

PRESS RELEASE

18.01 - 16.03.2018

ANDREA MASTROVITO
LE JARDIN DES HISTOIRES DU MONDE
24, RUE DU VIEUX-BILLARD
OPENING ON 18.01 – 18H

Art Bärtschi & Cie is pleased to present the exhibition "The Garden of World Stories" by the artist Andrea Mastrovito, whose work has not been exhibited at the gallery for three years.

In this new exhibition, the visitor will discover a frieze sequenced in paintings with subtitles. The viewer is invited to follow the itinerary elaborated by the artist, a pilgrimage of 24 scenes depicting "The Garden of World Stories". Andrea Mastrovito had accustomed us to his narrative collages, made of poor paper and materials, sometimes found and recycled. Today he calls upon the marker craftsmen of the Bergamo region, where he himself comes from. Traditionally ornamental, woodworking, which has made the reputation of this part of Italy (thanks among others to the work of Lorenzo Lotto), is here transposed into a contemporary reflection that the artist elaborates.

Different protagonists integrate the Garden, taking on the roles that the artist has attributed to them. He sets up a vocabulary of forms and ideas that expose the extent of human violence and its inexorable recurrence. Thus Titan and Apollo rub shoulders with silhouettes that seem to have emerged from a *hooligan* demonstration, the Sun is captured and redistributed to the inmates of the Buchenwald concentration camp, Cerberus and Ophiucus rub shoulders with police violence... These characters are deliberately depicted without faces, leaving the viewer a wide margin of interpretation. The origin of these images is varied: newspapers, mythology books, churches, celestial maps and art publications, among others. Thus, the artist is free to illustrate the world without temporal boundaries. A contiguous line subtitles the scenes, providing various interpretative clues as well as a cinematographic dimension dear to the artist.

Indeed "The Garden of World Stories" is accompanied by a unique projection of "NYsferatu", a contemporary adaptation of Murnau's "Nosferatu", itself inspired by Bram Stoker's book "Dracula". Through the succession of more than 35,000 drawings, Andrea Mastrovito's film questions the classical position of the vampire, taking on the role of the stranger here. The artist thus stages various current issues such as migration, discrimination and exclusion. Although inspired by an almost century-old story, the artist uses a contemporary New York decor, imbued with the heavy economic and political climate we are experiencing. In his previous exhibition at the gallery, in 2015, the artist already addressed the theme of the foreigner, a status he has known himself since he moved to the United States in 2008. He was then inspired by Camus' "The Stranger" to propose a reflection on the absurdity of the human condition. For the needs of "NYsferatu", Andrea Mastrovito set up a team of 12 artists, producing the thousands of drawings necessary for the sizzling effects of the image. He occasionally describes the pencil as "the best mediator between the world of ideas and the real world".

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