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« Jean-François Fourtou, *La Famille des Hybridus* »
From December 2, 2023, to January 13, 2024

«Jean-François Fourtou is pleased to announce the birth of the Hybridus!»

This new exhibition at the gallery RX & Slag could very well be introduced by such an announcement as it is a step in the path of the artist and the celebration of this new family now called «the Hybridus». The first milestones were set in 2020, when Jean-François Fourtou came to present his Nanitos, these little gardeners who were being quite mischievous. He reminds us of their origin : «When my daughter was little, I told her that in our house in Marrakech, there were holes in which small characters were installed that we could not see because they passed very quickly. Years later, she grew up and I had 2 children born by GPA. I thought about my Nanitos and I gave birth to them in the vegetable garden of Marrakech. As adults, they become pumpkin-headed gardeners.» As invitations were issued, notably by the Utopia festival in Lille in 2022 or on the occasion of the exhibition «Grandeur nature» at the Château de Fontainebleau in 2023, Fourtou added characters : “the Minitos à têtes de legumes”, “Mr. & Mrs. Palm à tête de palmiers”, and already has in mind to continue the adventure with beings returning to the seabed. New for this exhibition, he tackled embroidery – a skill that reminds him of his grandfather. For him, who claims to be a sculptor, it is a different approach to storytelling : each image is like a comic book box and everyone can arrange them as they want, inventing their own story.

An autobiographical work

The advent of this family is only a step in a work that is autobiographical as he admits, an extension of himself treated with distance and humor and always under the sign of childhood. He wants to keep the link with this fundamental moment where magic takes precedence over logic, where the capacity for wonder is at its peak. “I like to imagine that my work is for adults who have lost that connection with the imagination and innocence. It is not nostalgia, but an invitation to rediscover a little of this forgotten childhood world.” And so he shares his : «The house fallen from the sky refers to that of my grandfather, the giant house is the one where I spent my childhood at my great-grandmother, the hive house is the one created for my parents...»

A multifaceted universe

The world of Jean-François Fourtou grows as he explores his family history and tells his story in a choral narrative : each invented character becomes the narrator of a chapter in a

story that is like a work in progress but also a kind of initiatory journey. If each exhibition is an opportunity to discover a facet of the world of Fourtou, we will be able to embrace everything in Marrakech at the end of the year when he will open his domain to the public. There, faced with crazy animals, oversized houses, Nanitos, Minitos, butterflies, bees..., things will fall as evidence. The invasion continues...