

# Les bons comptes font les bons amis

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Julien Serve dessine le monde. Même si la main est l'un de ses sujets de prédilection – la main qui dessine, qui produit, qui crée, qui invente, qui indique, qui narre et dont les gestes parlent si fort que l'on peut se passer de mots –, rien de ce qui est humain ne lui est étranger et tout, pour lui, est sujet à dessin. Jusqu'à HEC, dont il suit désormais assidûment les cours. Julien Serve dessine, pendant les cours, comme il l'a toujours fait : mauvais élève, excellent dessinateur. La question est posée, et reste ouverte, de savoir si, en dessinant en cours d'économie plutôt qu'étudier cette discipline, l'artiste rend cette dernière plus humaine. Rien n'est moins sûr : il pourrait en réalité, tout aussi bien, fournir à celui qui feuillette ses cahiers, qui s'y plonge, qui s'y reflète, matière à distanciation, à critique, voire à détestation. Pour Julien Serve, en réalité, il ne s'agit pas tant de représenter l'économie que de laisser affleurer des sensations qui deviennent nôtres et qui prennent forme au cœur du vide, dans un grouillement d'idées qui foisonnent en liberté. Alors le crayon posé sur la feuille se met à se mouvoir, guidé par la main, à la fois dessinée et dessinante, devenue un rassurant mécanisme du corps.

Julien Serve draws the world. Even if the hand is one of his favourite subjects – the hand that draws, that produces, that creates, that invents, that signals, that narrates, the hand that speaks so clearly it has no need of words – nothing human is alien to him, and for him anything can become a drawing. And even HEC, whose economics courses he is now conscientiously attending. But of course Julien Serve draws during lessons, as he has always done: bad pupil, excellent draughtsman. Serve works in a constant dialogue with his images. He seeks to reveal the often ignored points of impact between the individual, the intimate, memory and society, the present day and history. Art-making, sometimes compulsive art-making (a score of drawings per work session, and sometimes, as at HEC, the use of a “notebook,” in actual fact accounts books picked up in an ad hoc office) is the only way he knows of structuring his doubts as, in his words, the drawing “takes shape out of nothingness.” And it is precisely from this position of doubt, this abhorrence of the void, that Serve's drawings emerge. For him, drawing is a peaceful arm against emptiness. “Some of the realities I draw I can neither experience nor accept. Drawing them allows me to take up my position in this inconceivable world.” Drawing, whatever the cost. The question remains as to whether, by drawing his economics lessons rather than studying the discipline, the artist manages to make this more humane. Nothing could be less certain. It might well be that his notebooks would give any reader grounds for distancing, critique or even detestation. For Serve, in fact, the point is not so much to represent the economy as to allow the emergence of sensations that we espouse and that take shape in the emptiness, in a teeming of free ideas. And so the pencil placed against the sheet starts to move, guided by the hand, at once drawn and “drawing,” now a reassuring corporeal mechanism.