Galerie des Ponchettes (MAMAC Hors-les-murs)
Exhibition from December 9th 2017 to June 3rd 2018

GENERAL COMMISSION
Hélène Guenin, director of MAMAC
assisted by Olivier Bergesi

77, quai des États-Unis - Nice
Every day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed on Mondays
04 93 62 31 24 - www.mamac-nice.org

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The lycée Professionnel des Métiers d’art Louis Pasteur and particularly the class of Seconde Baccalauréat Professionnel Artisanat and Métiers d’art option Marchandissage Visuel represented by Laure Marinho and Emmanuelle Humbert
Marie Larroque-Daran, Chargée de mission Arts Visuels, Territoire de Nice, Délégation académique à l’éducation artistique et culturelle
Dominique Ghesquière is represented by the Gallery Chez Valentin, Paris

Galerie des Ponchettes (MAMAC Hors-les-murs)
A eulogy to slowness, a territory of doubt, an invitation to introspection: the work by Dominique Ghesquière deeply resonates, despite or perhaps because of its singularity, with a growing yearning from contemporary society to slow down, take a side step, for fertile unproductivity, to return to authentic forms or basically a search for meaning in the face of the frenetic everyday and the sterile accumulation of images and objects. For several years now, her work has prompted us to put our observations and judgments at one side and focus instead on contemplation and doubt. Forever playing with the effects of trompe l’oeil and illusion in her practice that is part sculptural, part installation, Dominique Ghesquière invites the spectator to renew the experience of looking. The idea of nature and human being’s presence within it has established itself as a common theme explored by the artist. The ephemeral landscapes the artist composes are ecosystems woven together with elements borrowed from the natural world and patiently hand-made objects: indeed, the gallery des Prophéties has created a quintessential Mediterranean scene complete with hollowed-out trunks evoking the bark from plantain trees, pine needles, waves and a bed of pebbles. In her evocation the artist achieves a rough approximation, Dominique Ghesquière’s work is meant to be tongue-in-cheek, subtly toy ing with our sense of perception and the effect of illusion. Around the space, she deploys mutant, hybrid species of elements, blurring the lines between the natural and the manufactured: pine needles patiently arranged and preciously hand-stitched resemble odd-looking tufts of grass; hollowed plantain tree trunks, like bark sloughed off and abandoned, are turned to be carefully made replicas, pebbles are laid out forming serpentine lines across the floor... Long terra cotta mementos of pebbles, the strata of bedrock, and invites us to take a journey back, geologically speaking, to a remote past. From this emerges the idea of an already infinite order of things.

Vues, 2017
Stones (variable dimensions)
MAMAC production
© Photo: Dominique Ghesquière / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Vagues, 2017
Waves (variable dimensions)
MAMAC production
© Photo: Sylvie Chan-Liat / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Oiseau is a stuffed sitting, frozen in mid flight. Its vertical display, its back to the wall, lends it a sense of elevation. Its flight is a symbol of freedom, as recounted in the Greek myth of Icarus, but suspended forever in its momentum. It paradoxically evokes a vanity, a contemporary memento mori. This unusual point of view, as if we were watching it fly toward the sky, bestows a majesty to this commonplace species of bird. Displayed like a noble, martial eagle, it nonetheless proffers the vulnerability of its wings and its belly, the modesty of its plumage.

© Photo: Martin Argyroglo / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Openworked like mahlkholay, hollowed trunks span the space of the gallery, their minimal presence evoking the idea of trees. Wood, the typically dense and solid material of the tree, is absent here, evenly suggested by the smell and colour of the plantain bark. This face-like material, patiently inflated and reconstructed, suggests that the trees have somehow grown legs and sloughed off their bark before leaving. This forest of trunks, at child’s eye level, recalls the setting of countless fairy tales, such as Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel and Gretel, while leading us to believe that it may still grow yet.

© Photo: Sylvie Chan-Liat / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Glass is astuffing sitting, frozen in mid flight. Its vertical display, its back to the wall, lends it a sense of elevation. Its flight is a symbol of freedom, as recounted in the Greek myth of Icarus, but suspended forever in its momentum. It paradoxically evokes a vanity, a contemporary memento mori. This unusual point of view, as if we were watching it fly toward the sky, bestows a majesty to this commonplace species of bird. Displayed like a noble, martial eagle, it nonetheless proffers the vulnerability of its wings and its belly, the modesty of its plumage.

© Photo: Sylvie Chan-Liat / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

glass, 2016
bird of stone
Variable dimensions
77 elements
© Photo: Mathis-Angoty / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Rebuts d’arbres, 2016
Pebbles (variable dimensions)
© Photo: Martin Argyroglo / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

The ridge lines of the terracotta sculptures, laid out by the artist in her scenery/installation, form multiple fragile horizons. If their material and colour evoke the solidity of mountains, imparting an alternative dimension to the Mediterranean landscape, these low, fluid forms also resemble a succession of frozen waves. Raised and stretched vertically towards the sky, these waves, captured in their ascension, seem to blur and unite the elements, earth, water, plant life, in a primordial landscape.

© Photo: Dominique Ghesquière / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Herbe rousse, 2017
Pine needles, fabric
Variable dimensions
© Photo: Art-Art contemporain/france / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Small spiky balls mark the exhibition space recalling the tough and wild grass that just out in the dunes. Nature’s own creation or artifact? While looking closer these small wild bushes are composed of a pine needles vegetation densely and patiently embroidered. The stiffness of the needles evokes the futility of the waves and expresses a tension between earth and sky. This kind of pine Tumblerweed seems to be carried by the wind and spreading its seeds in its path. The work hesitates between fragility and strength: vulnerability of the spine alone, which, thus assembled, creates a protective barrier. Its title, Herbs rows, evokes playfully both the paranoiac expression of these herbs in the composed landscape and the singularity of this hybrid species, a kind of “vegetable chimera”.

© Photo: Sylvie Chan-Liat / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Pierre roulée, 2014
Pebbles
Variable dimensions
© Photo: Dominique Ghesquière / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

The universe she has created is, in fact, very similar to a common theme explored by the artist. The ephemeral landscapes the artist composes are ecosystems woven together with elements borrowed from the natural world and patiently hand-made objects: indeed, the gallery des Prophéties has created a quintessential Mediterranean scene complete with hollowed-out trunks evoking the bark from plantain trees, pine needles, waves and a bed of pebbles. In her evocation the artist achieves a rough approximation, Dominique Ghesquière’s work is meant to be tongue-in-cheek, subtly toy ing with our sense of perception and the effect of illusion. Around the space, she deploys mutant, hybrid species of elements, blurring the lines between the natural and the manufactured: pine needles patiently arranged and preciously hand-stitched resemble odd-looking tufts of grass; hollowed plantain tree trunks, like bark sloughed off and abandoned, are turned to be carefully made replicas, pebbles are laid out forming serpentine lines across the floor... Long terra cotta mementos of pebbles, the strata of bedrock, and invites us to take a journey back, geologically speaking, to a remote past. From this emerges the idea of an already infinite order of things.

© Photo: Martin Argyroglo /Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Variable dimensions. 11 elements
© Photo: Sylvie Chan-Liat / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Rideau d’arbres, 2016
Wood of veneer
32 x 30 x 24 cm
MAMAC production, with the support of CH
© Photo: Arnaud Billot / Courtesy of the artist and Valentin, Paris

Grey beach pebbles with white ribbing are piled on the floor. The white ribs form a pattern of intersecting coils. Her way of making connections between things with no obvious link gets us thinking about the source of the pebbles, the strata of bedrock, and invites us to take a journey back, geologically speaking, to a remote past. From this emerges the idea of an already infinite network, constantly disturbed and gradually transformed into round forms by water, fluidly disrupting the original order of things.