

POL TABURET: "GHETTO FLOWER"

Mendes Wood DM is pleased to announce Pol Taburet's inaugural solo exhibition in São Paulo, titled "Ode to Twisted Gods." This multimedia showcase includes photographs, installations, paintings, and bronze sculptures. Taburet's diverse approach draws from influences in cinema, art history, music, and cultural connections spanning the Caribbean, France, and the Americas.

At the core of the exhibition, the "ghetto flower" symbolizes resilience, depicting a plant thriving in adverse conditions—a metaphor for a generation of immigrant youth overcoming obstacles to shine artistically in spaces that often deny them recognition.

Taburet's paintings feature captivating scenes of bailarinas, waitresses, *pietà*, and sleeping figures, creating a dreamy atmosphere guarded by an enigmatic figure. Painted with a synthetic pigment famously associated with Yves Klein, Taburet adds a quirky aspect to his paintings. Navigating ambiguous narratives, the artist creates surreal images challenging conventional perceptions, inviting viewers into a captivating and dreamy world.

The bronze human-like figures reveal beehives within these amorphic bodies, inspired by the film "Candyman," a 1992 horror film directed by Bernard Rose. The narrative centers around a graduate student exploring the local urban legend of the vengeful specter, Candyman—a former slave and artist executed by a lynch mob for falling in love with and impregnating a white woman. These sculptures intricately intertwine themes of race and social class within inner-city United States, encapsulating the depth and complexity of Taburet's artistic dialogue.

At the main room of the exhibition, the artist presents an installation titled "As They Grow". The sculpture, tentatively named "The Wall," emerged from a photo taken in a Rio de Janeiro samba bar restroom, where a resilient plant grew through broken tiles. Symbolizing persistence and rebellion, the plant, resembling locks, inspired the artist with its defiance against adverse conditions. Seeking visual rhythm and movement, the artist saw the plant as a rebel overcoming self-made obstacles. The sculpture serves as a metaphor for the "ghetto flower," representing growth amidst challenges. Hair, chosen for its growth symbolism, reflects the idea of tearing away concealment and carries a personal and organic history. The wooden base provides warmth, contrasting with the tiles concealing building "innards." Broken tiles, allowing locks to escape, symbolize thoughts flowing without restraint. The locks, received from a friend, represent works of art reflecting personal traumas. Metal adds opacity, concealing what lies behind, while the wall's shape reinforces the theme of concealment. In essence, the sculpture embodies the artist's fascination with growth, rebellion, and the persistence of life in challenging circumstances.

The ambiguity in Taburet's images takes center stage, compelling viewers to question and reinterpret conventional norms. "Ghetto Flower" blurs the boundaries between reality and imagination, encouraging an exploration of the intersections of art, history, and cultural resilience. The ochres and greens in his paintings enrich the visual experience, creating a harmonious interplay of colors mirroring the vibrancy and diversity of the cultural influences shaping his work.