

VALLOIS

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LAMARCHE - OVIZE

Nos paradis perdus ... (Lost in our paradise)

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Florentine and **Alexandre Lamarche-Ovize** have been working together since 2006. They stopped smoking in 2012. And yet it has nothing to do with the frequent apparition of cigarette butts in their drawings, paintings, ceramics, as seen on the invitation for this exhibition. No, what these cigarette butts show in particular - apart from the grotesque figure of the artist smoking while contemplating his work in his studio - is the duet's interest for the real, the insignificant, the quotidian, from which they never cease to harvest elements to build their work. Cigarettes, dogs, flowers, shoes, vases, etc. Everything that composes their world and the world is considered, reconsidered, displaced, enlarged, isolated, laid out, exhibited under multiple forms and several times, thus questioning the way art and representation are fabricated, their modalities and articulations. Prepare yourself for some magnifying and surprise effects.

In the Summer of 2015, a residency in Mexico led to a series of sculptures in ceramic (" Pop columns "), an aggregate of objects (box, ice cone, amphora, apple, figurine, etc.) and more or less exotic or novel painted motifs (cactus, flowers, dogs, etc.) without any apparent relation - apart from what the artists reveal from one piece to another,

in the continuous flow of their work, in a sort of plastic homology which might elude the viewer. The most important thing is that it "holds", and it does. With **Lamarche-Ovize**, figures, images and references are superimposed and circulate haphazardly and shamelessly, jumping from one medium to the next, from paper to ceramic. Fond of accumulation and citation (see the " Barbodoigts vases " and the collages entitled " To Sarah "), the two artists are also keen on concatenation and sampling.

The motif at the heart of their work, the flowers - drawn, silkscreen printed, painted, on paper, on cardboard or on ceramic - follow one another (like the donuts, cigarette butts, asparagus, etc.). Details from the flowerbeds drawn with charcoal by Florentine in the Spring of 2016 and framed by Alexandre, possess the same variety and exoticism as the species painted on the Mexican ceramics. And yet, they are views of gardens from Varangeville-sur-Mer, in Normandy. The location was not chosen at random: the park was inspired by the " Arts and Crafts " movement founded in the 1860s by William Morris, a tutelary figure for both artists. A painter, architect, textile designer, writer, the man fought his entire life against the distinction between art and craft, conception and execution; a philosophy shared and carried out by **Lamarche-Ovize** in their artistic practice and in their attitude towards know-how. The duet almost always makes everything themselves, four-handedly; they assume and claim their pleasure towards the object, towards hybridisation, and breaking down barriers; they like to surround themselves with other artists and artisans. Their exhibitions are at times collective, often with furniture, sometimes with flowers. They have a taste for DIY, décor, motif and decoration.

In November 2016, their participation at the Drawing Center in New York gives them the opportunity to visit the Natural History Museum where the dioramas - panoramic and hyperrealistic paintings of the wild American far west - had been recently restored. It led to a dozen gouaches and watercolours on paper, " Natural History Pattern ", which differ a lot from their previous work, as much in terms of the subject, colours, technique and their treatment, as in the radical choices of framing or rather unframing, undertaken by the artists, a way for them to play with good old landscape.

You will have guessed that this last series has nothing to do with the title of this exhibition at Galerie Vallois, " Nos paradis perdus ... (Lost in our Paradise) ", which is actually a double reference to French singer Christophe, and Rihanna, whom they listened to during the Summer 2015 and whom they immortalised not long after in two large collages. **Florentine** and **Alexandre Lamarche-Ovize**, painters of flowers, landscapes and pop stars.

Barbara Soyer



OPENING

Thursday 12 January
Starting at 6:00 pm

13 January

-

25 February

2017



ART FAIRS

Art Genève
26.01 - 29.01

Armory Show
02.03 - 05.03

Drawing Now
23.03 - 26.03

Art Basel
15.06 - 18.06