

**Galerie Max Hetzler** Berlin | Paris | London

Online Viewing Room

**Tursic & Mille**

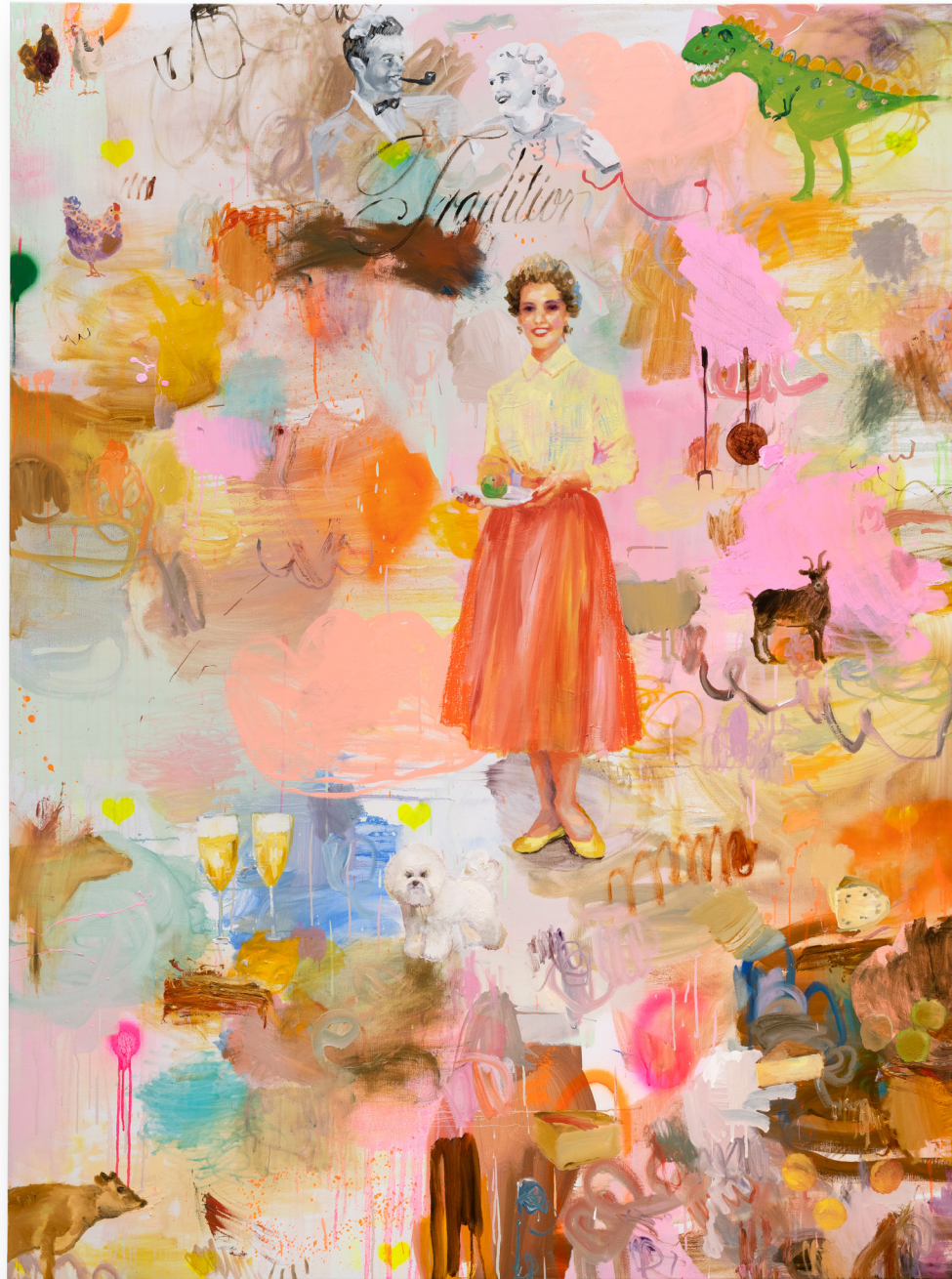
*Tradition, 2020*

4 – 18 July 2020

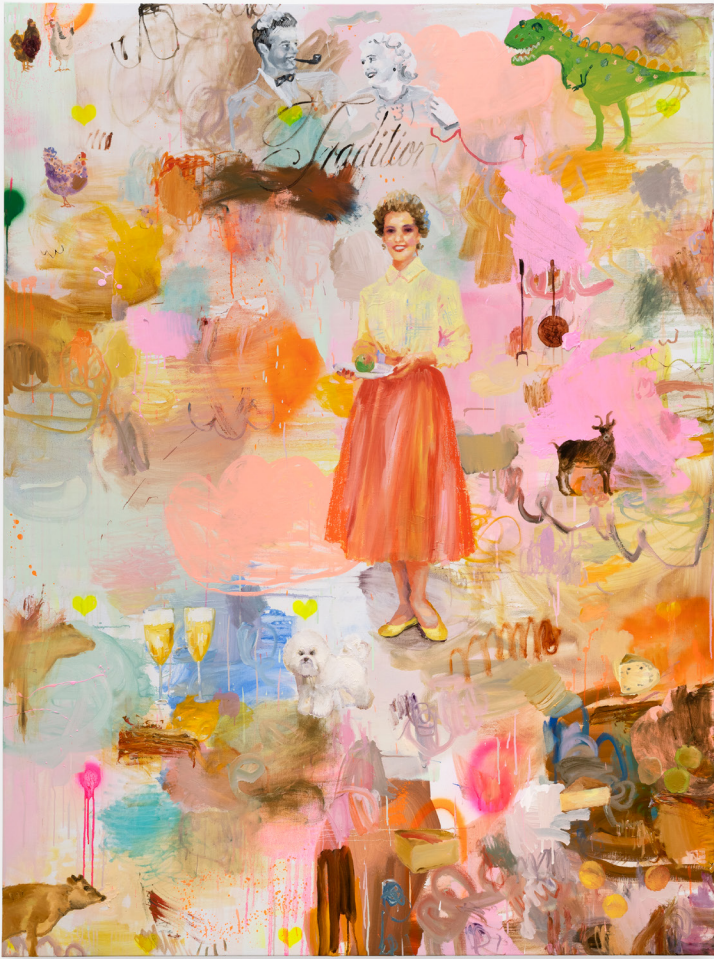
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Tradition (detail), 2020



Tursic & Mille  
*Tradition*, 2020  
oil on canvas  
200 x 150 cm.; 78 3/4 x 59 in.



## TURSIC & MILLE

Ida Tursic born 1974 in Belgrade, Serbia

Wilfried Mille born 1974 in Boulogne-sur-mer, France

live and work in Mazamet, France

Working in painting and sculpture, artist duo Tursic & Mille delve into the contemporary overload of images. The artists combine their awareness of art history with a wide spectrum of imagery and motifs including film scenes, pornography, flowers, landscapes and animals, which they instinctively cull from different media, including magazines, dictionary illustrations, personal pictures and the internet. Tursic & Mille's joyfully eccentric paintings simultaneously act within the tradition of the medium and challenge it with a playful mixture of "high" and "low", tradition and contemporaneity. Nominated for the prestigious Marcel Duchamp prize in 2019, Tursic & Mille are recognised as among the most innovative artists of their generation in France, whose works are in the permanent collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, among others.

*Tradition*, 2020 is a particularly complex and vibrant example from the artists' latest series of paintings coined the "Advertisement Paintings". In this series, Tursic & Mille draw from the imagery of Western commercials dating from the 1940s–1960s which promoted alcohol, cigarettes, and luxury food items (see fig. 1 and 2). For Tursic & Mille, this type of advertising, beyond its product-selling function, exemplifies the Western Golden Age and outdated political and economic utopias also linked to social realism. Taken out of their context and engulfed in a mass of paint, the borrowed motifs maintain a seductive logic of promotion and a sense of positivism.

Pulsing with a frenzied energy, *Tradition* is animated by a dense and colourful abstract field of energetic brushstrokes, washes, smears and scribbles, drips and splashes. To create this very painterly surface which calls to mind Abstract Expressionist painting, Tursic & Mille used varied techniques applying paint with the brush, spray, scraper, and even by hand. Figurative motifs, for the most part incongruous, appear onto this abstract background. Human figures, animals including a sheep and a Bichon dog, kitchen utensils, champagne glasses, cheese, fruits, chickens and a dinosaur—the ancestor of the former—rally on the canvas to summon popular culture and the spirit of bad painting.



Figure 1  
Advertisement for Miller's  
"High Life" beer, 1950s



Figure 2  
Advertisement for The Kaufman  
Brothers & Bondy Company's  
"Kaywoodie" pipe, 1947

In the centre of the composition stands a cheerfully inviting lady presenting the viewer with an apple, a nod to Paul Cézanne's still lifes (fig. 3). This figure was initially found in an advertisement for the beer "High Life", promoted with the motto: "Traditionally the Finest", part of which still floats above the lady's head, reflecting the work's title. An enamoured couple with a man evoking the archetypal male corporate is depicted at the top of the painting. They were drawn from a black-and-white advertising for a pipe—a conscious wink to René Magritte, as this continues not to be a pipe (fig. 4).

A recurring subject in the artists' practice, the bichon in the lower part of the composition makes reference to the long-standing position of the dog in the history of painting, found in the work of Titian, Pieter Bruegel, and Francisco de Goya. From the first representations in the Paleolithic to the Middle Ages and Modern times, the animal adopted diverse roles in painting: from hunter to cultural and social enhancer. The inclusion of the dog reinforces this notion of Tursic & Mille combining genres and epochs with humour and intelligence, inducing reflection within the viewer all-the-while developing new possibilities for the medium.



Figure 3  
Paul Cézanne (1839–1906)  
*Still Life with Quince, Apples, and Pears*,  
ca. 1885–87  
oil on canvas  
28.3 x 30.8 cm.; 11 1/8 x 12 1/8 in.  
Collection: White House Historical  
Association, Washington DC

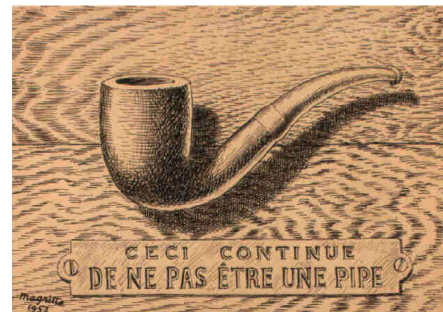


Figure 4  
René Magritte (1898–1967)  
*Ceci continue de ne pas être une pipe*  
(This continues not to be a pipe), 1952  
work on paper  
19 x 27 cm.; 7 1/2 x 10 5/8 in.  
Private Collection

*"Painting every which way. Every technique is there, every possible touch, every style, sometimes on one and the same canvas, every conceivable manner of painting, and every angle. Every genre, too: portrait, landscape, abstraction, geometric shapes, optical experiments. These artists' canvases summon up the history of painting, but in a discreet way, the whole past of painting in all its forms, and they bring it into our present, the present of the Internet, where they find their image market, the market of film, advertising, and fashion magazines."*

Virginie Vuillaume



*Tradition (detail), 2020*



The artists' studio



## LOOK



## WATCH



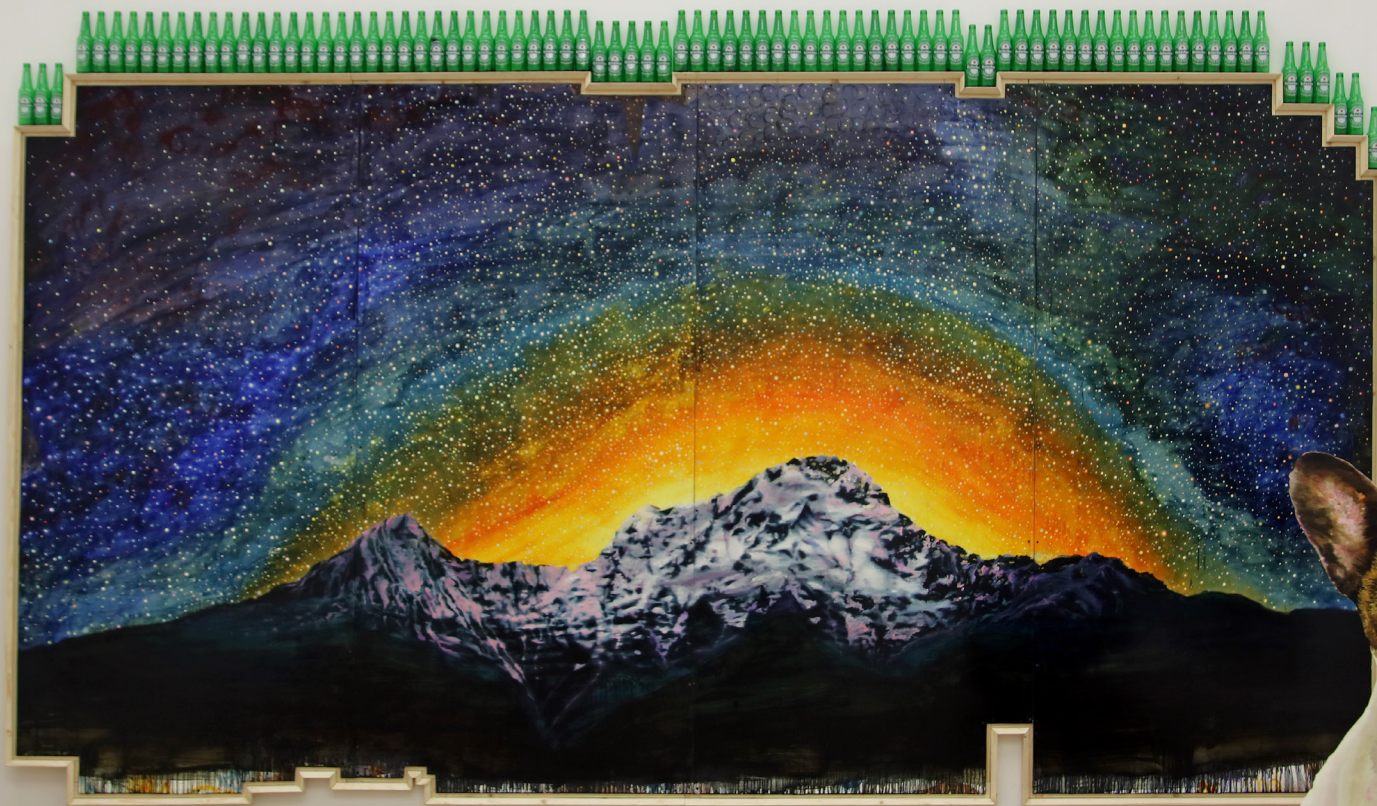
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*Advertisement for a Better World*, Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin, 2020

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*Les Enfants du Paradis*, MUba Eugène Leroy, Tourcoing, 2019

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The artists' studio



Portrait of the artists

Ida Tursic was born in 1974 in Belgrade and Wilfried Mille in 1974 in Boulogne-sur-mer. The artists live and work in Mazamet. Tursic & Mille's work was presented in solo exhibitions at important institutions, such as the Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, Paris (2017); Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dole and FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand (2011) and Le Musée de Serignan (2008–2009), among others. They participated in several group shows, most recently at the Centre Pompidou, Paris and Musée des Beaux-Arts, Limoges (2019); Centre Pompidou-Metz (2018); FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon (2017 and 2015); Palazzo Cavour, Torino (2014); ME-Collectors Room, Berlin (2011); and the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (2010).

Tursic & Mille were recipients of the La Fondation Simone et Cino Del Duca prize in 2020 and the Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard prize in 2009. The artists were nominated for the Marcel Duchamp Prize in 2019.

Tursic & Mille's works are in the permanent collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Le Consortium, Dijon; Berardo Museum, Lisbon; Frances Foundation, Senlis and National Collection of Contemporary Art-FNAC, Paris, among others

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Photographic credits

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Installation view: Les Enfants du Paradis, MUba Eugène Leroy, Tourcoing, 2019, Photo: Maxime Dufour

Artists's studio, Photo: The artists

Portrait of the artists, Photo: Holger Niehaus

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