

# Sophie-Yen Bretez

Bio and Artist statement

Sophie-Yen Bretez (**Vietnam, b. 1994**) is a self-taught artist currently living and working in Paris. Originally from Vietnam, Bretez moved to France when she was 4 years providing her with a rich fusion of cultural heritage often reflected in her multifaceted artistic practice. After completing a master's Grand École at Neoma Business School in Rouen, France in 2018. Bretez held multiple management positions in the creative industries throughout Paris. In 2021, Bretez decided to pursue her passion for art and began creating full time.

Rooting her artistic practice in self-awareness Sophie-Yen Bretez is inspired by the freedom found in observing her own experiences and simultaneously translating them into an enigmatic visual language. Striving to present an infinite dialogue between herself, the paintings and the viewer, Bretez confronts themes of the human condition and the complexity of the emotions while exploring the rich plurality of her identity as an adopted French Asian woman.

Building upon her signature style of dream-like surrealist figuration, Bretez's works explores issues such as trauma, resilience, identity, intimacy, sexuality and empowerment. Focusing on discovering ways in which to mirror the human condition in a state of recovery, Bretez often includes an illuminated horizon line stating, "I paint horizons for those who have suffered." By portraying her characters in semi-open spaces with a sunset or sunrise in the background, Bretez blurs the boundaries of the confined 'safe' space one builds for themselves in moments of weakness.

Interested in challenging the traditional male gaze Bretez utilises reverse voyeurism to challenge our societal relationship with the naked female body. Unflinching and strong, the women in Bretez's paintings look directly out at the spectator, serving to simultaneously create distance and prove they are not at the viewer's disposal rather they assert control of their own bodies.

A natural storyteller Bretez begins each painting with a poem linked to memory. Titling her works after these spontaneous and instinctual poems Bretez incorporates an additional layer of dialogue between the work, the viewer, and herself. Testifying to the intimate and the universal through substantive narratives, Bretez seeks to perpetuate a wider reflection of political, societal, and existential themes.

Messages of hope and perseverance permeate Bretez's work as she seeks to provide strength in the face of vulnerability.

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# Sophie-Yen Bretez

CV

## EDUCATION

- 2014-18      Master Grand École, Neoma Business School, Rouen, France  
2017          Indian Institute of Management, Indore, India

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023          *Powerful, despite it all*, **JD Malat Gallery**, London, UK

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024          **Volery Gallery**, Dubai, UAE  
2023          **Tang Contemporary**, Bangkok, THA  
2023          *Summer Exhibition*, **JD Malat Gallery**, London, UK  
2023          *All Together*, **Lorin Gallery**, Los Angeles, USA  
2022          *Woman, Empowered*, **JD Malat Gallery**, London, UK