



Modern Dog Clément Faydit & Rozenn Voyer 8 June – 27 July 2024

A light bulb, berries, a kite, ice, an electric kettle... These are the items a parrot named Rocco ordered on Amazon, with the help of his accomplice Alexa, a Smart Speaker¹. Rocco was portrayed by the media as an annoying pest, particularly for his “owner”, who had to cancel the parrot’s orders daily to not be charged. However, this shopping list not only reveals the tricks of a feathered con artist, but also— and more importantly— the elements for an alliance between animal and computer.

This story seems to be the best way to introduce this exhibition imagined by Clément Faydit and Rozenn Voyer as it embodies a rewiring of our understanding of alliances that form outside of our view, if not for under our nose. To borrow the words of Donna Haraway in *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*, “Cyborgs and companion species each bring together the human and non-human, the organic and the technological, carbon and silicon, freedom and structure, history and myth, the rich and the poor, the state and the subject, diversity and depletion, modernity and postmodernity and nature and culture in unexpected ways.”² In “Modern Dog”, we discover tales of natureculture, of cohabitation and cross-species sociality through a (tired) dance of cobbled together figures that we have endlessly attempted to domesticate. All of this articulated on a backdrop of a cartoonish modernism that has failed not only itself, but also its users.

“Nothing is magic, everything is mechanical!” We can almost hear the cries of the modernists from their glass houses echoing through time as they opted for exposed structures. One might imagine that this choice was not far from the gesture of showing one’s teeth, if not to be menacing, at least to be virile. Here, the exposed teeth evoke a skyline (*Yellow City*), a skyline that becomes a bouquet of buildings (*Lèche-vitrine (la Cité)*), buildings that wind up in a field being licked— rather than shat on— by a dog (*Lèche-vitrine (le Bouquet)*). And so, by exposing this behind-the-scenes, a caricature of modern virility (and, necessarily, vulnerability) takes form. And through this confusion of scale, we observe it from afar, gently, with a touch of mockery.

Clément Faydit and Rozenn Voyer stage the simultaneous vulnerability and emancipation of other species in the face of human consumerist whims.³ In *La Face (la Tour)*, a figure is trapped inside of advertising panels painted in a game of transparency as if to reveal its own manipulation tactics. Not far, spent cigarette butts come together, also in skeleton form, to mock the other who has fallen for his tricks (*Clopin-Clopant*). Another light-bulb-headed figure illuminates the scene. Blinded by its self-fulfillment, it is unaware that its big idea has left it hanging on by a thread (*L’Épanoui*).

Other species join this dance, like the dog and cat, each painted on the cover of a book emptied of its contents (*Pauvres lecteurs*). The missing pages are far from trivial, as they tell the story of a skyscraper window washer turned guide dog for his lover in a city on the brink of collapse⁴, or of a worker who loses his sense of self in the tangle of streets, houses, stores, nature, clothes, corporate meetings— in short, a city.⁵ Like the *Don Quixote* book that Le Corbusier covered with the hair of his dog Pinceau after its death, the cat and dog that adorn the books here reveal how nature and culture contain each other and are thus intimately inseparable.

And if the modernists had a penchant for skeletal architecture and exposed structures, Clément Faydit and Rozenn Voyer do as well. However theirs takes shape in an articulation game that reveals the now visible links between beings. There is no longer any privacy, nor a place to hide. We see the figures and the bodies of those who surveille us, like the cat face that we perceive in the interlaced cables and reflection of the headlights of a car (*La Face (le Chat)*). There is no longer any mystery, the fulfilled parallel lives of the non-humans who become restless when we turn our backs on them are finally in the spotlight. Even the forgotten phantoms of the city that we forget about have finally captured our attention (*La Danse du squelette*).

This restlessness is concentrated in the calculated movements of a robotic vacuum cleaner that tirelessly seeks out the animal hairs assembled in the shape of a bag on its back (*Sans queue ni tête*) [shaggy dog story]. This accessory is made from the felted hair of the artists’ dog, the same one that carefully licks the city. And if the vacuum cleaner’s absurd quest reflects the verbose, even dull, aspect of so-called “shaggy-dog” stories, the association between the objects embodies the entertainment sought by humans from the creatures they try to domesticate, and how their values depend on an affective consumerism.

Whether it’s in installation, graphic design⁶, drawing, painting or sculpture, Clément Faydit and Rozenn Voyer operate through sampling. By assembling objects and symbols extracted from the world around us, they compose forms that force us to consider new modes of attention. “Modern Dog” is the embodiment of a quivering city that gazes back at us, a city made up of cigarette butts, cables— and their vitality— Q-tips and, of course, dogs.

Katia Porro

- 1 «Celles et ceux qui changent le monde : se relier aux animaux», *Les Pieds sur terre*, France Culture, rediffusion 26 avril 2024.
- 2 Donna Haraway, *Manifeste des espèces compagnes*, Climats, Flammarion, Paris, 2018, p.26.
- 3 *Idem.*, p. 75.
- 4 Didier Decoin, *John L'Enfer*, Éditions Seuil, 1977.
- 5 Pierre Fisson, *Les Rendez-vous de Moscou*, Tallandier, Paris, 1965.
- 6 The artists, working under the name Traduttore, traditore, develop visual identities and editorial objects, as for In extenso and La belle revue.

Rozenn Voyer, born in 1993 in Les Lilas, questions where she lives. She studied at the École nationale supérieure d'art de Nancy and the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon. Her work involves drawing, glass and graphic design, but is always built around the same intention: replaying the pleasures she retains from the aesthetic excitements of her childhood. Rozenn Voyer turns her hands right to left and left to right, fingers held up high, to imitate the movements of marionettes. In her fervour, she plays with colours, shapes, signs and balls, layering and transparency, patterns and crossing lines, to achieve the same agitation as Rozenn-knee-high-to-a-grasshopper methodically ironing the colourful aluminium chocolate wrappers in the shape of... Her work has been featured in Diorama, Lagon revue (Plaine), Cadavres, Prime Times, Panthère Première and Monsieur Dubois dont on fait les flûtes. She's had exhibitions at Voiture 14 in Marseille (2019), Material in Zürich (2021), la Friche de la Belle de Mai in Marseille as part of Murmurations part 2 (2022), Office Festival in Marseille (2024) and Moscow art book fair (2020).

Clément Faydit was born in 1992 and lives in Uzerche. He graduated from the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon. He works across drawing, text, marionettes, painting, music and editorial design. Time (which flows) and animals (human and non-human) are the subjects driving the situations he creates and repeats, regardless of medium or tools. He has exhibited his work at the CID, Le Grand Hornu (BE, 2019), the MUDAC, Lausanne (CH, 2019), Voiture 14, Marseille (2020), the Moscow Art Fair (2020), the Material gallery in Zürich (2021) and la Friche de la Belle de mai in Marseille as part of Murmurations part 2 (2022).

Together, they have been developing visual identities, publications, educational workshops and duo exhibitions under the name Traduttore, traditore since 2019. They have collaborated with GUFU for the seasonal magazine HOOT, the Musée de l'Imprimerie et de la Communication Graphique, Mécènes du Sud and the Cnap, among others. They started the publishing house cry mimi cry in 2022.

Since 2022, Traduttore, traditore has been designing the visual identity for In extenso and its magazine, La belle revue.

- 1 *La Face (la Douche)*, collage, flowers, LED light, 2024. *La Face* was created with the support of the Fondation des Artistes.
- 2 *Pauvres lecteurs*, acrylic paint on book covers (*Les rendez-vous de Moscou* de Pierre Fisson and *John L'enfer* de Didier Decoin), screws, magnets, 2024.
- 3 *L'Épanoui*, glass, cables, beads, 2024
- 4 *La Face (la Tour)*, 2024, acrylic paint on plexiglass, neon lights, cables, beads, tape, works on paper:
 - * *Clermont, Pinceau et le Corbu*, pastel and acrylic, 30×45, 2023.
 - * *Mars, le robot et la fuite*, graphite, 30×45, 2023.
 - * *H&M, l'aiguille et les 30 glorieuses*, pastel and acrylic, 30×45, 2023.
 - * *Le programme, Georges, les épaisseurs*, graphite, 30×45, 2023.*La Face* was created with the support of the Fondation des Artistes.
- 5 *Sans queue ni tête*, dog hair felt bag, Lefant vacuum, 2024.
- 6 *Yellow city*, acrylic on canvas, 2024.
- 7 *Lèche-vitrine (la Cité)*, cement, 2024.
- 8 *La Face (le Chat)*, lightbulb, R19 headlight, cable, metal, 2024. *La Face* was created with the support of the Fondation des Artistes.
- 9 *Clopin-clopant*, acrylic on canvas, 2024.
- 10 *Lèche-vitrine (le Bouquet)*, video, 2024.
- 11 *La Danse du squelette*, Q-tips, thread, fans, spotlight, 2024.

