

ORLAN

MASQUES, PEKIN OPERA FACING DESIGNS & RÉALITÉ AUGMENTÉE

September 6 - October 18, 2014

Michel Rein, Paris is pleased to present ORLAN's third personal exhibition at the gallery. (*Tricéphale*, 2003, *Self-Hybridations Indiennes-Américaines*, 2008).

« ORLAN's works are prisms of diverging issues, which refuse any unique perspective. As if each one of her projects were inconsiderably loaded with all of her preoccupations: Technology and feminism, art history and surgery, football and religion, sex and politics. The artist gives priority to the wild polysemy of the image rather than the precision and prudence of "sure work". Duplicity? Worse: Multiplicity. ORLAN is a plural minority. This is problematic when one fears nothing more than that which is complex, imperceptible in a single gesture of thought. Literally un-kissable. Unless these disparate issues are different creases in a unique model of resistance. (...)

Performer-film director-photographer-sculptor-painter-activist: a one woman band without unison, dangerously multitasking and multi-body. (...) All bodies inside one body. All voices from a single mouth. All knowledge in one mind. Of course, the series of hybridisations rests upon this principal, but so do ORLAN's metamorphic games generally, until disappearance (Creased dresses without a body). Borrowing other's appearance to give birth to new identities in a chronic, aesthetic and cultural parthenogenesis. (...)

ORLAN is dissident, foremost at the heart of art. Within this field, yet permeable to otherness, ORLAN manages to never really be digestible, always embarrassing. Doing what shouldn't be done. Performances involving photography, video, then slipping into a digital aesthetic. (...)

In ORLAN's trajectory, there is always a moment where the question of style is mangled. Always a step too far, upsetting aesthetic acceptations and making unanimous approval for the whole of her work impossible. Choosing art as rebellion in a rebellion against art. Each of her projects, being in its own way a criticism of this environment and its conventions; ORLAN does everything to be socially unacceptable in it. So much so that her contestations of western criteria for beauty and ugliness are shown in their materiel crudeness (...) for ORLAN, the matter and the body are the support for these ideological stances. The flesh of objects and people constitutes the terrain for cognitive experience."

Guillaume Désanges¹



To obtain an original work by ORLAN, download the free Augment app on iPhone, iPad or Android and scan this page with Augment.

¹ Extracts from the text *Sorcière Maligne Anthropophage* which can be seen in the exhibition's catalogue « Mens sana in corpore... » (curator Pierre-Olivier Rollin), B.P.S.22, Musée de l'Hôpital Notre-Dame à la Rose, Lessines, Belgique.

This new exhibition will explore through all of the gallery's spaces the question of the masks.

On the ground floor ORLAN continues her work on hybridisations, beginning with the *pre-Columbian* (1998), *African* (2003) and *American Indian self-hybridisations* (2005), presenting a new series with masks from the Peking opera. For ORLAN "The masks are formal characters which speak before speaking to the spectators through their colours and signs. For my "opera" I immediately show that I am ORLAN with the two lumps that transform my face. I present myself and I play with the colours, signs and masks. In the universe of photography which resembles that of canvas painting, make-up is paint on the skin which becomes a mask."

These works contain an unprecedented principal of augmented reality² whereby once again ORLAN falls outside of the frame.

At the first floor of the gallery a selection of works related to surgery, performed between the late 1980's and early 1990's allude to the mask.

In the other room, the video *Repère(s) Mutant(s)* (mutant identification(s)) displays the portraits of 24 people shot at the naturalisation ceremony in Marseille in 2012. They march slowly in a static close up shot in front of their country of origin's flag whilst the image of this flag hybridised with the French one slides imperceptibly over their faces. Here, ORLAN opposes identity assignments an individual, shifting and personal construction. This video was presented during the exhibition "Ici, ailleurs" (Here, elsewhere") at la Friche Belle de Mai in 2013 (curator Juliette Laffon).



Repère(s) Mutant(s), 2012
video HD, 4h54

ORLAN (who lives and works in Paris) has enjoyed personal exhibitions since 2010 at B.P.S.22, Lessines (2013), at Muhka, Antwerp (2012), at Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogota (2012), at the Andy Warhol museum, Pittsburgh (2012), at the Fine Arts Museum, Nantes (2011), at Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln (2010), at the Miami Cinematheque (2010)

Her work is part of numerous collections such as: Centre Pompidou, Paris / Maison européenne de la photographie, Paris / National Contemporary Art Foundation, Paris / MAC/VAL, Paris / Neuflyze Vie collection, Paris / LACMA, Los Angeles / Getty Museum, Los Angeles / Pinault Collection / Banca di Santo Spirito, Lisbonne / Daelim Contemporary Art Museum, Seoul / Hanlim Art Museum, Seoul / Museum Kunst Palast, Dusseldorf.

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²Augmented reality refers to computing systems which enable the superposition of a virtual 2D or 3D model onto our natural perception of reality in real time.