

# Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong

## TENTSUGI

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Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong, *Lady Boy* (detail), Collage and acrylic on canvas, 50x75cm, 2017

12/10 – 18/11/2017

PJAMA Galerie (Pijama Galerie)  
M° Saint-Sébastien Froissart/M° Saint-Paul  
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Open from Tuesday to Saturday from 14h to 19h and by appointment

Opening the 12th October from 16h

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## TORN

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For his second solo show, Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong has moved on from his more classical stance on photography to a work that starts by tearing up his own photographic prints.

Sacrilege, renunciation of the past or a somersault into the future?

The act of tearing can refer to psychological references as much as it does to physical, mundane or spiritual ones. It is painful: whilst giving life, it can announce or symbolize death (cf. the tearing of the temple veil on the death of Jesus or the Keriah, where the rending of clothes symbolizes the grief of the mourner in the Jewish tradition). When a muscle is torn, the pain is excruciating; Continually recurrent in psychology, it is healed by words.

## TENTSUGI

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TENTSUGI – A Japanese neologism – taking its inspiration from the word Kintsugi; is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold. Here, gold is replaced by the point (ten), which becomes the element that bears light, creates richness and above all, uniqueness. By this means, Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong reclaims regular artists' techniques such as photography, collage and drawing, while delivering his very own unique interpretation of them. As Kintsugi craftsmen repair the flaws, the artist fills the spaces that the tearing has ripped open. There is no dissimulation, which, for a photographer would be the destruction of his work, but rather, the creation of missing matter, in order to give new meaning to the past and to recreate a new story of the photographed subject. In this way, the photography isn't a freeze-frame of a given moment in time, but more the narration of a story where the artist highlights its (and his own) imperfections.

## APPROACH

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In the continuity of his work on image: shadows and reflections, the artist symbolizes the evolution of the psyche. By tearing, he consciously imposes a physical constraint. By opposition with elastic deformations from childhood, which give birth to neurosis and enduring traumas and mark each one of us insidiously over long periods of time. By bandaging these imperfections with this thought process, Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong creates an allegory which invites a reflection on our capacity to accept our own frailty.

Dots or points are omnipresent. Like punctuation marks, which end phrases with which we rewrite our memories, but also unities of display that form an image on a screen. Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong puts a pictorial zoom right up to the most infinitely small defining points of our problematics.

In fact, the main subject matter is not only the artist himself, the work on show also broaches societal and environmental themes that are dear to him: the crucial question of sexuality, the historical gash that tore into the beginning of this century: 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, of which he was a powerless, first-hand witness and the tearing that we impose (unavoidably?) on our environment...

Even if black and white is predominant in this new work, contrasting with the more polychromatic vision of his first solo exhibition; Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong refuses all Manichaeism and reveals a large palette of talents, both pictorially and as a story-teller.

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Born in 1964 in Manhattan, Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong leaves the United States for Europe, due to the threat weighing on his father, who protested against the war in Vietnam with his artwork. At 17 he declined his place to study medicine at Cambridge and leaves for India to deepen his knowledge of the Vedic philosophy and to seek the meaning of life. He returns to France and begins a rich and varied professional career, while always continuing his two artistic practices: photography and piano.

Having trained as an actor and writing with a distinctive style, navigating between the Nouveau Roman and Sade, Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong talks crudely of his fears, his loves, sex and his distress. Indisputably, his large scope of possibilities makes him an artist that couldn't be satisfied with one medium alone.

Expressing himself with a style of painting that is very inspired by suprematism, Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong treats numerous subjects, between abstraction, photo-reportage and portraits. Conscious of recent evolutions in this medium, he now uses his images as a medium on which he redesigns their contours after having them suffer several accidents.

Jean-Paul Morrel-Armstrong lives in Paris where he is a member of the artists collective 'Curry Vavart' at the Shakirail.

#### Solo Exhibition

*Eye spy with my little I...*, Pijama Galerie, Paris (octobre/novembre 2015)

#### Group exhibitions

*Le rêve*, Silencio, Paris (september 2017)

*What's up Photo Doc*, Pijama Galerie, Paris (November 2016)

*Vaclavavart*, Bibliothèque Václav Havel, Paris (June-August 2016)

*Culture perchée*, Le Perchoir, Paris (November 2015)