

MUSÉES DE LA VILLE DE STRASBOURG

Strasbourg, 22 avril 2024

Exhibition « Julie Doucet. A review »
Tomi Ungerer Museum - International Centre for Illustration
From 25 April to 3 November 2024

This solo exhibition presents the work of Julie Doucet, a Quebec artist who has been one of the most important and influential authors of alternative comics in Canada, the United States, France and Germany since the 1990s. In 2022, she was awarded the Grand Prix at the Angoulême Festival for her body of work. This cult author has created a prolific body of work that extends beyond drawing to include printmaking, collage, video and poetry.

Central to Julie Doucet's work is a deep-seated desire to break away from formal social and artistic constraints. In the 1990s, the Quebec artist (born in 1965) brought her subjective and radical perspective on the female condition to the underground scene with her autofictional comic book series Dirty Plotte. Her depictions of menstruation, masturbation and mental health, as well as her experiences of competition and success in a male-dominated field, paved the way for situated writing for a whole generation of women artists. As such, she pioneered autofiction as a means of empowerment, of taking control over your own life.

In the 2000s, Doucet abandoned comics in favour of other art forms, developing an artistic practice that aims to constantly reinvent the relationship between image and writing. Her illustrations and collages are images of matter, her films are studies in lines, and her photocomics are images to be read aloud. She writes her poetry in the form of concrete images of cut-out words. She published her most recent drawings in the form of graphic essays.

The exhibition is therefore also a history of bookmaking and publishing: from the underground fanzine, through her publications in the very first comic-book publishing houses, to an experimental practice on the material form of the book, to which she has returned in recent years. Through her graphic essay, which unfolds like a Leporello, and an autobiography in cut-out words, Julie Doucet's formal innovations go beyond the limits of what the commercialisation of books allows. In this way, she is constantly renewing the political and aesthetic possibilities of bookmaking. To coincide with the exhibition, an artist's book by Julie Doucet will be published by Editions des Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg.

Curator: Anna Sailer, curator in charge of the Musée Tomi Ungerer - Centre international de l'Illustration

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