

Seghers & Pang
Fine Arts



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CHANTS OF A GARGOYLE
February 27 – April 03, 2021

With
Kasper Bosmans
Matthias Dornfeld
Delphine Hennelly
Jean-Baptiste Janisset
Sanam Khatibi
Les Monseigneurs
Katharina Schilling
Clement Jacques-Vossen
& anonymous medieval artists

In collaboration with
Seghers & Pang Fine Arts

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The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there (L.P. Hartley)

If the past is a foreign country, in the words of the writer L.P. Hartley, then that applies especially to the Middle Ages – a land populated by counts and dukes, noblemen and knights, farmers and sharecroppers, monks and whores, minstrels and pages, jesters and troubadours. It is a past that lives on in our collective memory, in shards and pieces without an over-arching narrative: half-forgotten fragments from history classes in dusty classrooms; an unforgettable face that seems to have stepped out of a Flemish Primitive painting; ominous names such as John the Fearless or Charles the Bold. The Middle Ages also live on in street names, local beers or TV series, in expressions, habits and traditions. They are more part of everyday life than we might imagine.

The medieval period continues to fascinate. That is probably also due to the way in which facts, anecdotes and stories have been embellished – in romanticized versions in popular culture, as a consequence of historical falsifications, or by politicians with a nationalist agenda who adapt facts, true or “alternative”, or who appropriate battles such as the Battle of the Golden Spurs to fit their particular discourse. Through the centuries, fact and fiction have formed a tangled web, and each historical period has had its own interpretation of the Middle Ages.

The Middle Ages are often represented as extremely violent, as a period of incessant warfare, between rebellious cities and shires, neighbouring duchies, or in the prosecution of bloody crusades. That neverending struggle demanded an impressive weapons arsenal, with evocative names such as goedendags and halberds, hauberks and lances, battering-rams and trebuchets – contraptions that continue to fascinate entire generations of children.

But then again the Middle Ages weren’t only about bloodshed, battles and burnings, but also about courtly love and devotion. This conflict between the earthly and the divine, the high and the low, is always present. In spite of the wars, the famines, the plagues and the brutalities, the Middle Ages were also a golden period for the arts – polyphonic music, sculpture and an almost hyperrealist style of painting, which culminated in Van Eyck’s *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*. And then there were knightly tales, altarpieces and miniatures, stained-glass windows, gargoyles, baptismal fonts and votives. And what breathtaking architecture: castles with footbridges, sturdy fortresses, abbeys, churches and cathedrals in Roman or Gothic style. Our historic cities – or at least that is the claim – have plenty of these, even if they are mostly barely noticed. For what we consider authentic is often a restored version from the nineteenth century, a historical falsification, or a simulacrum. These different historical layers together form a palimpsest in which the boundaries between the authentic and the fake are blurred.

The Middle Ages offer many themes and motives that continue to inspire artists today. They sometimes even opt for ancient mediums such as tapestries, miniatures or stained-glass windows – usually with a contemporary or postmodern twist. For the medium had a different meaning or function back then – the past is a foreign country. Tapestries were used to commemorate battles and to isolate cold castles, miniature portraits served to present oneself on the marriage market, and heraldic art was a precursor of contemporary logos and a form of branding. Things like these return in the work of artists today, either as faithful reproduction or as free-floating signifiers, signs and symbols uncoupled from their original meaning. The Middle Ages are a bottomless well of inspiration, and however fragmentary and arbitrary our gaze may be, through misunderstandings, *Hineininterpretierung*, and distortions, they are coming alive once again.

—Sam Steverlynck

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Exhibition view



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[above: on view at Seghers & Pang Fine Arts]

Kasper Bosmans

Kasper Bosmans (b. 1990, Belgium) is a shrewd observer of the ways in which images can teeter on the edge of nature and fiction, or art and craft. With an intuitive anthropological approach, he looks towards the remnants of local traditions and mythological iconography in contemporary life.

Concerned with an associative beauty produced by play, Bosmans cuts across performance, painting, drawing, and sculptural installations made up of various components, such as milk, sand or marble—means through which he explores both functional and decorative forms, and evokes subtle correspondences between them.

Recent exhibitions include a.o. Cintamani Weavings at Art Center Centrale, Brussels (2016); Loot, Soil, and Cleanliness, CIAP, Hasselt (2016); Correspondence, with Rafaella Crispino, Unosunove, Rome (2015); Yesterday was different with Marthe Ramm Fortun, KOMPLOT, Brussels (2015); Des hôtes: a foreigner, a human, an unexpected visitor, Spring Workshop, Hong Kong (2015); Little Cherry Virus, Pakt, Amsterdam (2015); Un-Scene III, Wiels, Brussels (2015); Made to Measure: Fishing Rod, Experimental Intermedia, Ghent (2014); Het kanaal - le canal, Extra City Kunsthall, Antwerp & Espace 251 Nord, Liège (2014); Coming People, S.M.A.K., Ghent (2014).

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- 1 Kasper Bosmans, *T.O. Chip Log (Ebstorf)*, 2018
Elm wood, lead, vinyl paint, 27 × 37,5 cm each

Matthias Dornfeld

°1960, Esslingen (DE) – lives and works in Berlin (DE)

The paintings of Matthias Dornfeld are based on his longtime interest in conventional themes, such as portraiture, landscape and still life. Within his interest in particular painting discourses, he not only operates in the tradition of classical pictorial genres, but also generates a visual aesthetic characteristic of earlier approaches to naïve expressive painting. Dornfeld's work ultimately demonstrate that they are more acutely situated in the inventive painting strategies of analytical abstraction.

He explains: "The subjects and motives are simple, they come without thinking. They're stupid, banal, commonplace, clichés." It is through the repetitive use of the familiar, even boring—both in process and in subject matter—that Dornfeld subverts these painterly tropes and, in turn, makes them strange, makes them funny. (courtesy of Mousse Publishing)

The work of Matthias Dornfeld is shown internationally, including at Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Helsinki Contemporary, Helsinki; Salon Dahlmann, Berlin; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Deichtorhallen & Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg.



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- 2 Matthias Dornfeld, *untitled (horse series)*, 2020
Oil on canvas, 180 × 200 cm



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i Matthias Dornfeld, *HARUURARA*
 (*sanfter Frühling*), 2017
 Acrylic and Gouache on canvas, 200 × 300 cm

ii Matthias Dornfeld, *untitled (tier oder so)*, 2017
 Oil on mdf, 100 × 80 cm

Delphine Hennelly

Delphine Hennelly's work, through her use of pattern, repetition, and uncanny color palettes, addresses prescribed gender roles, immediacy of painting, and the human condition. Inspiration for the artist's work includes tapestries, art history, and early Modernism. Hennelly has exhibited across the U.S. and Canada including her current show at Massey Klein, New York, NY; Pt.2 Gallery, Oakland, CA; Mother Gallery, Beacon, NY and Projet Pangee, Montreal, Quebec. Her recent past exhibitions include a two person exhibition, History Lessons, with Mimi Jung at Carvalho Park, Brooklyn, NY, and Shen made her European debut in May 2019 at Lisa Kandlhofer Gallery, Vienna. Hennelly is a three-time recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Award. Her work has appeared in numerous publications including ArtMaze Magazine, Nut Publication, New American Paintings, and more.

The artist received her BFA from Cooper Union in 2002 and her MFA from the Mason Gross School of Visual Arts, Rutgers University in 2017.

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3 Delphine Hennelly, *Coda*, 2020
Oil on canvas, 72 × 107 cm



4 Delphine Hennelly, *Les Goddesses*, 2020
Oil on canvas, 72 × 107 cm

Jean-Baptiste Janisset

“Between an anthropologist and a sorcerer, Jean-Baptiste Janisset’s installations are conceived from discoveries and encounters which, during his travels, have developed his creative psyche.

For this new installation, the artist takes over the iconic plastic houses in which many Western children have displayed their imaginations. Janisset uses these hiding spots and their innate quality to shelter blossoming creativity, to construct a totem-like beacon against obsolete systems of education which fuse a formatted consumerist society.

In such, they become a place of belief, a chapel made of lead, a rampart against the brutality of the outside world.

On this building, Jean-Baptiste Janisset came to place symbols and memories relating to different myths and religions. The most discreet of them is placed inside the monument. It is a seal of Saturn, a talisman that he himself made for its protective qualities and which he sleeps with every day. All these objects are for him vectors of elevation. They motivate a finer consciousness and thus a dialogue with what he calls “the underworld”.

Most of the time these are relics of the ceremonies he attended in Benin, Gabon, and Corsica. For example, the sheep carcass being displayed as one of the elements of Janisset’s sculpture has for origin the molding of the bones of the animal sacrificed during the Magal de Touba, a religious festival that has been celebrated since 1928 in Senegal. It is the most important ceremony of the Mouride religion, a mystical branch of Sufism.

To make these elements his own, Jean-Baptiste Janisset proceeds to make molds by directly using clay to take a borrowing in situ of objects, sculptures, and bas reliefs before making lead prints out of them.”

Jean-Baptiste Janisset explains that he is not a fine craftsman: all the symbols he uses are snatched from others. The artist sees himself more as a witness to the past, a creator of syncretism between diverse beliefs and plural existences. Janisset’s ‘Smile to the Angles of Frioul’ building is therefore the center of gravity of a multitude of consciousness. We are thus projected into a place of all and no religion, a new path which Jean-Baptiste Janisset seems to outline for us.

Text: Camille Bardin, Translation: Leo Lopez

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5 Jean-Baptiste Janisset, «*Jour J*», 2019
Laiton Silicé, 42 × 37 × 3 cm



6 Jean-Baptiste Janisset, *Paratonnerre*, 2020
Plomb, 201 × 33 cm

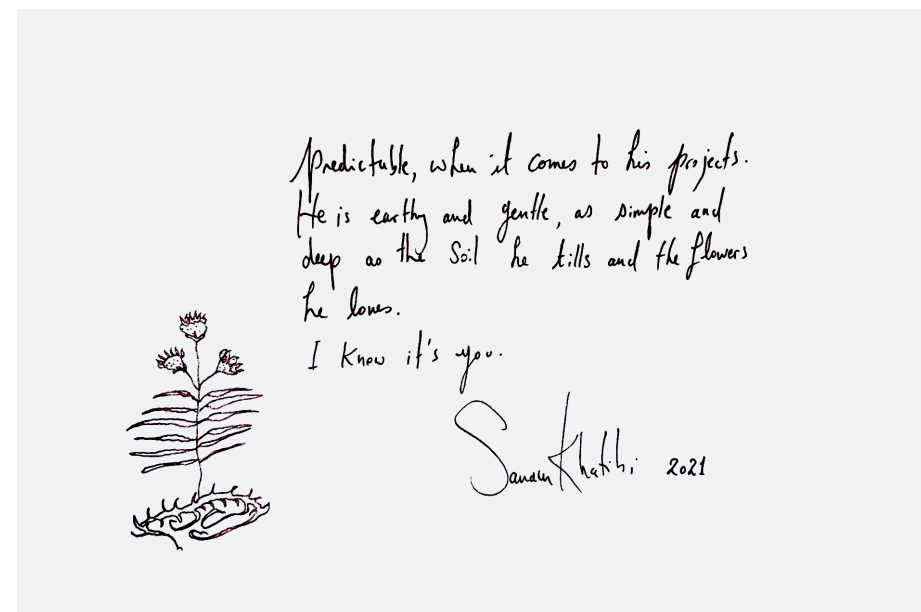


Sanam Khatibi

Born 1979 in Tehran, Iran Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Sanam Khatibi's works deal with animality, and our primal impulses and the core of her practice interrogates our relationship to power structures, specifically the duality of triumph and failure. The recurrent themes that often feature in her work question our relationship with excess, loss of control, bestiality, the male-female dynamics, domination and submission. She is also interested in the thin line that exists between fear and desire, and how closely they are interrelated. Her subjects live on their impulses in alluring, exotic landscapes. They are ambiguous with their relationship to power, violence, sensuality and each other. Wildlife and animals are an integral part of her practice, and her subjects are often depicted within the same plane as the flora and fauna. Her work consists of paintings, embroideries, tapestries, and sculptures.

Sanam Khatibi has a major solo exhibition upcoming at Groeninge Museum, in Bruges.

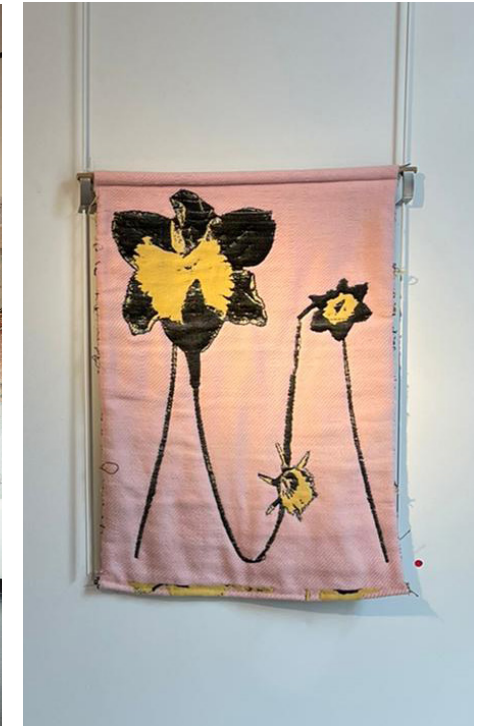


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- iii Sanam Khatibi, *I know it's you*, 2021
Oil on canvas and wood (2 parts, framed), 28,3 × 27,9 cm (framed)
[on view at Seghers & Pang Fine Arts]

Les Monseigneurs

Les Monseigneurs is the artistic alias of Thomas Renwart (°1995). He graduated in 2019 at LUCA School of Arts, Ghent gaining his masters in Textiles. His work is continuous meeting point between craftsmanship and poetic/visual depictions of A Horticultural Society. He makes the drawings of his tapestries starting from his herbarium of pressed flowers and found butterflies, which he translates into various worlds and textile adaption, presented as unique works of art. A close knit relationship with Belgian and Dutch textiles manufacturers and a research of weaving, embroidery and quilting belong to his portfolio. He has his studio at NUCLEO, where he's building a Daffodil garden to continue to work on the ever growing herbarium and works as a guest lecturer at LUCA School of Arts within the field of weaving.



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- iv Les Monseigneurs, *Gilding the Lily*, 2020
Triptych, linen, paper, rubber, lurex, acrylic,
350 × 170 cm each, unique
In collaboration with Textiellab Tilburg
- 7 Les Monseigneurs, *Les mots au bout des lèvres*
un chemin vers la vie, 2021
Linen, 300 × 300 cm, unique
In collaboration with Verilin

- v Les Monseigneurs, *Study no 5*, 2020
Cotton, wool, 35 × 70 cm, unique, handwoven
[on view at Seghers & Pang Fine Arts]

Katharina Schilling

Across a series of interconnected planes, Schilling dissolves a traditional notion of history with its neat linearity to enable diverse concepts and entities to interact in productive tension with one another: the spurs of progress against soft, slow flesh and the vines ensnaring the arms that would embrace. Together, these paintings show what might lie behind the veil lifted from modernity, what can come out of the darkest of ages. In a kind of hopeful stasis, Katharina Schilling allows worlds to float for a moment, in order to free images, objects, motifs and gestures from their historical binds. Once dispersed, they can then offer themselves up as the basis for a new community – at a time when one cannot say “when” uncomplicatedly. (excerpt of text by Miriam Stoney)



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8 Katharina Schilling, *The Opening II*, 2020
Oil on canvas, 28 × 20 cm

9 Katharina Schilling, *Parade*, 2020
Oil on canvas, 25 × 37 cm

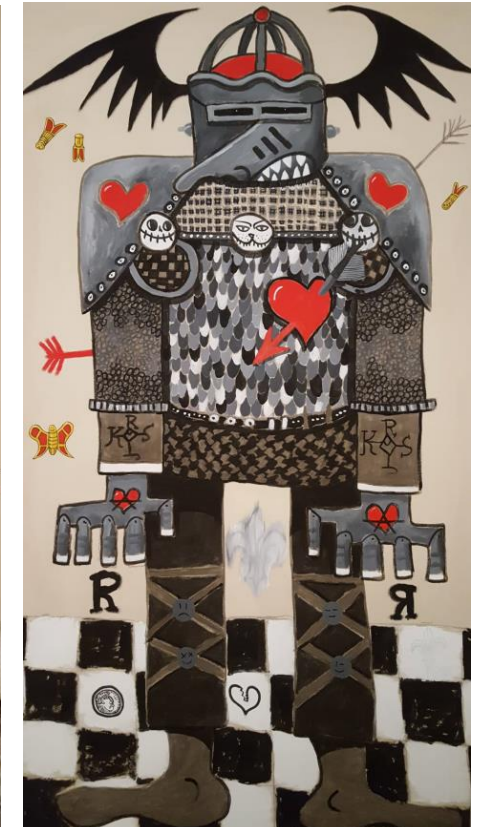
10 Katharina Schilling, *soon never comes*, 2020
Oil on canvas, 30 × 50 cm

Clément Jacques-Vossen

Clément Jacques-Vossen (1996) is a Belgian artist living and working in Brussels. His practice considers of small paintings (acrylic & ink) on paper, marouflé on wood. Those small formats are representing a fantasy world where kings, knights and legendary creatures are fighting for existence. They are in between drawing and painting. The battles or story's that are depicting give a glimpse of the fantasy world that is living in the mind of the painter. Pink elephants are wiring city's on there back, knights are fighting epic battles and roosters have lion's feet. The paintings are made with intensive research about medieval manuscripts, 19th century images about history and contemporary culture. All paintings start with this find image culture, facilitated by Instagram. Clément love history and contemporary fantasy (Lord of the Ring, Game of Thrones, ...), it's why you will see historical figures and historical events melting together with contemporary culture. With a great knowledge of art history and history, he creates new images full of symbols. Every object and every piece of the composition have something to tell about the story. The stories are most of the time created in an unconscious mode and are left unexplained and open for interpretation.

The second part of the work of Clément Jacques-Vossen, consist of large paintings is black and white. Those paintings consist of knights in full armor. The image of the knight is something that's goes back to the childhood of the painter. As a child he played allot with figurines, Playmobiles and dress himself as a knight. But growing up and losing his naivety, he discovered the truth behind the man in armor. They where not nice guys making beautiful and happy battles, where the enemy was obvious. No, the truth is they were killing machines, fully equip for war. Nonetheless, they kept his interest.

Now they became a kind of self-reflection about himself and the world around him. It's not clear if they are self-portraits or helpless protectors against time and live. (Artus Mundi)





vii Clément Jacques-Vossen, *Le beau Godefroid de Bouillon*, 2021
Acrylic, ink on canvas, 230 × 100 cm
[on view at Seghers & Pang Fine Arts]

viii Clément Jacques-Vossen, *I nailed it*, 2021
Acrylic, ink on canvas, 210 × 110 cm
[on view at Seghers & Pang Fine Arts]
ix Clément Jacques-Vossen, *Black Night*, 2021
Ink on paper marouflage on wood, 21 × 29 cm
[on view at Seghers & Pang Fine Arts]

x Clément Jacques-Vossen, *Le martyre*, 2021
Acrylic, ink marouflage on wood, 21 × 28 cm
xi Clément Jacques-Vossen, *Le blues*, 2021
Acrylic, ink marouflage on wood, 21 × 28 cm

xii Clément Jacques-Vossen, *XXX*, 2021
Acrylic, ink marouflage on canvas, 30 × 24 cm

Charming grotesque with gaping toothed mouth, wide open staring eyes and pointed, batlike ears. Monsters like these were placed on the outside walls of houses and churches in order to chase away evil spirits. They may also have been a warning to onlooking sinners that unpleasant things were awaiting for them in the future if they did not repent.



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- 14 Head of a Grotesque (England, 13th century)
Granite. Wear, losses (chin and lower teeth). Not fixed on stand. Stand optional.
Hole in base from previous, older stand. 19 × 16 × 17 cm



The Archangel is represented while slaying the demon at his feet with his sword (its empty sheath balances at his waist) in his right hand. He wears his curly hair as a crown around his juvenile face bearing an extremely soft and serene expression. His harness of Italian inspiration together with his soft facial expression suggest an origin somewhere in the southeast of France (maybe Dauphiné or Provence) at the end of the XVth and beginning of XVIth century. The hand of the demon still clasps the upper part of his leg.



