

# Forever sailing around my mind

Sylvie Selig

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January 13th 2024, March 9th 2024



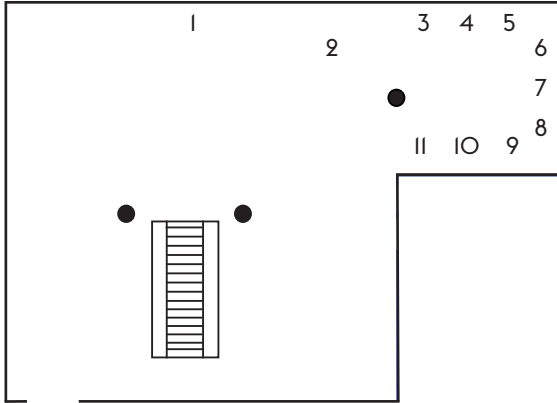
Sylvie Selig, *Dawn White*, 2023 (detail)

Sylvie Selig's artistic practice unravels a dreamlike and disturbing universe. Her images convey a peculiar iconography, often compared to Lewis Carroll's imaginary world, into which unconscious fantasies and traumas are combined in some deceptively innocent fairy tale atmosphere. Her productions could be misleading, as under its lightness and poetry, emerge some unexpected somber stories, creating therefore an intriguing whimsical dynamic. The ambiguous and sometimes disturbing nature of her work reflects a deep exploration of themes such as sexuality, identity as well as domination and power. Sometimes told with humour, peeps out unexpected tenderness. She draws out from a wide variety of visual references, some from art history but also literature and films. In her career as a painter, for a short period, she dedicated herself to children's books illustrations which might have revealed her desire to link writing to painting. The title she has chosen for this exhibition focuses precisely on this continuous introspective navigation that leads her to explore the confines of her imagination. In front of her works, the viewer is not only invited to travel but also to take the helm and let his own fantasy run wild. The artist rejects the univocal reading of her symbols and images and, on the contrary, prefers that everyone feels free to interpret them according to their own emotions.

After years of reserved, almost secret work, outside the art system and its circuit of distribution, the 2022 Lyon's Biennale revealed to the world the extraordinary work of Sylvie Selig. Leaving aside the unusual fact of "discovering" an artist in her eighties, the biggest surprise is the exceptional volume and scale of her production. There is something unbridled in Selig's ambition that leads her to engage seamlessly with hyperbolic formats, sometimes hundreds of meters in length, and then to imagine mechanical devices through which to present them to the viewer. Asserting an overflowing creativity, she has conceived some kind of painting/machines allowing the unfolding narration of the images, thus, approaching a cinematic experience. This desire to surpass the traditional format of the framed work is also evident in some of her canvases, "stretched" with ropes on metal frames, or in the use of scraps and fragments of textiles she reuses as pictorial support. Sometimes embroidery elements are also included, extending and entangling themselves like blood capillaries that sprout from the characters or the text.

Sylvie Selig is first and foremost a visual storyteller whose fables captivate and interrogate, provoking contradictory emotions in the face of her enigmatic images. Each of her works is a fascinating journey through a universe in which fantasy and reality intertwine in a mysterious way.

## Ground floor



**1. Dawn White, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
500 x 175 cm

**2. Twofaces, 2023**

Mannequin and various materials  
40 x 70 x 145 cm

**3. Untitled #9, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
43,5 x 63,5 cm

**4. Untitled #7, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
65,5 x 64 cm

**5. Untitled #4, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
63 x 56 cm

**6. Untitled #6, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
47 x 58 cm

**7. Untitled #2, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
63,5 x 63,5 cm

**8. Untitled #1, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
44 x 52,5 cm

**9. Untitled #3, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
51 x 56 cm

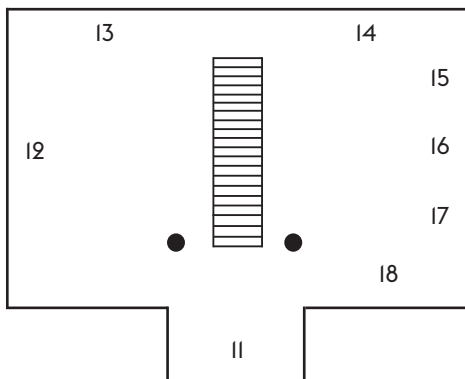
**10. Untitled #5, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
43,5 x 63,5 cm

**11. Untitled #8, 2023**

Embroidered drawings with vernacular photos on linen canvas  
55,5 x 60 cm

## Lower floor



**11. Born, 2020**

Paint roller on canvas and steel structure incorporating a motor  
60 x 45 cm

**12. The Little Red Riding Hood, 2002**

Oil on canvas  
238,5 x 174,5 cm

**13. Little Red Riding Hood, 2023**

Felt and embroidery on linen  
80 x 130 cm

**14. The Lonely Heart, 2023**

Felt and embroidery on linen  
72 x 89 cm

**15. Autumn Leaves, 2023**

Felt and embroidery on linen  
104 x 88 cm

**16. Scatering hearts, 2023**

Felt and embroidery on linen  
71 x 73 cm

**17. Can one catch happiness, 2023**

Felt and embroidery on linen  
122 x 96 cm

**18. He Really Understood Her Awkward Position, 1998**

Oil on canvas  
41 x 33 cm