

## FARIDA LE SUAVÉ & JEREMY STIGTER

### Chère chair (Dear Flesh/Fabulous Flesh)

23. 05 – 20. 07. 2019

Gallery closed from 19. 06 to 26. 06

. OPENING

Thursday May 23rd, 6pm-9pm – with the artists present

. LATE NIGHT

Thursday June 6th 7pm- 9pm

**Flesh.** A connection between the body's different parts, a connection between human beings. We are, indeed, all made of flesh: tender flesh, soft flesh, toned. Masses of flesh, young, fresh flesh, old, flaccid flesh, at every stage, flesh lives, vibrates, full of palpitations... *Flesh exists beyond the beat of the heart.*

A source of passion, obsession, fascination, terror – its quantity, its shape and other characteristics, flesh is with us, always, in all its various manifestations. As our primary topography, it awakens us and it's intense presence never ceases to 'tickle' our curiosity, our senses, and in our wanderings connects, allowing for a sense of communion as well as transcendence. Sometimes flesh is only pain, disgust, loathing. *Chère chair (Dear Flesh - Fabulous Flesh)* sets out examine, to scrutinize this matter that makes us who we are.

Farida Le Suavé's sculptures are both ambiguous and dynamic: full of desire, languorous at times, closed on themselves and in flight at others... As for Jeremy Stigter's photographs, if the camera's lens appears painfully close, its subject, the female figure, seems strangely distant; a vague sense of derision lends an odd touch to the display of so much flesh. Luminous shapes, profound obscurities, suggestive, even delicious, shadows... The eye is puzzled, not quite sure what it beholds.

Farida Le Suavé's sculptures breathe. Inevitably, their very skin colour and softness of touch provoke associations with the body, with things organic and sometimes bring to mind a receptacle – the body as a vessel with orifices appearing here and there. Strata of 'flesh', of clay, rise up like an amorphous embryo would, multiplying from almost-nothing. The shapes thus created are generous, toned, wrinkled – carried by a breath, even out of breath, barely standing... These artworks present flesh as a territory, as something quite apart, an identity that is independent, autonomous. The work is all too human as it incarnates contradictions, from caress to destruction, from flesh as a playground, a place of comfort, to flesh abandoned, reduced to nothing more than a cry of despair.

Looking for other flesh (*Enlacé, 2019 – Embraced/Intertwined, 2019*) or a vehicle that activates impenetrable links between micro- and macro-cosmos (*Coup de foudre, 2019 – (Love at first sight/Flash of lightning, 2019)*), in Farida Le Suavé's works the flesh also strongly expresses the indeed very complex register of desire, as in *Deux pots (Two pots)* (2005) a paraphrase of Bernini's *Daphne and Apollo*.

Fragments, "bits and pieces" ... **Jeremy Stigter** has bent, unbent, literally hovered over the female body. As a somewhat mischievous observer, he appears to have resisted the temptation to emphasize his subject's evident sensuality. He went, and takes us, on a visual adventure, offering visions of near abstraction where light appears as much the subject as the female anatomy it illuminates. Thus, bright flesh stands out, removed momentarily from the anonymous darkness that surrounds it. This series of silver prints prosaically titled *Quelques nus (Some nudes)*, demands attention, to look well – eventually only to get lost in the image.

The series *Cafouillages (Disorder)*, on the other hand, appears more frontal and direct. In an ordinary lighting, the photographer shows a naked man, quite identical to his own, standing upright in a room: the body poses, playful, at ease, quite theatrical. A man is looking at a man, acts him out, or maybe it's the other way round...

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Surfaces appear up close. Fragments of a body: a hip, another hip, a chest, a glimmer of a face superimposed. Is it rubbish, or refinement? Discovery or statement of fact, a confirmation of being? Can we see ourselves merely as flesh?

## background

**Farida Le Suavé** (born in Paris in 1969) felt an artistic calling at a very young age, when drawing was all she did and has done ever since. Her initial training in the textiles - a diploma in *Clothing, measure and creation* - brought her to work as a seamstress in a Parisian fashion house. The desire to be able to dedicate time for personal artistic research led her to other jobs, until she was able to start art studies at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts d'Angers from where she graduated in 2005. Though at first it was painting that was her favoured medium, an experience at a ceramic studio, *Soleil d'ombre*, and the discovery of the pink clay of St. Amand en Puisaye proved a revelation. She turned to sculpture as a means of expression.

Since, she has participated in numerous exhibitions in France - *Céramique Fiction* (Musée des Beaux Arts - Rouen, 2006), *L'Art dans les Chapelles* (Pays de Pontivy/Saint Nicolas des Eaux, 2009), *Circuit céramique aux Arts Décoratifs* (Musée des Arts Décoratifs - Paris, 2011), *Le beau est toujours bizarre* (FRAC Haute Normandie - Sotteville-les-Rouen, 2011) and *WANI* (Fondation Entreprise Ricard Art contemporain - Paris, 2011). In 2010, the Espace Grandjean de Vallauris dedicated a show to her work and the Galerie NextLevel presented her solo show *O* in 2015. Two years later, the Chapelle des Calvairiennes in Mayenne - a splendid baroque chapel that is now a center for contemporary art - hosted her exhibition *La part des anges* - a compilation of about 5 years of work, including sculptures made during a three year period spent in Chicago

Farida Le Suavé's work is represented in the following public collections : *FRAC Basse Normandie*, *FRAC Haute Normandie*, *Artothèque d'Angers*, *Artothèque de Caen*, *Collège Charles Léandres* (La Férière-aux-étangs), and the *CHU Angers*. It has been featured in many specialized articles and publications.

Her collaboration with the Galerie Maria Lund is recent. The gallery had presented one of her works in 2013 in *Terres - Copenhagen Ceramics invites* (an exhibition in the context of the show *Nouvelles vagues* - event created by the Palais de Tokyo).

**Jeremy Stigter** (born in 1958 in The Hague, the Netherlands) has developed a photographic universe where the societal documentary meets narration and psychology. A graduate of History and Political Studies (London School of Economics and at the Collège d'Europe, Bruges in 1983), he left for New York where he studied theater for a while (Sandy Meisner). His interest in fashion brought him to travel and to live in Japan for a time. During this period he discovered photography as a subject. Jeremy Stigter's chance meeting in 1986 with fellow countryman Ed van der Elksen proved decisive. From that point he focused on exploring by means of the photographic media. He practices photography freely under many forms - documentary photo, stories for the French and international press, books, photo novels, photo/performances, portraits - often in series. Since 1992, Jeremy Stigter has exhibited his work regularly (Tokyo, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam). His specific attachment to Japan is reflected in his photos of the country "lived from the inside" where his complete immersion allows for an acute awareness of an often mundane daily life. These images attracted attention and were shown in *Hito Bito - Ordinary People* at the *Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna*, Rome (2005).

In 2007, Nazraeli Press published his first book *The Jewish Bride - a photoplay* - an account of an amorous encounter in the form of "theatrical documentary".

*Vivre (To live)*, published by Le Seuil (2012) draws up an original and moving portrayal of a cancer treatment department at a day hospital, while also giving a testimony of the reality of the illness as lived by the patients, their family as well as the medical staff.

Jeremy Stigter is currently developing several publishing projects: *Una Noche en Oaxaca*, the story of a night spent in a bar in Oaxaca (Mexico), a trilogy on the Front National (*Parties de Campagne*), as well as a book on Japan.

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