

PRESS RELEASE

«PERSONAL STRUCTURES - Identities»

Contemporary Art Exhibition

May 11th to November 24th 2019
Palazzo Mora & Giardino Della Marinaressa
Venice, Italy

GUADELOUPE ISLANDS PAVILION

Jean-Marc Hunt (FR)

Joël Nankin (FR)

François Piquet (FR)

Organized by the **European Cultural Centre**
Coordination, artists representation: **Krystel Ann Art**
Curators: **Marci Gaymu & Chrystelle Merabli**

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I - THE PROJECT

Three artists from Guadeloupe in Venice

PERSONAL
STRUCTURES
Venice 2019

For its 5th edition, “**PERSONAL STRUCTURES - Identities**” exhibition, organized by the **European Cultural Centre (ECC)** in Venice during the Biennale, will show a group of **200 artists** from different countries.

Three artists from Guadeloupe - Jean-Marc Hunt, Joël Nankin, and François Piquet -, selected by the curators **Marc Gaymu & Chrystelle Merabli**, will be exhibited **from May 11th to November 24th 2019**, in a set of spaces called the “**Guadeloupe Islands Pavilion**”, composed of a 44m² room in the **Palazzo Mora**, and outdoor spaces in **Marinaressa Gardens, Venice**.

This is the first time that Guadeloupe Islands are represented in an international artistic event of this magnitude, through the work of artists who have a committed discourse about the Guadeloupe history and its island society.

The French journalist **Kareen Guiock**, host at M6 channel and born of a guadeloupean father, will be the **sponsor of this Guadeloupe Islands Pavilion**.

The **European Cultural Centre (ECC)** manages different places dedicated to European cultures throughout the world. From 2011, with the support of **GAA Foundation**, his partner in Italy, the ECC is organizing contemporary art and architecture exhibitions in Venice, during the Biennale, in three palaces and two public gardens in the heart of the city. These exhibitions are free and receive nearly **500.000 visitors each year**. (+ infos: <https://europeanculturalcentre.eu/aboutus>)



Palazzo Mora
Venice
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II - THE CURATORS

PERSONAL
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Marci Gaymu

Born in Brazil in 1951, Marci Gaymu studied cinema, painting, engraving, lithography, jewellery, and sculpture. Then, she opened a gallery dedicated to Latin American art in 1987 in Paris, in Hong Kong and Madrid in the 90s. She regularly participates in important international contemporary art fairs. For several years she has been working in collaboration with the European Cultural Centre during the Venice Biennale, as a curator.

Chrystelle Merabli

Krystelle Ann Art agency director, president of Kouleurs et Sens association, member of Guggenheim Museum New York acquisitions department, graduated from Sotheby's Institute of Art.

Chrystelle Merabli established herself in finance and real estate via several companies in Europe, the Caribbean and the United States. Meanwhile, her passion for art led her to invest in a rich collection of contemporary designers, painters and sculptors.

She coordinates the participation of the three Guadeloupean artists in "Personal Structures - Identities" exhibition.

"CROSSING"

by Chrystelle Merabli

In the fifteenth century Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic and discovered the Americas. He will baptize Guadeloupe, the Amerindian island of Karuka (island with beautiful waters in the Caribbean language), known today as French Caribbean territory Guadeloupe. Colombus initial crossing will generate other sea crossings synonymous with pain for the African continent: the slave trade. From these multiple cultural shocks, human confrontations, multiple wrenching and economic exchanges, came a new people: the Creoles.

The term "crossing" both symbolizes the voyage made by the colonists and the slaves towards the lands of the Americas, and is also an image of the psychological journey made by the individuals towards the discovery of their inner selves. This quest of identity requires knowledge about history, and the constitution of an indelible link between the people of Guadeloupe and its ancestors of various origins.

*"CROSSING" is related to the philosophy of the book **"Mangrove Crossing"** of the Guadeloupian writer **Maryse Condé**, winner of the 2018 Alternative Nobel Prize in Literature.*

Like the characters in the novel, the visitor is invited to witness a change of spirit, the passage from an identity born of colonialism to an assumed Caribbean identity, whose birth passes through the expiation of pain and the construction of a common history where the people wear a new skin.

Guadeloupian contemporary art, while still young, is in turmoil and is structuring. Mocked for a long time, visual artists from Guadeloupe write an historical page, where their role as ambassadors and storytellers of the reality of their territory is legitimized. Guadeloupian artists were able to bring out aesthetics that bear the social, cultural and historical identity of their island.

Although the works of the three artists presented in this exhibition are very different, they all express the identity research of Guadeloupean people. Through various media and techniques, Jean-Marc Hunt, Joël Nankin and François Piquet describe the origins of social tensions, but also a rich and diverse cultural heritage that forges the spirit of their country.

Jean-Marc Hunt *native of Guadeloupe settled on the island after having started his artistic practice in France. He is interested in how the link between traditions and the current socio-political structure affects the behavior and sense of responsibility of present generations. Jean-Marc Hunt often uses traditional objects or terms specific to the Creole language to show the link between the past and the post-colonial present of Guadeloupe. He also adds satirical elements in his artistic language to show the interrelationship and complexity of today's society, where people have a hard time defining themselves between insularity and globalization.*

Joël Nankin, *the eldest artist, is also a local figure known for his commitment to the fight for independence of the island. Nankin's work is deeply rooted in the heritage of African ancestors and in the way the people from Guadeloupe achieve resilience through time by being in touch with their African traditions. His work is mainly concentrated on the decolonization of the esthetics to empower the people through a positive vision of their cultural legacy.*

François Piquet *is not a native of Guadeloupe; he came with his wife on the Island 19 years ago. His work shows both an inside and outside view of Guadeloupe social, psychological and historical evolution. Through videos and sculptures François Piquet is trying to draw a bridge between the past and present of the island. His work depicts the violence and resistance underlying Guadeloupe cultural and social identity. François Piquet expresses the urgency for the people to achieve reconciliation and acceptance of the past to heal Guadeloupian society of its wounds.*

In their practices the three artists highlight the need for Guadeloupean people to embrace their history and be proud of their capacity of resilience, in order to build a peaceful and positive future for the island.

III - THE ARTISTS & THEIR ARTWORKS

PERSONAL
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AT GUADELOUPE ISLANDS PAVILION

1 - JEAN-MARC HUNT

Jean-Marc Hunt is a visual artist and curator, who lives and works in Guadeloupe French Caribbean. Born in 1975 in France, he grows up in suburb, making his marks in the graffiti and the rap music. In 2003, he settles down in Guadeloupe, where from he's native. His creation is a form of urban neo-expressionism describing a creolization of the world, through the transformation and the expression of the mixed body. Working as much the drawing and the painting as the sculpture and the installation, he proceeds by series, accumulation and misappropriation as inseparable components. Invited to collective exhibitions in Europe, in Caribbean and in the United States, he also realizes residences of art which will allow him to approach the monumental creation in sculpture and painting. He conceives also federative events in visual arts since 2005, as scenographer and curator. In 2015, he's decorated by the Ministry of Culture and Communication of the French Republic with the Chevalier of Arts and Letters.

<http://www.jeanmarchunt.fr/>



"Mongolfière"

Acrylic on paper mounted on canvas
75x50cm - 2016



"Happyyness"

Acrylic on paper mounted on canvas
75x50cm - 2018

HIS PROJECT: «THE FOREIGNER»

This project of creation is a work from salvaged materials. It is about a structure in red resin and white, which has the shape of a question mark, that I recovered in an abandoned (given up) nursery school. The set is supported in its extremity by a wooden ladder called in Guadeloupe « ladder help » (rudimentary manufacturing from board of construction). This part inspires me the cycle of the absurd « Camusien » where the soft indifference of the world questions the simplicity of the work and confers him an autonomy which escapes us. The reason of its existence questions the right and the acceptance of the not sense of the strangeness.

"L'Étranger"
Monumental sculpture, mixed technique
350x300cm - 2019



ART CRITIC

The expression of the connection between everyday life and the derision of death determines the stripped expressivity of Jean-Marc Hunt's work, and thus his need to find the pictorial and sculptural form best suited to his telling of a life experience. He takes on the duty to make visible the shock of inevitable encounters between different worlds and cultures. Hunt's style reveals the reality of the desires, hopes, joys, disappointments, and sufferings experienced in the confined spaces of the impoverished suburbs.

Indeed, the irruption of his writing, fast and jerky, represents the reality of social and psychological experiences, and essentially the existential condition of humanity. Hunt thus points out the distressing a pace that shapes our modern era.

The common thread running through his three reference exhibitions, Negroscope (2008), Negropolitan Traffic (2010), Negropolis (2014), followed by Récits cosmogoniques in 2017, is haunted by caricatured figures created by a mind that's radically critical of the pretentious game, which he rocks with a powerful, sardonic laugh. Hunt's tossed, erratic, seismographic plot transcribes his revolt against injustices and the chaos that shakes the foundations of our modern societies. His sculptures also challenge mental barriers, and other walls and customs barriers, echoing the old adage that hatred is born of fear, while fear is born of ignorance.

"Revisiting the Polis and Reestablishing the soul of being"
by Christian Bracy, AICA-France art critic, March 2019

III - THE ARTISTS & THEIR ARTWORKS

AT GUADELOUPE ISLANDS PAVILION

2 - JOËL NANKIN

Born on 4 March 1955, Joël Nankin lives and works in Guadeloupe. Painter, musician, but also political activist, he has made his life a fight for creole identity. Passionate about percussion, he founded in 1979 the AKIYO group, a musical project and separatist movement.

Later, campaigning for Guadeloupe independance, he is judged for committing attacks and threatening the French territory integrity, and is imprisoned from 1983 to 1989. Behind bars he discovered painting and has been influenced by the Haitian pictorial universe, Kandinsky and Mark Rothko. Nankin began working with pencil and soon moved on to colour. He uses mixed media, ink, acrylic, spray.

His really efficient works are poems dedicated to people that suffer, denounce domination and injustice. Violent in the way of using colours, abrupt and scheming, it seems to be the reflection of his political commitment.

<https://www.joelnankin.com/>

"Et rouge était la Ville"
Acrylic on canvas
130x190 cm - 2018





HIS PROJECT: «**EXISTENCE**»

« Existence » is a word that resides permanently in Joël Nankin artistic universe. Egzistans, in creole, was the title of an exhibition that took place at Nankin Gallery in Guadeloupe, in 2015.

The history of humanity and of the Caribbean is full of stories about boats and travels, desired or forced. For this painter and activist who spent six years in jail as a political prisoner, the destiny of men and women is closely related to the movement from a place to another, and the ship is the main instrument of it. Crossings and other navigations towards new countries are at the centre of Nankin work. Whether it is the slave trade horrors or the actual news about migrants, the boat and the so-called « marine » aesthetics traverse the all history of painting.

Nankin painting is resilient, makes us think about a tragic situation that repeats through the centuries, and gives a voice to the underprivileged.

"Je ne suis pas seul"

Acrylic, mixed technique on canvas
200x100 cm - 2018

ART CRITIC

Guadeloupean visual artist Joël Nankin literally freed himself through painting. Introduced to art in Haiti after leaving colonial jails, he became a major figure in the visual arts in Guadeloupe. He opens up the mind by practicing an aesthetic that goes "beyond what we can see."

Nankin paints in a rhythm, with outlines, streaks, erasures and scratches that gives his work movement. Over the course of more than thirty years of facing the canvas, Nankin has built a pictorial nomenclature that extends from an obvious figuration to a deconstruction of this same figuration.

The artist has alternated between personal and collective exhibitions, shown in Guadeloupe or abroad in Canada, Trinidad, Rome, New York or Paris. His creations are almost always populated by characters inspired by Native American, African, and Asian symbols. Nankin summons beings, spirits, and souls.

His dives into the heart of painting display confident, hatched, nervous, blurry, or messy features, but above all they show absent or wide-eyed gazes, witnesses of a history often written by the conquerors. Nankin's pieces transcend this question of memory in our existence.

Nathalie Hainaut, art critic, 2019

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3 - FRANÇOIS PIQUET

Born in Paris suburb, he obtained an Industrial Design engineer degree, and simultaneously developed musical performing and graphical and multimedia design. Arrived in Guadeloupe in 2000, he created "Collactif", a group of urban artistic intervention, which participated in the 2007 "Reappropriation of Darboussier" (an old cane sugar factory), an art event where he braided his first sculpture, monumental, with iron strips that were used to hoop rum barrels. It was a revelation.

His first sculptures were purchased in 2008 by the Guadeloupe administrations (Museum of the cane, Memorial Act). In 2010, he co-produced the first Salon of Contemporary Art in Guadeloupe in 2010. He then presented his first solo exhibition, "IRON & SKIN" in Guadeloupe and Martinique, and installed sculptures in the streets of Marseille (France) for an artistic residency in 2011.

He continues his exploration of Caribbean contemporary creation in 2012, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Sint Maarten. Since 2013, he has focused its production on public spaces, ephemeral and permanent urban interventions in Guadeloupe, Martinique, France and Senegal always with the research of Caribbean experimentation, coupled with social commitment. He presented "Reparations" in 2016, and has since participated in several collective exhibitions and international fairs in the Caribbean and Europe. The International Slavery Museum in Liverpool (UK) has just added it to its permanent collection.

<http://www.francoispiquet.com/>



"Atlas", série "Moun brilé"
Iron blades, mechanical parts
280x150x150cm
2018

HIS PROJECT: «DECOLONIAL EQUATION»

In this time of global movements of people, goods and disasters, in this space where cultures interpenetrate inexorably, the universal can be envisaged only in plurality and diversity, unless to be reduced to the formatted expression of economic, social, cultural dominations, directly resulting from a colonial genesis of the world.

To escape disasters, war, or even annihilation, we need to recombine these universal archetypes and shape decolonial utopias able to develop new forms of society. Decolonial discussion is unavoidable. The All-World, theorized by the martinican writer Edouard Glissant, is a living laboratory for the "world that is coming": a multi-cultural society dominated by a post-colonial foreign power, and the total unpredictability of the announced surges, whether they are technological or human.

This project intends to establish the conditions of the decolonial encounter, often perceived as a face-to-face argument between irreconcilable and totally deaf postures.



"You & Me"
Braided iron blades, wood
330x130x130cm
2019

ART CRITIC

The works of François Piquet, both in their manufacture and in their reception, generate an unrest that is continually reiterated. He creates three-dimensional "objects", installations, drawings, and multimedia productions through an approach based on appropriation, recycling, and reinterpretation. His work questions memory, modern Guadeloupean society, and the complexity of human relationships resulting from a former dominant/dominated system.

He drew attention by making animal and human figures out of woven metal strips he recovered in the old Darboussier sugar factory in Guadeloupe. These strips of iron were originally intended to be used as hoops for rum barrels. They refer to an ethic position of the artist.

For a work he calls Mounpapyé, he built forms out of crumpled paper that he wrapped in large sheets of paper, tied up, and coated with resin. For his project Moun brilé, he carved deep black burned wood into figures. These pieces show a sense of violence and/or vulnerability.

For the 2019 Venice Biennale, he created a multimedia installation entitled Equation décoloniale, that shows the difficulty and necessity for people to coexist.

Dominique Berthet, 2019

PALAZZO MORA

The 3 artists from Guadeloupe will have a dedicated space at Palazzo Mora, 2cd floor, Room 206.

This palace will also host the official pavilions of Mozambique, Seychelles and Kiribati Islands, which are part of the official programme of the Venice Biennale.

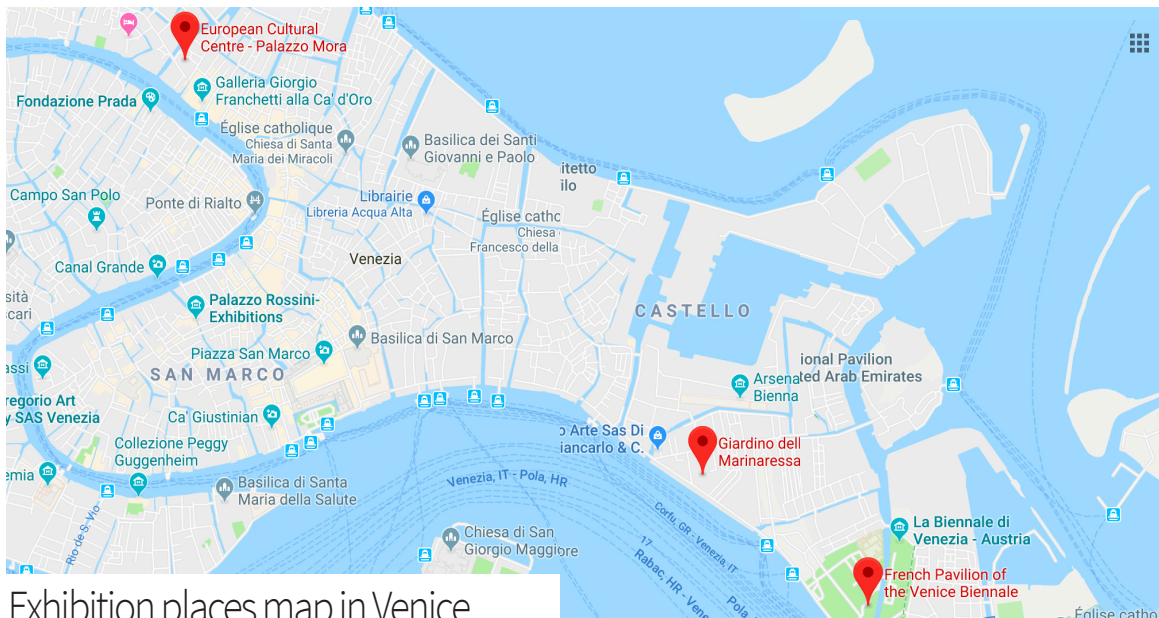
Presentation of Palazzo Mora:

<https://vimeo.com/201120279>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcV5lSZ1LFw&feature=youtu.be>

GIARDINO DELLA MARINARESSA

A Jean-Marc Hunt monumental sculpture will be presented at Marinaressa Gardens, close to the official French Pavilion.



Exhibition places map in Venice

V - CONTACTS & PRACTICAL INFOS

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"PERSONAL STRUCTURES - Identities"
GUADELOUPE ISLANDS PAVILION

MAY 11th to NOVEMBER 24TH 2019

Opening : May 9-10

Palazzo Mora from 6 to 10pm

Marinaressa Gardens from 5 to 8pm

Press Preview (on request): May 9-10
from 10am to 6pm

PALAZZO MORA

Strada Nova, 3659, 30121 Venezia

Everyday from 10am to 6pm except Tuesday

+INFOS

www.krystelannart.com

www.europeanculturalcentre.eu

www.ecc-italy.eu

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