beautiful countryside in the centre of France, to his academic training in Bordeaux, plus his passion for landscapes nurtured by his fly-fishing adventures all around the world. When he began to paint on his own, he had to face contempt from conceptual art Trotskyist teachers who expressed their reluctance to paint classical landscapes, but he never gave up!

From Olivier's perspective, landscapes are a never-ending connection to precious moments, abstract souvenirs, and specific atmospheres. Landscapes are also a marvellous opportunity to build creative storytelling with contrasting colours (superposition of objects, imagery, butterflies, human figures adding extra dimensions to the painting). No wonder Olivier is so attached to Lefranc Bourgeois pigments quality, predominantly yellow, purple, and sapphire blue that he mixes with many other tones.

He has a concern for sustainability, especially recycling of solvents, wrapping of artworks, and quality of canvas (linen sourced from Normandy).

We talked about the last two years and his initiatives to raise awareness of art, sharing his talent in videos and podcasts. He said people are more than ever keen on purchasing artworks to bring home meaningful lasting beauty and to escape from anxious reality.

Olivier is very busy with commissions. He is currently developing a 5-meter fresco for "Hotel de la Poste" du Louvre, and other collaboration projects.

His wife is a cook, and we talked about the hybridisation of events (they like to gather friends for dinner parties in the fine art studio). It reminded me of the art exhibition I organised in 2019 for the Terre Exotique international festival of peppers in the Loire Valley, celebrating 500 years of the Renaissance. Working in the food industry and specifically a spice company, it feels like traveling from the pallet of flavours to the cuisine of pigments.

Olivier was very welcoming, and I was impressed by the accessible simplicity of such an immense and gifted artist.

May this magical moment with Thierry, Dennis and Olivier Masmonteil inspire us with beautiful projects in the global development of Lefranc Bourgeois and the Parisian home of French brands! "