

*je dois vous dire que Tarzan
n'a pas écrit Le Livre de la Jungle
et Mowgli n'a pas couché avec Jane.*

GAUTHIER HUBERT

OPENING 7.09.23
8.09.23 > 14.10.23



Gauthier Hubert, *Une mouche rousse sur une moche rousse*, 2023, Oil on canvas, 35 x 25,5 cm

Letter to: Gauthier Hubert

I often read books recommended to me by others. During a conversation, the artist Ricardo Brey told me about the masterpiece by the Nigerian writer Amos Tutuola, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, published in 1954. It's the story of a boy who plunges into the wilderness to escape the slave trade. The book is an incessant delirium in which the writer mixes tradition and innovation. As I turned the pages, I came across the following lines: «...he had one arm, both his legs were twisted as rope and both feet faced sharply left and right, he had an eye on his forehead which was exactly like a moon, this eye was as big as a full moon and had a cover or a socket which could be easily opening and closing at any time that he likes, no single hairs on his head and it was sparkling as polished ebony furniture». Not long before, Gauthier Hubert had asked me to write a letter for his forthcoming exhibition at Irène Laub gallery. I reread Amos Tutuola's passage several times, which sounded to me like the title of one of his paintings. The text may lack the humour and complexity that characterise the artist, but it still made me think his work. We know that Gauthier Hubert's titles sometimes precede his paintings by several years. In general, the title of a work of art is the final touch, marking the completion of a process. The fact that the titles of his works are pre-conceived immediately gives us a hint of the analytical and thought-provoking aspect of Gauthier Hubert's painting. Certain aspects of his work are reminiscent of René Magritte and Marcel Broodthaers, much in the same way as they have fascinated certain conceptual artists such as Joseph Kosuth and John Baldessari. Gauthier Hubert creates works in which the act of painting itself becomes a means of asking essential questions about a painting's relationship with reality, with the image or the picture. His works, produced slowly and marked by the promiscuity between language and meaning, seem to make the gap between words and their significance even more complex and multifaceted. Magritte said that when we try to understand what we see, we generally no longer see the thing itself but the underlying questions that it raises. Here, the «thing» is a painting by Gauthier Hubert. Or rather, the thing is the artist's oeuvre as a whole. We tend to look at just one painting, as if we were blinded by a single word in a poem. But Gauthier Hubert's works form a community, an entity that takes on different forms depending on the presentations or selections. Each exhibition can therefore be seen as a «conversation piece» in which the dialogue between the works and with the space reveals a particular perspective on painting. Gauthier Hubert's work is a succession of figurative hypotheses. With meticulously painted portraits that oscillate between discomfort and seduction, the artist invites the viewer to question the status and veracity of an image. Each painting is an enigma that explores the origins of an image and shows the necessary possibilities of painting in a digital world. Through his work, Gauthier Hubert gives birth to an inventory of individuals confronted to reality and art history. And there's a lot more I could say about colour...

- Philippe Van Cauteren, Ferté-Vidame, 15 August 2023
Artistic director of S.M.A.K., Gand (BE)



Gauthier Hubert, exhibition view of «...Fils de...» (*les retrouvailles*), Le Botanique, Brussels (BE), 2020

Born in 1967 in Brussels (BE)
Lives and works in Brussels (BE)

Gauthier Hubert's painting is enigmatic in many respects – while his technique itself is characterized by a timeless and meticulous quality, the rest of his approach has a resolutely contemporary style. It shows solid swathes of vibrant colours, combined with shapes characterized by an unsettling strangeness and a steady fascination with ugliness, which immediately draws the eye.

Language is essential in Gauthier Hubert's works; the title frames the pictorial subject or precedes it, in a constant back and forth between text and image. The title is a primary element of the work, and creates a constant back and forth between word and image. Situated in a satirical dialogue with art and history, Gauthier Hubert's paintings are extremely referenced, interspersing their composition with clues, jokes and visual puns. The treatment and choice of subject often lead to a deeper examination of the pictorial discipline - for Gauthier Hubert, painting is a pretext to talk about painting.

Born in 1967 in Brussels, Gauthier Hubert won the « Prix de la jeune peinture belge » in 1999 and has since shown his work in international group and solo shows. We can mention several exhibitions in the Musée d'Ixelles and La Maison Particulière in Brussels (BE), the National Portrait Gallery of London and of Edinburgh (UK), and a solo show at the National Gallery of Iceland in Reykjavík (IS). In 2020, the Botanique museum (BE) presented a large-scale retrospective exhibition of his work and he published a monograph entitled « Viral – Portraits ».

SHOWS (SELECTED)

- 2023 *TAGELDIMDE / MIDDLEGATE*, cur. Pierre Muylle and Philippe Van Cauteren, Geel (BE)
- 2022 *Portrait of a Lady*, cur. Louma Salamé, Villa Empain - Fondation Boghossian, Bruxelles (BE)
Dialogue de sourds, Titanikas Art Center, Vilnius (LT)
- 2021 *The intimate consciousness of time*, Irène Laub Gallery, Brussels (BE)
- 2020 «...Fils de...» (*les retrouvailles*), Le Botanique, Brussels (BE)
«Réunions familiales» (*un goût de liberté*), Le Botanique, Brussels (BE)
Tempête dans un verre d'eau, Irène Laub Gallery, Brussels (BE)
- 2019 *ACHROME*, Irène Laub Gallery, Brussels (BE)
- 2018 *Sans aucun titre*, Brussels (BE)
Nothing like a little levity, Molière Project 4#, Brussels (BE)
Faces, Psychiatrisch Centrum Sint Amandus, Beernem (BE)
- 2016 *Monographies d'artistes - Arte 10+6*, La Mediatine, Brussels (BE)
Notre ami Yves, (avec Yves Lecomte et Gudny Rosa Ingimarsdottir), Brussels (BE)
Kwartett, National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik (IS)
- 2015 *Maison à vendre*, (with Gudny Rosa Ingimarsdottir) Brussels (BE)
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh (UK)
- 2014 *Résonnance(s)*, la Maison Particulière, Brussels (BE)
Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens, Tyne and Wear (UK)
National Portrait Gallery, London (UK)
- 2013 *Treasures around E. Munch*, National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik (IS)
- 2012 *Pop Up – les dernières acquisitions*, Museum of Ixelles, Brussels (BE)
- 2011 *c'est la peinture qui nous regarde*, WEproject, Brussels (BE)
Féminité, la Maison Particulière, Brussels (BE)
Origines, la Maison Particulière, Brussels (BE)
- 2010 *De Garage*, Mechelen (BE)
- 2009 *Fading*, Museum of Ixelles, Brussels (BE)
- 2006 *Een schilderij van Sint-Lukas*, Sint-Lukasgalerie, Brussels (BE)
Dieter Roth fondation, Skaftfell, Seydisfjordur (IS)

GAUTHIER HUBERT



Gauthier Hubert, «un français se prenant pour Bob Ross», 2021,
Oil on canvas, 46 x 37 cm

PRIZES

- 2016 Prix Royal Académique 'Jos Albert', Palais des Académies Sciences & Lettres
- 1999 Lauréat du Prix de la Jeune Peinture Belge, Palais des Beaux-Arts
- 1998 Prix Royal Académique 'Gustave Camus', Palais des Académies sciences & lettres

COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik (IS)
Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (BE)
Musée d'Ixelles (BE)
Maison Particulière (BE)
Axia Collection (BE)

IRÈNE LAUB GALLERY
29 Rue Van Eyck, 1050 Bruxelles

Tuesday to Saturday from 11am to 6pm
or by appointment

www.irenelaubgallery.com
info@irenelaubgallery.com
+32 2 647 55 16

Director : Irène Laub
+32 473 91 85 06
irene@irenelaubgallery.com

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