

HdM GALLERY

BARTHÉLÉMY TOGUO | HUMAN NATURE

CURATOR: CHRIS SPRING

13/06/2019-23/08/2019



I'm Flying, Jack!, 2018



Fragile Body No.1, 2017



Fragile Body No.9, 2017

Barthélémy Toguo is a traveller, crossing boundaries of all sorts as his vision evolves. His travels are not just physical – though he has been to many places – but are also concerned with crossing the various borders, barriers and boundaries that human beings construct in their minds. He uses watercolour painting, photography, sculpture, installation, theatre and performance to try to explain to himself and to his audience the spectrum of human triumphs and tragedies he has encountered.

Chris Spring, Curator

HdM GALLERY London is pleased to present 'Human Nature', a solo show by artist Barthélémy Toguo and curated by Chris Spring. It will be Barthélémy Toguo's first solo show in London, and highlights a key player in the unfolding richness of contemporary visual practice by artists of African heritage, increasingly valued and sought after in the international arena. 'Human Nature' will open on June 13th and last till August 23rd.

Once met, never forgotten, Toguo has made a remarkable contribution to this development, both through his own visual art practice and the creation of the extraordinary Bandjoun Station in his native Cameroon, a cultural centre which combines art, education and agriculture in and around a building which utilises the technological wizardry of the 21st century while paying homage to ancient architectural styles. Toguo's new HdM show, curated by former British Museum Africa specialist, Dr. Chris Spring, and provocatively titled 'Human Nature', helps us not only to see how his aesthetic has evolved over the past decade - but also how his guiding principles have remained the same:

A key feature of the show – exhibited in the UK for the first time - is Toguo's 'Fragile Bodies' series of large, porcelain vessels which he created in Jingzhen, China. Each is painted with representations of different creatures and topped with a cast of the artist's own head. While Toguo's vessels acknowledge the ongoing connections between Africa and China and the supreme achievements of China within the arts, the African heads on the 'Fragile Bodies' remind us that it was in Africa that the capacity to think symbolically, to create art and to become modern humans evolved.

Alongside these sculptural works Toguo will show a series of his celebrated watercolour paintings on the subject of human nature.

Barthélémy Toguo

Was born in M'Balmayo, Cameroon, in 1967. He currently lives and works between Paris, France and Bandjoun, Cameroon.

Toguo was shortlisted for the 2016 Prix Marcel Duchamp and was included in the group exhibition of finalists at the Centre Pompidou, Paris. He has participated in numerous international biennials, including the 56th Venice Biennale (2015). He was recently featured in Intriguing Uncertainties, The Parkview Museum Singapore, travelling to Beijing; Art/Afrique Le Nouvel Atelier, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; and Fragile State, Pinchuk Art Centre, Kiev, Ukraine. In 2011, Toguo was made a Knight of the Order of Arts and Literature in France. His works are included in public collections worldwide, including the Tate Modern, England where the work 'Purification' (2012) is on display now; Centre Pompidou, France; Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, France; Studio Museum Harlem, New York; and MoMA, New York. Both artist and activist, Toguo also founded a non-profit art centre 'Bandjoun Station' in 2008 in Cameroon.

HdM GALLERY

HdM GALLERY is a leading contemporary gallery with a special focus on Contemporary Chinese Art. Founded on a passion for Chinese art, the first HdM GALLERY was opened in Beijing in 2009 - the success of which leading to a subsequent gallery opening in Hangzhou in 2013. Founders and partners Hadrien de Montferrand, Laurant Dassault, and Olivier Hervet have garnered over 10 years of experience and understanding of the art market in China, witnessing first-hand China's rapidly evolving art ecosystem.

HdM GALLERY proudly represents a wealth of emerging Chinese artists among which are He An, Chen Han, Hao Shiming, and Wang Yi. Having established a reputation as a leading gallery in the field of Chinese contemporary art - working with established Chinese artists such as Mao Yan and Liu Xiaodong - HdM GALLERY is dedicated to using their expertise to nurture and develop the careers of these new artists. Exhibiting regularly at prominent fairs such as Art Brussels, Photo London and Art Basel Hong Kong, HdM introduces contemporary Chinese artists to a worldwide client base and broadens perceptions, understanding and appreciation of these engaging contemporary works.

Though initially specialising exclusively in Chinese Art, the ethos of the gallery has since seen a development. HdM has evolved to work with noted Western artists - often exhibiting their works alongside their Chinese contemporaries, bridging the Chinese and Western art markets through this previously unexplored approach. The result is an exhibition with a unique and thought-provoking fusion of influences and on this topic, founder Hadrien de Montferrand defines the identity of the gallery as 'an international gallery with strong Chinese DNA'. Western artists such as Martin Kollar, Ivan Messac, Romain Bernini, Manuel Mathieu and Barthélemy Togo are currently represented by HdM GALLERY.

FOUNDERS

Hadrien de Montferrand has long served as a bridge between the Art worlds of China and Europe. His more than seven years at various auction houses and Art institutions included roles as marketing director for ARTCURIAL, the largest French auction house, and for the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing.

Laurent Dassault, an entrepreneur to the core, helped to found Arquna, continental Europe's leading horse auction house, in 2006. His entrepreneurial spirit extends to his charitable activities as well: Laurent serves as the administrator of the "Friends of Pompidou Museum's Association" in Paris, and heads the development committee for the auction house ARTCURIAL.

Olivier Hervet graduated with an MA in Classics from Oxford University in 2008. After working for Hadrien de Montferrand Gallery since its inception in 2009 where he developed the gallery's network of young collectors, he became a partner in 2012 with the goal of opening a second space in China.

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Opening Hours: Monday - Friday from 10 am to 6pm

(By appointment)

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Beijing space



London space

