

# Alain Le Chatelier

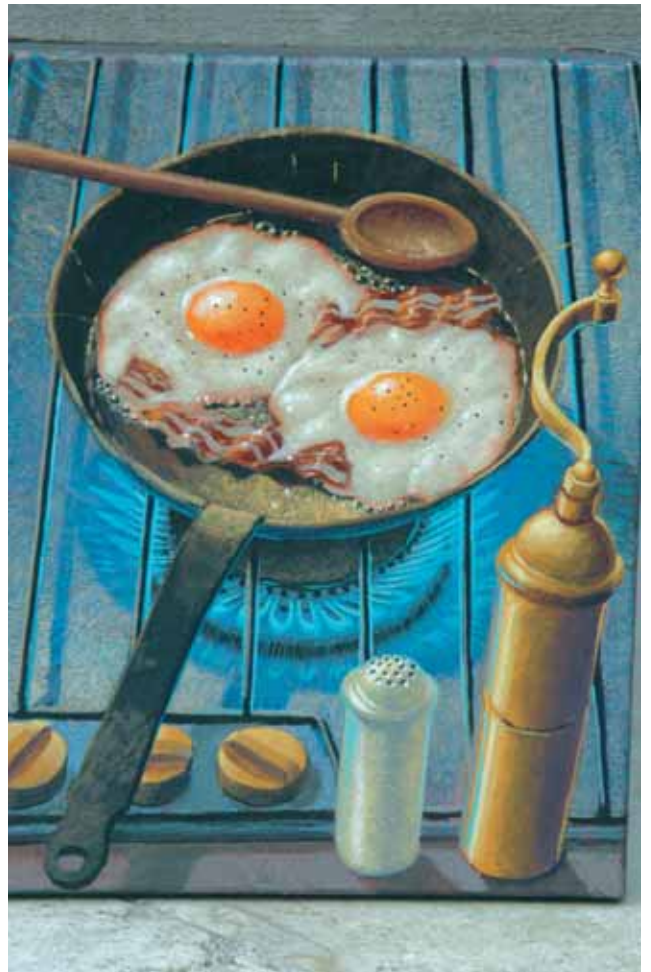
*A* favorite in Saint-Barth

Right, saturated colors define the palette of Alain Le Chatelier, a French painter who shows his work every winter (since 1996) at Les Artisans gallery in Gustavia. One is immediately drawn to the incredible sense of humor—spiced with a dash of irreverence—seen in his work. In one large painting of Le Chatelier's studio in Paris, an easel stands in the middle of the room. And on the easel is a painting of Le Chatelier's studio with an easel in the middle, and on the easel is a painting of Le Chatelier's studio with an easel in the middle, and on and on... displaying his mastery of *trompe l'oeil*.

Many of Le Chatelier's paintings are of the living room and kitchen at his country home—a former rectory located about 100 kilometers southeast of Paris. In fact the kitchen scenes that are so immediate they are like a visual version of onomatopoeia: you can almost hear the eggs frying and the bacon sizzling... on a stove crowded with a canister of sea salt, a pepper mill, a Dijon mustard jar, and other accoutrements of French cooking. "I paint in the kitchen when it gets cold in the winter," he says.



*Grand Salon Rouge 150 x 150*



*Les œufs 19 x 24 - photos - R.Gréaux*

Other canvases look as if they were painted through a wide-angle lens, almost from a fish-eye perspective, like reality knocked slightly off-kilter for the artist and his audience. "Some of the paintings are seen from an angle that only a bird or an insect flying overhead could see," says Le Chatelier, who often includes insects in his paintings as another touch of whimsy. Some of the scenes he refers to as "unfolded rooms" where the viewer is welcome into the open space.

Cakes with forks dancing above them, a melon sliced open ready to eat, topiary rabbits, sly self-portraits made entirely of fruits and vegetables, a bright blue eye peering from behind a large bouquet of flowers, the juxtaposition of shadow and light: you never know what you might discover in one of Le Chatelier's paintings, the colors are just the beginning...

*Ellen.L.Gréaux*

*Exhibition - "Les Artisans" rue du Roi Oscar II - Gustavia*