

DUST SPECKS ON THE SEA

CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE
FROM THE FRENCH CARAIBBEAN
AND HAITI

02.02 –
28.07.2024

FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI
3RD FLOOR

CURATION:
ARDEN SHERMAN



infos
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**RAPHAËL BARONTINI, SYLVIA BERTÉ,
JULIE BESSARD, HERVÉ BEUZE,
JEAN-FRANÇOIS BOCLÉ, ERNÉST
BRELEUR, ALEX BURKE, VLADIMIR CYBIL
CHARLIER, GAËLLE CHOISNE, RONALD
CYRILLE, JEAN-ULRICK DÉSSERT, KENNY
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ADLER GUERRIER, JEAN-MARC HUNT,
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MONFILS, LOUISA MARAJO, RICARDO
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MARIELLE PLAISIR, MICHELLE LISA
POLISSAINT ET NAJJA MOON, TABITA
REZAIRE, FRANÇOISE SÉMIRAMOTH,
YOAN SORIN, JUDE PAPALOKO THEGENUS,
KIRA TIPPENHAUER**

Curated by Arden Sherman, Hunter East Harlem Gallery, New York.

A proposal as part of *Un champ d'îles*, a program dedicated to artists from the overseas territories.

In 1964, French President Charles de Gaulle visited Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana on an official state visit. Flying in an airplane over the Caribbean Sea, de Gaulle described the islands as “dust specks on the sea”.¹ De Gaulle’s famous quote evokes the almost otherworldly mystery of an aerial view of the Caribbean archipelago, while at the same time revealing a deep-seated hierarchical perspective of the region stemming from France’s history as a powerful colonizing force in the Caribbean.

The French Caribbean is made up of two islands – Guadeloupe and Martinique – as well as French Guiana, which sits on the northeastern edge of South America. These Overseas Departments of France are officially governed by, and are economically and socially connected to, the European metropole. In the northern part of the Caribbean, known as the Greater Antilles, the nation of Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic. In 1804, after over a decade of combat led by rebelling slaves, Haiti gained independence from France and forever changed the history of French sovereignty in the Caribbean.

In the exhibition *Dust Specks on the Sea*, while history is undeniably present, the artists are not bound to create artwork that looks “Caribbean” or that didactically demonstrates the

conditions of their landscape or colonial trauma. The French Caribbean and Haiti cannot be defined solely by their “exotic” beauty nor by their historical trauma. The exhibition is a platform where artists play all fields: expressing their personal relationships to heritage, navigating art-making inside the globalized contemporary art market, and looking beyond their cultural background for inspiration and ideas.

The exhibition presents various approaches to subject matter, sculptural materials, and processes that speak to contemporary art making by twenty-eight artists of this region, evincing their participation in an expanding, globalized artworld and putting pressure on notions of who is at its “center” and who is on its “periphery”. The medium-specific, sculpture-based exhibition presents artwork in a distinctive, integrated way, evoking a network of ideas around heritage, history, identity, community, and politics.

Arden Sherman

¹ – The story is recounted by Betsy Wing in her “Translator’s Introduction” in *Edouard Glissant, Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), p. 13

After travelling in the United States since 2018, and after two iterations in France – at the Ferme du Buisson (Noisiel, Seine-et-Marne), and the Villa du Parc (Annemasse, Haute-Savoie) – the exhibition is presented at la Friche la Belle de Mai from February the 2nd to July the 28th, 2024 as part of the programme *Un champ d’îles*, which focuses on the Caribbean diaspora. As a producer, Fræme is thrilled to present a new selection of works loaned by the CNAP, and have invited artists Ernest Breleur and Françoise Sémiramoth to take part of this iteration of *Dust Specks on the Sea*. The exhibition will be presented in autumn 2024 at Passerelle, a contemporary art centre of national interest in Brest.

In 2018, *Dust Specks on the Sea: Contemporary Sculpture from the French Caribbean & Haiti* was curated by Arden Sherman and organized by the Hunter College Art Galleries, New York City, with curatorial assistance from Katie Hood Morgan and Marie Vickles. This exhibition has been made possible by the generous support of the Cultural Departments of the French Embassy in the United States and Hunter College. Additional sponsorship has been provided by the Cultural Affairs Departments of Martinique and Guadeloupe and the FACE Foundation. In France, the exhibition is coproduced by Hunter College, the Villa du Parc (Haute Savoie), the Ferme du Buisson (Seine-et-Marne), La Passerelle (Finistère) centers for Contemporary Art of National Interest. It is supported by the FEAC (overseas arts and cultural exchange fund) and supported by Etant Donnés, a program of Villa Albertine and Albertine Foundation. The exhibition is also supported by the French shipowner MARFRET.



Toussaint Bréda, 2019
Silkscreen digital printing on fabric, trimmings
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

RAPHAËL BARONTINI

Born in 1984 in Saint-Denis, Seine-Saint-Denis, France
Lives and works in Saint-Denis, Seine-Saint-Denis, France

Raphaël Barontini creates installations and assemblages that combine silkscreened photographic images, digital prints, bold colors, and soft textile materials. His work often includes images of marginalized figures from art history, religion, and popular culture. His work *Eurydice* is a wearable cape from the series *Solar Cloaks*. This work and the larger series were created in response to the 1959 Brazilian film *Black Orpheus* (1959), a contemporary adaptation of the Greek tragedy of Orpheus and Eurydice set in the context of a Rio de Janeiro favela. The film traces its love story through the complications of race and economic strife during Carnival. For the second cloak, he depicts the Haitian revolutionary hero, *Toussaint Bréda* (also known as Toussaint Louverture), who led the first successful slave revolt that granted Haiti independence from France in 1804. Finally, *Black Minerva* refers to Minerva, the goddess of elevated thinking, wisdom, intelligence, labor and of war in terms of strategic prowess and tactical know-how in Roman mythology. Barontini's ornate *Solar Cloaks* are embellished with images and trimmings, evoking traditional costumes worn during the parades of festival season.



Untitled, 2019
Hand-shaped sterling silver sculptures
© The artist

SYLVIA BERTÉ

Born in 1984 in Fort-de-France, Martinique, France
Lives and works in Barcelona, Spain

Sylvia Berté is an artist and jeweler from Martinique. Berté dedicates her practice to furthering human-nature relationships using mindfully harvested materials. In her piece Berté explores play and the connotations of materials. In this collection of tiny sculptures, she has carefully crafted folded paper fortune tellers made in childhood out of silver paper covered with a sheer patina. Here, Berté explores the area between utility and decoration, examining a duality that mirrors her own dual identity with roots in both Caribbean and French cultures.



The Wings, 2008
Straw, staples, and copper, courtesy of the artist,
150 × 73 × 28 cm
© The artist

JULIE BESSARD

Born in 1971 in Châtellerault, France
Lives and works in Schoelcher, Martinique,
France

Julie Bessard explores form and composition in her work, often playing with illusion and lighting in space. The artist has created an *in situ* painting for the exhibition at la Villa du Parc, reinvisioned as a sculptural installation in the heart of la Ferme du Buisson - Center for contemporary art, and presented here at La Friche la Belle de Mai. This large mural of stretched canvas is part of a constant and uninterrupted series of oil pastel paintings, presenting frontal compositions, very vivid, with strong colored tensions that Julie Bessard makes very quickly. Emerging from a dark black base, an abstract swirl of shapes, lines and colors, evokes movement, flight, breath and acts as a musical or choreographic composition. In a sculptural and more symbolic register, *Ailes [The Wings]*, her second piece in the exhibition, interact with the architecture in a game of light and shadow, and are made with common materials such as mesh, metal staples and packaging tape.



Manufacture Coloniale, 2004
Aluminum plate, polyurethane foam, acrylic,
rope, and fiberglass
© The artist

HERVÉ BEUZE

Born in 1970 in Fort-de-France, Martinique,
France
Lives and works in Vauclin, Martinique, France

Hervé Beuze's work explores the identity, memory, people, and the geography of Martinique. His paintings, assemblages, and monumental installations express elements of a latent historical Martinican identity that works in direct dialogue with the fast pace of a contemporary art world. He uses a variety of materials, from parts of machinery and wire to wood, that gesture symbolically toward the history of postcolonial Martinique. In this work, *Manufacture Coloniale [Colonial Factory]*, works as an allegory of colonial exploitation by European powers in the Americas. Favoring notions that are often contentious and intense, Beuze works with fragmentary and hybrid symbolism, painting a realistic picture of the complexities of his Caribbean identity.



Untitled, series *Caribbean Hurricane*, 2010
Fans, strips of fabric and plastic bags
© The artist, Adagp – Paris & Maëlle Galerie – Paris

JEAN-FRANÇOIS BOCLÉ

Born in 1971 in Fort-de-France, Martinique, France
Lives and works in Paris, France

Jean-François Boclé uses found objects to create sculptures, installations, and video that address consumerism, capitalism, and the fight for natural resources. Like a supermarket shelf, *Consommons racial! [Let's consume racially]* presents numerous everyday consumer products. On one end are some products showing the peaceful everyday life of a white family, and on the other end, black people assigned to domestic chores in the service of the first ones. The objects are categorized in a line of racist ideology which represents for Boclé “the persistence of coloniality.”

Caribbean Hurricane, consists of 3 fans blowing colored stripes made of fabric and recycled plastic. Red, black and green are the 3 colors of the panafrikan flag. Pan-Africanism is an activist organization aiming to strengthen bonds of solidarity between native ethnic groups and groups from African bloodline diaspora. These colors are also emblematic of the Black Star Line, a steamboat company founded by activist Marcus Garvey in 1919 to allow the transportation of goods and people and to create an international African economy. Through the vigorous gust of the fans, Boclé evokes in a sensitive yet powerful way not only the Caribbean hurricanes, but also the history of the African diaspora in the Americas.



Sans Titre de la série *Féminin*, 2014
Printed polyester film, staples, synthetic fabric, plastic, synthetic fur and feathers, nylon thread, 220 x 47 x 40 cm
© The artist

ERNEST BRELEUR

Born in 1945, Rivière-Salée, Martinique, France
Lives and works in Martinique, France

Ernest Breleur works in painting, drawing, and sculpture with each medium informing the other throughout his practice. Breleur's artistic interest is formal - where his sculptures are spatial and interactive, and his drawings of figures dance on white paper in carefully controlled designs. The three sculptures presented in *Dust Specks on the Sea* are from Breleur's series *Féminin [Feminine]*, where he explored materiality through a female lens. Mixing, contorting, and weaving together disparate found materials like x-ray film, tinsel, and monofilament, Breleur's sculptures portray a biomorphic presence, appearing almost otherworldly or from the depths of the deep ocean. Breleur's work straddles his identity as both Martinican and as an artist, where the boundaries of the island present the conceptual framework for his practice and simultaneously present is the expansiveness of his artistic imperative to create. Informed by his meetings with Martinician writers like Édouard Glissant and Patrick Chamoiseau, Breleur's work questions Caribbean relations inside an increasingly globalized world.



La Bibliothèque 2, 2010
Wood and embroidered cloth bag,
200 × 200 × 20 cm
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

ALEX BURKE

Born in 1944 in Fort-de-France, Martinique,
France
Lives and works in Cachan, France

Alex Burke's works are often generated from his position of being from the Caribbean diaspora and living and working in France. In 1963, Burke moved to France to attend l'École des Beaux-Arts de Nancy and since then his practice has been informed by his experience of the erasure of Caribbean history within Western narratives. His work entitled *La Bibliothèque 2* [*The Bookshelf 2*] is composed of a bookshelf populated by closed cloth bags—reminiscent of burlap sacks used for storing dry goods—onto which he has embroidered the dates of significant events in the colonial history of the Americas. These closed bags metaphorically contain covered up parts of history, representing the West's neglect of its colonial legacy. Burke chooses embroidery for the dates because of the medium's symbolic history and, with his use of tonal colored thread, he nods to the erasure of these dates in history and the fragile state of their collective memory. For the artist, collective memory is the most valuable tool for rebuilding and looking forward.



Untitled (Guédé Mani), 2018
Mixed media
© The artist

VLADIMIR CYBIL CHARLIER

Born in 1967 in Queens, New York, USA
Lives and works in Harlem, New York, USA

Vladimir Cybil Charlier's practice is informed by her connection to Haitian culture, referencing her own memories as a child in Haiti alongside historic Haitian imagery to discuss the complexities of the diaspora and cultural identity. She cites mythology, literature, and music as references for her paintings, collages, and sculptures. In her work *Sans titre (Guédé Mani)* [*Untitled (Guédé Mani)*], the artist poetically combines her personal story with Haitian mythology with an installation of busts adorned with glasses that refer to the Haitian Guédé spirits who represent death and fertility. These spirits accompany Baron, a god of death, and have the gift of foresight. Charlier modeled the head sculpture after her own brother, who has suffered from disabilities since birth, as a memento to his strength.



Les amulettes et les trophées - l'huître, 2018
Cast bronze oyster shell and chain
© The artist & Adagp – Paris; Galerie Until
then, Paris, France

GAËLLE CHOISNE

Born in 1985 in Cherbourg, France
Lives and works between Paris, France and
Berlin, Germany

Gaëlle Choïsne's cross-disciplinary art practice employs a poetic juxtaposition of materials and imagery to address themes of colonial legacies, the exploitation of resources, and global disasters. Her works for *Dust Specks on the Sea* are responses to the "world's disorder." In *Les amulettes et les trophées - l'huître* [*Amulets and Trophies - The Oyster*], an etched oyster shell hangs suspended by a gold chain as if in limbo. The work's tension arises from the contrast between fragility and strength, organic and artificial. For Choïsne, the oyster signifies an offering, creating a kind of expanded altar or ceremonial site and as the title suggests, this mysterious object is meant as an amulet or trophy. To accompany this sculpture, the artist has commissioned two musicians to record a 1966 composition *Sonate Vaudouesque* [*Voodoo Sonata*] by the under-recognized Haitian composer Carmen Brouard (1909–2005). Like Choïsne, who lives and works primarily in Europe, Brouard lived most of her life in France and Canada, but her compositions frequently reference Haitian culture. Audible in the space as a soundscape heard throughout the exhibition's run, the composition complicates the cross-cultural markers that together make up French Caribbean identity. *The series Sculptures: War of Images - Distortion and Temporal Ellipses, Foot, Fingers and Head*, shows drawings made by colonists found in the Rijksakademie's archives, scanned and printed on offset plates. Created during Choïsne's residency, the artist intertwines part of her own body with the historical drawings to further emphasize the "othering" that continues to be pervasive in contemporary society.



Key Escape, 2018
Mixed media, 82,5 × 20,5 × 35 cm
© The artist

RONALD CYRILLE AKA B.BIRD

Born in 1984 in Guadeloupe, France
Lives and works in Les Abymes, Guadeloupe,
France

Known by his street art name B-Bird, Ronald Cyrille was raised on the island of Dominica, known as the "Nature Isle of the Caribbean". In his sculpture *Key Escape*, Cyrille presents uncanny, cartoonish black hands—sculpted from found fabric gloves and adorned with exaggerated, hot pink nails—that reach up and out of a small boat. The boat is run aground on Guadeloupean sand and filled with a decaying green moss, as if to affirm its uselessness as a vessel. The work references the transatlantic slave trade and despite its modest size, *Key Escape* could easily serve as a blueprint for a darkly humorous civic monument. Keys are small, sandy islands common to the Caribbean; a "key escape" could refer to people of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora who have emigrated to other parts of the world, including North America and Europe where this boat has found a resting place in this exhibition.



Still Life with Flowers (The Spectacle of Tragedy), 2018

Holographic tape on cardboard, metal, PVC, and textiles, courtesy of the artist, 68,6 × 35,6 × 216 cm
© The artist & Adagp

JEAN-ULRICK DÉSERT

Born in 1960 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Jean-Ulrick Désert has described his art practice as visualizing “conspicuous invisibility.” In his work, *Nature morte aux fleurs (Le spectacle de la tragédie)* [*Still Life with Flowers (The Spectacle of Tragedy)*], the installation is made up of garlands of holographic tape and flower petals, with frills and pastel pinks recalling the stereotypical visual markers of a teenage girl’s bedroom. Its letters spell out the name of Fabienne Cherisma, a fifteen-year-old who survived the 2010 Haiti earthquakes only to tragically die a week later, murdered by police for looting two plastic chairs and three framed pictures. Images of her lifeless body were spectacularized by international media, re-inscribing narratives of violence, victimization, criminality, and innocence as they exploited and infantilized Cherisma and the nation of Haiti. Désert’s installation serves as a memorial site or *memento mori*, urging the viewer to contemplate Western perspectives on “Third World” tragedy and trauma, and questioning the value systems that privilege the dignity of certain lives over others.



EXOROTIC, 2018

metallic fuel cans with articulated spouts, courtesy of the artist, 580 × 50 × 40 cm
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

KENNY DUNKAN

Born in 1988 in Point-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, France

Lives and works in Paris, France and Zurich, Switzerland

Kenny Dunkan’s practice includes both sculpture and performance, and is particularly influenced by his childhood memories of the carnival culture in Guadeloupe. His identity becomes a point of departure to deal with the frictions of the country and his own place amongst this history. *EXOROTIC* is a sculpture made up of metallic fuel cans whose phallic spouts are manipulated to form the undulating shape of a wave in motion, while also alluding erotically to the body. Dunkan’s practice often touches on the fetishization of the black body and in his work, his repetition of these sleek cans is meant to commodify and accentuate the persistence of stereotypes and clichés among the conversation of blackness, the body, eroticism, and Caribbeanism. The cans, arranged as if part of a commercial display, also materialize connections between human trade, body exploitation, and imperialism. The installation *COSMOS* presents an accumulation of images on a scroll in which intimacy is narrated to the world through the act of looking. Objects, bodies and words collide in both direct and sensitive relationships emphasized by videos of Dunkan’s performances invoking movement, dance and ritual.



Ogu Feraille, 2015
Tinted fiberglass, 127 × 50,8 cm.
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

ÉDOUARD DUVAL-CARRIÉ

Born in 1954 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Lives and works in Miami, Florida, USA

Edouard Duval-Carrié is a sculptor and painter heavily inspired by Haiti's traditions with themes of voodoo, racism, madness, and erotomania emerging in his work. He creates works that speak to the complexities of the Caribbean and its diaspora, with a special interest in the Haitian community of Miami, where the artist resides. Presented during this exhibition is a large bust of Ogun—an orisha, or spirit god, in the Yoruba religion—who is a warrior and a powerful spirit of metal work. *Ogu Feraille* (2015) symbolizes the historical and present struggle of the Haitian people, and, through its materiality as a glowing resin cast sculpture, it evokes a sensation of hope and power that is juxtaposed with the fierce imagery of traditional warriors one might encounter in objects on display in museums.



Untitled (Sharing in a market - mediated access economy-stadium), 2015
45,7 × 38 × 38 cm, clipboard, wire, enamel, paint, wood and coroplast.
Untitled (Nodal unit - soapbox to campaign for a re-ordering), 2018
45,7 × 38 × 38 cm, plywood, wood stain, enamel paint, acrylic paint, and found coroplast
© The artist; Marissa Newman Projects, New York; and David Castillo Gallery, Miami, Florida

ADLER GUERRIER

Born in 1975 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Lives and works in Miami, Florida, USA

Adler Guerrier works in a range of media including photography, drawing, printmaking, video, and sculpture. His work examines the public space of the street as a site for civil discourse and disobedience, as well as the more private spaces of the home and the yard—addressing the political, therapeutic, and aesthetic spheres of such locales. For *Dust Specks on the Sea*, Guerrier presents two structures made from found materials that are remnants of political promotional signage, urban construction materials, household wares, and yard tchotchkes. Guerrier's work represents the point of view of a Haitian living in Miami—a city heavily populated with Haitian immigrants—and the holistic impact of how unfulfilled historical demands for prosperity, justice, and civil rights remain even in his stateside environment.



Bananas Deluxe, 2013-2022
Bananas, metal frame
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

JEAN-MARC HUNT

Born in 1975 in Strasbourg, France
Lives and works in Baie-Mahault, Guadeloupe, France

Jean-Marc Hunt works in drawing, painting, sculpture, and installation, using accumulation and appropriation as driving methodologies. *Bananas Deluxe* is a temporal work that takes the form of a chandelier suspended from the ceiling, decorated with yellow bananas. Hunt organizes the bananas in a manner that references an iconic costume worn by the historic black entertainer Joséphine Baker—a revealing skirt made of artificial bananas that she wore during a 1927 performance, causing a sensation in Paris at the time of France’s colonial empire. Hunt also pays tribute to the legendary 1939 song “Strange Fruit” by singer Billie Holiday, which gained popularity during the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. The bananas can also read as symbolic of lust, the wealth of imperialism, and the vanity that grew out of Caribbean exoticism in postcolonial conditions. With *Bananas Deluxe* (2013 - 2022), Hunt creates a multifunctioning icon, where paradoxical and cyclical artistic arguments are present.



EX VOTO: HERE, BLACK AND WHITE BLUES, 2018
Mixed media
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

NATHALIE LEROY-FIÉVÉE

Born in Cayenne, French Guiana
Lives and works in Paris, France

Nathalie Leroy Fiévée works in painting, sculpture, and outdoor installations. Utilizing free-form methodologies and strong gestures in her work, she uses artmaking as an emotional experience to understand human life and loss. In her work

EX VOTO : ISI-A NWE' BLAN BLUES [EX VOTO: HERE, BLACK AND WHITE BLUES]

Leroy Fiévée pays homage to her recently deceased grandmother. The artist is strongly influenced by her grandmother—to whom she attributes her interest in abstraction and in-situ art-making—and her surroundings growing up in the natural landscape of French Guiana. *EX VOTO* is part monument, part expression. Leroy Fiévée considers herself a world citizen who embodies a holistic identity informed by the beauty of the natural environment and the anguish of the man-made one.



Driftwood That Is Equal to the Same Driftwood, 2018

Driftwood, mirror
© The artist

AUDRY LISERON-MONFILS

Born in Cayenne, French Guiana
Lives and works in Bordeaux, France

For Audry Liseron-Monfils, the question of displacement arises in relation to the history of emancipation in the French Caribbean. In his piece *Driftwood That Is Equal to the Same Driftwood*, he highlights a piece of driftwood's journey from a Caribbean island to the United States. Liseron-Monfils' driftwood has been displaced by various flows, both human and mechanical the artist's hands to planes and trucks and arrived at this exhibition space to be presented as a sculpture for *Dust Specks on the Sea*, elevating it from its previous status as a piece of natural detritus. The horizontality of the resulting sculpture emphasizes the driftwood as, finally, an inert body at rest. Placed on top of a mirror, the piece references 1960s and 70s Minimalist sculptures and Land Art, where natural substances interact with man-made materials to form their own distinct conversation.



BoMb - de cendres s'élevant dans l'art d'aimer la Vie - cette fleur, ce cocotier chaotique, 2022

In situ installation, wooden pallets, paint, sand and spray

© The artist and Adagp – Paris

LOUISA MARAJO

Born in 1987 in Schoelcher, Martinique, France
Lives and works in Serris, France

Louisa Marajo creates large scale, mixed-media installation and sculptural works using manipulated photographs, construction materials, paint, and found objects. The question "Can chaos be useful?" fascinates Marajo as her work explores how man-made environments can become an otherworldly landscape. Her installation, *BoMb - de cendres s'élevant dans l'art d'aimer la Vie - cette fleur, ce cocotier chaotique* [*BoMb - from ashes rising in the art of loving Life - this flower, this chaotic coconut tree*], conceived for the exhibition, presents the remains of an oceanic wave following a volcanic eruption, where signs of life would flourish once the ashes are taken away. Photographs and paint stand alongside constructions remnants. The artist offers a landscape-like scene, echoing a world which is quickly evolving, and which may collapse. The landscape in *Into the wave* reconstructs the same memory of a hurricane with elements found in her installations including pieces of wood, fragments of ladders, leftovers from frames and brushes. Drawn from an aesthetic of collapse or apocalypse, she repositions the viewers into a new proposition of daydream and reinvention. The sculpture *Or de Sargasse* [*Sargasso Gold*] rehabilitates the harmful plant in a tool of resistance to the conquest of the waters. Marajo's work proposes an analytical mapping of an identity that is not completely locked into her native Martinique nor fully positioned in her new European home, but lives somewhere in between.



Martinique, l'île aux fleurs, 2018
Acrylic on canvas and soccer balls
© The artiste & Adagp – Paris

RICARDO OZIER-LAFONTAINE

Born in 1973 in Fort-de-France, Martinique, France
Lives and works in Fort-de-France, Martinique, France

Ricardo Ozier-Lafontaine's large-scale drawings, paintings, and installations are created using a method of automatic tracing that puts the artist into a graphic trance of rhythm, sensation, and tension. His work combines Afro-Caribbean ritual percussion and the exploration of visual arts therapy. Ozier-Lafontaine has used sculpture and installation to examine the effects of imagination and experience. His work *Martinique, l'île aux fleurs* [*Martinique, Flowers' Island*] is a large-scale installation on canvas using black and white lines accompanied by embellished soccer balls. Inside the work's dreamlike cartography are hybrid characters that the artist calls the "Zigidaws", which he develops deep in his imagination. Revealing mythical geographies and interwoven networks, Ozier-Lafontaine's drawing demonstrates the dynamism of the human psyche, imagining a dense and complex history of Martinique.



Les Tiags de mon oncle, 2017
Porcelain and hardcover books with candles
© The artist and Maëlle Gallery, Paris, France

JÉRÉMIE PAUL

Born in 1983 in Guadeloupe, France
Lives and works in Paris, France

Jérémy Paul works between painting and installation deeply inspired by his homeland of Guadeloupe. In his practice, Paul presents a world of «figures»; symbols that represent an emotional presence in the artist's life. Paul's works gesture towards a greater story—not completely defined by genre, concepts, and feelings. *Les Tiags de mon Oncle* [*My Uncle's Tiags*] consists of three cowboy boots that are imbued with rich symbols and personal history. The artist's uncle died in the 1990s during the first wave of the HIV crisis; and in his work, porcelain replicas of his boots have been repurposed as vases, installed as if marching up a staircase made of hardcover books. Paul has created a memorial that is both personal—unpacking his uncle's relationship within the family structure—and collective, opening up a larger conversation about loss, myth, and memory. His other series of works, *Écume de ma mère* [*My Mother's Foam*], pairs branches from a local native tree with silk flags printed with images of the ocean. Here the artist is playing with both semantics and materials where "mère" means mother in French and "la mer" means sea. He explores the intersection of nature and personal narratives, in dialogue with the local flora.



Oh! What a mirage!, 2018
fabric, embroidery, buttons, lead weights, and fans, 122 x 88,9 x 96,5 cm
© The artist

MARIELLE PLAISIR

Born in 1975 in Le Havre, France
Lives and works in Miami, South Florida, USA

Marielle Plaisir combines painting, drawing, monumental installations and performance to present highly intense visual experiences. Her work blends life and fiction in personal and historical narratives from her Caribbean upbringing. In *Oh! What a Mirage!*, Plaisir proposes a visual metaphor of Guadeloupe and its history, from the moment Charles de Gaulle flew over the island in 1964 to contemporary perceptions of the island. When de Gaulle arrived in Guadeloupe and Martinique, he was greeted by a cheering population. What he did not see across the idyllic landscape, were the effects of history on the islands' people, from slavery to its social emancipation movements, or from its negritude to its creolité. Through all of this and to the present, Guadeloupeans and Martiniquans have been in constant flux trying to find their place inside Caribbean history and in a global landscape. *Oh! What a Mirage!* is a cloud sculpture, positioned about an "island" set against an imagined sunny, clear blue sky. As its title suggests, it is an exotic illusion, an artificial idea of a "good" life powered by a colonial machine that persists, even now.



Who's The Fool? How To Patch A Leaky Roof,
(*Kay Koule Twonpe Soley, Men Li Pa Twonpe Lapli*), 2018

Community art project
© The artists

MICHELLE LISA POLISSAINT ET NAJJA MOON

Polissaint was born in 1991 in Boynton Beach, Florida, USA, Moon was born in 1986 in Durham, North Carolina, USA
Both live and work in Miami, Florida, USA

Artists Michelle Lisa Polissaint and Najja Moon created this site-specific project in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood as a community-based, creative response to gentrification. For the project, the artists used umbrellas as a metaphor for the gentrification of their community. Inspired by the ubiquity of Miami's blue Design District umbrellas—created by a marketing firm and distributed for free to shoppers in this high-rent, commercial neighborhood—Polissaint and Moon created their own version of the umbrellas in bright red. The artists, who both reside in Little Haiti, gave these away as a gift to the residents of their own neighborhood and an invitation to join the fight against the overdevelopment of Miami. Naming the piece after a phrase in Haitian Creole — “Kay Koule Twonpe Soley, Men Li Pa Twonpe Lapl”— the artists expand on the metaphor to explain their gesture. “Attempting to repair a leaky roof while it rains,” they write, “is as futile a task as sweeping a home with muddy shoes on. Here, the roof is local government, the rain is rapid gentrification, the crack is capitalism and beneath all of this are residents of Little Haiti, fighting to keep up with the downpour.” *Who's The Fool? How to Patch A Leaky Roof* exists as a site-specific public work archived through photographs and video documentation. The new red umbrellas were given to the residents in Little Haiti, beginning with the homes on the artists' mail route and expanding until they reached every home in the community.



Peaceful Warrior, 2015
Video, 5:39, amethyst gemstone grotto
© The artist and Goodman Gallery - South Africa

TABITA REZAIRE

Born in 1989 in Paris, France
Lives and works in Cayenne, French Guiana

Tabita Rezaire considers herself an agent of healing who uses art and technology to shift consciousness. Rezaire is particularly interested in the intersections between technology and spirituality and takes a cross dimensional approach to her work, using primarily digital tools to navigate spaces of power. In her work, *Peaceful Warrior*, a video can be watched inside a large amethyst geode—a purple gemstone known for its healing qualities. Rezaire embarks on a journey of spiritual healing through what she describes as “decolonial self-care,” guiding viewers through a hypnotic landscape of ancient Egyptian cosmology, celestial bodies, and violet-hued amethyst “ovum.” In the video, Rezaire uses the dream-like images as a form of meditation, transforming from an “angry warrior” into a “peaceful warrior.” Rezaire’s complex, mesmeric imagery is accompanied by various sounds, beginning with clear, instructive speech, descending into a cacophony of growls, and then softening into soothing meditative tones. In her work, Rezaire proposes a new order—a future liberated from temporality and geography but bounded by the healing powers of technology.



Caravage Créole, 2022
Video 03:47
© The artist

FRANÇOISE SÉMIRAMOTH

Born in 1968 in Saint-Claude, Guadeloupe, France
Lives and works Marseille, France

Françoise Sémiramoth’s practice explores Caribbean histories through a concentration on color and shape. For her series *Caravage Créole*, Sémiramoth reimagines the stories depicted in Caravaggio’s paintings through a revisionist lens where her figures are enmeshed in bright tropical landscapes. Working primarily in painting and printmaking, she presents her figures in a red-orange hue meant to represent the skin of the native people that lived throughout the Caribbean prior to the pre-Columbian era. These inhabitants would smear their bodies with the crushed seeds of the roucou plant which was used for sun and insect protection. Sémiramoth’s graphic-style paintings and prints emphasize color, shape, and accessibility, informed by contemporary pop-culture, pop-art, and geometric abstraction. In her video, entitled *Caravage Créole*, Sémiramoth collaborated with her friend the Guadeloupan writer, Maryse Condé to create an essay and soundscape responding to the artist’s series. The montage of moving images filmed throughout Guadeloupe provide an haunting yet beautiful look at the island - from its colonial history to the impact of industry to natural wonder - dichotomies of the Caribbean reality. Set to the voice of Condé and narrative of the writer’s own memories around color and place, the video powerfully asserts itself in today’s complicated postcolonial moment.

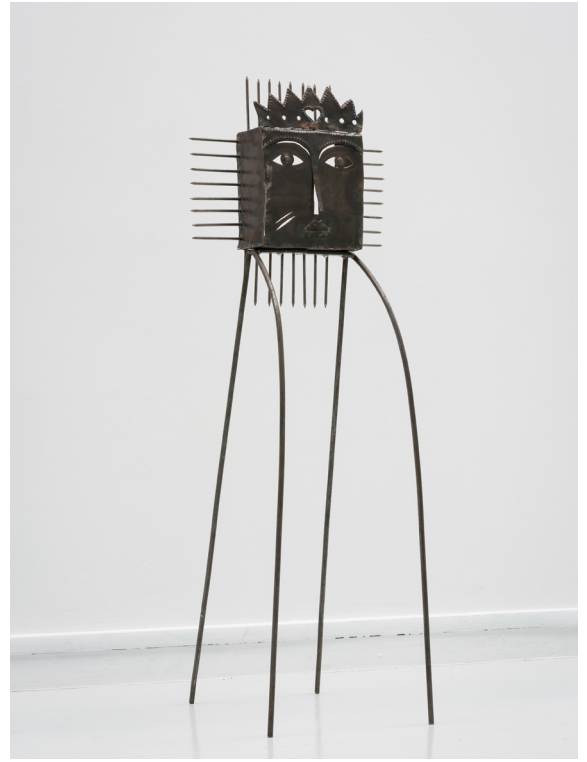


Pièces détachées, 2024
Assembling shapes in plasterboard, papier mâché, wood, cardboard, pigments, workshop dust, shell powder and acrylic binder
© The artist & Adagp – Paris

YOAN SORIN

Born in 1982 in Cholet, France
Lives and works in Arles, France

Yohan Sorin practices performance in the same way as sculpture or painting, all of which is as much a fleeting thought as a form of “Chaos Monde”, borrowing phrasing from Edouard Glissant. Like a diary, Yohan Sorin’s practice is based on exploded mythologies that the artist updates through drawings and installations, paintings and performances. Finding inspiration from the world around him, Sorin collects discarded objects from his daily commute, or leftovers from exhibition installations to create his immersive, experiential spaces. Inspired by his Caribbean heritage, the remnants that Sorin collects inherently link himself back to his roots, telling the story of his genealogy in an indirect, yet poetic fashion. Yohan Sorin combines note-taking and the making of objects that are apprehended in the form of puzzles, slogans or aphorisms. Like his many notebooks that he regularly fills with drawings, his production combines craft and low tech, bad spirit and sense of derision. Drawing on materials used in past exhibitions and experimenting with “intuitive crafting”, Yohan Sorin, is designing a new installation in Marseille.



Jude Papaloko Thegenus, *Ezili Dantò*, 2004,
Metal (steel)
© The artist

JUDE PAPALOKO THEGENUS

Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Lives and works in Miami, Florida, USA

Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jude Papaloko Thegenus creates artwork through meditations and trance. To make his work, Papaloko enters a hypnotic state where he is guided by spirits. The sculptural work, *Ezili Dantò*, resembles a ceremonial mask, but the otherwise human face is adorned with spike-like metal protrusions that imbue the object with an element of otherworldliness. Papaloko studied Roman Catholic priesthood before finding a spiritual practice that aligned with his Haitian and Caribbean cultural roots and taking up an in-depth study of the Vodoun Temple. In addition to sculpture, Papaloko creates paintings, educational projects, illustrations, signs, public murals, and unique style textural compositions.



Dambala (series selections), 2020
Stoneware clay, tassars, ghicha and cotton fibers
© The artist

KIRA TIPPENHAUER

Born in 1986 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Lives and works in Miami, Florida, USA

Kira Tippenhauer has a multidisciplinary practice that includes fine art and design. Her unique editions of slab built ceramic homeware are inspired by her tropical and Afro-Caribbean roots of Haiti. In her *Dambala* series, Tippenhauer creates works that refer to pre-Columbian craft and utility artifacts. By interlaying natural fibers on her objects, Tippenhauer creates pieces that exist in between sculpture and homeware and reflect her hybrid identity as a Haitian living and working in the United States. Her commitment to collaborative teaching and art practices has led Tippenhauer to develop a community ceramic studio and teaching practice.

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