Ali Cherri
Return of the Beast
22 April – 23 July, 2021

41 rue Mazarine, Paris 6e
Imane Farès is proud to present *Return of the Beast*, Ali Cherri’s fourth solo exhibition at the gallery, almost ten years after their first collaboration together.

The exhibition coincides with the publication of the artist’s first monograph titled *Earth, Fire, Water*, that was co-edited by the gallery and Éditions Dilecta. This bilingual book (English-French) looks back at the last ten years of Ali Cherri’s practice and includes contributions by Tarek El-Ariss, Nicole Brenez, Hannah Feldman, Roxana Azimi, as well as an interview with the artist by Aaron Cezar. It will be sold at the gallery and we are hoping to celebrate its launch during the month of June.

We are also delighted that Ali Cherri has been chosen to be the second artist-in-residence at the National Gallery in London, where, starting April 2021 and during one year, he will have the opportunity to work with the museum’s collection, archives and research facilities.

A journal with a text by Line Ajan (Cherri’s artist liaison and a curator) accompanies the exhibition.
Standing at the center of Cherri’s fourth solo exhibition at Imane Farès, a one-legged creature carved in marble greets you. Its limbs have not been fully amputated: a fragmented human foot lingers on the right, while the left leg, adorned with scale-like patterns, seems to have sunk into the short plinth. Attached to these mutilated remains is a pale humanoid face. Rimmed with green-blue lines, its eyes are wide-open, as if staggered by you, in a surprising inversion of roles.

Titled Return of the Beast, Ali Cherri’s exhibition compels us to rethink what we’ve historically considered as the figure of the monster, by inviting us to reevaluate the gaze that defines this conception.

How do we look at monsters?
How do they look back?
What brings about the monstrous?
The exhibition engages with the trope of the monstrous in a continuation of Cherri’s research on hybridity, which has been central to his practice for the better part of the last decade.

(...) Like the roadkills placed side by side, some of these small sculptures share a platform, as if they formed a community of devalued and displaced things together. They are not only monsters by their appearance, but also by their condition of uprooted objects. Or rather, they are outcasts who gather as survivors and witnesses of catastrophes. And while the de-hierarchization of objects has always pervaded Cherri’s work in a renewed critique of “the museum as a mausoleum,” it is here expanded further: figures and birds converse in How To Make a Bird Sing, inhabiting their own world, in a blissful ignorance of the human whose gaze has long defined them.

And so, we are tempted to lend the words of Donna Haraway, speaking of her “kin,” to these fauns that are re-assembled by Cherri: “And like a decadent gardener who can’t keep good distinctions between natures and cultures straight, the shape of my kin networks looks more like a trellis, an esplanade, than a tree. You can’t tell up from down, and everything seems to go sidewise.”

—Line Ajan, excerpt from the exhibition’s journal

Recent solo exhibitions include Somniculus (Uppsala Art Museum, 2021), Tales from the Riverbed (Clark House, 2018), From Fragment to Whole (Jönköping County Museum, 2018), Programme Satellite 10: Somniculus (CAPC Musée d’art contemporain de Bordeaux et Jeu de Paume, 2017), A Taxonomy of Fallacies: The Life of Dead Objects (Sursock Museum, 2016).
His work has been recently exhibited at the EYE Filmmuseum (Amsterdam), macLYON, Institut Valenciac d’Art Modern (Valencia), the Jämeel Arts Center (Dubai), Para Site (Hong Kong), MAXXI (Rome), the Centre Pompidou (Paris), as well as included in Manifesta 13 (Marseille, 2020), the Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art (Yekaterinburg, 2019), the Biennale internationale d’art contemporain de Melle (2018), the Biennale de Lyon and the Sharjah Biennial (2017). His films have been screened in numerous international festivals such as: New Directors/New Films, MoMA; Cinéma du Réel, Centre Pompidou; CPH:DOX, Copenhagen (New Vision Award, 2015); Dubai International Film Festival, Dubai (Best filmmaker award, 2013); VideoBrasil, São Paulo (Southern Panorama award, 2015); Toronto International Film Festival and San Francisco International Film Festival.
He was the Robert E. Fulton III Fellow of the Film Study Center at Harvard University in 2016-17, and was nominated for the Abraaj Group Art Prize in 2018. To complete his first feature-film The Dam, shot in Sudan in early 2021, he received several prestigious grants, including from the Hubert Bals Fund of the International Film Festival in Rotterdam (« Bright Future » category) and the Aide aux cinémas du monde from the Centre National du Cinéma (CNC) and the Institut Français.
His work is part of numerous institutional collections: CNAP, Fonds d’art contemporain - Paris Collections, MAC VAL, Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MECA, Frac Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, Les Abattoirs - Frac Occitanie Toulouse, Musée national d’art moderne/ Centre Georges Pompidou, Art Jameel (Dubai), MACBA (Barcelona), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York), Sursock Museum (Beirut), Sharjah Art Foundation.

For more information on the artist, please see his web-page on the gallery’s website.
Imane Farès

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THE ARTIST’S RECENT PROJECTS

UPTO MAY 16, 2021, UPPSALA ART MUSEUM

Somniculus, solo-exhibition
Uppsala Art Museum, Uppsala, Sweden

UNTIL JULY 18, 2021, MACLYON

Comme un parfum d’aventure, group exhibition
MacLYON, Lyon, France
Curated by Manilou Leneuville, Head of Exhibitions at MacLYON and Matthieu Lelièvre, Artistic Advisor at MacLYON
More information on the exhibition ↘

APRIL 1 - MAY 9, 2021, 13TH GWANGJU BIENNALE

Minds Rising Spirits Tuning
Gwangju, South Korea
Curated by Defne Ayas and Natasha Ginwala, artistic directors of the biennale
More information on the Gwangju Biennale ↘

APRIL - DECEMBER 2021, NATIONAL GALLERY

Residency followed by a solo exhibition in the museum’s collection
National Gallery, London, United Kingdom
Press Release ↘

APRIL 4 - 19, 2021, SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

In-Between Days: Video from the Guggenheim Collection
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, United States of America
Curated by Nat Trotman, Performance and Media curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
Screening program ↘

APRIL 29 - AUGUST 29, 2021, CAIXA FORUM

La Imagen Humana. Arte, identidades y simbolismo, group exhibition in collaboration with the British Museum
CaixaForum, Madrid, Spain
More information on the exhibition ↘

SPRING OR SUMMER 2021, PALAIS IDÉAL DU FACTEUR CHEVAL

Le Palais à quatre heure, duo show with Alberto Giacometti
Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval, Haute-ville, France
Curated by Frédéric Legros, director of the Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval

NOVEMBER 1, 2021 - FEBRUARY 28, 2022, KOCHI-MUZIRIS BIENNALE

IN OUR VEINS FLOW INK AND FIRE
Kochi, India
Curated by Shubigi Rao, curator of the 5th edition
More information on the Kochi-Muziris Biennale ↘

2022, THE HERBERT ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

Exhibition centered on Ali Cherri’s artwork that will be acquired by The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum with the support of the Contemporary Art Society
The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, United Kingdom
More information on The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum ↘
Press images

How To Make a Bird Sing, 2021
Figure with a shaved head from the Amarna Period, Ancient Egypt, patinated limestone, Horus Falcon God, glazed sandstone
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris

The Avian Spirit, 2021
Horus Falcon God in glass paste from the Late period of Ancient Egypt, glazed sandstone
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris

Dead Inside, 2021
Watercolor and graphite on paper
Courtesy of the artist and Imane Farès, Paris