

NEW GALERIE

THUS SPOKE THE SILENCE...

October 18 - December 15, 2012

opening October 18, 4-9 pm

Thus Spoke The Silence..., Aurélien Porte's first solo exhibition at the New Galerie, opens with a cry. *The Terror of Cercopithecus* is a small format painting into which is inserted a photograph: the head of a frightened monkey, taken from the colonial journal «Journal des Voyages» and retained by the artist for many years. This monkey is surrounded by an owl, fish, frog and beaver. These zoomorphic forms and this imaginary bestiary are a resurgence of Egyptian deities. Understood as icons, these small format portraits have immediacy. They express a primitive mystical consciousness through anger, happiness or sexual desire.

Raw and uninhibited, Aurélien Porte's paintings operate as a whole that he combines with other materials without any hierarchy. At the New Galerie they take an architectural aspect, through the presence of carved tablets hung on the walls of this improvised temple, the artist's imaginary museum enriched by each new exhibition.

Perspective Of Words, Combination Of Elements, Primordial Gestures: at the crossroads of the Celtic stele, the tablet and the tombstone, the four inscribed soapstone bas-reliefs are odes and warnings conveyed by the exhibition.

Ever since Neolithic times soapstone has been a stone with magical properties. Capable of storing heat, it is also known for its malleability. This stone which competed with ceramics in ancient times is used here by the artist in the form of carved blocks.

Narrative, mystical and ancestral, Aurélien Porte's works keep the viewer physically and emotionally close while the inscribed words keep him at a distance. While steles are message bearers that seem to arise from the past, animals in the *Silent Witnesses* series are «silent witnesses» to the world stage. Going from light to darkness, from the intimate to the architectural, *Thus Spoke The Silence...* prolongs a story where the forces present collide and then come into balance.

Claire Staebler

Text from «In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni, La peinture consumée d'Aurélien Porte», to be published.