



"Glory 8" 2013
Gold luster on yellow glazed stoneware, aluminium
100 x 75 x 18 cm / 39 1/4 x 29 1/2 x 7 1/8 inches



"Glory Double 8" 2013
Gold luster on red glazed stoneware, aluminium
100 x 75 x 18 cm / 40 1/2 x 29 1/2 x 6 1/4 inches

JOHAN CRETEN "FIREWORKS"

Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong / October 02 - November 15, 2014

Opening reception: Thursday, October 02, 6-8pm

Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong, is pleased to present "Fireworks" by Johan Creten.

Born in Sint-Truiden, Belgium, Creten has been working on the move for 25 years, from Mexico to Rome, from Miami to Amsterdam. He currently lives in Paris, France, but the sculptures exhibited in Hong Kong have been specially made during the past two years at Struktuur 68 in Den Haag, the Netherlands.

Creten started working with clay from the late 80s, when the medium was still a taboo in the art world. Earth was deemed dirty and damp, while the creator was also seen as a usurper of God, transgressing religious interdicts. Yet, at the same time clay represents "Earth Mother", linking the sacred to the profane. Creten is one of the earliest exponents of using clay in the context of contemporary art and is considered a precursor alongside Thomas Schütte and Lucio Fontana. As a pioneer in the revival of modern ceramics, Creten continues to influence a generation of young artists today.

The title "Fireworks" of the exhibition is twofold: on one hand it describes a show that is about joy and the outburst of intense emotion; on the other hand the works are literally fireworks. They are sculptures made of fired clay, which evoke the moment when muddy earth transforms into pure mysterious beauty. They rose from fire like a phoenix from ashes, metamorphosed into a timeless and superbly rich material.

In the center of the main room stands "Hong Kong Beauty", 2014, the most recent torso from the well-known "Odore di Femmina" series. The title of the series is taken from Mozart's "Don Giovanni", referencing the point when the great seducer sniffs and calls out "Ah, odore di femmina". "He does not see the woman but he smells her. There is something animal about body odor, but at the same time it is attractive and sensual. Nonetheless it is taboo, a complaint that must be combated with endless perfumes." [1] The title is a game Creten plays with his sculptures, in which the two parties are engaged in an ambiguous relationship.

"Hong Kong Beauty" is covered in a fleshy dark red glaze and a skin of bright gold luster. It is the first torso that makes use of a glazed stoneware base.

JOHAN CRETEN 《FIREWORKS》

貝浩登 (香港) / 2014年10月2日至11月15日

開幕式: 10月2日 (星期四) 晚上6時至8時

貝浩登 (香港) 很榮幸為Johan Creten舉辦《Fireworks》展覽。

Creten在比利時聖圖爾登出生，25年來在世界各地創作，從墨西哥到羅馬、邁亞密到阿姆斯特丹，現居於法國巴黎。是次展出的作品特別在荷蘭海牙Struk Tuur 68製作，歷時兩年。

Creten自上世紀80年代末開始以黏土創作，當時這媒介在藝術界仍屬禁忌。泥土被視為一潮濕骯髒的物料，藝術家用以創作，更是僭越上帝，違反宗教禁令。可是，黏土也代表「大地之母」，聯繫世俗與神聖。在當代藝術界，Creten可算是其中一位最早推動黏土創作的藝術家，與托馬斯·舒特 (Thomas Schütte) 和盧齊歐·封塔納 (Lucio Fontana) 同為先驅人物。作為復興現代陶瓷藝術的先鋒，Creten 繼續影響着當今年青一代藝術家。

展覽取名《Fireworks》有雙重意義，既表達歡樂和情感迸發，又點出展品確實與火有關，來自火燒的黏土。就像浴火重生的鳳凰，泥土經火淨化後充滿神秘美感，成為一永恆瑰寶。

主展廳中央擺放了《Hong Kong Beauty》(2014年)，是著名《Odore di Femmina》系列的最新作品。系列名稱來自莫札特歌劇《唐璜》(Don Giovanni)，其中一場講大情聖聞到女角體味後大叫：「啊，女人的香味！」「他看不見那女人，但卻聞得到。人體氣味雖帶點獸性，同時又性感誘人；由於是禁忌，所以要不斷噴灑香水。」以此命名塑像系列，是要暗示作品裏的兩性曖昧關係。

漆上暗紅釉彩的《Hong Kong Beauty》，外有一層金黃光澤，是第一件配以上釉石座的軀幹塑像。由於用手精製，這類塑像每年產量極少，經多年演變，形態也各有不同，包括今次展出的早期深黑色塑像 (看似滿佈蜆殼的石塊)、珊瑚色邁亞密塑像，以及充滿原始純潔色彩的白色塞維爾 (Sèvres) 塑像 (曾於倫敦華萊士收藏館和巴黎羅浮宮博物館展出)。

藝評人Rosa Martinez如此解讀這件《Odore di Femmina》系列作品：「Johan Creten用滿佈玫瑰的塑像暗示大海的重和密，亦即母親的香味 (法文「海」與「母親」同音)。從遠處看，塑像的暗沉色彩和表面

Carefully hand-built by the artist himself, only very few of these torsos are produced each year. Their forms have evolved over the years, from the early dark black torso suggesting mussel shell covered rocks as seen in this show, to the open coral colored torso made in Miami, and to the pristine virginal white Sèvres torso that was shown at the Wallace Collection in London and at the Louvre Museum in Paris.

Explaining the concept of the "Odore di Femmina" series, critic Rosa Martínez says "Johan Creten alludes to the weight and density of the sea – mother odor (la mer – la mère, in French) – by using torsos covered in roses. From a distance the dark color and incrustations suggest mussel shells and the darkness and glow of the female sexual organ thereby creating primeval reflections on the origins of life." [2] The torso is also a reminiscence of the Venus de Milo, who emerged from the sea as the incarnation of love and beauty. In the primitive form of woman nature, the sculpture lures men with its feminine aura, urging them through an uncharted journey of feelings. Fragile and tender with seductive petals, "Hong Kong Beauty" is sensitive to the male gaze; but the razor-sharp edges on the surface immediately present a threat of wound resulting in a figurative tension between the opposite sexes.

"Hong Kong Beauty" is surrounded by sculptures from the "Glory" series shimmering on the wall. During Creten's stay at the Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres, he started a series called "Les Vagues pour Palissy", which consists of triumphant images of energy, regeneration, the cycle of life and the hopeful nature of creation. The series was a tribute to the renaissance ceramic master Bernard Palissy, which later developed into new wall sculptures titled "The Glories". Hand-shaped from clay, the secular is glorified and the secret is made secular, witnessing the collision of two distinct worlds. However, this does not give rise to chaos but harmony, with geometric perfection and uniform proportion giving viewers a scope into inner peace. The sculptures are embodiments of majestic splendor, images of bliss, prosperity and great happiness.

Creten has employed the Italian majolica glaze technique in a fresh new way and created the "Fireworks" pieces in the other room. They are sculptural works with painterly quality, perfectly poised between painting and sculpture. Created in a specific form, they can be placed in four different orientations, opening up to multiple possibilities.

Finally are presented "Community One" and "Community Two", two oversized sculptures covered with insects, modeled after traditional European beehives. They are the artist's appropriation of human relations, with a metaphorical socio-political undertone. For Creten, the anthropomorphic motif stands for a constructive community, a force that works together for the greater good. Each individual is part of the community, who has his or her own role, position and task. There is a free-flow of communications through the channels in the eye and mouth area. Such is the ideal form of a constructive community. Nevertheless, when viewed from a different angle, one can see a multitude of insects invading this seemingly utopian community, dissolving the established order. Thus the work is simultaneously a criticism towards blind work discipline, which is susceptible to disintegration upon the derailment of an individual or external attack.

Johan Creten was the winner of the Rome Prize and held a residency at Villa Medici, Rome, Italy, from 1996 to 1997. From June 2004 to January 2008, he was an artist in residence at the legendary Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres, the French national porcelain factory. He was one of the featured artists in the exhibition "Contrepoint 2" (2005) at The Musée du Louvre, Paris, France. He recently had a solo exhibition "The Storm" (2014) at the Middelheim Museum in Antwerp, Belgium. Creten will also participate in FIAC 2014 where Galerie Perrotin will unveil a series of ceramic paintings made by the artist at the Alfred University (New York) in 2013.

裝飾，令人聯想到蜆殼和女性性器官，進而反思生命之源。」塑像也令人想到維納斯女神，那個從海中升起的爱與美的化身。作品呈現女性的原始形態，其陰柔面引領男士展開一段短暫情感之旅。柔弱的花瓣固然惹人憐愛，但在突出分明的輪廓下，隱然流露剛烈，暗示兩性的緊張關係。

圍繞《Hong Kong Beauty》的是牆上《Glory》系列。在國立塞維爾瓷器廠 (Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres) 期間，Creten開始創作《Les Vagues pour Palissy》系列，向文藝復興陶瓷大師伯納德·帕里希 (Bernard Palissy) 致敬。作品歌頌能量、再生、生命循環和美好創造，後來發展成新壁雕作品，名為《The Glories》。它們以人手形塑黏土而成，既有世俗謳歌，也有神聖啓示，雖是聖凡交遇，但見和諧而無混亂，線條完美，比例合一，令人看後心境平靜，代表着華麗、幸福、繁榮和快樂。

Creten改變了意大利錫釉 (majolica glaze) 製陶法，以嶄新方式創作《Fireworks》展品，帶出繪畫效果，平衡了繪畫與雕塑。每個塑像雖有特定形態，卻可以4種方式擺放，增添了觀賞可能性。

最後是兩個特大塑像《Community One》和《Community Two》，造型以傳統歐洲蜂巢為藍本，表面滿佈昆蟲，反映藝術家對人類關係的觀察，含豐富社會政治意義。Creten認為，人形塑像代表進步社會，一種共同朝向更高福祉的力量。在這理想社會，人人都是一分子，各有不同角色、位置和責任，但可以自由溝通，正如塑像的眼和口。不過，從另一角度看，卻會發現這烏托邦正受大量昆蟲侵襲，秩序瀕臨崩潰。所以，作品同時在抨擊盲目的工作規律，暗示一旦出現個人反常或有外來衝擊，規律便無法維持。

Johan Creten是羅馬獎 (Rome Prize) 得主，1996至1997年間獲邀到羅馬美第奇別墅 (Villa Medici) ；2004年6月至2008年1月，獲任法國國家瓷器廠—國立塞維爾瓷器廠—常駐藝術家；曾參與巴黎羅浮宮博物館《Counterpoint 2》展覽 (2005年) (作為主藝術家之一) ，以及比利時安特衛普 (Anvers) Middelheim博物館《The Storm》個展 (2014年) ；今年稍後將參與法國國際當代藝術展覽會 (FIAC) ，屆時貝浩登會首次展示藝術家2013年在紐約阿爾弗雷德大學 (Alfred University) 製作的一批陶瓷畫。

[1] Doris Wintgens Hötte, "Johan Creten. Ars longa, vita brevis", Johan Creten: beelden, cat. exp., Leiden, Stedelijk Museum de Lakenhal, 2007, pp.51

[2] Rosa Martínez, "Johan Creten. Odore di Femmina", cat.exp., Robert Miller Gallery New York, 1998, pp.11

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (selection)

- 2014** "The Storm", Musée Middelheim, Sculpture Park, Anvers, Belgium; "Gulden Snede", Galerie Transit, Mechelen, Belgique; "Fireworks", Perrotin Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2013** "The Vivisector", Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France "JC", Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2012** "Fire-Works", Dhondt-Dhaenens Museum, Deurle, Belgium
- 2011** "Johan Creten. Pliny's Sorrow", Almine Rech, Brussels, Belgium; "Les ruches de Saint Bernard", Abbaye du Thoronet, Thoronet, France
- 2010** "Dark Continent" Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris
- 2009** "Why does Strange fruit always look so sweet?" Galerie Saint Severin, Paris, France
- 2008** "Strange Fruit", Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Miami, USA; "Johan Creten : La Femmina", Musée archéologique Henri-Prades, Lattes, France; "De Gewonden", Keramiekmuseum Princessehof, Leeuwarden, Pays Bas; "Ex Natura", Musée de la Chasse, (in coproduction with the Manufacture National of Sèvres), Paris, France
- 2007** "Tour des Forces", Royal Museum of Mariemont, Morlanwelz, Belgium; "Beelden/Sculptures", Stedelijk Museum de Lakenhal, Leiden, The Netherlands
- 2006** "Narcissus Saved", Transit Galerie, Mechelen, Belgium
- 2004** "Miami Dreams", De Garage, Mechelen, Belgium
- 2003** "JC solo", Bass Museum of Art, Miami, USA; "Odore di Femmina", J.Johnson Gallery, Jacksonville, Florida, USA; "JC Sculptures", Elaine Baker, Boca raton, Florida, USA
- 2001** "3 Torso's", Robert Miller Gallery, New York, USA
- 2000** "JC Sculptures", Riva Yares Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ and Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA; "Casa del Obispado", Arte Actual Mexicano, Monterrey, Mexico
- 1998** "L'homme parfait", MAMCO, Genève, Switzerland; "Odore di Femmina", Robert Miller gallery, New York, USA
- 1997** "La Misère Dorée", Musée des Arts décoratif, Paris, France
- 1996** "Wereldbeelden", W 139, Amsterdam, Holland
- 1994** "Amerika Amerika", Galerie Arndt&Partner, Berlin, Germany; "La Mort d'Adonis", FRAC Auvergne, Château de Chareil-Cintrat, France; "Les Amants", Galerie Transit, Leuven, Belgique; "JC Solo", Galerie de la Villa, Villa Arson, Nice, France; "En Quarantaine", Brise-lames, Sète, France
- 1992** "Le Cheval de Troie", Galerie Transit, Leuven, Belgium
- 1990** "L'œil de l'antiquaire", Transit Galerie, Belgium
- 1988** "Kunstkamer", Galerie Meyer, Paris, France

GROUP SHOWS (selection)

- 2014** "Beating around the Bush Episode # 2", Bonnafantenmuseum, Maastricht, Netherlands; "Cet obscur objet de désirs : Autour de l'Origine du monde", Musée Gustave Courbet, Ornans, France; "Le Baiser" Musée Maillol, Paris
- 2013** "Happy Birthday, 25 ans de la Galerie Perrotin", Tripostal, Lille, France; "FIAC hors les murs, Almine Rech Gallery, Jardin des Plantes, Paris, France; "Remake", Musée royal de Mariemont, Morlanwez, Belgium; "Révélations. Le salon des métiers d'art et de la création", Grand Palais, Paris, France; "Terra Arte - Projektes", Zigelei Hundisburg, Hundisburg, Germany; "Sculptures 9 - Animal", Musée Despiau-Wlérick, Mont de Marsan, France; "The 7th Gyeonggi International Ceramic Biennale", Icheon CeraMIX Creative Center - Gyeonggi, Corée du Sud; "Mon île de Montmajour", Abbaye de Montmajour, Arles, France; "Back to Earth - From Picasso to Ai Weiwei. Rediscovering ceramics in Art", Herbert Gerisch Foundation, Neumünster, Germany; "La Révolte et l'Ennui, la collection du FRAC Auvergne" FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, France; "Château hanté", FRAC Auvergne, Domaine Royal de Randan, Randan, France; "Tresses 13. dés-tresse et délacet treize", Maison des tresses et lacets, La Terrasse-sur-Dorlay, France
- 2012** "Des Fleurs en Hiver", Musée Delacroix, Paris, France; "La Belle & la Bête", Institut Culturel Bernard Magrez, Bordeaux, France; "Group Show", Galerie Perrotin, Paris; "Group Show", Galerie Transit, Mechelen, Belgium; "Beauté animale, de Dürer à Jeff Koons", Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, France; Festival International d'Art Contemporain Ap'Art, Les Alpilles, France; Musée Imaginaire du Moyen Age, Château de Tarascon, France
- 2011/12** "Bêtes off", Conciergerie, Paris, France; "Tour de France/Florida - Artist from France in FLorida's private collections", Institut Français and the French Consulate, The Frost Museum, Miami, USA
- 2011** "Pearls of North", On a pas perdu le nord, Palais d'Iéna, Paris, France; "Louvre à Bethune", Béthune 2011 - Capitale régionale de la culture, Béthune, France; "Intérieurs", L'art de vivre avec l'art, Artcurial, Hôtel Dassault, Paris, France; "Scène Belge", Hippocrène Foundation, Paris, France; "Bestes, bestiaux et bestioles (Genèse)", Château de Oiron, France; "Big Brother, l'artiste face aux tyrans", Palais des Arts et du festival de Dinard, France
- 2010** "Beyond Limits, a selling exhibition of modern and contemporary sculpture", Sotheby's, Chatsworth Castle, Derbyshire, UK; "Circuit Céramique : la scène française contemporaine", Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris, France; "Liefde voor het boek", Hasselt, Belgium; "Between the Sacred and the Profane", CIAP, Hasselt, Belgium; "Sèvres, Porcelaines Contemporaines", Musée de l'Ermitage, Palais Menchikov, Saint Petersburg, Russie; Château de Rambouillet, France; "Who is afraid of the Museum?" Museum Hof van Busleyden Mechelen, Belgium; "Olbricht Collection", Essen & Berlin, Germany; "New Monuments" Middelheimmuseum, Anvers, Belgium; "Coup de ville en chambre d'amis" Tentoonstellingsproject, Sint-Niklaas, Belgium; "Weizijwizei, Landart", Flandres, Belgium; "Manifestation d'art contemporain", Centre culturel français, Yaoundé, Cameroun; "Métissages à Rochefort : Rencontre entre un artiste et une technique textile", Rochefort
- 2009** "New Love" Princessehof Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden, Netherlands; "Feux continus" Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres, Grand Hornu, Belgique; "La Conquista della Modernità, 1920-2008", Musei Capitolini, Rome, Italy; "Flower Power", Villa Giulia, Verbania, Italy; "Silencio", Johan Creten - Paolo Grassino - Sarkis, Eglise Saint Jean, Le Monastier organized by Fonds Régional D'Art Contemporain Auvergne
- 2008** "Grandeur", Curator Anna Tilroe, Sonsbeek, Pays Bas; "Sand: Memory, Meaning and Metaphor", The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, NY, USA; "La dégelée Rabelais, la Dive Bouteille, Trich", Château de Jau, Fonds régional d'art contemporain, Languedoc-Rousillon, France

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Media Preview Invitation:

A media preview will be taking place on Tuesday September 30th 2014 from 5pm to 6pm.
Opening cocktail on Thursday October 2nd 2014 from 6pm to 8pm.

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