



« Avec le pain, toujours prêts à surgir »

Jessy Razafimandimby

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Secret bestiary, on the work of Jessy Razafimandimby by Pauline Coquart
(translated by Aaron Ayscough)

No one snubs anyone here, we regard one another politely, at times even delicately
Knowing how to look at one another is like
Knowing how to embrace and how to depart. Everything is hazy today
Or has everything always been hazy

There are memories and there are inventions
Mixed up in bits of fur, dust
and scattered crumbs, no doubt

We lacquer ourselves and curl up, in a drawer as if in a doghouse
and even in the depth of your varnished eyes, those very ones
with their lashes hiding the side of the sclera

Meditates, vaguely, who knows how to appear
But I forget and I dream. I forget while there exists something between
Us and then our commemorative activities. Maybe if I were alone
I don't know anymore and it doesn't matter

The duvet pulls from both sides, the mustache full of water
We bond as we regard one another, a superimposition of old bones
A nebulous attachment
The lightning always spares the soft wood

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Jessy Razafimandimby (b. 1995) is a Malagasy artist who lives and works in Switzerland and France. His multidisciplinary production encompasses painting, drawing, installations, and performance. Often, these practices converge, finding the artist manipulating fragmented decorative objects and textiles, which extend the work beyond its frame. These extensions reveal a clash between sculpture and painting, staged by Razafimandimby.

The artist brings a world inherited from the past back to life, making reference to French cinema of the 1960s, jazz music, design, and postwar architecture. He pays particular attention to the history of interior decoration and ornamentation, as well as social conventions and the “good manners” traditionally linked to a conservative way of life and promoted by a classist bourgeois system.

Jessy Razafimandimby's obsessions take place principally within the home, and the practice of the artist is accordingly criss-crossed with references to domesticity and collective memory. Coexisting in his paintings are human figures and animals - but also chimerical figures that express Razafimandimby's utopic and dystopic projections. These seem at times to merge, to mutate into new and complex forms that reveal the artist's interest in the question of becoming. It is not as much what we become, as with whom we become it - the collective experience - that Razafimandimby interrogates.

The figures detailed by the artist are extracted from a pictorial space in which they could be contained, and projected into a present, sensorial space, that of the exhibition. In such a way, he conceives joyously disordered, agitated environments, inspired by fictional domestic environments inhabited by strange masses of objects and drapery, ghostly in affect.

These territories are inhabited by Razafimandimby's fictional hosts, becoming a vestigial space in which the artist engages physically, employing the household as a metaphorical framework to question notions of taste, belonging, and power. He interrogates the ability of humans to construct relations with their environment, at times merging with it. These relations are imbued with attention, tenderness, and confusion.

Jessy Razafimandimby obtained a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Geneva's Haute École d'Art & Design (HEAD) in 2018. He is a laureate of the Kunstpreis Kiefer Hablitzel 2021 - Swiss Art Awards. He has had solo shows at Art au Centre, Geneva (2021) ; 13 vitrine, Renens (2021) ; Espace HIT, Geneva (2021) ; Arsenic, Lausanne (2020) ; 1.1., Basel (2020). In 2023, the artist will be the subject of a solo exhibition at A.ROMY, Zurich.

Recent group shows include 'Sleeping In', June, Berlin (2022) ; 'Species of Space', Walgreens windows – The Bass Museum of Art, Miami (2021) ; 'Salon Suisse', Biennale Architettura, Venice (2021) ; Urgent Paradis, Lausanne (2021) ; 'Real Shoez Life', Basel (2021) ; 'Favrite Figures (LCT in presentia)' with Niels Trannois, La Vraie Vie, Geneva (2021) ; 'Lemania: Réflexions sur d'autres scènes', Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2021) ; Bad House Performance Festival, Mad House, Helsinki (2021) ; 'Modern nature : Hommage à Derek Jarman', partie II, La Becque (2020) ; 'Weaving Home', Limbo Space, Geneva (2020) ; 'Observer of techniques', Wallriss, Fribourg (2019) ; and 'I'll see you back tonite', Alienze, Lausanne (2018).