

Jacques Fléchemuller: Bathos

30 Orchard St, Gallery 2 ▪ Sept 8 - Oct 8, 2023



Jacques Fléchemuller's drawings take you home and away at the same time. They are catalysts for magical thinking, for escaping the mundane, and when encountered in volume, represent a striking creative accomplishment, laid out as a series of impossible propositions. Fléchemuller prioritizes the pleasure of a resigned smile, the capacity for celebrating the absurd hiding in the ordered. He lifts the veil of rationality that obscures the gaping maw of chaotic and incomprehensible truth, and ultimately relishes in the perspective that, whatever the challenges of the day, joy is always an option.

Fléchemuller's pictures are deceptively simple—so much so that the simple attempt to describe them with words illuminates their hidden power. Going and coming back all at once; beaks of codependency; timelapse boxing; many

cyclists, one bike; kinked hose quandary; cowboy with cactus clouds; cavemen wading a shouldered lump; hands off daredevil; crosslegged giraffe; arm and hammer; my gaseous butterfly; woman with bee pail; remembering lightbulb rests his feet; contraposto roman with stuffed blue dog; motorboat flapping; elephant highwire; drinking witch takes flight; ancestral weight; asses in pudding; tit box palette.

Born in Monaco in 1945, Fléchemuller visited Lascaux at a young age, returning home to paint the ceiling of his bedroom and watch transfixed as pigments dripped, dotting his bedsheets. Painting was a kind of “punchline automatism” that was always with him, and later in life he began collecting printed materials, making subversive adjustments full of wit and pleasure. He credits *Les Pieds Nickelés*, the long-running French comic series, with his penchant for nihilistic themes. In his work, life’s strange lessons—that you often get what you bargain for, that the moment you realize you’ve taken something for granted, poof, it is gone, and that death, but also deep banality, are always hiding around the corner—are as taffy-like as his figures, who are flattened, warped, exaggerated to serve his aims.

Jacques Fléchemuller has exhibited extensively throughout the United States and Europe, and is included in the public collections of the Musee d’Art Moderne, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. He has recently had solo shows at Galeria Esther Montoriol in Barcelona, Autour de l’image in Lyon, and gallery DEN 5 in Tokyo. Today, splits his time between Ardeche and Brooklyn.