

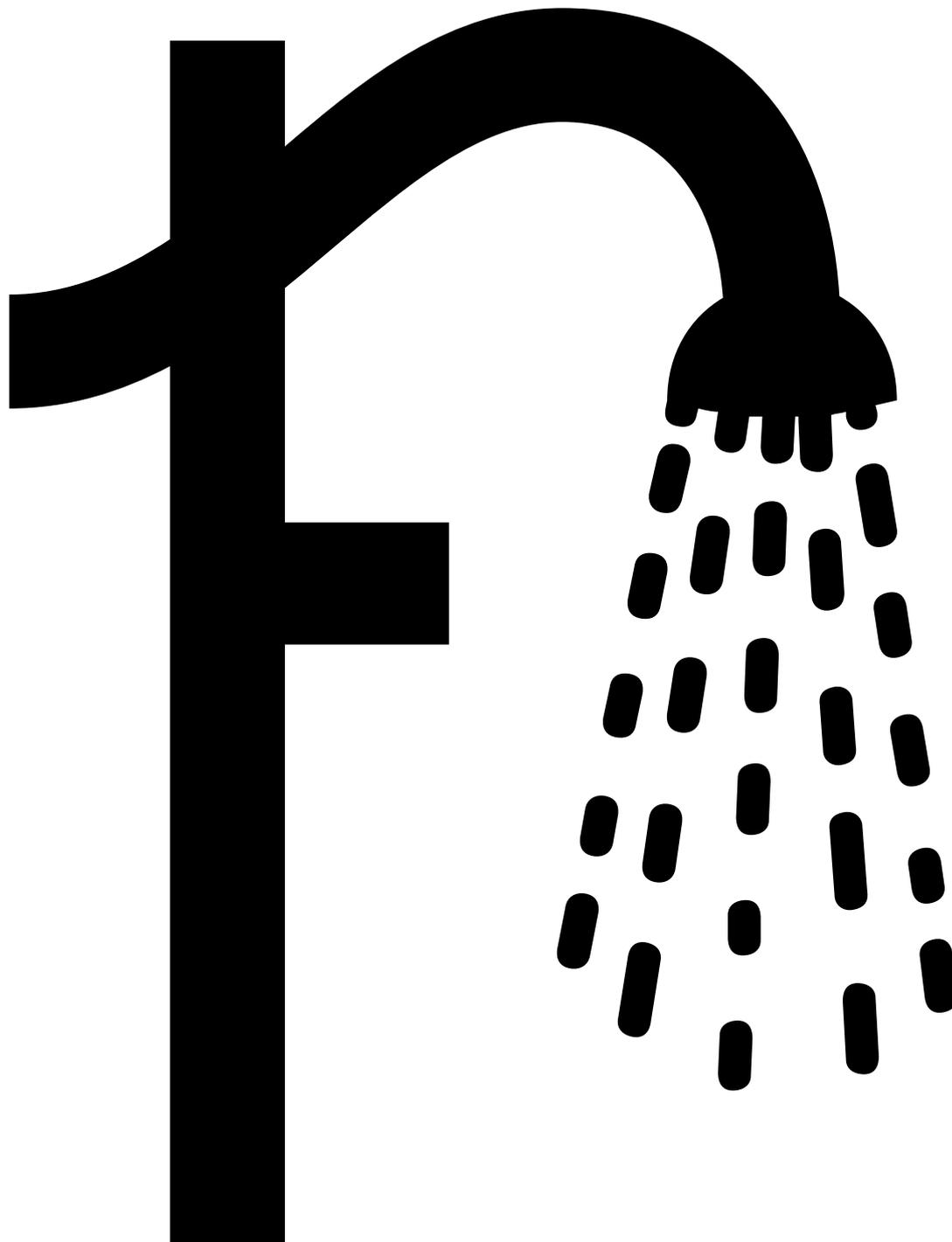
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Sylvie Auvray
Anne Bourse
Xinyi Cheng
Mathis Collins
Jean-Alain Corre
Than Hussein Clark
Cameron Jamie

Opening
Saturday, February 2nd, from
5 pm

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Curator: Franck Balland
With the collaboration of
Jean-Alain Corre



The scene takes place in the suburbs of Montgomery, the capital of Alabama, a Southern State and one of the most religious of the United States. Two young African-Americans sporting white tank tops, tattoos, and thin gold chains around the neck, are swaying languorously in socks on the thick off-white carpet of a tidy little detached house. Around them can be seen polished furniture decorated with knickknacks and family photos, armchairs upholstered in pastel fabrics framing a marble fireplace, and atop the Christmas tree the Stars and Stripes. In a typical middle-class sitting room where Catholic crosses are carefully lined up on the walls, one of the boys slowly approaches a pedestal table. His finger delicately glides over the surface of the shiny wood, caresses the pedestal, and works its way back up to the table top, where it brushes over the objects resting there. In rhythm with the music of Sonic Youth, the raspy voice of Kim Gordon repeats “You’re so close, close to me...”, the two teenagers come back together, shimmy side by side towards a sofa embroidered with flower motifs. Their hands tightly gripping the armrests, their knees slightly bent, they move their bodies in a wavelike sensual and suggestive back-and-forth motion.

I’ve just described an excerpt of *Massage the History* (2007-2009), a film Cameron Jamie made when he was studying the way gangs document their deeds on the Internet. Long fascinated by the—mainly subversive—myths and rituals that unite communities, this American artist stumbled on a video in the course of his research that turned the usual codes and representations on their head. Far from certain aggressive virile clichés, groups of three or four gang members are seen dancing lasciviously in cozy interiors in Alabama, wiggling around pieces of furniture (coffee tables, sofas, beds, chests of drawers...) as if they were trying to seduce them. For what precisely? As Jamie himself admits, nothing is terribly clear. According to the artist, this libidinal urge vis-à-vis objects suggests both certain tribal rituals and an original, collective form of fetishism provoked by these iconic domestic interiors of the American middle-classes.

In an article titled “Éloge du fétichisme” (In Praise of Fetishism) recently published in the pages of the French daily *Libération*, the philosopher Paul B. Preciado notes that the eroticization of objects represents “the most poetic and conceptual version” of humanity’s sexual history. The repertory of things which desire crystalizes around, it must be said, definitely holds surprises, running from the classic shoes, to tears, to even hurricanes. In the field of art, the expression has a range of echoes. Fetishism signifies—occasionally with a little disdain from its critics—an attitude that sacralizes works thought to have a suprasensible power. It is about seeing in art objects more than a simple material manifestation, admitting that they transcend this condition by adopting a high symbolic power. More rarely perhaps, it is through the very plasticity of the works of art, or through what they represent, that we can glimpse the phenomena of the attraction to things. From a more psychological perspective, we ought to evaluate their fetishistic character as vehicles or even targets of the expression of desire.

While these two aspects are found entangled in “Futomomo” from the very first, it is these questions of desirable materials and representation that have been the focus of my wish to mount this show at CAC Brétigny. On the one hand, the exhibition took shape while working closely with Jean-Alain Corre, whose work explores a certain sensuality of forms and materials while revealing the way a domestic environment can be eroticized. And on the other, because, like Cameron Jamie, my attention was drawn to the work of artists whose treatment of day-to-day objects sometimes suggests their ambiguous role—as if through their presence, which is terribly banal nonetheless, they concealed the secret elements of a relationship with the other or the world.

I should say one last word about the title of this project, which is borrowed from Japanese. The word “futomomo” literally means “fat leg”. In *shibari* (literally “to tie”), an erotic practice that consists in tying up and suspending the body of one’s partner with ropes, *futomomo* is a specific type of knot for the leg. Restraining the thigh and the tibia with repeated methodical turns of the rope puts pressure on the skin such that the flesh displays a series of rolls. It is this specific relationship between the object, the body, and the expression of the occasionally complex desires uniting them that the present show would like to bring to light through the distorting specter of contemporary art.

Franck Balland

One of CAC Brétigny's aims is to offer a program of events that is especially diverse, where styles are seen side by side without looking like one another and forms clash, transforming the space from one show to the next.

The wish to extend an invitation to the curator Franck Balland sprang from his own desire for paintings, sculptures, photographs, and all other kinds of supports for making art in which both the physical material of the art and the artist's hand appear.

The exhibitions that Franck put together in Tlön in Nevers, in the odd spaces that were part of the Parc Saint Léger's extramural series, and elsewhere as a freelance curator were full of odors, paints, sounds, and movements. Even empty space assumed a bodily form in them.

This then is how the exhibition "Futomomo" at CAC Brétigny took shape, with a ground swell of pleasure in seeing and feeling.

Part of the *Altérisme* (Otherism) cycle, "Futomomo" places the radical alterity of objects at its source while proposing a carnal encounter with powerful major works from today's artistic output.

Céline Poulin
Director of the CAC Brétigny

Franck Balland is an art critic and freelance curator. In 2011, following two years in the public outreach department of the Contemporary Art Institute of Villeurbanne, he joined the staff of Parc Saint Léger, the contemporary art center in Pougues-les-Eaux, where he oversaw extramural programming until 2016. In 2017, he managed the Marcelle Alix Gallery in Paris. Along with these activities, Balland cofounded in 2014 a store-front exhibition space in Nevers called Tlön. A former member of the editorial board of *La Belle Revue*, he has also contributed to a number of other reviews (*Hors d'œuvre, zéro quatre, Semaine, El Flasherito, artpress...*) and catalogs. The exhibitions he has recently curated include “Broom Emotion” by Tiziana La Melia at the Anne Barrault Gallery (Paris) in 2017 and “It’s All Tied Up in a Rainbow” by Morgan Courtois at Passerelle (Brest) in 2018. He was also co-curator of a group show called “Je t’épaule tu me respire” at the Marcelle Alix Gallery (Paris), also in 2018.

Sylvie Auvray (1974, France) lives and works in Paris. Auvray studied at both the Beaux-Arts of Montpellier and the City & Guilds of London. She works in sculpture, jewelry, and assemblages for the most part. Drawing its references from both pop culture and various mythologies, Auvray’s art explores concepts of the uncanny through constant experimentation of materials and forms, as well as her repeated interest in masks, which haunt her output. Her work has been shown at the Musée d’Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Palais de Tokyo, the Pompidou Center (Paris), and frac Champagne-Ardenne in 2011; MAMCO in Geneva in 2012; and the Consortium (Dijon) in 2015; as well as the Chantal Coussell gallery (Paris). She is represented by Laurent Godin Gallery (Paris).

Anne Bourse (1982, France) lives and works in Paris. A graduate of the Beaux-Arts of Lyon, Bourse has been producing work in a range of mediums, including drawing, painting, and sculpture mostly in textile. Through these forms she blends in a continuous shift back and forth biographical fragments and references to art history. Her work has been shown at Parc Saint Léger (Pougues-les-Eaux) in 2015; at Mains d’Œuvres (Saint-Ouen) and the Centre International d’Art et du Paysage (Vassivière) in 2016; at the Florence Loewy Gallery (Paris) in 2017; and most recently at Pauline Perplexe (Arcueil) alongside Jean-Alain Corre’s own output.

Xinyi Cheng (1989, China) lives and works between Shanghai (China) and Paris. Trained as a sculptor in China, the artist soon left for the United States to study painting before joining the postgraduate program at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten of Amsterdam. Drawing on Western masculine imagery, Cheng’s work focuses on an intimacy that fuses gentleness and modesty but also occasionally the grotesque and the perverse. Her paintings and their diaphanous colors have an intense atmosphere, a sensuous in-between state where identities prove fragile and fleeting. Her work has been shown most notably at the Balice Hertling Gallery (Paris), the Frans Hals Museum of Haarlem (the Netherlands), the Boston Center for the Arts (the United States), and the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York (the United States). She is represented by the Balice Hertling Gallery and Antena Space (Shanghai).

Mathis Collins (1986, France) lives and works between Paris and London (the United Kingdom). He studied at the École Nationale Supérieure d’Arts of Paris-Cergy, and subsequently in Brussels, Montreal, and Metz, as well as the Open School East of London. Developing a practice that blends sculpture, performance art, and poetry, Mathis Collins has focused on objects and popular artisanal practices, taking over their catalog of forms through collective experience and an approach that draws on the absurd. A member of the Parisian collective Treize, Mathis Collins has shown his work at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), the Musée d’Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Friche Belle de Mai (Marseille), the Rijksakademie (Amsterdam), 1m3 (Lausanne), and Longtang (Zurich).

Jean-Alain Corre (1981, France) lives and works in Paris. A recently published monograph on Corre’s work invited readers to discover *11 Supers Épisodes de Johnny*, a character the artist created during his art studies in Lyon that has since served as a kind of matrix that lies at the core of his output. Thus, whether we are looking at paintings, sculptures, collages, or even performances, we are introduced above all to the artist’s distracted reveries, which play out somewhere between the dance floor, the factory, and the supermarket. Materiality transforms these hallucinated experiences into hybrid environments where we can read the hold a normalized daily reality has over the construction of individual desires. A recipient of the 2014 Prix Ricard, Corre was notably given a solo show at the Thomas Bernard Gallery—Cortex Athletico, in 2015. In 2016, he took part in the 5th Biennial of Contemporary Art in Rennes, and has exhibited in a number of group shows, including “Double Jeu” at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, and “Your Memories Are Our Future” as part of Manifesta 11 in Zurich. In 2018, his work was shown alongside Anne Bourse’s at Pauline Perplexe (Arcueil). A fictional interview between Johnny and Isa Genzken was published in the 11th issue of the review *Initiales*.

Than Hussein Clark (1981, United States) lives and works between London (United Kingdom) and Hamburg (Germany). His art practice involves performance, installation, video, and publishing. With a penchant for architecture, studied displays, and the decorative arts, he explores the codes and aesthetics of gay culture, and questions of authenticity and theatricality. He is one of the founding members of Villa Design Group, an artists’ and performers’ collective that is developing a theater of queer design. His most recent projects have been shown at the Crèvecoeur Gallery (Paris), at Passerelle (Brest), the Liverpool Biennial (with Villa Design Group), the MIT List Visual Arts Centre in Cambridge (the United States) and the Frans Hals Museum of Haarlem (the Netherlands). Than Hussein Clark is represented by the Crèvecoeur Gallery (Paris), the Mathew Gallery (Berlin and New York), VI, VII (Oslo), and the Karin Guenther Gallery (Hamburg).

Cameron Jamie (1969, United States) currently lives and works in Paris. Working in sculpture and video, Jamie is interested in the underground aspects of American suburbs. Developing an investigative art that focuses on vernacular rituals and subcultures, he reveals the role that daily mythologies and collective rites play in the life of depressed areas housing poor and middleclass Americans. Jamie’s work has been featured in many shows and retrospectives, notably at the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), the MIT List Visual

Arts Center in Cambridge (the United States), the Pompidou Center (Paris), Quai Branly (Paris), MoMA (New York), and the Kunsthalle of Zurich. He is represented by the Kamel Mennour Gallery (Paris) and the Gladstone Gallery (New York).

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