

Sophie-Yen Bretez

Emerging artist Sophie-Yen Bretez (b.1994, Vietnam) moved to France at a young age where she has lived and worked since. Originally self-taught, she earned a Grand École Master's degree from NEOMA Business School in 2018, holding management positions in Paris while painting on the side. In 2023, following growing recognition and opportunities, she transitioned to working full-time as an artist.



Bretez's work confronts the uncanny, merging autobiography and fiction to explore identity through narrative that is rendered through dream-like surrealist figuration. With an acute sensitivity to complex emotional states and often focusing on the human condition in moments of recovery, she frequently incorporates an illuminated horizon line, explaining, "I paint horizons for those who have suffered." Her figures operate in semi-open settings bathed in light from a sunset or sunrise: both protective and vulnerable, Bretez's spaces capture the human spirit of resilience and recovery.

Bretez's figures, most often nude women, are marked by an unflinching agency that governs the terms of their own presence. She subverts a certain coyness and seduction traditionally projected onto the female form. The figures stare outwards, confidently asserting themselves. They do not invite our gaze through passive allure, but meet us directly, stimulating our active observation. In doing so, she contributes to an evolving conversation about the meaning of the gaze, aligning herself with generations of female painters and photographers who have challenged its dynamics.

Bretez is a natural storyteller. Before painting each work, Bretez composes a poem exploring memory, personal experience, or literary inspiration (such as the writings of French author Marguerite Duras). The titles of her works come from these poems, creating another layer of meaning to be deciphered by the viewer. Written text also features within her canvases, where newspapers and novels are common enigmatic motifs. Her work has been widely exhibited and highly regarded in various publications, such as Forbes and Art Daily. Her capability for locating political and existential commentary in dreamlike environments is testament to her strength as a painter of complex human themes.

Sophie-Yen Bretez CV

Education

- 2014 Master Grand École, Neoma Business School, Rouen, France
2017 Indian Institute of Management, Indore, India

Solo Exhibitions

- 2025 *The Unsaid Remains Remembered*, JD Malat Gallery, Dubai, UAE
2023 *Powerful, despite it all*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK

Group Exhibitions

- 2025 *Discover Collect Repeat*, Galerie Zberro, Paris, France
2025 *Portraits: Through the Looking Glass*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK
2025 *Carte Blanche*, JD Malat Gallery, Dubai, UAE
2024 *Origins 2.0*, Rhodes Contemporary Art, London, UK
2024 *Untamable Spirit*, Allouche Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
2024 *The Possible and the Elsewhere*, Tang Contemporary, Hong Kong, CH
2024 *Miradas*, Cohle Gallery, Minorca, SP
2024 *Summer Exhibition*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK
2024 *Here & Now*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK
2024 *Journeys - 'On Paper'*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK
2024 *International Artists Group Exhibition: The Possible and the Elsewhere*, Tang Contemporary Art, Various Locations
2023 *Contemporary Figuration: Between Body & Metaphor*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK
2023 *A Bold Harmony*, Tang Contemporary Art, Bangkok, Thailand
2023 *All Together*, Lorin Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
2023 *Summer Exhibition*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK

2022 *Woman, Empowered*, JD Malat Gallery, London, UK

Art Fairs

2024 *Tang Contemporary Art at ART OnO*, Seoul, South Korea

2024 *Tang Contemporary Art at Art SG*, Singapore, MY

2024 *The Untitled Void at Art Busan*, Busan, South Korea

Prizes

2024 Winner of Spring 2024, *Innovate Grant*

Press

Artsy: *The Art We're Obsessed With in June 2024*

Innovate Grant: *Interview: Sophie-Yen Bretez's Dialectic of Inner/Outer Space*

Create Magazine: *Interview with Cover Artist, Sophie-Yen Bretez*

Art Daily: *Here & Now Group show opening*

Vein Magazine: *Sophie-Yen Bretez: Summer, surrealism, dreamlike and abundance*

Bangkok Post: *Exhibition showcases essence of Asia*

Forbes: *Essential Highlights Of International Women Artists' Art Week*

The White Pube: *What I saw last week*

Stylist Magazine France: *10 New faces to follow*

Quiet Lunch: *The Painstakingly Pleasant Task of Emoting Emotions: An Interview w/ Sophie-Yen Bretez*

Invest' Art: *Sophie-Yen Bretez Q&A*

Artplugged: *Sophie-Yen Bretez: Powerful, Despite it All*

Business Monday: *Artistry and Milestones: JD Malat Gallery Commemorates 5th Anniversary with Striking Showcase of Sophie-Yen Bretez' Debut Solo Exhibition*

Selected Works



Sophie-Yen Bretez

« Before we knew there was silence the mountain spoke the water answered the world remembers for us. », 2025

Oil on linen
59 x 43 1/4 in
150 x 110 cm



Sophie-Yen Bretez

« Half asleep half awake the eye remains the world insists - an impossible state. », 2025

Oil on linen
39 3/8 x 29 1/2 in
100 x 75 cm