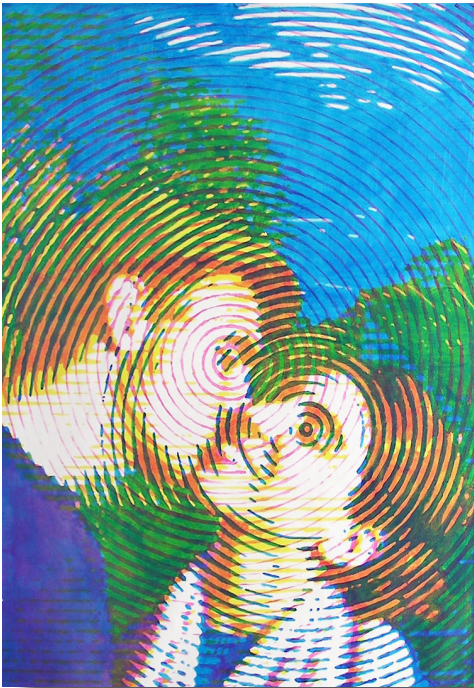


The Capital City Arts Initiative [CCAI] is delighted to present, *Moiré*, an exhibition by artist Claire Pasquier, at the Courthouse Gallery from June 8 – September 29, 2022. CCAI extends its sincere appreciations to the artist, the Carson City Courthouse, and to all those involved with the exhibition. In addition, CCAI thanks our commissioned writer, Vivian Zavataro, who provided the following essay.

## Shimmering

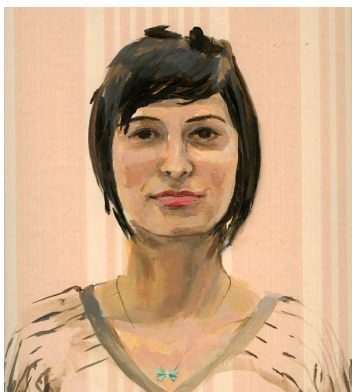
It was 2010 and Claire Pasquier was an artist in residence at the San Francisco Museum of Modern



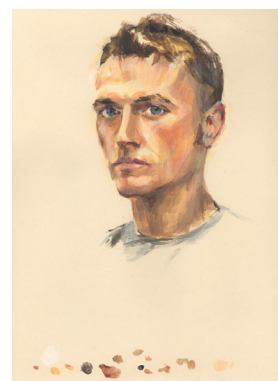
*le Baiser (the kiss)*, acrylic on canvas, 90"x70", 2012

Art's Artist Gallery when we met. At the time, her work focused on the relationship between the painter and the individual being painted. In her series *Portrait Landscape*, she produced hundreds of portraits in the span of one year. The concept behind this specific project was to challenge our current times, to think about connection in this day and age while reflecting about the paradox of division and unity social media can potentially bring. For Pasquier, it was just like back in the early 1900s, when one had to pose or pause (a play on words she does in French—"il faut un temps de pose ou pause?") to have their portrait done. To sit in front of the artist, in the 21st century, for a couple hours, might intimidate some, but to Pasquier it was an exchange and a chance for both—herself and the person posing—to connect with each other. For Claire and me, then, sitting in front of each other, for two hours, was enough for us to become lifetime friends and professional colleagues (you can see my young-self

with straightened hair in *VZ*, 2010—not included in *Moiré*). In a similar fashion, back in 2005, Claire met Ian Padgham and invited him to pose for her for a portrait (*IP*, 2005—not included in *Moiré*). I enjoyed listening her talk about the beginning of their story. She says he sat in front of her, they did not speak to each other, instead they looked intensively at each other's eyes. As a painter, she could not help



*VZ*, 2010



*IP*, 2005

herself to think about how much she liked his face proportions, “academically speaking,” she says. Their relationship began with the portrait and progressed to their life-long partnership, marriage, and two beautiful children.

## **moire**

nom féminin

1. Étoffe à reflet changeant et souvent ondé, obtenue en écrasant le grain des étoffes avec une calandre spéciale.
2. Littéraire. Reflets changeants et chatoyants d'une surface, d'un objet<sup>1</sup>.

## **moiré**

noun

variants: or moire

- 1
  - a. an irregular wavy finish on a fabric.
  - b. a ripple pattern on a stamp.
2. fabric having a wavy watered appearance.
3. an independent usually shimmering pattern seen when two geometrically regular patterns (such as two sets of parallel lines or two halftone screens) are superimposed especially at an acute angle<sup>2</sup>.

When surrounded by Claire's current exhibit, *Moiré*, I could not help but think about the meaning of the word *moiré*. As a non-native English speaker, I was actually surprised to find out that the word also belongs to the English language. As you can see above, the word has quite a few definitions in English. When I started comparing the definition of *moire*/*moiré* in both French and English, while looking at Claire's current body of work, I started to think about the connections between each description from the dictionaries to her pieces. One of them in particular resonated with me in a deeper way: “*reflets changeants et chatoyants d'une surface, d'un objet*,” which would translate to the changing and shimmering reflections of a surface or an object. Yes, the difference between the description in the two languages is subtle; yes, I could be biased by the poetic quality of the French language, but to me, this was the definition that captured the essence of Pasquier's work.

Pasquier was born in the region of Provence in France, she got her Bachelor's degree in Art History from the renowned *La Sorbonne* and her Master's Degree from *L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs* in Paris, where she spent most of her late teens and early twenties. Claire

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1 Larousse Dictionnaire, <https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/moire>

2 Merriam-Webster Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/moire>



*Static Luke*, oil on wood panel, 2012

*Static Luke, Moiré*, acrylic on canvas, 2015

moved to San Francisco in 2006, where she lived with her husband before they returned to France in 2017.

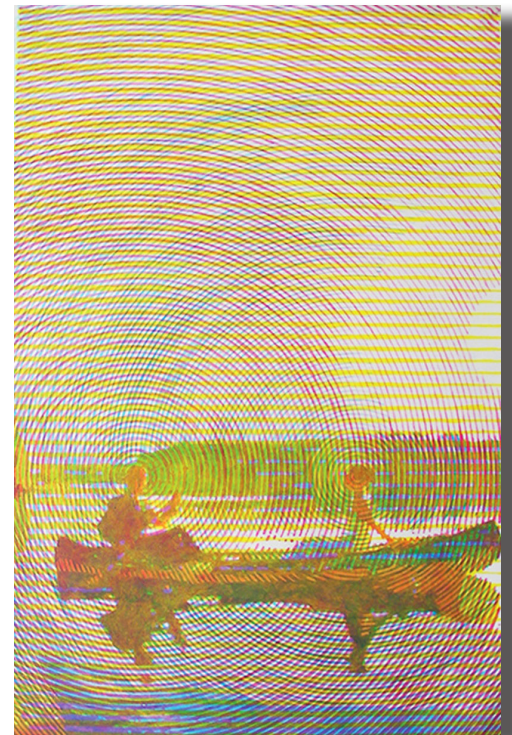
Being trained in a classic tradition as a painter, portraits were an intrinsic part of Pasquier's oeuvre. Even though these are incredibly different when compared to the pieces in *Moiré*, Pasquier's conceptual approach is still sound and consistent. Her body of work as a whole reflects on the very definition of moiré, the "changing and shimmering reflection of a surface," that being of a person, a fleeing memory, a landscape, or a connection.

Pasquier started to develop her moiré style paintings about a decade ago, while still living in San Francisco. Seeing herself in the city where many of the sets from the movies she watched growing up, drew her close to the idea of a TV screen, VHS, and nostalgia—

think Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. At the time, when reflecting on this series, she stated, "my work has pushed me to analyze the power of memory of VHS images in relationship to my current life, and also to reflect on the intersection of what I see on the TV and the world around me. Recently, these questions have led me to apply the moiré effect seen in old television screens to reproduce images from my personal life and Californian culture."

One of her first pieces in this style is *Static Luke*, 2012, seen in this exhibit; made with a palette knife, oil painting on wood board. If you were born before the year 1985, I am sure you can make the connection between this piece and an old TV, the one your family member would pound on in an attempt to make the image clearer. These earlier pieces illustrate Pasquier's aesthetic transition to the moirés seen in this show, her connection to American pop culture, and her personal experience when living in California.

Throughout time, she started experimenting with the elementary characteristics of a painting, such as color, line, shape, and scale. Her pieces started to become more abstract—if the viewers are close to the piece, they will be able to capture the details in the lines and the particular shades of the



*le Mariage (the wedding)*, acrylic on canvas, 91"x70", 2012



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colors, but when stepping back one can identify a sunset, landscape, or a depiction of a kiss (*le Baiser*, 2012). In these paintings, such as *le Mariage*, 2012, Pasquier uses current technology to morph the image into its essence, she then re-interprets the information with projected lines on the surface of the canvas.

By breaking down an image into lines and colors, Pasquier urges one to reflect on the paradox of technology and nature, providing the viewer with a different perspective and a new way of seeing the world around them. Take the time to be surrounded by Claire Pasquier's moirés, accept her invitation to meditate on everyday life—the beautiful landscapes that surround us, colorful sunsets, memories from the past, and the feeling of belonging.

Vivian Zavataro  
Reno, NV  
June, 2022



Claire Pasquier

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