

NICODIM

Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont: *The Unknown Beginning of a Very Long Story*

Nicodim Bucharest

February 10 – March 26, 2022



Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont, *Fleur-Cyborg 2*, 2021

'Life begins and ends in the unconscious; the actions we carry out while fully lucid are only little islands in an archipelago of dreams.'

– Paul B. Preciado, *An Apartment on Uranus* (2019)

In the centre of the space, as in the centre of the plastic reflection, is the black paste. A boundless puddle, a dark and infinite ocean. It sticks, clings to our flesh, envelops us and overtakes us. We, the terrestrials, the individuals of a transtemporal ecosystem. The black paste is our immensity. It agglomerates the memories, the secrets, the silences that constitute us, in the present, as well as in the past and the future.

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The black paste is in us, around us, yet, often, it escapes us. It binds us to others, human and non-human. It is the invisible part of the living, what we have forgotten, what we do not want to see, what overflows and troubles us.

Metaphorically and conceptually, black paste embodies not only what binds Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont to her loved ones and the cyborg plants whose portraits she creates, but also what binds the individuals represented to their own memories, their own experiences, their own existences and interdependencies. The black paste connects everything. 'It stores the whole, the atoms that constitute the whole. It is the beginning, where we come from and also where we will return. It is the proof, the memento that no matter what we do, I have been you, you have been me and we have been this plant.'¹ Physically, on the canvas as in space, it is the cooked result of a mixture of beeswax, Dammar resin, black pigments obtained by the calcination of materials. The black paste is applied by hand around the figure in the form of plant motifs, water currents or air currents. It is thick and matte. It generates densities. On the canvas, it absorbs light - thus bodies, human and non-human, are their own source of light. The artist explains that black paste is 'a paint for bats, for beings who see with something other than their eyes'. The black paste tells us that there are a multitude of ways to see, to remember, to feel an image, a light, an object, a body, a texture.

It is the compost by which it becomes possible for us to *dream the obscure*, to think beneath flesh, beneath surfaces and appearances. 'What we believe shapes the world.' In the exhibition space as in the painting surface, the artist sculpts the black paste with her fingers to form swampy areas, riptides, torrents, paths or even mounds. She looks for what is buried, everything that is difficult for us to say or to show. The mounds, hillocks of black paste, conceal what has been buried. Graves, buried cities, swallowed up by the earth and by time. On the canvas, Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont buries elements beneath black paste. Like tightly-closed chests, the paintings contain an obscure part, an invisible part. Starhawk, a Californian witch and ecofeminist activist, speaks of *the inner power*: 'Yes, the inner power is the power of the low, the dark, the earth; the power that comes from our blood, our lives, and our passionate desire for the living body of the other.'² Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont manifests through painting this 'passionate desire for the living body of the other'. A desire freed from binary and alienating thoughts. A desire generated by a vital impulse that leads her to a deep encounter with the other, that guides her as much towards darkness, rich in dissimulations and troubles, as towards a light, a colour, a 'meta-surreal' interior of the individuals whose lives she explores. So perhaps the artist manages to manifest some of *the inner power* of those she chooses to represent. She also speaks of the 'fire from within'. The portraits challenge certitudes, fixities and rigidities in order, on the contrary, to present individuals in becoming, beings in movement who evolve within an ecosystem, which also occurs over a long period of time, invariably mutating and becoming an ancestral metamorphosis of the living. 'And,

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little by little, extend a map. Make the rest disappear. Not to pronounce any more in order to forget. Then pronounce only what is sure and move forward by feeling with the throat to pronounce a little more.'

Text by Julie Crenn

¹ Chloë Saï Breil Dupont's quotes are taken from personal texts and conversations.

² *STARHAWK. Dreaming the dark - Magic, sex and politics*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1982.

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Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont

° Born 1990, Lilas, France

Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Education

2016 Filosofia Geral, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, Brasil

2015 DNSEP, École Supérieure d'Art Annecy Alpes, Annecy, France

2013 DNAP, École Supérieure d'Art des Rocailles, Biarritz, France

Selected Exhibitions

2022 *Chloë Saï Breil-Dupont: The Unknown Beginning of a Very Long Story* (solo), Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles

We Paint, Beaux-Arts, Paris, France

2021 *Misa*, Van-Ham Kunst Halle, Cologne, Germany

Home Alone 2, Surface Area, Miami

FLESH, Newchild Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

Prix Jean-François Prat, Paris, France

Feldmalerei, Jedermann, Hambourg, Germany

2020 *Biennale ArtPress*, MAMC et Cité du design, Saint Etienne, France

KYST, Galerie JEP, Carrare, Italy

2019 *PASTORALE DEL FUOCO FATUO* (solo), Galerie JEP, Carrare, Italy

Diable, Autodrône, Batt Coop, Paris, France

2018 *"O"*, Galerie Chybulski, Le Cosset, France

EXCELLIUM, Galerie Adda & Taxi, Paris, France

2017 *OK CHAOS*, Autodrône Paris, France

1230°C, Galerie Iconoclastes, Paris, France

72 rue Riquet pour la Nuit Blanche, Paris, France

Cocktail, LaVallée, Bruxelles, Belgium

How do you know tomorrow has started if there's no night, Villa Belleville, Paris, France

Le premier Jour, Villa Belleville, Paris, France

2016 *Merci pour ce moment*, Wonder, St Ouen, France

Söper, Wonder, St Ouen, France

Mnemosyl, ATELIE 397, São Paulo, Brazil

Compil' #1, Sous les Tropiques, Bruxelles, Belgium

Blue Valley, Sous les Tropiques, Bruxelles, Belgium

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Piège de Crystal, Sous les Tropiques, Bruxelles, Belgium

2015 *O Amor por principio*, Casa de Povo, São Paulo, Brazil

2014 *Huldra Aurora Boréalis Project Express*, Warsaw, Poland; Svolvær, Norway; Berlin, Germany

2013 *Mozorro En*, Crypte Ste Eugénie, Biarritz, France

2012 *Les Iguanes*, Galerie du Levant, Bayonne, France

Residencies, Grants, Awards

2022 Somos Residency, Berlin, Germany

2021 Selection au prix Jean-François Prat

Ateliergemeinschaft Milchhof Residency, Berlin, Germany

2017 Villa Belleville Residency, Paris, France

Dune Residency, Pondicherry, India

2016 Les ateliers Wonder, St Ouen, France