

*Bertrand Flanet*

## **Colorful Madalies**

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What if our nightmare are real? What if you could brew your own monster? Selective breeding of various animals often result in hideous forms of a certain species. Dogs without snouts, naked cats, rabbits with massively oversized ears. To be honest, those are not monsters, but overly adorable and human made abominations, that are often unhealthy or even just broken if not crippled beings. They are our responsibility and have all rights to exist. Bertrand Flanet offers us skeletons of monsters - *Colorful Maladies* (2018, laser-cut balsa wood, paint, 29,7 x 42 cm) - in a form of wooden 3D-models. Similar to those that imitate dinosaurs, Flanet introduces new breeds of creatures. Something unseen, unheard of. The painted flat sheet of wood offers all the parts of a skeleton, waiting to be assembled. The idea of the 3D object stays flat and abstracted to the extend where the interaction of the pre-cut shapes loses itself in a morphed and unknown shape of a body and sexes.

Here we find a link to the video installation "Exhibitions" (2018, 12'00", digital animation, color, sound) that he presents at MÉLANGE, which covers about half of the space. The animated corridors and rooms, in which a first-person camera moves around, discovering the place, are populated with cartoon-esque flocks of what could be described as crows. The short sequences in which they are introduced depict dramatic family scenes, mother crow and their children, or even nightmarish sceneries. Flanet takes a ruthless look at the somewhat coarse and merciless relationships among the beings and at the same time one casts doubt on the meaningfulness of these poor ones. This gets emphasized by the movement of the camera, its sudden cuts that violently breach private moments, bringing the viewer closer or pulling away from certain moments.

Like the 3D puzzles, the video turns out to be a maze through which the viewer is guided, puzzlingly exploring the empty and uncanny place. The feeling of being trapped takes shape, when the camera "wakes up" several times from the same starting point, to find the place even more deserted than before. Apparently the camera imitates an actual person, but odd camera angles distort this feeling at the same time. Environmental sounds just add to a continuously suspended moment that is resisting a climax. Here we find ourselves engulfed by Flanet's work that allows an almost life-size experience, reflecting its own presence and casting out anything that is not part of it.

## Captions

All images courtesy MÉLANGE and the Artist. Photo by MÉLANGE

Colorful Maladies, 2018, laser-cut balsa wood, paint, each 29.7 x 42 cm, installation view, MÉLANGE 2018

Exhibitions, 2018, digital animation, color, sound, installation view, MÉLANGE 2018

Exhibitions, 2018, video still