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PRESSBOOK

Wall Street International

A Thing of Beauty
美 is a Joy Forever
美 是永恆的喜悅

Tess DUMON 苔絲 • 杜蒙

13 November 2019

Tess Dumon

2 Nov — 29 Dec 2019 at the Galerie Dumonteil in Shanghai, China

13 NOVEMBER 2019



Tess Dumon. Courtesy of Galerie Dumonteil

Galerie Dumonteil Shanghai is pleased to present “A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever”, the solo exhibition of Tess Dumon, marking this brilliant French emerging artist's debut in China. The exhibition features most of the artist's recent creations including a dozen gouache paintings and several monumental sculptures, most of which were made during her residency in Shanghai. “A Thing of Beauty Is a Joy Forever” originates from John Keat's long poem “Endymion”, in which he describes that something beautiful will give pleasure long after it ceases to exist. The exhibition encourages the viewers to embrace all the lovely tales in our lives and throughout history and search for the universal in the particular, the enduring in the ephemeral, from beliefs and legends that survive thousands of years to emotions and relationships that last beyond the limit of time.

Having no clue about the origins of the illness of her brother with autism, Tess Dumon (b.1990) turned herself towards myths, symbols, and legends, at a very young age. They aim to answer all kinds of existential questions, from the birth of mankind to the existence of earthquakes. During her artistic studies, she started to create her very own mythology, including horses from her brother's horse therapy sessions, handmade unique blue paint, and poems, etc. And for this exhibition, the artist has combined her story with terms, elements, and systems selected from Buddhism, Taoism, and Chinese folklore. Dumon's practice begins as her way of reconciliation with the enduring traumatic childhood memories, and yet it transcends into intriguing stories that every viewer can somehow relate to or resonate with, as Dumon tries to place the viewer at the heart of her work, aiming to transform the act of seeing into performance itself.

The visually captivating monumental sculptures have always been a significant part of Dumon's creation. The aluminum and stainless steel used in her sculptures reflect perfectly any incoming ray of light, giving her magnificent animals the appearance of ghosts floating in the air. The magic resulting from these lighting effects contrasts with the dramatic meaning of her work and the roughness of the material she sculpts by hands. “After the Night, Before the Day” and “Mare and Her Foal” revolve around love in its various forms — the most profound and universal emotions that a human or an animal can experience, while “Amber” retells an early Chinese tale about tigers whose souls enter the earth and become amber, a belief that attempts to associate

immortality with an object that takes millions of years to form. “Bliss” is the artist's first creation of sculptures based on humans. Unlike the precise modeling when making the animals, Dumon uses semi-abstract forms to give the figure a richer interpretation.

Equally expressive on paper, Dumon's allegorical gouache paintings seem to catch the viewers in their imperceptible moment of vulnerability — a sudden joy, surprise, sadness or loneliness arise as they walk in front of each work. This instant “clicking” with one's heart stems from the artist's concise yet eloquent lines as well as her uncanny ability to transform a body gesture or an animal gaze into a trigger for the honest yet constraint emotions in our deep consciousness. In the extensive works “A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever” and “Your Happy Place”, Dumon combines her research about “Blissful Realms” and “Grotto of Heaven”(ideal lands associated with immortality and ultimate peace respectively in Buddhism and Taoism) with her pictorial vision of inner peace and a sense of belonging. Besides the theme of the paintings, it is also worth pointing out that Dumon has experimented on some materials to work along with the gouache on paper, including shells, gold-leaf, Shuxuan paper (commonly used in Chinese painting and calligraphy), among others.

Always seeking new challenges and opportunities to share her work and her story, Tess Dumon transforms the gallery space into her fantasy land as “A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever” becomes a series of enchanting stories that viewers can only unfold with their own imaginations.



Galerie Dumonteil

Focusing on modern and contemporary art, Galerie Dumonteil has three gallery spaces in Paris, New York and Shanghai respectively.

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Location
Shanghai, China

Founded in
1982

