

GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA

PARIS - BRUXELLES

Antoine Renard

Démons

November 8 - January 25, 2025

3, rue du Cloître Saint-Merri, Paris 4^e



Sans titre (Maschinenmensch #3), 2024 (détails)
Glazed ceramic, 30 x 40 x 155 cm (11^{5/16} x 15^{5/8} x 61^{1/2} in.)
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is delighted to present *Démons*, Antoine Renard's third solo exhibition at the gallery. A native of Lourdes and the new town of Cergy Pontoise, the artist has developed a protean body of work where telluric and digital elements are combined with odors. The issue of exorcism in our society is once again at the heart of this new corpus: it is addressed through the body – its representation and its intimate and collective reception – and its traumatic memory, bringing together contemporary mythologies, new media and popular beliefs.

The title of the exhibition, *Démons*, is aptly linked to the bewitching fragrances and sensual forms of the fourteen new sculptures on view. These 3d-ceramic prints suggest anthropomorphic silhouettes evoking specters or ruins. They rise up in space, in contact with the fragrance of a fictitious psychotropic plant, mixed with a series of sounds and ritual chants that the artist gleaned then reworked during his research trips to Lourdes and the Peruvian Amazon, as well as during his residency at the Villa Medici in Rome.

The invisible elements of the exhibition, such as the sound vibrations and the scents, infuse these bodies in the throes of transformation with a kind of magic. The question of the body repairing itself is central, whether in terms of the reconstruction of its physical or its psychological ruins. This characteristic is reflected in the creation of Antoine Renard's works. In an ultra-contemporary approach to sculpture, the artist works from scans and digital models gleaned from online sharing platforms for video game developers, where classical sculpture, archeological archives and science fiction characters are intermingled. He then proceeds by 3-d printing earthenware, stoneware or porcelain.

Among these seductive propositions is one of Antoine Renard's major preoccupations: to see *beneath the skin of bodies and things*, crossing the threshold between viscera and epidermis to explore the mysteries of the psyche. The interpretation of the *Spinario*¹ works, a hunched figure removing a thorn from its foot, illustrates this reflection. In contact with his wound, the adolescent seeks not only to heal himself, but also to introspect: flesh provides access to certain hidden secrets. Antoine Renard became interested in these healing rituals through the *perfumero* shamans,

¹The Spinario, also known as the Thorn Puller, is a famous ancient sculpture from Greco-Roman art. It depicts a young boy concentrating on removing a thorn from his foot.

South American healers whom the artist met during his travels in the Amazon. They possess in-depth knowledge of fragrances and their use in both therapeutic and mystical contexts.

The smells and sounds in the exhibition attest to these initiations. The fragrance is a memorial reconstitution of the Toe flower (*Brugmansia suaveolens*), a shrub used in rituals to heal bones and generate visions. The sound waves blend the exorcism chant of Signora Lourdes, a Peruvian healer, with sound transcriptions of the artist's brain activity during the trances he experienced on this research trip.

The forms and asperities of the sculptures make them oscillate between figuration and abstraction. The exhibition showcases the body and the psychic architecture of each character. The confrontation between the solid materiality of the sculptures and the more ethereal dimensions of the sounds and smells symbolizes this alliance, contributing to the intoxicating – even bewitching – atmosphere that hovers over *Démons*.

Born in 1984 in Paris, Antoine Renard lives and works between Paris and Lourdes, France.

A graduate of the DNSEP art program at the Beaux-Arts in Dijon, in 2008, Antoine Renard has won numerous prizes and residencies, notably the Inkubator Innovator fellowship (Germany, 2015); the Goethe Institute Residency Prague (Czech Republic, 2017), the Résidence Cheval Noir (with Komplot), Brussels (Belgium, 2018). In 2019, he was awarded the Occitanie – Medici Prize, and the same year he also received a scholarship for the CNAP's artistic project and a residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. What's more, Antoine Renard was the winner of the doctoral program SACRe 2020, from PSL University. His thesis, under the direction of Pascal Rousseau, focalizes on olfaction as an extension of sculpture.

Antoine Renard has already been the subject of several important solo exhibitions, including *Psychobotania* à la Cité des Sciences à Paris (France, 2022), *PHARMAKON*, Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain, Sète (France, 2021), *Geometries of -l-o-v-e, Very*, Berlin (Germany, 2019); *Cats in the City*, Komplot, Brussels (Belgium, 2018); 1999, Marsèlleria, Milan (Italy, 2017); *Resource Operation (Part II)*, *In-Extenso*, Clermont-Ferrand (France, 2017); *Resource Operation (Part I) "The monk's corridor"*, Tlön, Nevers (France, 2017); *I spell it Nature*, DIESEL, Liège (Belgium, 2016).

Antoine Renard's works were also included in significant group exhibitions, including *Power Flower*, Biennale de Nice, Nice (France, 2022), *Respirer l'Art, quand l'art contemporain sublime l'univers du parfum*, Musée International de Grasse, (France, 2022), *Futur, ancien, fugitif. Une scène française*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (France, 2019); *The Future of Memory*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (Austria, 2015); *Saturn Drive*, Kunstverein am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, Berlin (Germany, 2015); 58th Salon de Montrouge, Paris (France, 2013)

Antoine Renard is represented by the Galerie Nathalie Obadia Paris/Brussels since 2021.

Paris Saint-Honoré

Laure Prouvost

Nest In You

November 15 - January 4, 2025

Viswanadhan

January 17 - March 2025

Paris Cloître Saint-Merri

Antoine Renard

Démons

November 8 - January 25, 2025

Paris Cloître Saint-Merri - Espace II

Guillaume Lebon

January 11 - March 2025

Brussels

Joris Van de Moortel

L'apocalypse excite les nerfs de la nef

October 24 - January 11, 2025

Group exhibition of photography

January 16 - February 22, 2025

For any further information, please contact :Eva Ben Dhiab
evab@nathalieobadia.com / + 33 (0) 1 53 01 99 76

Pour suivre toutes les actualités de la Galerie Nathalie Obadia :
Instagram (@galerieobadia), Facebook (@GalerieNathalieObadia), Twitter (@GalerieObadia) via le hashtag #galerieobadia