

ART : CONCEPT
4 PASSAGE SAINTE-AVOYE
75003 PARIS, FRANCE
WWW.GALERIEARTCONCEPT.COM
INFO@GALERIEARTCONCEPT.COM
T: +33 (0)1 53 60 90 30

OPENING HOURS
TUESDAY - SATURDAY
11:00 > 19:00

Corentin Grossmann *Imadi Mungo* January 26 - February 26, 2019

Opening Saturday the 26th of January from 6pm

Which are these worlds of which Corentin Grossmann's drawings offer us vaporous views? Their discovery has been on going for about ten years, in different formats, landscapes and more or less edifying scenes coming out of the studio. It has made it possible to collect certain climatic data: stormy skies, tropical humidity which moistens most beings and things; to list different strata of this geology under acid: erected rock pigmented like marshmallow, forming anthropomorphic mountains and lukewarm volcanoes. The meeting with native species and some locals has for the moment brought about simple manners, where hedonism yields to the cruelty of natural laws.

Also, the two big vertical drawings presented for the *Imadi Mungo* show seem to testify of a more confidential way of life under those latitudes. By placing a troglodyte hermitage at the foot of a sacred mountain, where streams of water furrow into creamy falls that gather into landscaped pools. We presume sophisticated spiritual practices, the preparation of a ceremony involving a pastry offering on a boat, a pair of flip-flops and a pair of buttocks, a relaxed bath ritual including appropriate accessories. Above all, as elsewhere, we find the pretext of a composition drawn with a meticulousness reminiscent of the zealous backgrounds of certain Florentine painters, where the demonstration of the first techniques of representation of perspective made the biblical subject accessory. Let us note here that the references that have often been invoked to qualify this practice of contemporary drawing, from Medieval and pre-Renaissance painting to Surrealism, can not ignore the influence that Japanese cartoons, video games or 3D have had on the artist's imagination: image-worlds that exist somewhere in an accessible fictional cosmos, where it is easy to make an avatar evolve.

But are these worlds related to a same space-time (on a variable scale)? Are the small formats specifications of details that would have escaped the gaze, sub-parts of this hybrid ecosystem, intermediate narratives or divergent scenarios of a same legend? This is how, with some mischief, episodes of overtly sexed original myths are repeated. It also appears that this teeming nature, governed by the laws of metamorphosis rather than evolution, of coexistence rather than hierarchy, as it is described in these amphibian gardens, becomes the object of a classification and nomenclature which reject the thesis of a world free from the modern project (the garden stakes under the foliage and the dam in the background are clues).

There is no doubt that this multiverse coexists with areas inhabited by human kind (these are the laws of physics), which, in the drawings of Corentin Grossmann explains the appearance of certain artifacts symptomatic of terrestrial civilisations (cotton swabs or a "raclette" device) as well as distant architectural influences, between Byzantine and Mayan. In other words, have these ceramic figures, filling the exhibition with their hieratic presence, been brought back from trips to staggering localities? They retain the sort of ambivalence (both touching and inducing suspicion) for the statuettes displayed with pride on globetrotters' cupboards, authentic remains that look like fakes for tourists (or vice versa), magical objects whose decorative function prevails.

Under the bovine and protective gaze of the two Acolytes, the little being who presents himself with a corn-cob in one hand and what could be a jewel in the other, reenacts the archetypal scene of an encounter with the Conquistador. It is here that the title could take on a critical dimension, evoking the memory of *Imago Mundi*, the sum of the cosmographic knowledge of the fifteenth century which navigators used to refer to when searching for the marvellous islands of the antipodes. Because the cottony Edens of Corentin Grossmann are troubled by the perils of anthropocentrism, by the perspective of a finite world where everything has already been discovered, confiscated, geolocated. The drawing then asserts itself, if not as valve, as method of exploration, and the artist's imaginary becomes an infinite territory where the instability of everything keeps being verified. Finally, it is necessary to insist on the working process which excludes making projects and prefers to navigate by sight, leaving the drawing to generate figures and engender new worlds; the process takes place in a particular state of consciousness that could be indicated by the fuzzy contours of the drawing, of those sought by the visionaries and artists who investigate the blind spots of modernity: these are not just dreams.

Written by Julie Portier.
Translated by Frieda Schumann.

