

PERRINE LIEVENS

FEBRUARY 3 - MARCH 24 / 2018

Von Bartha, Showroom Basel



Perrine Lievens, *Les Mondes vierges (détail)*, 2017, Dandelions integrated to 1000 copies of the newspaper Le Monde, courtesy of the artist and von Bartha, photo by Le Shed et Studio Full B1

We sometimes have the feeling that Perrine Lievens is trying to breathe her pieces, as if she wanted to give back to the materials the life they lose by becoming works, passing from outside to inside, from the fragility of the living to the eternity of art; this eternal dilemma of art.

Extrait from Pauline de Laboulaye's text, for the catalog La Ronde, Museum of Fine Arts of Rouen, 2018

Von Bartha, Basel presents an exhibition of new works by the French artist Perrine Lievens, running from 3 February – 24 March 2018.

Lievens sculpturally reworks the familiar, challenging our established perceptions and urging the visitor to reimagine the function of everyday objects. Caught in a new space between fiction and reality, her refashioned objects take on a poetic potency, illuminating the intrinsic fragility of the presented subjects.

While participating in the project “*Voisins de Campagne*” (2017), Lievens lived for six months at the estate of Priscilla and Edouard de Lamaze, near Rouen. At von Bartha she presents two works - “*Les mondes vierges*” and “*Notes de printemps*” - completed during this residency.

In *Les mondes vierges*, corollas of dandelion seeds are nestled in 1000 blank copies of the French newspaper “*Le Monde*”. When picked up and opened to read, the seeds are blown away in all directions by the wind, spreading information. The work uses the material to challenge the viewers’ imagination and to lift them to a state of contemplation.

The work *Empreintes* takes inspiration from the *Morpho Thamyris* butterfly whose wings are composed of layers of scales as well as layers of air, allowing the light to permeate the wing and be reflected. To render this natural phenomenon visible, Lievens uses glass plates to isolate the different layers of scales.

In *Notes de Printemps*, terracotta leaves - dipped in liquid clay and tinted - evoke a feeling of seasons passing by. Presented as a pile on the floor, the leaves create an imagined, artificial landscape.

The latest series of works included in the exhibition is inspired by the story of the birth of sculpture, as told by the poet Plinius the Elder. The tale details how Butades of Sicyon recreates the face of his daughter’s absent lover in clay, working from an outline she has drawn from the man’s shadow; the resulting creation is thus said to be the first known sculpture. For Lievens, the story references her own attempts as an artist to capture fleeting moments in time, as well as the fragile and ephemeral side of nature.

About the Artist

Perrine Lievens (*1981 in Aix-en-Provence) lives and works in Paris.

She has exhibited at the Espace Paul Ricard, Paris (2009), the Super Window Gallery, Kyoto (2007), and the Fonderie Darling, Montréal (2007), among others. In 2009 she took part in the exhibition “*CHHTTT... le merveilleux dans l’art contemporain: 2ième volet*” at Crac Alsace (Altkirch). Her first solo show at von Bartha was in S-chanf in 2013 followed by *Clouds*, Château du Roelx, Mons (2015), Capitale Européenne de la culture, Belgique (2015), *Se souvenir des belles choses*, FRAC Languedoc Roussillon, Sérignan (2016) and *Mirabilia*, Maison des consuls, Les Martels (2017).