

**GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA**

PARIS

**BENOIT MAIRE**

*Quelques meubles*

**September 4 - October 23, 2021**

3, rue du Cloître Saint-Merri  
75004 - Paris



Benoît Maire  
*Chaise à la pêche*, 2019  
Stainless steel, restours green marble, brass, composite materials, 108 x 64 x 54 cm  
Exhibition view, Villa Noailles, 2020 - Scenography by Les Crafties  
© Luc Bertrand  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is pleased to dedicate an exhibition to the pieces of furniture, editions and unique creations made by Benoît Maire for the design and architecture collective Ker-Xavier. The group, co-founded by scenographer Marie Corbin in 2010 with architects from the École de Belleville, has become a label of which the artist has been the artistic director since 2016. Under the name «Benoît Maire pour Ker-Xavier», he edits furniture, signs exhibition set designs, collaborates with artists on special projects and carries out private commissions, when only the signature «Ker-Xavier» indicates a collective work.

Thus the scenography of the exhibition *Foncteur d'oubli*, in 2019, at the FRAC Ile-de-France is attributed to «Ker-Xavier» while the Villa Noailles in Hyères presented the following year a series of sculptural chairs signed by the artist. Continuing in parallel his artistic work in resonance with philosophy, art history, mythology but also design and mathematics, Benoît Maire will be a resident at the Villa Medici in Rome during the 2021-2022 season.

The exhibition at the gallery is made up of different variations around the seat and its corollary, the table. Chairs, stools, armchairs, in limited editions and unique pieces perpetuate through the field of design a conceptual and aesthetic research around manufactured objects, characteristic of the work of Benoît Maire. We find the same sensitivity for the association between forms, colors and materials, a constant in the practice of the artist, which he extends to the scenography of his own works. Through his pieces of furniture destined for everyday use, he further explores the concept of measurement as a calculation between man and his environment, a consideration also pregnant in his sculptures, in which the principle of balance is paramount.

The border between art object and craft has never been so thin. Several pieces of furniture are derivatives of sculptures, while others foreshadow new formal avenues in the artist's practice. The *Chaise à la pêche*, for example, seems to be an every day extension of the *Châteaux* series, which brings together objects of opposite natures, one from the mineral world, the other from the technological, through a delicate brass architecture. The artist has soldered onto the stem a small leg recovered from an old nutcracker. On this stem rests the reproduction of a composite peach that the artist

found in Hong Kong, in 2019. The seat is made of estour green marble from a table originally designed for his video *Letre* (2015). The *Fauteuil couchant* also creates an obvious bridge with the artist's pictorial universe and his *Peintures de nuages*, (Cloud paintings). The purely artisanal dimension of the chair, its facture, becomes the central motif of a composition that evokes a diptych, now rendered functional. The Fondation Carmignac has commissioned an important set of chaises longues in the same spirit for its site in Porquerolles.

Attentive to the various crafts and ancestral know-hows, the artist has all his furniture pieces made by French artisans, or local artisans when working abroad, as was the case, for example, in Merida, Mexico. Thus, the *Chaise du Soir* and its variations are produced between Mérignac and La Meuse, where the Atelier Jean Bergeron takes care of the wooden structure. The caning of the seat, which includes vegetable or cereal raw materials, was also carried out by people with hearing disabilities thanks to the ESAT Les Eyquems workfare center that the collective sponsors, while the Zebra 3 workshop in Bordeaux produces most of the wood and steel prototypes. Benoît Maire also called upon the carpenter Nicolas Bastien in the Bordeaux suburbs for the armchair version of the *Chaise du soir* and a decorative upholsterer from Bordeaux, the Mimilo workshop, was in charge of the cushion made from foam scraps and opaline fabrics.

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**Benoît Maire was born in 1978 in Pessac (France). He lives and works in Bordeaux (France).**

He received a DEA (Master) in Philosophy from Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris, France) in 2002, a DNSEP from Villa Arson (Nice, France) in 2003, and was a resident at the Palais de Tokyo in 2005-2006. Benoît Maire studied art and philosophy, a double training that he brings together in his artistic practice by seeking to give sensitive form to theoretical concepts.

In 2021-2022, Benoît Maire will be a resident at the Villa Médicis - Académie de France in Rome (Italy).

The artist has been the subject of several solo exhibitions, notably at the Centre d'art contemporain des Tanneries in Amilly (France) with *In Hawaï* and in 2019 at the Musée archéologique Henri Prades in Montpellier (France) with *Laicriture*. He received a lot of attention in 2018 as the CAPC - Museum of Contemporary Art in Bordeaux (France) dedicated him an important solo exhibition entitled *Thèbes*. That same year he is also featured at the Spike Island Art Centre in Bristol (UK). *Cloud Paintings* is presented at the Arsenal in New York (USA) and *George Slays the Dragon* at the Bielefelder Kunstverein (Germany) in 2017; in 2014 with *Letre* at La Verrière - Fondation Hermès in Brussels (Belgium); in 2013, with *Spiaggia di menzogne (Lying Beach)* at the Fondazione Giuliani in Rome (Italy), *Weapon* at the David Roberts Art Foundation in London (United Kingdom); or in 2011, with *Soon the metal between us will turn into gold* at the Kunsthalle in Mulhouse (France), *The Object of Criticism* at the De Vleeshal in Middelburg (Netherlands).

His last exhibition at Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Miss Rankin, was in 2020 (Paris, France).

Benoît Maire was a laureate of the «1% artistic» associated with the MÉCA (a project of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region, which is in charge of the project) and presented *Un détail*, a bronze half-head of Hermes that was installed on the outdoor bleachers in 2018. In 2010, he was awarded the Ricard Foundation and CNAP Image/Mouvement prize, the Cité Internationale des Arts in 2009, and the DRAC Aquitaine in 2005.

Benoît Maire's work can be found in renowned public and private collections, such as in France, the Centre Pompidou, Paris, the FNAC Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, the FRAC Ile-de-France, Paris, the FRAC Aquitaine, Bordeaux, the FRAC Franche-Comté, Besançon, the Kadist Art Foundation, Paris, the Artothèque de Pessac, the CAPC Musée, Bordeaux, the MAC/VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine, the Francès Foundation, Senlis; and abroad: David Roberts Foundation, London, UK; Nomas Foundation, Rome, Italy; Fondazione Giuliani, Rome, Italy; Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada.

Benoît Maire is represented by Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels, since 2018.

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**Paris Saint-Honoré**

**Group show**

September 9 - September 25,  
2021

**Mickalene Thomas**

October 7 - December 18, 2021

**Paris Cloître Saint-Merri**

**Robert Kushner**

*Jardin Sauvage*

September 4 - October 23, 2021

**Paris Cloître Saint-Merri II**

**Benoît Maire - Ker Xavier**

*Quelques meubles*

September 4 - October 23, 2021

**Brussels**

**Jérôme Zonder**

*Jusqu'ici tout va bien*

September 7 - October 23, 2021

**Shahpour Pouyan**

Novembre 6 - December 18, 2021

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