

**"faire partie des gens qui chantent"
ou ne pas s'amuser des bizarreries de la vie**

by Arpaïs du Bois



Opening: Thursday, Nov 24th 2016
Show: Nov 25th until Jan 28th 2017

Title and subtitle: as if from now on, ARPAÏS du bois wanted to be sure to be even more careful about her choosing her own words. Her own words about which Damien Sausset puts in the foreword of her latest book that: "As for the style of writing itself, it is without emphasis, neutral, often streaked with anger, but anger without overtly personal incarnation, as devoid of its own voice in order better to attain the universal."

The present exhibition can clearly be seen and understood in line with the themes that were handled in 'tout droit vers la fin en sifflotant', (straight ahead till the end while whistling) published by Hannibal, and 'trouver un moyen d'habiter le monde' ('to find a way to inhabit the world'), her solo-exhibition at Museum Dr. Guislain in Ghent earlier this year.

For the first time ARPAÏS du bois took nearly exclusively the outside world as a main theme. She digested, dismantled and analysed it in her own sharp way. She sporadically punctuated these drawings with more intimate ones, taking over the role of counterpoints or increasing the feeling of despondency due to their lightness.

'Faire partie des gens qui chantent' is a direct outcome of her time spent at the Museum Dr. Guislain. The title might be filled with a kind of softening, a compassion, a yearning for the closeness or a common ground with 'the others, the more sensitive ones, the gentle ones, the righteous', in some way those who resist the harshness that seems to be one of ARPAÏS du bois' recurrent main themes. Still, each separate work in this exhibition shows us the damned dark side of life.

We can read and see observations, subtle descriptions, near-summonses, musings, that have that well known poetic character of her writings. The works drag us into a dialogue with her. Once more ARPAÏS du bois makes us more than mere viewers or visitors. She draws us into participation, as if being pulled by the arm, we slow down our pace, we think, feel and formulate answers. With works titled as: 'déranger par habitude' (to disturb out of habit), 'un horizon marchandable' (a bargainable horizon), or 'médaillon de boue' (mud medaillon). 'faner nos semences' (to wither our seeds), 'la transpiration du glacier' (the sweat of the iceberg) are works that denounce, that appoint.

But does the title merely express a wish, a yearning or does it designate an acquired state that is not separated from but rather at a certain distance of reality?

Let's focus on the subtitle. 'ou ne pas s'amuser des bizarreries de la vie', brings nuances to the title that might give an answer to the previous question. 'Les gens qui chantent' may well be the frail ones, the 'innocent ones' in a way, at least they are not cynical, they don't laugh at the oddities and cruelties of life. Thus this exhibition is clearly a quest to be part of those 'gens qui chantent' (those who sing).

Touching the perceived world with words and images. Those who have been following du bois' work, know that this is what she does and needed to do since her very beginning. To quote Damien Sausset one more time: 'she tries to formulate an answer to the weight of reality', 'she draws with and against language'.