

02.05 - 01.06.24

Born in 1991 in Soignies, Belgium, Simon Demeuter resides and practices his artistic activity in Brussels. His pictorial approach is guided by a bold desire for the simplification of forms, giving his creations a pictorial freshness and striking spontaneity. Color plays a central role in Demeuter's artistic expression, serving as an essential tool to evoke emotions, impressions, sensations, moods, and physical or mental states.

"The 'Charbon' series draws its inspiration from the landscapes of my childhood, rooted in southern Belgium, a region marked by a rich mining past. This industry profoundly shaped the setting in which I grew up. Memories come alive when I think of this black earth, where playing with scouts on the slag heaps was my daily routine. Today, these mounds have been transformed, covered in greenery where wildlife flourishes. They symbolise the marks left by man on nature. But in our contemporary world, what remains untouched by human influence?"

"I've never had any particular attachment to my native region. Its charm escaped my perception, unlike that of visitors who saw in it a singular beauty. Perhaps I found it too sleepy, imbued with a subtle melancholy, as if time had stood still after the mines closed. My life's journey has taken me away from this land. However, time has its ways of reminding us of our origins. Like coal that leaves its mark, our past remains inscribed in us."

"Through this series, I want to pay tribute to these men and women, often immigrants, who came to Belgium in search of a better life. "Charbon" shows portraits of miners against a deep blue background, lit up as if in the darkness of a gallery. Their features are deliberately simplified, evoking sketches. This stripped-down aesthetic, which I'm increasingly seeking in my painting, magnifies the figures and settings through flat expanses of bright colour. These are idealised representations, populated by gentle, robust bodies and figures wearing helmets."

"Through my paintings, I try to use my eyes to bring out, to extract, hidden beauties. There are flowers everywhere for those who want to see them," said Matisse. Now I see them too."

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Charbon, 2023
Oil on canvas
46 x 38 cm