
LAB'BEL EXPO: TALES WITHOUT WITCHES

LA MAISON DE LA VACHE QUI RIT, LONS-LE-SAUNIER
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PRESS RELEASE

This fall, in the footsteps of its 2010 show **REWIND**, Lab'Bel, the Artistic Laboratory of the Bel Group, revisits the theme of childhood with another contemporary art exhibition at La Maison de La vache qui rit: **LAB'BEL EXPO: HISTOIRES SANS SORCIERE (TALES WITHOUT WITCHES)**. The exhibition will present a collection of sculptures, installations, performances and video works by **Anna Betbeze, Pierre Ardouvin, Virginie Barré, Massimo Bartolini, Oliver Beer, Pierre Huyghe, Pierre Joseph, João Pedro Vale** and **Virginia Yassef** that will transport visitors to the marvelous world of fairy tales.

From Snow White to Jack and the Beanstalk, from the familiar to the mysterious, from the joyful to the cruel, curators Gilles Baume, Laurent Fiévet et Silvia Guerra have chosen artworks that invite visitors to explore these imaginary realms and the characters who inhabit them. Rather than imitate stories or fairy tales themselves, these works function as settings to wander through, deeply infused with symbolic meaning.

LAB'BEL EXPO: HISTOIRES SANS SORCIERE offers a visual transposition of specific tales, creating abstract evocations of those fabulous, impossible, and inaccessible stories that we all want to believe are true. It invites visitors to take a break from reality and to experience a transition to other worlds, in order to rediscover the language of the imagination buried deeply within our memories.

Created in 2010, **LAB'BEL** (Laboratoire Artistique du Groupe Bel) is committed to supporting contemporary art and to rendering it accessible to the public in a way that reflects the core values of the Bel Group: sharing, accessibility, and fun. Since its creation it has assembled a collection of artworks produced since 2000, while also staging an annual program of artistic events and exhibits both in France and abroad. **LAB'BEL** is directed by Laurent Fiévet and Silvia Guerra.



CURATORIAL ESSAYS

I DON'T KNOW SNOW WHITE BY SILVIA GUERRA

Once upon a time in the middle of winter, when the flakes of snow were falling like feathers from the sky, a queen sat at a window sewing, and the frame of the window was made of black ebony. And whilst she was sewing and looking out of the window at the snow, she pricked her finger with the needle, and three drops of blood fell upon the snow. And the red looked pretty upon the white snow, and she thought to herself, "Would that I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the window-frame." Soon after that she had a little daughter, who was as white as snow, and as red as blood, and her hair was as black as ebony; and she was therefore called Little Snow-white. And when the child was born, the Queen died.'

Beginning of the English version of Little Snow-white by the Brothers Grimm¹

Why is this exhibition about the imaginary world of fairy tales 'without witches'?

Because the only witch that we come across here (the one from Pierre Joseph's *Grand Bleu*) has fallen because of an accident: she didn't see the blue wall and crashed to the ground.

In this exhibition, there are no witches because they are dead. Although fairy tales usually have happy endings, is it not their very wickedness or cruelty that has always made them so appealing? One of the reasons for this is their power of exorcism. They bring our deepest darkest secrets into the light of day. Surely everyone would like to transform a prince into a frog or break that same spell with a kiss.

Blood features heavily in fairy tales: one simply has to turn to the opening pages of Snow White to see red drops falling on the immaculate whiteness of snow. Even the exemplary Countess de Ségur found good reason to have Madame Fichini whip disobedient little girls in *Les Malheurs de Sophie*.

How have children's fairy tales survived to this day? Are they still part of our imaginary world and that of children? How many children still read fairy tales

I DON'T KNOW SNOW WHITE BY SILVIA GUERRA

today? Deep down, are they not frightened by them? Perhaps this is the reason why they take refuge in their video games while granny goes to her yoga class.

Yet the stories live on. They continue to be translated, revised, adapted, re-appropriated, and transformed into *Contes à l'Envers* (like those of Philippe Dumas and Boris Moissard), or anti-tales by authors such as Robert Walser.

As Pierre Huyghe reminds us with *I DO NOT OWN SNOW WHITE*, he cannot claim ownership of Snow White. Fairy tales belong to no one. They are part of an oral tradition which seems to be slowly but surely disappearing. However, contemporary art has taken hold of their intrinsic ability to radically transform reality.

Fairy tales provide a framework, just like the ebony-coloured window-frame at the beginning of the Grimm Brother's narrative. In this exhibition, the works act as a gateway onto a whole host of other possible stories to be imagined. They present themselves as paths to be followed, doors to be opened, giant pillows, voices to be listened to, characters to be discerned, stories to be retold...

We all have the right to rejoice at the death of the witch and the victory of good over evil. However, we don't know Snow White, we only know her footprints in the snow, or the black screen of the eponymously-titled film by João César Monteiro. We may not own fairy tales but we reinvent them every day.

Silvia Guerra, co-curator of *Histoires sans sorcière*

(Tales without witches)

1. Extract taken from the 1884 translation by Margaret Hunt of *Household Tales* by the Brothers Grimm.

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL BY LAURENT FIÉVET

It is a rather unusual exhibition when visitors may discover giant beans in a perpetually growing installation, an untrustworthy mirror placed at the bottom of a red plastic basin, multicoloured landscapes eaten or eroded away by acid, and a joyous spider suspended from the ceiling. A fantastical tale featuring a motley collection of incongruous objects which seem, almost nonchalantly, to make reference to the familiar figure of Snow White, following in the footsteps of Alice from *Rewind*—Lab'Bel's inaugural exhibition at the Maison de La vache qui rit in the spring of 2010.

On one of the walls of the exhibition space, Pierre Huyghe's neon art piece refers to Snow White. In brightly-lit letters, we find the somewhat enigmatic phrase: 'I DO NOT OWN SNOW WHITE'. Indeed, this princess with the red lips and ebony-coloured hair makes a number of notable appearances within this exhibition *Histoires sans sorcière*, such as in Oliver Beer's riotously psychedelic film, *Reanimation 1*, inspired by Walt Disney's famous version of the fairy tale. Although some of the artworks refer directly to the character of Snow White, others do so in a more covert fashion. The title of the piece *Dis-moi* by Pierre Ardouvin for example, contains a more implicit reference with its evocation of the enchanted mirror consulted by the Queen, which results in the young Snow White being led into a forest by a huntsman to be killed. Indeed, this same forest seems to have been recreated at the centre of the Maison de La vache qui rit exhibition space with João Pedro Vale's *Feijoeiro*, an abundant tangle of vegetation. A mirror placed in a basin at the foot of a strangely scorched landscape by Anna Betbeze—evocative of a land cursed by a spell—brings a disturbing dimension to the fairy tale, just metres away from the soap bubbles escaping from another of Pierre Ardouvin's pieces: *Abri*. Through its allusion to the famous laundry scene from the Walt Disney animated film version of the tale, Pierre Ardouvin's work, along with João Pedro Vale's and Anna Betbeze's oeuvres conjure forth a series of resonances, akin to a form of maleficent counterpoint or contrast. The dwarves meanwhile, seem to have disappeared. Perhaps they are working in the mine hidden behind the stone ramparts that constitute Virginie Yassef's work, *Passe Apache*. Found in one of the nooks

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL BY LAURENT FIÉVET

of the exhibition space, this kind of secret passageway provides access to a hidden treasure which, like a pearl concealed in a hand, lies patiently waiting to be unearthed by the visitor. But keep this under your hat. As the title of another one of the artworks suggests: *Silence is golden*. We will say nothing. Unless the tale, as suggested by the empty table in front of which seven seats are meticulously aligned, was abandoned by Snow White's cheerful associates, at least for a few days until Oliver Beer's film managed to bring the princess back to life, once the witch came crashing to her demise against the wall of Pierre Joseph's *Grand Bleu*. During the dwarves' absence, a spider was able to spin a web on the ceiling of the exhibition space. At least so the story goes, as this cunning *CCSpider* created by Pierre Huyghe is not so easy to spot.

Dis-moi. (Tell me). All of the artworks in the *Histoires sans sorcière* exhibition are the pretext for a story. In the disorderly layout of this rather curious exhibition, visitors are invited to take possession of what they perceive, in order to forge their own story. Not just a story but a series of different stories like the many objects scattered throughout the exhibition space by the artist Virginie Barré. By giving children the task of redrawing one of the frames of the Walt Disney film, Oliver Beer highlights this process of re-appropriation at work within his oeuvre. Furthermore, in the film *Reanimation 1*, the compilation of various versions of the song sung by Snow White, in different languages, allows the artist to cleverly illustrate the presence of the fairy tale on a geographical scale, thereby highlighting its universal dimension. Here, parallels may be drawn with Pierre Huyghe's neon artwork which reminds us that the fairy tale character does not belong to any one of us. Interestingly, dispossession is also the theme of Huyghe's 1997 short film, *Snow White Lucie*, which recounts the experience of an actress, Lucie, who claims to have had her voice stolen. This echo of a distant voice, disconnected from the body, which is not without reference to the oral nature of storytelling and reverberates within the intimacy of the exhibition space is something which Oliver Beer directly evokes in his work.

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL BY LAURENT FIÉVET

Similarly, Anna Betbeze and João Pedro Vale do not merely provide us with imaginary landscapes to be explored in *Histoires sans sorcière*. Like Virginie Yassef's *Passe-Apache*, their works are clearly pathways to utterly intimate and secret spaces: our imagination and our thoughts. As quickly as in the enchanted mirror held up by Pierre Ardouvin in *Dis-moi*, the visitor may come to gaze at the reflection of his/her face at any moment, while letting his/her dreams float upwards, rather like the soap bubbles from *L'Abri*. For as the house which attempted to contain them, obviously pushed to the side to rest on its roof, the constituent elements or building blocks of these stories are simply brought to our attention in order to be overcome and forgotten. Working like Pierre Huyghe's spider that has taken up residence on the ceiling of *La Maison de La vache qui rit*, the visitor's mind only relies on such building blocks so as to better weave the connections between stories, thereby allowing even more terrifying witches, dastardly traps and valiant princes to be conjured up by our imagination.

Indeed, everyone is free to grasp, like the building blocks of a story, the coloured modules exhibited by Virginie Barré, so as to organize them at will, or to put on the bathrobe left by Anna Betbeze to embody the hungry ogre who will come to haunt it. The blue wall of Pierre Joseph's *Grand Bleu* fatal to the witch is the secret passageway in cinema to a myriad of possibilities and montage effects, capable of propelling the film in new directions. This blue wall also mirrors the capacity of human thought to endlessly construct stories.

If the fairy tale appears as the thematic concern of *Histoires sans sorcière*, it is also a means for us to reflect upon our relationship to Art and its propensity to resonate in such an intimate fashion with each and every one of us. Indeed, similar to the fairy tale, the work of art throws up our own reflection, and has the ability to speak directly to us. This is just one of the fabulous stories that this unusual exhibition aims to construct. *Miroir, mon beau miroir* [*Mirror, mirror on the wall*], show me works of art and *dis-moi* [*tell me*] who I am.

TALES AGAINST THE GRAIN BY GILLES BAUME

The encounter or junction between the visual arts and fairy tales refers to numerous questions, whether these concern the relationship (or connections) between popular culture (the origins of the tales) and academic cultures, or the relationship between literature and the image, with, on the hand, the codes and rules to follow (or not) of the genre, and on the other hand, the power of the image. If Art, in its foundations, refers to the experience of reality, the fairy tale deals with the imagination and the fantastic, thereby allowing all kinds of possible inventions. Furthermore, these connections evoke the tradition of illustration, where the artist-illustrator is at the service of the narrative in accompanying, even transcending interpretation. Gustave Doré (1832-1883), amongst others, masterfully concentrated or condensed the intensity of the narrative over the pages of the books he illustrated (Perrault's Tales in 1862, being just one example). His images did not simply reflect a stream of words: they were condensed cauldrons of the situations, spatial contexts and characters described. The evocative power of the images aroused the imagination of the reader and invited him to linger over the story in his mind, rather than simply locking it into a fixed form. Such images have helped shape a shared cultural heritage, in Europe and elsewhere.

Today, if artists remain interested in fairy tales, they do not consider them merely as a repertoire of motifs and symbols from which to draw. By intentionally freeing themselves from restrictive frameworks, in terms of narration (respecting the story) and in terms of form (the pages of a book), they have succeeded in translating the experience of the fairy tale in the exhibition space, in several different ways.

Some of the works in the *Histoires sans sorcière* exhibition succeed in refreshing memories of childhood tales: places, faces, even accessories, such as the giant bean from Jack and the Beanstalk, here transformed into an abundant textile installation (*Feijoeiro*, by Joao Pedro Vale), or indeed the mirror belonging to the witch in Snow White, transformed into a sculptural object, rich in triviality and humour (*Dis-moi*, by Pierre Ardouvin). Therefore, while deploying plastic or visual vocabularies of their own, the

TALES AGAINST THE GRAIN BY GILLES BAUME

artists knowingly open a window onto a shared or communal memory and invite the public onto familiar ground. Forms generate fragments of stories as if these are brought back to the present moment. The images become living experiences to be felt in all areas of the exhibition space.

Other works, even if they do not intentionally refer to specific fairy tales, refer to a multitude of fantastical situations which generate shifts in relation to reality, as if motivated or 'occupied' by the springs or mischievous essence of the fairy tale. *L'Abri (le vent nous portera)*, by Pierre Ardouvin therefore confronts the visitor with a modest garden shed turned upside down, appearing as a kind of living creature lying on the ground, resting, and beginning to 'bubble over'... Indeed, small bubbles really do escape from the shed in an endless stream, symbolic of idleness and daydreams. The bubbles soaring into space embody the notion of a wandering imagination and recall modes of transportation common in fairy tales—teleportation or flying carpets—also evoked by the presence of a secret passageway (*Passe-Apache* by Virginie Yassef), by the somewhat incongruously uninhibited movements of a spider through the exhibition space (*CC Spider* by Pierre Huyghe), or by a hanging basket, as if waiting to whisk passengers off on a celestial journey. Virginie Barré's cabinet of curiosities—and its range of forms and colours, floating or buried—unfold or reveal the vocabulary of a fragmented and mysterious story, alluding to childhood and magic, a story which everyone is invited to tell. The vibrant colour in Anna Betbeze's paintings—here symbolic of excess—explode in the exhibition space and make use of unusual media such as carpets and clothing.

Finally, other works in the exhibition rely on fairy tales in order to develop a dialectic criticizing the dominance of entertainment, television and the theme-park culture prevalent in western society. Noting the ubiquity of fairy tales in contemporary imagery (in advertisements, film or even on stage), and the impact caused by Hollywood, Walt Disney and their descendants on the collective imagination, artists can only regret that dreams have become somewhat of a commodity, at the risk of moulding, even indoctrinating, the collective consciousness. Therefore, Pierre Huyghe's

TALES AGAINST THE GRAIN BY GILLES BAUME

phrase 'I DO NOT OWN SNOW WHITE', written like a slogan in neon letters and declaimed as a manifesto, captures the irreducibility of fairy tales with their characters and motifs. Meanwhile, as for the witch in Pierre Joseph's *Le Grand Bleu*, she has literally crashed into the wall of illusion that is the blue wall, a medium traditionally used on film sets, upon which images are affixed as decor. Following the series *Personnages à réactiver*, the witch exists both as a photographic image and as a performance, with an actress replaying the scene in the here and now of the exhibition space. Finally, we should note that criticism does not exclude the possibility of re-enchantment. The operation of *Reanimation* orchestrated by Oliver Beer consists in redoing a sequence from the film *Snow White* with the participation of hundreds of children, drawing image after image, thereby reviving the story in a dynamic fashion, demonstrating that everyone can take ownership of fairy tales and create his/her own version of them. The transmission of a fairy tale from one individual to another through the oral tradition (as was originally the case), through books, or through images, somehow transcends the generic nature of the fantastic and allows everyone to connect to his/her own imaginary experiences.

Gilles Baume



EXHIBITED ARTISTS

PIERRE ARDOUVIN

Pierre Ardouvin's installations translate the dreams and anxieties of our time, with the boundary from one to the other proving paradoxically tenuous. A carnival landscape may indeed be sad, while a fire burning in a fireplace or a simple postcard, synonyms of ordinary domestic joy and conviviality, can seem very disturbing. By depicting everyday objects, playing with the notion of the cliché, the artist, gifted with a sense of showmanship and drama, produces situations which overturn reality. His works convey mental images in space, playing with both audio and visual dimensions. They generate a mood, an atmosphere to be experienced, somewhere between melancholy and jubilation.

L'abri (le vent nous portera) confronts the visitor with a modest garden shed turned on its side, from which delicate bubbles escape in a continuous stream. Bubbles convey a sense of idleness and reverie, and the shed is treated as a kind of living creature, resting and beginning to 'bubble over'. Ardouvin imagined this work as the result of a mental concertinaing between a garden shed and a snail, an animal typically found close to this type of habitation. The title—borrowed from a song—refers to the artist's taste for the effects produced by this musical format, between repetition and temporal suspension.

Evoking the myth of Narcissus, the sculpture *Dis-moi* is the result of the incongruous combination of two objects from the tale of Snow White, the magical mirror regularly consulted by the evil queen, and the red plastic basin or tub which Snow White could nowadays use for housework... This act of assemblage, as well as the title chosen by the artist, humourously transforms banal elements into a wonderfully squeaky-clean world.

Pierre Ardouvin, was born in 1955 in Crest. He lives and works in Paris (France). He is represented by the Galerie Praz-Delavallade (Paris).

VIRGINIE BARRÉ

Shifting from the familiar to the mysterious, from the moving image to the freeze-frame, Virginie Barré's artistic practice ranges from drawings of solemn Indian chiefs, to installations of strange accessorized mannequins, to bitter evocations of childhood. Her works, which are conceived from a process of collage and assemblage, are the fragments of a soap opera or an unusual thriller. Haunted by cinematographic references, her works appear as a puzzle to the viewer.

In the underground showcases of the entrance area, *La forme des rêves - fragments* is presented as a curious inventory or collection of curiosities, consisting of various real objects, and objects made by the artist. Punctuating the space in black, white and primary colours, these elements represent the 'vocabulary' of a story, the elements of a generic film in the making.

The hanging sculpture *Suspension des esprits* is a flying tepee, somewhere between a shed and a spaceship, combining multiple shapes, patterns and elements, such as tassels, hoops or bars. The end result is a colourful and magical vehicle. Inspired by a scene from the film *Juliet of the Spirits* by Federico Fellini, the work reflects the desire to fly to a dream world, while revealing the way to get there.

Linked to the same film source, the sculpture *La forme des rêves, le vélo de Giulietta* is another unlikely vehicle, a customized child's bike, with added multicoloured spheres.

Virginie Barré's pieces reflect the quest for a joyous, patchwork style, from which new legends may be written. Starting with a simple use of shapes and objects, they somehow succeed in conveying wonderful images such as those that appear in dreams. References to the imaginary world of childhood abound, but without sentimentality, making tangible a certain re-enchantment of the world.

Virginie Barré was born in Quimper in 1970. She lives and works in Douarnenez (France). She is represented by the Galerie Loevenbruck (Paris).

MASSIMO BARTOLINI

The artistic career of Massimo Bartolini is marked by the legacy of the Italian *Arte Povera* movement, bestowing simple elements with a sensual poetry. His work is quite diverse in terms of materials and techniques, ranging from sculpture to installation, as well as performance. *Double Shell* is a performance that prompts an unusual confrontation between the visitor to the exhibition and the museum guard. A concave shell is hidden in the hand of the museum guard. When he feels that he is in the presence of a person with whom he shares a certain empathy, then he shows him the shell in an intimate gesture. In a place where the artworks are usually 'behind glass', this performance speaks of a shared treasure. It shows that art can also be near at hand and imparted or passed on by a person who is not the curator of the museum, but he who minds the premises. *Double Shell* promises an imagined exchange and opens the door to the wonderful. Although no words are exchanged in the context of the performance, the situation produced echoes the direct transmission of the fairytale from one individual to another, either by word of mouth or by the written word.

Massimo Bartolini was born in 1962 in Cecina (Italy) where he lives and works. He is represented by the Galleria Massimo de Carlo (Milan) and the Frith Street Gallery (London).

OLIVIER BEER

Through videos, performances and installations, the young British artist Oliver Beer mainly explores sound, in all its emotional, narrative, scientific or visual dimensions. The exploration of the characteristics of the voice, as a vector of the resonances of the body, in relation to architecture and to space, is one of his primary fields of research, and inspiration behind the series of performances called *The Resonance Project*, under creation since 2007.

Reanimation 1 is a video piece based on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the classic Walt Disney animated film. The artist asked five hundred children to reinterpret and redraw an entire sequence, frame by frame. The result is startling in its freshness, evident in the abundance of pastel and crayon, dynamic bursts of colour that fail to remain inside the lines, as in the vibrant use of birdsong that forms the soundtrack. The operation of re-animation is translated by this loop: the animated film turns into a drawing once again, and the hand-coloured drawings by the children are transformed into a new film, one which is shared and exhilarating.

Silence is Golden is a sculpture in the form of a precious paperweight in crystal, containing small gold objects, representing, in actual size, the auditory ossicles of the ear (the malleus, incus and stapes). These elements, essential for hearing, are here as if frozen in a fragile, silent jewel. The evocative power of the work reminds us, amongst other things, of the crucial roles of the voice and listening, in the transmission of fairytales.

Oliver Beer was born in 1985 in Pembury (United Kingdom). He lives and works between Kent (United Kingdom) and Paris (France). He is represented by the Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac (Paris/Salzburg).

ANNA BETBEZE

The young New York artist Anna Betbeze revisits a major part of the history of modern and contemporary art: abstract painting. Her fields of bright colours, mono or multicoloured, homogeneous or mixed, are spread over textile materials, not just canvases stretched on frames, but three-dimensional elements (such as towels, rugs, or clothing) textured, patinated, and rather unexpected. These materials are subject to violent attacks; they are doused with acid dyes, ripped with blades, and burnt (traces of ash can be seen on the artwork)... In other words, different tools and processes are employed so as to introduce a paradox between the 'elegant' and the 'dirty', thereby producing disturbing effects ranging from brutal seduction to 'convulsive beauty' (to cite André Breton). The physical power emanating from the works is both a visual and tactile one. Ultimately, the works are imbued with a strong narrative expression or power. The experimental processes used, the results of which may be seen when one views the artworks up close, are suggestive of enigmatic scenarios. Therefore, the 'gown' and the 'cushion/pillow', shown in the exhibition, may appear as the accessory of and/or decor to a wonderful and disturbing tale, populated by ogres and other creatures. *Untitled (Pillow)* depicts a monumental landscape, at once devastated and magical.

Anna Betbeze was born in 1980 in Mobile (Alabama, United States). She lives and works in New York. She is represented by the Kate Werble Gallery (New York).

PIERRE HUYGHE

Since the late 1980s, Pierre Huyghe has been developing a protean oeuvre, questioning the format of the artwork and the exhibition. Taking as his model the language of cinema, television or magazines, the artist uses the mechanisms of fiction to better reflect on reality. Issues of authorship, copyright, contemporary rituals, as well as the relationship between art and culture punctuate his various projects. Pierre Huyghe has recently highlighted his interest in the intrinsic relationship between art and life, integrating living materials, whether plants or animals, within the context of the exhibition. The various elements involved are therefore engaged in a process of evolution, thereby transforming the exhibition into a laboratory study.

I DO NOT OWN SNOW WHITE is a sentence written in neon letters, which illuminates the exhibition space, and reads as declamatory as a manifesto or a slogan. The work belongs to the series *Disclaimers* where Pierre Huyghe lays claim to the fact that the cited content does not belong to him, even though it is related to his work as an artist. The work captures the irreducibility or resistance of the fairytale, of its figures and motifs, faced with the domination of the spectacular and the commoditisation of the dream.

The sculpture *It's All Gone* represents a magic wand, lost in a corner of the exhibition, between standardized artefact and reminder of a delicious dream. Perhaps its owner, the fairy, is somewhere close by?

C.C. Spider consists of installing a live spider in a corner of the exhibition space, and respecting a strict protocol written by the artist. The spider coexists with the public and the other artworks, each evolving at its own rhythm.

Pierre Huyghe was born in 1962 in Paris (France), where he lives and works. He is represented by the Marian Goodman Gallery (New York and Paris) and the Esther Schipper Gallery (Berlin).

PIERRE JOSEPH

The blue wall is the medium traditionally used during film shoots, upon which the images serving as the decor are affixed. Here, an accident has obviously happened, a witch is literally crushed on the wall. She has somehow collided with the materiality of the real (as opposed to the immateriality of the image), the cause of a physical but also symbolic impact. Indeed, this work, which is both a performance and a photograph, can be said to offer a kind of amusing treatise on the illusionist dimension of the entertainment industry. Beginning in 1991 and throughout the 90s, Pierre Joseph has developed characters to be 'revived', a concept he has revisited in recent years. Based on a simple principle, the artist assumes the role of author and showcases real people dressed in costumes in the exhibition area, during the inauguration. 'Interpreting' archetypal figures, such as the heroes of video games, fairytales and legends—Snow White, Catwoman, Harlequin or an American football player—the characters have to keep their pose, sit still, remain passive. The result is real tableaux, altering the conventional relationship between art and the public, the latter being confronted with a real, but eminently fictional and fictitious presence. The idea of 'revival' is connected to the artist's use of photography. A photographic image keeps track of the first embodiment of each character. This then acts as the starting point to 'replay' the situation in a new exhibition. This joyful process is reminiscent of the remake (common in the domain of cinema), and conveys the idea that the characters, like those of the fairytale *Snow White*, form part of a communal memory. Thanks to the method developed by the artist, their 'revival' is therefore authorized and even highly desirable, the idea of play or playing being logically associated with the world of storytelling and children.

Pierre Joseph was born in 1965 in Caen. He lives and works in Paris (France). He is represented by the Galerie Air de Paris (Paris).

JOÃO PEDRO VALE

The artistic process of João Pedro Vale radically stands out in the landscape of Portuguese art of the last two decades. His works—installations, videos, multidisciplinary projects—engage in a form of ironic distancing from the cultural conventions of our time. The artist notably makes use of objects from popular culture to overthrow their seductive power and symbolic dimension. In a country caught in the throes of a major economic recession, the artist marries pop and post-revolutionary culture, in a climate of disillusionment and broken dreams, marked by the struggle between tradition and the consequences of globalization. The symbols punctuating his work are not only those of the country of his birth, but also those that inhabit our shared imaginary world, with an unabashed attraction to American culture. The sheepskin donned by artist in the video *Do you want to be part of a world of sleeping people?* (2002), where he may be seen jumping over the barriers of a motorway, does not represent the animal to which we frequently have recourse in our quest for sleep. Instead it is the evocation of a man dressed as a beast, which in claiming its own identity, rather awakens the consciousness of the viewer by prescribing its singular reality. *Feijoeiro* is one of the key works of João Pedro Vale. With its strong evocative power, it is imbued with mystery. Originally created in 2004 for the Seville Biennial, and displayed in an abandoned monastery, the monumental installation offers a potential gateway to a fabulous world. As often in the works of the artist, fiction is the drive or motivation, and the pretext for the form. The natural element represented here grows in an irrational, fantastical, wild fashion... The imaginary world of the fairytale *Jack and the Beanstalk* is the starting point of the composition, which emancipates itself from its original source and reaches other meanings beyond the narrative. Here, nature has been completely reinvented and fantasized by the artist into a kind of a hybrid genre, made from simple materials, and transformed into a decor to be surveyed. Through the path it creates, the work promotes the idea of elevation, of crossing into a world that is both strange and dreamlike.

João Pedro Vale was born in 1976 in Lisbon (Portugal) where he lives and works. He is represented by the Galeria Leme in São Paulo (Brazil).

VIRGINIE YASSEF

Sculpture, installations, photography, shows, videos, drawings: Virginie Yassef uses a variety of mediums of expression, with the idea of constructing fictions that are like daydreams. Each piece is considered as a new scenario, imbued with strangeness, and offered to the public in order to solicit a reaction. The themes of travel, childhood and theatricality feature heavily in her work.

A very visual description from the travelogue of an American in Native American Indian territory in the late nineteenth century inspired Virginie Yassef to create *Passe Apache*. 'I first met Cochise at the "Apache Pass," a narrow gorge through the Chiricahui Mountains, and through which pass ran the only road connecting the settlements on the Rio Grande with Tucson and Fort Yuma ... Just before us, the point of rock standing out so prominently resembles a huge giant ready to crush us in his terrible grasp.' *The Marvellous Country*, Samuel Woodworth Cozzens, 1876 (ed. Arabian Nights, 2001).*

The visitor is confronted with a large realistic rock presented as part of a wall. By touching it, he may discover that it is a secret door, and that one simply has to push it to access a hidden space. Meticulously modelled on a stone of 10 cm by 10 cm, found in a wasteland in Beijing, Virgine Barré's rock has obviously been widely extended and enlarged by a mechanism hidden inside; the work explores the notion of passage and opening. The artist is interested in the sense of surprise generated by the work and the strange experience it offers, envisaged as the basis of a story that everyone can tell, following in the footsteps of Indian legends.

Virginie Yassef was born in 1970 in Grasse. She lives and works in Paris (France). She is represented by the Galerie Georges-Philippe & Nathalie Vallois (Paris).



LIST OF WORKS

EXHIBITED WORKS

Pierre Ardouvin

- *L'Abri (le vent nous portera)*, 2007
Moulin family endowment fund collection, Paris
- *Dis-moi*, 2009
Edition Artothèque de Caen
Courtesy of the artist

Virginie Barré

- *La forme des rêves – fragments*, 2013
Courtesy of the artist
- *Suspension des esprits*, 2014
Courtesy of the artist
- *La forme des rêves, le vélo de Giulietta*, 2014
Courtesy Galerie Loevenbruck (Paris)

Massimo Bartolini

- *Double Shell*, 2001
Courtesy Galleria Massimo de Carlo (Milan)

Olivier Beer

- *Reanimation 1 (Snow White)*, 2014
16mm Film, 2 mins 57
Edition of 5
Courtesy Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac (Paris/Salzburg)
- *Silence is Golden: Bass – Malleus Incus Stapes – Left*, 2013
Private collection, courtesy of the Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac (Paris/Salzburg)

EXHIBITED WORKS

Anna Betbeze

- *Merman*, 2013
Private collection, Paris
- *Untitled (Pillow)*, 2014
Courtesy Kate Werble gallery (New York)

Pierre Huyghe

- *I DO NOT OWN SNOW WHITE*, 2005
Courtesy Esther Schipper gallery (Berlin) et Galerie Marian Goodman (Paris)
- *It's All Gone*, 2007
Courtesy Esther Schipper gallery (Berlin)
- *C.C. Spider*, 2011
Courtesy Esther Schipper gallery (Berlin)

Pierre Joseph

- *La sorcière (personnage à réactiver)*, 1993
Collection Frac Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Air de Paris

João Pedro Vale

- *Feijoeiro*, 2004
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Leme (São Paulo)

Virginie Yassef

- *Passe Apache*, 2004 - 2006
Collection frac Île-de-France
Courtesy Galerie Georges-Philippe & Nathalie Vallois (Paris)



CURATORS

CURATORS

GILLES BAUME

Gilles Baume studied art history and specialized in contemporary art at the Ecole du Louvre. He then participated in professional projects concerning the general public and contemporary art in several different institutions, including the Centre Pompidou and Jeu de Paume. His professional experience includes but is not limited to the conception and production of conferences, studios, training, and guide development. As an art critic at the Standard Revue, he has also developed a personal artistic practice regarding video. Since 2006, he has been head of the cultural program at the Plateau / Frac Île-de-France à Paris. Since 2010, he has been in charge of developing public awareness of contemporary art for the Bel group's artistic laboratory. In 2011, he was the exhibition curator of *Même pas vieille !* (at La Maison de La vache qui rit, Lons-le-saunier, France).

SILVIA GUERRA

Art critic and exhibition curator Silvia Guerra studied art history at Coimbra (Portugal) and at the Università di Ca' Foscari in Venice (Italy). She began her professional activity in 2001, managing the German Pavilion team along with artist Gregor Schneider during the presentation of his work "Totes Haus Ur", which received the Golden Lion award at the 49th Venice Biennale. For three years Silvia Guerra was the Representative of Contemporary Art for the Department of International Relations at the Arts Institute of the Ministry of Portuguese Culture. In 2006, she transitioned into the role of curator. In her work, Silvia Guerra investigates the curator's artistic creativity and uses new media to experiment with new exhibition display forms, including social networks and USB supports. Showing art works on screen using a cinematic narrative or exploring the space of an art show as a "medium" to develop our conception on reality and fiction, on literality and transe are some of her research themes; Silvia Guerra has co-curated - among others - the following Lab'Bel exhibitions: REWIND (2010), METAPHORIA I and II (2012,2013), and The Light Hours: Haroon Mirza at Villa Savoye (2014).

CURATORS

LAURENT FIÉVET

Born in 1969, Laurent Fiévet is the great-grandson of Léon Bel, founder of the Bel Group. After earning his doctorate in film and audiovisual studies, he taught film aesthetics and criticism for ten years at the University of Paris III: Sorbonne Nouvelle and the University of Paris 7. His artistic work has appeared in over fifty solo and group exhibitions in France and abroad, at institutions including the Vermelho Gallery in São Paulo (*Silêncio!* 2008), the Munch Museum in Oslo (*In/Out*, 2007) and Kiasma, the Contemporary Art Museum of Helsinki (*Suites hitchcockiennes* in 2003). He has also participated twice in Art Video Night, which was shown at the Centre Georges Pompidou and at the Cinémathèque de Toulouse. This fall, as part of the reopening of the Musée Picasso, two of his films will be presented as part of a 'ciné-concert' created in collaboration with composer Olivier Innocenti.



SCENOGRAPHY

AND THEY ALL LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER

A story or a good fairytale always requires a rather peculiar setting: an enchanted forest, a sumptuous palace, a ramshackle cottage... After all, the place or setting of the action gives the story its power of evocation and efficacy. The narrative potential of scenography has been exploited by theatre for thousands of years, and by cinema for over a century. And in the visual arts, the narrators are the artists who make use of this aesthetic tool in order to create spatial installations.

Nowadays, scenographic measures are more and more widely used in the presentation of works of art. Instead of the white, neutral space of the gallery where enclosed or protected zones are arranged in such a way that the different artworks may be presented to their best advantage, elaborate spatial arrangements, partitions and corridors now offer new angles and perspectives. Special materials, colours and lighting effects create the desired ambiance. Since when, a veritable dialogue is initiated between the artworks, even a certain concertinaing effect, thereby allowing the visitor to perceive and even to interpret the artworks differently. The spatial experience of the visitor becomes an integral part of the aesthetic experience.

The exhibition, *Histoires sans sorcière*, boasts a carefully elaborated scenography. The visitor is not confronted with a series of images, nor does he discover a random ensemble of disparate pieces, but instead finds himself plunged into a space that has a direct influence or impact on his experience. The organization of the oeuvres presented does not follow the usual principles of art history or pure aesthetics since the scenographer, curators and artists are involved in the collective telling of a story. It is left to the visitor to decide what this story is and indeed, in this exhibition at La Maison de La vache qui rit, we can find ourselves on a desert island, a fabulous castle, a strange clearing in the forest, or perhaps, for all that, in an enchanted museum. And we should not forget the art: marvellous, unique, singular, mysterious, impressive, expansive, intoxicating, impertinent ... all this at once, like any good story.

Michael STAAB, September 2014



LAB'BEL AND LA MAISON DE LA VACHE QUI RIT

LAB'BEL, LABORATOIRE ARTISTIQUE DU GROUPE BEL

Lab'Bel, the artistic laboratory of the Bel food group, was formed in the spring of 2010 out of the latter's keen desire and policy to support contemporary art.

Directed by Laurent Fiévet and Silvia Guerra, director and artistic director, Lab'Bel has made a commitment to visual artists and to diverse other actors in the world of contemporary art. The group structures its identity around three primary thematic axes: humour, impertinence and the unconventional.

AN ITINERANT LABORATORY

Through these thematic concerns and its association with the Bel food group (whose portfolio includes popular and accessible brand names such as Babybel, Kiri and La vache qui rit [The Laughing Cow] cheese), **Lab'Bel** immediately attracted attention for its unusual position in the French landscape of corporate art sponsorship. An itinerant arts platform, Lab'Bel has, until now, focused on actions in the various regions of France. As the region of the Jura is the historical cradle of this family enterprise, Lons-le-Saunier was a natural choice for the site of the group's first collective exhibitions (*REWIND*, *Même pas vieille*, etc.).

LA MAISON DE LA VACHE QUI RIT

Since its 2009 opening in Lons-le-Saunier (Jura) on the original production site of the famous cheese, **LA MAISON DE LA VACHE QUI RIT** has offered visitors an educational, interactive, and fun experience that makes it unique among brand museums.

La Maison de La vache qui rit has its origins in the initiative of Catherine Sauvin, (granddaughter of Bel Cheese founder Léon Bel) who wished to collect, preserve and transmit the history and values of this iconic brand now present in more than 120 countries worldwide, and whose story includes one of the most remarkable industrial and marketing adventures of the past century.

In addition to a permanent collection of approximately 600 collectors objects, the museum hosts temporary exhibitions and seasonal events, always in tune with the brand's fun and slightly offbeat image that has made it synonymous with good humour, togetherness, and shared pleasures.

The 200,000 children, parents and grandparents who have visited and re-visited La Maison de La vache qui rit since its opening have experienced the brand through its highlights, milestones, and iconic images—things that have made it immediately recognisable to 97% of the French people.

Situated in a 2,200m² space, La Maison de La vache qui rit hosts temporary exhibitions and numerous events ranging from contemporary art to the evolution of culinary design, from the history of advertising to research in experimental architecture. It offers visitors of all ages an experience that embodies the core values of the brand: creativity, the joys of childhood, intergenerational connections, and social and environmental responsibility.



PRESS IMAGES

PRESS IMAGES

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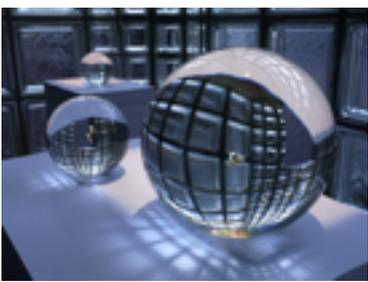
IMAGE	TITRE	CRÉDITS
	<p>Reanimation 1 Still (Snow White)</p> <p>2014</p>	<p>Oliver BEER</p> <p>Film</p> <p>Image credit: Oliver Beer Courtesy: Thaddeus Ropac Gallery, Paris, Salzburg</p>
	<p>Silence is golden</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>Oliver BEER</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Image credit: Oliver Beer Private collection Courtesy: Thaddeus Ropac Gallery, Paris, Salzburg</p>
	<p>Silence is golden</p> <p>2013</p>	<p>Oliver BEER</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Image credit: Oliver Beer Private collection Courtesy: Thaddeus Ropac Gallery, Paris, Salzburg</p>

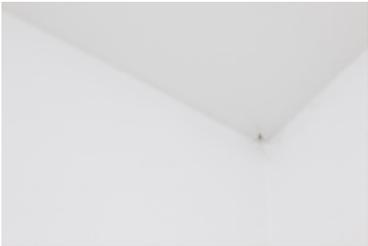
IMAGE	TITRE	CRÉDITS
	<p style="text-align: center;">Silence is golden 2013</p>	<p>Oliver BEER</p> <p>Installation Image credit: Oliver Beer Private collection Courtesy: Thaddeus Ropac Gallery, Paris, Salzburg</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Merman 2013</p>	<p>Anna BETBEZE</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Acid dyes and ash on terrycloth Approx. 68 x 16 x 6 Inches / 173 x 41 x 15 cm Private collection, Paris</p> <p>Courtesy of the artist and © Sylvie Chan Liat Gallery</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">C. C. Spider, 2011</p>	<p>Pierre HUYGHE</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Spider, protocol Spinne, Protokoll Variable Edition of 20 (PH 067) Photos: © Andrea Rossetti View of the installation Influants, Courtesy: Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin</p>

IMAGE	TITRE	CRÉDITS
	<p>I DO NOT OWN SNOW WHITE</p> <p>2005</p>	<p>Pierre HUYGHE</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Lettres en néons Neonschrift 185,1 x 487,05 cm Edition of 3 plus 2 Artist proof (PH 038) Image credit: © Florian Kleinefenn Courtesy: Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin and Marian Goodman Gallery, Paris</p>
	<p>Feijoeiro</p> <p>2004</p>	<p>João Pedro VALE</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Image credit: Simon Chaput. Courtesy of the artist and Leme Gallery, São Paulo</p>
	<p>Feijoeiro</p> <p>2004</p>	<p>João Pedro VALE</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Image credit: Simon Chaput. Courtesy of the artist and Leme Gallery, São Paulo</p>
	<p>Passé Apache</p> <p>2004-2006</p>	<p>Virginie YASSEF</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Collection Frac Île-de-France</p> <p>Copyright: Virginie Yassef Courtesy: Georges-Philippe et Nathalie Vallois Gallery, Paris</p>

IMAGE	TITRE	CRÉDITS
	<p><i>Passe Apache</i></p> <p>2004-2006</p>	<p>Virginie YASSEF</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Collection Frac Île-de-France</p> <p>Copyright: Virginie Yassef Courtesy: Georges-Philippe et Nathalie Vallois Gallery, Paris</p>



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Dates

22 September 2014 - 8 March 2015

Address

La Maison de La vache qui rit
25, rue Richebourg
39000 Lons-le-Saunier

Opening days and hours

In September and October:

Open every day except Monday: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

In November:

Only during school holidays: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

From December to March:

Weekends, bank holidays and school holidays: 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Closed on 25 December and 1 January

Open year-round for groups, upon reservation

Website

La Maison de La Vache qui rit

www.lamaisondelavachequirit.com

Lab'Bel, Laboratoire Artistique du Groupe Bel

www.lab-bel.com

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