

Matthieu Faury was born in 1970 in Cherbourg. He lives and works in Paris and Avignon.

A former student of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Versailles, Matthieu Faury lived for two years in Ivory Coast, where he developed a lively and sensitive style. Back in France he created "contemporary primitive" works – mostly sculptures – inspired by literature, movies, news, science, art history. For the last 15 years, great apes have become one of his favorite themes. He uses a whole range of techniques (modeling, molding, carving, cast iron, digital printing, digital cutting and industrial machining) and materials (ceramics, stone, marble, bronze, aluminum, resin, etc.).

In 2010 Faury set up his workshop in Avignon (Provence), and the proximity of the historical sites inspired him to create a series of works allowing him to have a dialogue with the architectures that are present in the region. In particular the Helmet of Apollo - an antique style aluminum helmet two meters high – has been exhibited in front of the Pont du Gard, in the ancient site of Glanum and on the esplanade of the chateau at Baux-de-Provence. Inspired by the true story of a female-to-male transgender, he creates the sculpture "H +" depicting a pregnant man, which was exhibited in Avignon during the festival (July 2012). For the chateau of Tarascon, also in 2012, he installed a 'Ape assembly' in the chamber of the King René - exhibition Beasts, monsters and creatures - then in 2015 a monumental 'Castle-Heart', mutant and palpitating architecture, referring to The Book of the Love-Smitten Heart written in the fifteenth century by René d'Anjou. In 2017, in the Sculpture Garden of the Salinger Foundation in Le Thor - Provence, he presents the sculpture Purgatorius, a metaphor of a living Earth undergoing a severe test.

His most recent productions are drawings. It is a set of portraits of transgender men and women mixing several techniques. They were presented at the DDESSINPARIS art fair (March 2018) and will be exhibited again at the end of September in Beirut (Beirut Art Fair).

His works are in private collections in France, England, Scotland, Italy, Switzerland, the United States and India.

## Artist's statement

My work as a sculptor aims at revealing what is no longer visible, what ultimately the human has forgotten of his own nature.

Understanding the human being is the subject. I study what defines it, including its opposition to animal nature. What is human? Is there a clear border between human and animal? Between civilized and barbarian? Between man and woman?

My art merges morphology, biology, history, tales and philosophy. My works refer as

much to popular and classical culture (references to fairy tales, Shakespeare, René d'Anjou) as to contemporary issues (democracy, transgender, anthropocene). And to the history of art too, this great kaleidoscope, to which I borrow incessantly fragments of forms and ideas.

My artistic approach is Darwinian on many levels. Within my creations you will find these notions of transformation and mutation primordial. They are at the heart of my creative process and very apparent in my artistic subjects.

For me, sculpting consists first of shaping, molding, cloning, deforming, chiseling, sundering, enrobing, polishing, burning, firing ... When I create, nothing remains in its original form. On the contrary, all materials, from the purest to the most complex, are transformed. Hence a vast array of materials, textures and colors in my work.

In addition, I consistently re-address the theme of evolution, in the Darwinian sense of the term. The kinship between animals and humans, and the vagueness of biological boundaries, are perceived with irony or emotion as much in my "political skulls" as in my sculptures of great apes. The figures of the 'man-mama' ('H +', the pregnant man), of mutant objects (Ape suitcases, bio-helmet, Helmet of Apollo) or hybrid architectures (Extruded Temple, Dance of the Castle, Chateau-Cœur) present also my reflections on the limits of our condition and on the ambivalence of the being.

The ape is the common thread and protagonist of my work for years. It reminds us how human nature and 'animal nature' are intertwined. Great apes have an element of humanity in them, and we have an element of "simianity" in us. And it is this common, polymorphous, surprising and colorful part that I explore through art.

The figure of the ape is interesting because this is the alter ego of the human, sometimes mocking, sometimes tragic. It reveals and transfigures our own condition. The 'Simianitus', with its many variations, has allowed me to show the world through the intrusive or astonished eyes of another primate. It also unveils certain contradictions of the human character. My approach may appear also political, deeply rooted in the present, questioning the foundations or the future of our life together.

My art indeed has a strong narrative frame and proves to be a support of reflection that is effective, though unexpected. The patterns present in my paintings or in my sculptures - ape busts as emperors, simian helmets, split-doubled skeletons, political vanitas, pregnant man, distorted architectures or the bio-helmet - propose each its own point of view, but also offer a multitude of meanings for the viewer who can also find dissimilarity or nonsense.

I indeed like to change the meaning of a work through simple details, enabling it to derive for example: from the individual to the collective, from animal to ecology, from male to transgender, from ancient times to current politics.

Therefore my works through both their techniques and their words are a sort of bold and unique exegesis of the world and of our own nature.

## **Solo exhibitions**

2018

- . Marie Jaouen Gallery, BEIRUT ART FAIR
- . Marie Jaouen Gallery, DDESSINPARIS ART FAIR

2016

- . « *Amour merci mon !* », ovine performance – In a field, Sauveterre

2015

- . *If the castles were a tale....*- Château de Tarascon - Centre d'arts René d'Anjou

2013

- . *NEVER///AGAIN*, Maison de Fogasses, Avignon

2012

- . LIFE AT ALL COST - Galerie LC, Paris
- . *Metaphysics of helmets*, Town hall and castle esplanade, Baux-de-Provence

2011

- . *To protect Art*- archeological site of Glanum, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence
- . *Animals architects* - Hôtel de Sade, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence - Festival AP'ART

2010

- . *Apollo's Helmet* - Pont du Gard

2009

- . *Simianitus* - Galerie LC, Paris

2002

- . *Dualities* - Galerie Fugitive, Paris

1995

- . J.Zogo Gallery, Le Plateau, Abidjan

## **Group Exhibitions**

2019

- . Winners of the "Expression Terre" ceramic contest, La Piscine Museum, Roubaix

2018

- . Winners of the "Expression Terre" ceramic contest, Douai School of Art

2017

- . ODD Gallery, Saint-Paul de Vence
- . Sculpture garden, Poppy & Pierre Salinger Foundation, Le Thor

2016

- . ABBYAC - Abbaye de Saint-André, Villeneuve-lès-Avignon
- . Superflux - Viens voir, lieu de curiosité artistique, Tavel

2014

- . Galerie Pascal Lainé, Ménerbes
- . Dialogues with Goya, Hôtel de Manville, Les Baux-de-Provence - Festival AP'ART

2013

- . *Monumental confrontation, path of contemporary sculptures*, Linz and Pascal Lainé galleries, Ménerbes

- . *Tombés des nues*, Chapelle du Grand Couvent, Cavaillon

- . *25 years of contemporary art*, Galerie Pascal Lainé, Ménerbes

2012

- beasts, monsters and creatures, dialogue around the medieval and contemporary art -  
Castle of Tarascon
- *Hyper\*corps* -Courtyard of the Municipal Archives, Avignon  
2010
- *Contemporary Vanitas*- Galerie LC, Paris  
2008
- *Art/Design* - Maatgallery, Paris  
2007
- Maatgallery, Paris  
2003
- *About Congo*, Noisy-le-Grand, Espace Michel Simon