

RUTTKOWSKI;68

The Dream of the Fisherman's Wife

Hans Bellmer, Kitty Brophy, Robert Crumb, Sante D'Orazio, Jårg Geismar, Kent Monkman, Marieli Fröhlich, Matthew Collings, Robert Hawkins, Bjarne Melgaard, Pierre Molinier, Carlos Pazos, Vilte Fuller, Philomène Amougou, Lily Lewis, Sophy Rickett, Larry Rivers, Marie Sauvage, Penny Slinger, Andy Warhol, Bruce Weber, Cicciolina Ilona Staller, Hokusai

curated by Steven Pollock

Opening April 17, 2021

(adults only)

RUTTKOWSKI;68 Paris is pleased to present The Dream of the Fisherman's Wife, a themed exhibition inspired by Hokusai's legendary orgy scene of a pearl diver being penetrated by an octopus and his offspring of the same title. The frenzied evolutionary reunion of man and mollusc, is symbolically explored by 23 international artists, ranging from historical modernists to well-known contemporary & emerging talent.

Hokusai's scene included a painted breathy soundtrack. The artist's text is an anime-style description of the rapturous sounds of the diver's orgasms, with counterpoint by the octopus's dominant taunts, a coupling that has a fascinating poetic nuance. Neither species is the established norm, and this threesome might also be interpreted as a single organism, categorised as vertebrae and invertebrate, depending on the stage of arousal.

The woman cries, "This hateful octopus!" "People have called me an octopus!" Octopus is Japanese slang for vagina. She utters Hokusai's onomatopoeic cry: "Yoyoyoyoooh yes... it's...there!!! ...Inside, there, there! Yoyoyoooh, saa... suu suuu...!"

The idea of a vagina that is also called an octopus, penetrated by a real octopus while a mini-octopus fills the mouth, is uniquely Japanese; closer to Shinto animism & pantheism, than Western monotheism.

As a reaction to imported Western morality during the Meiji era, Japan volunteered to repress and discourage popular shunga (erotic woodblock prints) with new laws. Simultaneously, it was French art critic Edmond de Goncourt who proclaimed the pleasures of Japanese art, sans landscapes, cherry blossoms and cranes. He wrote, "In these albums we find this shocking image: on rocks green with seaweed lies a naked body of a woman, swooning with rapture, sicut cadaver ("fallen dead body"). The sicut cadaver of Goncourt's text, had its philosophical double with Nietzsche's edict...

"For art to exist, for any sort of aesthetic activity or perception to exist, a certain physiological precondition is indispensable: intoxication."

Hokusai's scene created an art history priapism that pokes at culture, high and low. What inspired Lautrec, Picasso & Rodin becomes at once contemporary and extended also into engagement in stratas of sub-cultures, from shibari, ahogao, hentai, futunara, to bukkake, cosplay, tentacle sex & zoophilia

Highlights from the exhibition include the erotic live performance of shibari artist Marie Sauvage at the vernissage, featuring a muse wearing only a kimono, suspended from the ceiling while Sauvage's interactions build intimacy in stages.

Feminist legend Penny Slinger is represented by a photograph of two women sharing a dildo in their mouths. A seminal work, *Bride and Groom -- Blunt Instrument*, 1973, poses the question; can the artist have her cake and eat it too? A clue lies deep in the void left by a missing slice of her sculpted wedding-cake skirt; exposed pudendum for sweet tooth and voyeurs alike.

Pop artist Larry Rivers created his own shunga series in the 70s. In *Erotic Jap Detail* we see a rendered close-up of already exaggerated genitalia: literally Goncourt's "landscape of genitals" complete with a small thick white cascading waterfall, bringing to mind states of bliss, ecstasy, nirvana and satiated lust.

Power dynamics and colonial symbolism are ingeniously exposed in the paintings of Kent Monkman, an indigenous artist of Cree origin based in Toronto. We see a Canadian Mountie fellating Monkman's alter ego, Miss Chief Testickles. Broken presumptions of race, dominance and desire, sow seeds of future promise as Monkman makes history paintings for a new generation.

"Be water my friend" -- Bruce Lee

Like Hokusai's *Great Wave*, a flowing liquid narrative winds through the scenes crammed into English painter Matthew Collings' alt art history lesson, *History of Piss*. The painting traces a timeline beginning in the 1950s with Jackson Pollock peeing in Peggy Guggenheim's fireplace, cutting to Andy Warhol's 80s abstract piss-oxidation paintings, concluding with a rendering of mega-dealer Larry Gagosian relieving himself on the stairs of an exclusive London nightclub in 2018.

Paris-born Cameroon artist, Philomène Amougou's video *The Black Sap*, oozes other secretions, composed of an organic primordial nectar. The scenes suggest an occult ritual between performer and a tentacled tree -- a modern alchemist's recipe for the rescue of mind, body and spirit. With psychedelic overtones, sitings of the eternal feminine are informed by Philomène's deep connection to African culture.

The Dream exhibition is an immersion into a libidinous sea, an acceptance of the octopus's invitation to surrender sapien motricity. The entwining and probing tentacles move simultaneously between one's legs while fucking the mind. The Dream is an unholy mantra to shake off the shell and ennui of society's restrictive tendencies. What emerges, picture by ribald picture, is as primal and cunning as Hokusai's wide-eyed team and their Picassoesque message : Sex is Art.



The Dream of the Fisherman's Wife by Hokusai ca. 1814

exhibition 17/4/21 - 15/5/21

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Larry Rivers Erotic Jap Detail

1975
acrylic on canvas
66.04 x 55.88 cm



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Kent Monkman
Nation to Subject Nation

2021
oil on canvas
183 x 137 cm



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Pierre Molinier

Le Triomphe des tribades ou Sur le pavois

1967
vintage silver print
17.4 x 11.5 cm
unique



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Robert Crumb

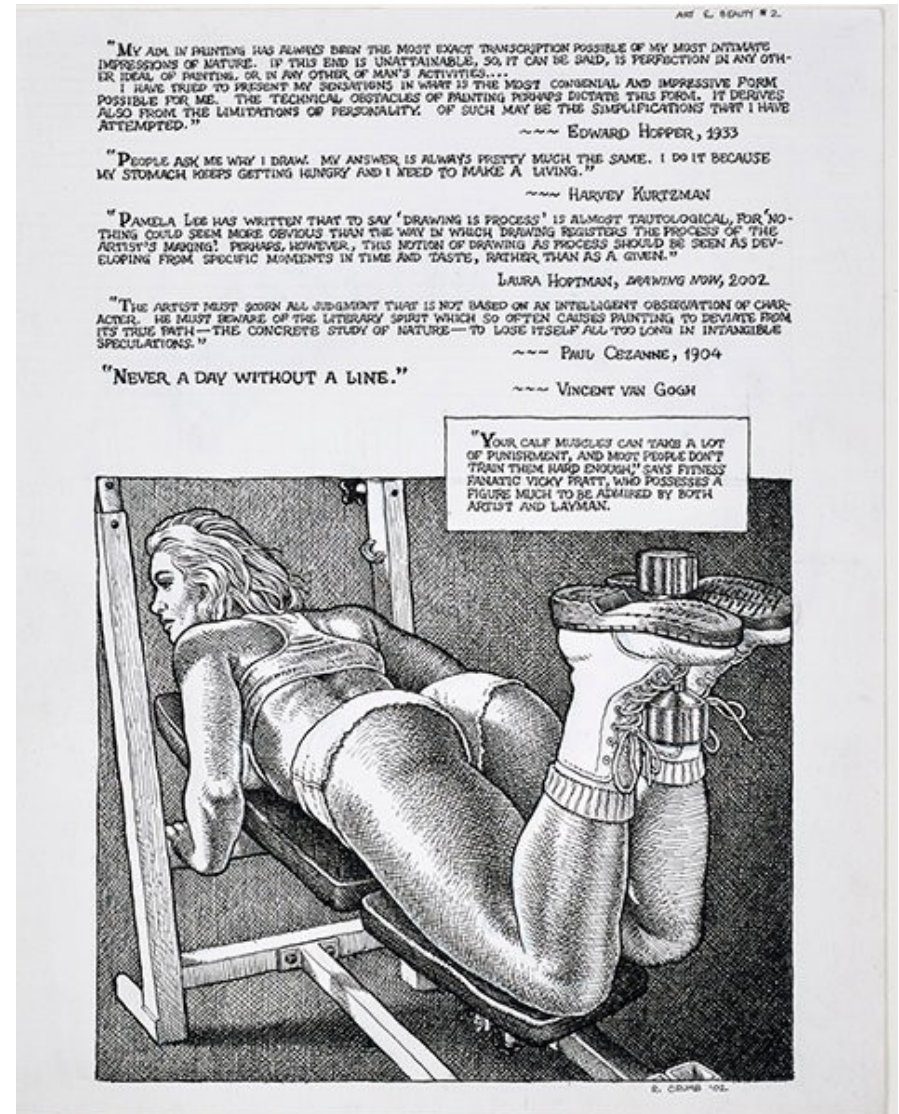
Untitled (Page from "Art & Beauty Magazine Number 2"

2003

2002

ink and correction fluid on paper

35.5 x 28 cm



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Matthew Collings

History of Piss in Modern and Contemporary Art

Jackson Pollock pisses in the fireplace at Peggy Guggenheim's hoity-toity party in

1943; Robert Rauschenberg and Dennis

Oppenheim piss their names in the snow by Pollock's grave in Green River cementary, Springs, in

the early 70s; Andy Warhol, Victor Hugo, Bridgid Berlin and Ronnie Cutrone piss on canvasses to

make Warhol's Piss Paintings series 1977/8; Larry Gagosian pisses on the red carpeted stairs at

Annabel's in 2018



2021
oil on canvas
50 x 70 cm

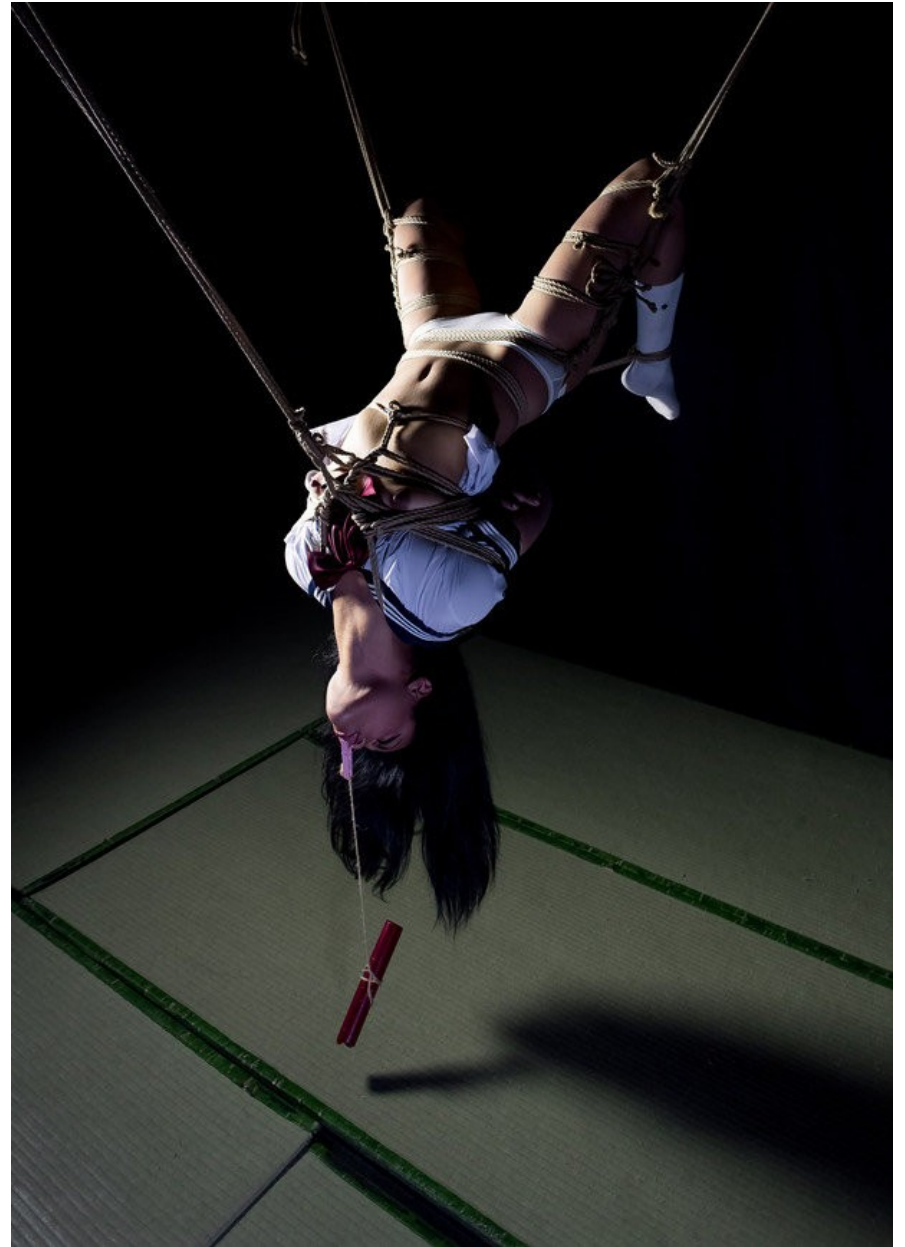
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Marie Sauvage
Tokyo Bound (photographed by THL)

2017
archival photographic print

70 x 40 cm
edition 5



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Philomène Amougou
The Origin Of The Black Sap

2019

multimedia art video : sculpture, animation, performance



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Penny Slinger Bride and Groom - Blunt Instrument

1973
vintage black and white photograph, sepia-toned
20.3 x 12.7 cm

unique



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Katsushika Hokusai
"Manpuku wagojin" Gods of Intercourse

ca. 1821

original colour wood block print

22 x 27.31 cm

