

David Raffini

Tatiana Wolska

The Poetry of Detritus

26 May - 2 September 2017

There are several ways to write poetry...my biggest ambition, or that of art, or of man, is to create, to be near poetry, to make sure that at some point all things belong to poetry.(David Raffini)

Starting from simple rejects, precarious and miserable, Wolska invites us to dream of a universe full of humanity and poetry. (source unknown)

l'étrangère is pleased to present the first exhibition in the UK of works by David Raffini and Tatiana Wolska. Their practices revolve around repurposing, reforming and reconstituting materials, using discarded objects or detritus from the studio. *The Poetry of Detritus*, will feature an installation of Wolska's recent sculptures and a selection of her works on paper, together with Raffini's paintings.

Describing herself a "junk collector", Wolska uses discarded plastic bottles, salvaged timber, rusty nails and foam from old mattresses and, "gives them new breath". Wolska transforms these humble, discarded materials into seductive, poetic, biomorphic sculptures. Works such as these won Wolska a prestigious Salon de Montrouge prize in 2014, which led to the presentation of her works at Palais de Tokyo in 2015, where her spectacular installation won rave reviews. Since then her nail sculpture has become a permanent fixture at Palais de Tokyo.

Wolska recycles waste, not because she is an environmentalist, but out of habit. She was brought up in communist Poland where recycling was a necessity to cope with the lack of goods. The artist ranks and orders the poor, damaged, rejected, "pollutants" and composes new, strangely beautiful, sensuous objects. Plastic bottles of Perrier or Badoit are cut and then heat-sealed before they are metamorphosed into aerolight forms. Her undulating wooden structures are shaped into sensuous, diaphanous forms, or like parasites weave their 'bodies' through the gallery walls. Tatiana's drawings echo her sculptures. Made with ink, pen, pencil and paint, they reveal mysterious forms with ribbed surfaces, folds and undulations as if tracing the DNA of a universe in gestation.

David Raffini's practice revolves around painting, sculpture, installations, sculptures and video produced mainly in collaboration with Florian Pugnaire, with whom he has won many awards and accolades. Be it on boards, aluminium or canvas, Raffini's paintings are initially left on the floor of his studio for an extended period, where they are walked over, and gather remnants of paint, dust and other detritus, before they enter the next stages of artistic transformation. In his own words: ... *when I start working on...paintings, my first pretext is...the fact of salvaging all this waste and perpetuating these various alterations of matter...* Mainly abstract, the paintings sometimes hint at figuration; the artist is interested in the border through which forms are born.

Raffini's paintings form several on-going series with titles implying action, process and gestures such as *Empreinter, Recomposer, Reconstituer, Éprouver*. Amongst the series presented in *The Poetry of Detritus*, will be *Land Escape*, exhibited at Maison Rouge in 2014, on which vividly colourful stains are organised in a way that suggests a representation of waste in a landscape. Also included in the exhibition will be the series *Éprouver*: stainless-steel plates that have been subjected to a violent process of crashing, gritting, punching and sanding before being covered with graphite and paint.

Raffini's paintings have a humanity that is not always apparent at first sight: they are 'ghosts' of an accumulated history of paint, artists' gestures and art-historical references. Together with Wolska's sculptures they create a poetic universe of beauty, hope, memory and renewed life.

David Raffini

Born in 1982 in Bastia, currently lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. After graduating with Applied Arts at the University of Corsica in 2004, he continued his studies at Villa Arson, Nice, graduating in 2007. Raffini works with video, installations, paintings and sculptures. He makes videos in close collaboration with Florian Pugnaire, winning significant recognition and many awards for these collaborative works. In 2009 they presented at the *Modules* programme at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, and again in 2010 when they took part in the *Dynasty* exhibition. In 2014, on the occasion of the exhibition *Le coefficient de Poisson*, they presented a site-specific installation on the patio of the Maison Rouge, Paris. Their solo exhibitions include Centre G. Pompidou, Paris, France, in 2016, Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris, France, in 2014, Musée National Pablo Picasso, Vallauris, France, in 2013, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France in 2009. Their other group exhibitions include Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, Paris, France, in 2015, Gagliardi Art System Gallery, Torino, Italy, in 2015, MAC VAL Paris, France, in 2015, Palazzo Cavour, Torino, Italy, 2014, Biennale de Belleville, Paris, France, 2014.

David Raffini's **solo exhibitions** include *INSULAE 1*, SHIN Gallery, New York, USA, in 2015, Espace Contemporain Domaine Orenga, Patrimonio, Corsica, 2014, and amongst his **group exhibitions** are *GAS Station*, Gagliardi Art System Gallery, Torino, Italy, in 2015, *Dark Energy*, Athens Digital Arts Festival, Athens, Greece, 2015; Espace d'Art Contemporain, Toulouse, France, in 2013, Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Villa Arson, Nice, France, 2013; *Impressions d'Ateliers*, Galerie Maud Barral, Nice, France, 2012; *Que Sera, Sera*, CAN, Neuchâtel, Switzerland, 2011; *Figura in the Isula, Fantasy Island*, FRAC Corsica, Corté, 2009; *Pavilion 7*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France, 2007.

Raffini has taken part in **residencies** at Fahrenheit Fondation By Flax, Los Angeles, USA, in 2016, Résidences américaines de l'Institut Français, New York, USA in 2015 and Pavillon du Palais de Tokyo, Sartène, Paris, France, in 2009-2010.

He has been awarded the prestigious **prizes**: Ricard Foundation Prize, Paris, 2015 and Videonale Audience Award of KfW Stiftung, Bonn in 2015, Prix des amis de la Maison Rouge, Paris and Un festival c'est trop court, Nice in 2014, Prix de la CTC section peinture, Ajaccio.

Raffini's artworks are part of a number of important **public collections**: Centre George Pompidou, Paris, Fond Regional d'Art Contemporain, La Réunion, Fond Regional d'Art Contemporain of Corsica, Museum of Modern Art, Paris.

Tatiana Wolska

Born in 1977 in Poland, currently lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. After graduating from Villa Arson art school in 2007 Wolska joined the artist run organisation, La Station, in Nice. She won Grand Prix of the Salon de Montrouge in 2014, and participated in the exhibition, *Modules*, supported by Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent at the Palais de Tokyo in 2014. In 2015 Wolska completed a residency at the Maison Saint-Sauveur, in Rocheservière and in the same year was invited to make a permanent, site-specific installation at Palais de Tokyo in Paris, *Principe d'incertitude*.

Wolska's **group exhibitions** include: *Wish You Were Here*, Galerie Catherine Issert, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France, 2014; *J'écris donc je suis' Ben*, La Station & invités, Le Garage, Brive, France,

2014; *Les Modules*, Fondation Pierre Bergé & Yves Saint-Laurent, Palais Tokyo, Paris, France, 2014; *Conjecture* with Vivien Roubaud, Galeria In Extenso, Clermont-Ferrand, France, 2013; *Entrée libre mais non obligatoire*, manifestation mono/polygraphique de Noël Dolla, Villa Arson, Nice, France, 2013; *Drawing Now*, Paris, France, 2013; *Moi & Les autres*, Galerie Catherine Issert, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France, 2012; *Partouse*, Berlin, Germany, 2012; *SUNSHINE & PRECIPITATION / DE LA PLUIE & DU BEAU TEMPS 2*, Belfast, Northern Island, Macumba Night Club, Nice, France, 2011; *Piegigriggio*, Corsica, 2011; *Pagès Viallat Wolska*, Galerie Catherine Issert, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France - as part of L'Art Contemporain et la Côte d'Azur, France, un territoire pour l'expérimentation - 1951/2011; MDAC, Cagnes sur Mer - as part of L'Art Contemporain et la Côte d'Azur, France, 2011, un territoire pour l'expérimentation - 1951/2011, Rouen, France, 2011; *Que sera, sera ...*, Centre d'Art de Neuchatel, Neuchatel, France, 2011; *Auto-Station*, La Station, Nice, France, 2011; *Nitrospective*, Piedigriggio, Corsica, 2010; Festival Arte Mare, Bastia, 2010; *Replikantki 2*, 2010; Centre d'art Contemporain BWA, Katowice, Poland, 2010; *Young Sculptural Talent Prize*, Collectivité Territoriale de Corse, Corsica, 2009; *Moi et les autres III*, Galerie Catherine Issert, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France, 2009, *Bas'art*, Frogs, France, 2009, *Ex-Voto*, Piedigriggio, Corsica, 2008; *Workshop Atelier Création France Culture*, Pavillon de Palais Tokyo, Paris, France, 2008; Biennale d'Art Contemporain de Nîmes, France, 2008; *L'art c'est renversant*, Galeries Lafayette, Nice, France, 2007; *Dernière station avant l'autoroute*, Museav, Nice, France, 2007; *Génération 2007*, Galerie de la Marine, Nice, France, 2007.