

GAUTHIER HUBERT

°1967, Belgium

Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

13 MARCH – 19 APRIL

**About 'Bibliotheca'**

In his series of paintings "Bibliotheca", Gauthier Hubert addresses the complex history of art, which through the ages has mainly revolved around painting as the leading medium in visual arts. The fact that painting, at least to a certain degree, has always been misunderstood seems to be Hubert's main concern, seriously as well as humorously. For ordinary people technical mastery eclipses all other aims of the painter and becomes in their opinion the only purpose worthy to pursue. If he wants to gain public attention the artist is supposed to show his extraordinary talents and thus fulfill his social duty.

This, of course, is in a perfect contradiction with the evolution of artistic practises and preoccupations described by the universal history of art. Technical hability is only the starting point for an artist in order to realize his ideas, which usually revolve around other and more pertinent concerns than simple skills or mastery. The discrepancy between public belief and the ideas which influence the artist is the conceptual ground on which Gauthier Hubert operates with his systematic sets of sizes, where A4 conditions his format, either horizontally as a "landscape", or vertically as a "portrait".

Ironically he follows assiduously the rules traditionally dictated by the academies, where literary order was set above all other kind of artistic activity. His series nevertheless reveal the difference of approach from one work to the other, showing that no matter how strictly the activity of painting is contained or regulated, the observer cannot avoid making up his personal mind in front of a work of art. Hubert's small paintings contain such stylistic variety that often they seem to be painted by more than one artist, yet each one of them deals with its particular subject in a way which emphasizes the author's extraordinary knowledge of the art of painting through the ages. Together with his sensitivity Gauthier Hubert's acuteness for detail makes him a painter of unusual talent.

Halldór Björn Runólfsson

*Director of the National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik*