

Fabrice Hyber

Mutations Acquises
February 4 - April 4, 2015



Press release

A year after his first collaboration with the Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Fabrice Hyber will be welcomed for the first time to the Brussels gallery, where he will show his exhibition "Mutations Acquises". For the occasion the show is bringing together fifteen or so new paintings, each an invitation to discover Fabrice Hyber's factory of functional dreams and fantasies.

From April 24th, 2015, the French artist, at the invitation of Bart de Baere, will be exhibiting a series of new works on forms of language at the MUHKA in Antwerp.

"My paintings are moments of euphoria in which I set landscapes, bodies or processes currently either undergoing transformation or being questioned". This is the description given by Fabrice Hyber of the works exhibited at the Galerie Nathalie Obadia, which to him are like "solutions for adaptation that go as far as the possibility of mutation". This remark strikes a chord with the artist's first solo exhibition in 1986, titled "Mutation". This title-cum-manifesto could alone describe the close on thirty years of graphical and conceptual reflection in which the artist has always attempted to represent the multiple processes of transformation of matter and the unbounded power of works of art for metamorphosis.

His "Mutations Acquises" are illustrative of different themes dear to the heart of the artist, for example, hybridization, here embodied by an octopus whose tentacles end in human organs: itself a nod in the direction of the Darwinian theory of evolution in which species adapt to their environment in a process of perpetual transformation. "Become fluid" is one of the solutions captioned and proposed by Fabrice Hyber for adaptation to respond to climate change, and is also indicative of his ecological concerns. These are further illustrated in a drawing on the theme of recycling in which three mountains of waste appear in a joyously colourful yet toxic landscape: this reference to our ambivalent attitude is treated with the artist's typically ironic tone.

And yet more mutations, through the transformation of organic matter: here Hyber invents a machine that transforms the humble potato into French fries or mashed potato using a mechanism formed of intersecting grills. It is from this type of drawing that his "Prototypes d'Objets en Fonctionnement" (known as POFs) are derived. For the most part fabrications, they are devices or situations that invite visitors to interact with them and invent a usage. The subversive mission of the POFs is to "encourage mutations to the point of creating new systems of diffusion". In so doing, they run counter to the trend of Pop Art, by taking art into the world of consumption rather than vice-versa.

And mutation once again, this time with the principle of digestion, represented here by camembert cheeses eating one another, in a form of "self-recycling", as the artist notes on the canvas. Fabrice Hyber takes this gathering of gluttonous "pacmen" as an opportunity to convey a warning about the various excesses our consumer society indulges in.

These non-exhaustive examples of mutations are necessary to Hyber "to advance and conquer new forms". They prompt new ideas in this artist who develops his paintings through the use of storyboards in which images are associated with words that provide their "regarders" with keys to their understanding. Various notes, calculations and annotations dot the surface of the canvas, resembling the blackboard of a researcher or a botanist's plate.

Hyber's approach is precise and almost always starts with a drawing. "At the beginning, there is often a design, a freehand sketch in charcoal or pastels on the canvas, a first 'phrase' that announces the premonition of a more comprehensive project", says Hyber. The speed with which the design is created stimulates the free emergence of unfettered ideas, in what he calls "states of non-vigilance". It is these that give free rein to his desire to transform of the world. This outlook, which is as political as it is poetic, is an expression of the rebellious and libertarian spirit that makes Fabrice Hyber one of the most important artists of his generation.

Born in the Vendée in 1961, Fabrice Hyber lives and works in Paris.

At the start of his career in the 1980s, he became one of the youngest winners of the Golden Lion at the 1997 Venice Biennale and has since enjoyed increasing attention on the international scene. He has shown in many leading institutions in France and abroad, and his work has been presented at important international events for more than twenty years.

2013 and 2014 were busy years for him. In 2013 he had an important solo exhibition, "Matières Premières", at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (France), which enjoyed broad public and critical success, "Essentiel" at the Fondation Maeght, where he presented his homeopathic paintings in Saint-Paul-de-Vence (France), and which was continued in 2014 at the Galerie der Stadt Tuttlingen (Germany), and "Prototypes d'objets en fonctionnement (POF)" at the MAC/VAL in Vitry. He also produced the monumental fresco Sans Gène on ceramic tiles commissioned from him by the Institut Pasteur, which was inaugurated in October 2012. Fabrice Hyber also participated in the Lyon Biennial (France) in 2013 and the Busan Biennial (South Korea) in 2014. In 2014, his works were

shown in the exhibition "Narcisse, l'image dans l'onde" at the Fondation François Scheinder in Wattwiller (France), and in the exhibition "Brave New Worlds: Utopia in Dystopia" at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila (Philippines).

2015 will be just as busy for Fabrice Hyber.

From 24 April to 26 July, Bart de Baere, director of the M HKA (Museum of Contemporary Art of Antwerp, Belgium), will present a solo exhibition of his work called "Formes des mots".

Bart de Baere will also invite Fabrice Hyber to take part, under his direction, in the 6th Moscow Biennial (Russia) beginning on 17 September 2015.

In New York, the White Box, an alternative space in the Bowery, will show "Maison des POFS", curated by Tony Guerrero, beginning in May 2015.

In France the CRAC Languedoc Roussillon (Sète) will devote a large monographic exhibition to the artist starting in June 2015.

Titled '2716m2', it will bring together more than 300 paintings.

The Centre Pompidou Metz will hold a group exhibition as from October 2015 called "Aura. Art et télépathie de Rodin à nous jours".

The curator, Pascal Rousseau, will assemble works by artists from the 19th century to the 21st century, from Rodin to Fabrice Hyber.

-> French version

-> English version