

# DIANE DETALLE

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“Where am I going with this white piece of canvas? It’s like writing a story without knowing the ending – it appears in front of you...”

Diane Detalle (b.1974) is a French-born, American based painter. Energetic, intricate and spontaneous, her work embodies the dual traditions of European and American abstract art. Detalle’s painting has, in recent years, been deeply influenced by a series of personal losses and by her own dual identity as an artist and a mother. In the space of five years Detalle suffered the deaths of her mother, her aunt and her brother and sister 18th months apart . In May 2022 she opened a seminal solo exhibition entitled “BIGGER THAN LIFE: In Loving Memory of Edouard Detalle” at One Art Space gallery, NYC. Working in a deliberate haze of pressure, Detalle sought to reach into her grief to evoke her brother and his complexities in the paintings. Many layered, and with subtle interplays of light and darkness that suggest interior and exterior emotional landscapes, the paintings stand not only as a memorial but as a living and passionate evocation of humanity, loss and love.



Les Couleurs De Moustique Acrylic on canvas, 60” x 72” , 2022

As the mother of three children (‘I have given birth to three New Yorkers!’), Detalle describes how, enclosed in her studio, she ‘shuts down’ being a mother and a wife and goes back to her unconstrained self in order to paint. Her 2019 solo show was titled “DE TOI A MOI: From You to Me”. The painting of the same name is an organic web of lines and forms competing, merging and mutating – the complex and changing flows of the artist’s emotions and energies made visible. The solo show “CÉCILE” in May 2023 was in honor of her sister deep love for literature and music. She painted instinctively in the hope to represent her sister with an authentic artistic expression .

This fine balance between unpredictability and a disciplined and focused self-control is at the core of Detalle's artistic process in the studio. She describes how each painting is inspired by 'emotional pressure'... her need to react to a psychological state or a process of spontaneously travelling through a sensation, sound or vision. Canvases are laid out flat on the studio floor and the artist moves around them like a dancer, approaching from every angle, building the painting with layer upon layer of colour and texture – '... it starts with an idea and then the execution takes over'. Having experimented with dripping techniques in acrylic paint, often improvised in response to music, Detalle's recent paintings see her working with what she describes as her 'square mind'. Using a palette knife as her primary tool, she obsessively explores 45 degree angles, as well as parallels and diagonal lines. The paint is dropped onto the canvas from above, and then Detalle digs in with her knife and brush, finding the lines, perpetually in motion and flux like the city around her, often straining physically and imaginatively to reach the centre. 'Nothing is one way', says Detalle firmly, of her creative philosophy.



Life on the Fast Lane, Acrylic on canvas, 36" x 72", 2021

Detalle lights up describing her immediate, intense creative reaction to the energy of New York when she arrived on a one way ticket at the age of twenty four. The curiosity and experimentation of her early years in the city quickly led to her first serious works and to her growing realisation that she was, incontrovertibly, a self-taught artist. Whilst living in Paris and working in the financial sector Detalle had stood on the outside and looked into the windows of lighted first floor apartments, wondering at the beautiful artworks within. In NYC she moved into an apartment with a big white wall and immediately set about creating a huge and exquisite painting for herself on her own terms. ‘The sense of unpredictability around New York was [...] endearing to me. From the incredible sunsets to the energy flowing around the city, I knew this is where I should be.’ Ever experimental, ever spontaneous, reaching and responsive, Diane Detalle continues to use the canvas to write her own story. Text by Isabel Taylor



Le rêve doré (Detail) Acrylic on canvas, 12” x 16”, 2023



DIANE DETALLE STUDIO

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