IRÈNE LAUB
GALLERY

EN

KEEN SOUHLAL
WHAT IF THE MOON WERE MADE OF GREEN CHEESE ?

28.10.16 > 07.01.17

Keen Souhlal, Slice and Dice, 2016, Wood, glazed ceramic, 56 x 30 x 25 cm

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A sculptor said—who just had bought
The finest marble ever wrought
What must my chisel here produce?
A god, or cowl for common use?
No, it shall be a god, I swear;
His hand the thunder-bolt shall bear:
Mortals, fall down, or hence be hurled;
Behold the sovereign of the world !

Jean de La Fontaine – *The statuary and statue of Jupiter* (1678)

A block of stone, earth, concrete or wood, that is the strictly material origin of sculpture. What to do with this material? What to make it say? How to attune it to an extremely rich history? **Keen Souhlal** is attentive to the physical properties of materials, to their symbolic significance, but also to their history. She injects this knowledge in a reflection in which past and present coexist and attract and hybridize each other. The works, resembling archaeological artifacts, transform the definitions and status of the materials and carefully selected objects. The sculptures are born from technical, material and formal investigations. The artist uses wood, earth, lava, plant fibers, stone, concrete or metal and utilizes either forms that exist in nature or objects resulting from artisanal and traditional practices such as basketry, woodworking, or ceramics. To this end, for instance, she has studied the design of fishing hooks from different cultures (New Zealand, Polynesia) to produce a new series of sculptures in ceramics. Even if the formal substance of the hook is retained, the artist does not hesitate to transform its materiality and scale. From the totem and amphora to the woven basket, **Keen Souhlal** revisits everyday and traditional objects. She makes use of their structures and specificities to generate sculptures with new and composite forms. In this sense, she activates a process of mixing, or, what Edouard Glissant refers to as creolization: «Creolization is a mixing of arts or languages that produces the unexpected. It is a way of transforming in a continuous manner without losing oneself. It is a space where dispersion allows us to come together, where cultural shocks, disharmony, disorder, and interference become creators. It is the creation of an open and inextricable culture that upsets the uniformization by the big media and artistic centrals.» By introducing a concept of sculpture situated between geology, ethnology and archeology, **Keen Souhlal** builds bridges between territories, between art and craft, between nature and culture, between East and West, between the artificial and the natural. The works forward a plural reading of geography, landscapes, cultures, objects and natural materials. **Keen Souhlal** then, through hybridization and contamination, breaks down barriers and produces the unexpected.

Julie Crenn

[1]JOIGNOT, Frédéric. « Interview with Édouard Glissant ». *Le Monde 2*, january 2005

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FEW WORDS ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in 1982 in Paris (FR)
Lives and works in Paris (FR)

Born in Paris, Keen Souhlal's career path is atypical. After studying at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris (ENSBA), she settled abroad in Iceland, Greenland, then Quebec and completed her training with a CAP (vocational training certificate) in marquetry at the Ecole Boulle.
Her work is built around many different disciplines, such as sculpture, ceramics, embossing, drawing and photography. Keen Souhlal develops a protean body of work with real subtlety, trifling with the perception of the observer in order to unsettle him more effectively in his convictions. The artist freezes the material in its most ephemeral and precarious phenomena, in order to reveal more fully its plastic and poetic potential, thus prompting wonder in the observer.
Following her residency at the Cité des Arts in Paris, she set off to carry out work research with scientists in the Antarctic ocean. Recently a finalist of the Friends of the Palais de Tokyo Prize 2014 and spotted at the Salon de Montrouge art fair.

SOLO & GROUP SHOWS (SELECTED)

2016
Por Venir, Casa de Velazquez, Madrid (ES)
Biennale de la Jeune Création, La Graineterie, Houilles (FR)
The Collection, Irène Laub Gallery (FEIZI), Brussels (BE)
2015
Poésie de la matière, 15e Parcours Saint Germain, Boutique Burberry, Paris (FR)
Silent Conversation, Irène Laub Gallery (FEIZI), Brussels (BE)
Les Récits de l'Insu, Centre d'art Albert Chanot, Clamart (FR)
Cartographie intime, le 116, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Montreuil (FR)
2014
Conversation d'un vestige contemporain, Centre d'art de l'Attrape Couleurs, Lyon (FR)
65e Jeune Création, Cent Quatre 104, Paris (FR)
Equilibre, Musée des Archives Nationales, Paris (FR)
2013
Codes et système, Welcome to, Galerie Perception Park, Paris (FR)

FAIRS-EVENTS (SELECTED)

2016
ESTAMPA, Madrid (ES)
Yia Art Fair, Brussels (BE)
2015
Finaliste des Prix des Amis du Palais de Tokyo, Paris (FR)
Hors-les-murs Yia Art Fair #5, Musée des Archives Nationales, Paris (FR)
Objectif Terre, 18e Biennale de Céramique Contemporaine, musées de Châteauroux (FR)
Art Brussels, Brussels (BE)
Art en Paysage, cur. by Matthieu Corradino,
Biennale de Sologne (FR)
2013
Biennale off de Lyon, Bureau d'études #2 / Partitions tactiles, La Mire, Lyon (FR)
2012
57e Salon de Montrouge, cur. by Stéphane Corréard, (FR)

RESIDENCIES

2017
Terre / Céramique, École d'Art du Beauvaisis (FR)
2016
Member sculptor artist at Casa de Velazquez, Madrid (ES)
2014
Cité des Arts, Atelier D3 Montmartre, Paris (FR)
Research project Austral and Antarctic Lands
L'Attrape Coeur, Lyon (FR)
2013
Aide individuelle à la création, DRAC Ile de France, Paris (FR)
2010
Aller-Retour, National University of Arts of Taiwan, Taipeï (TW)

COLLECTIONS

2015
Fondation Francès, Sentis (FR)
Collection d'art contemporain de la ville de Montreuil (FR)
2012
Collection Libert, Los Angeles (USA) / Paris (FR)

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THE GALLERY

Feizi Gallery is renamed Irène Laub Gallery.

The change of name reflects the Gallery's reorientation decided by its initiator Irène Laub. Dropping its specific Chinese contemporary art profile, it seeks artists with strong messages the world over and with a propensity for cross fertilization.

UPCOMING

JESSICA LAJARD
Solo show
13.01.17 > 25.02.17

CONTACT

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Tue. Wed. Thu. Sat. 11am - 1pm and 2pm - 6.30pm
Fri. 2pm - 6.30pm
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