



Augustin Rebetez @ La Nef, Le Noirmont, 2018

BIOGRAPHY

Augustin Rebetez (03.08.1986) works in various media including painting, photography, video, sculpture, installations and theatre. He is developing a universe populated by characters, chimeras and peculiar machines which reflect his exuberant imagination. Drawing inspiration from outsider and folk art brut as well as tribal design, Rebetez constructs a multifacetted body of work that defies categorisation. Rebetez's work seems to form part of an ancient tradition of legends and rites.

His creations relate to a wondrous and fantastic world which swings between dream and nightmare, the lighthearted and the serious. A modern alchemist, Rebetez plays with movement and sound, transforming banal reality into poetic fiction. (Nathalie Herschdorfer, MBAL, 2016)

Since 2009, he has exhibited his work all ove r the world. His solo show at the Rencontres photographiques d'Arles in 2011 marked a milestone in his career, as did the Sydney Biennale in 2014. He received the Vevey International Photography Prize that same year. Then, in 2016, he created a big in-situ installation for the Tinguely Museum in Basel.

In his vibrant exploration of total art, he collaborates with many performers, acrobats, musicians and friends, as well institutions such as Théâtre de Vidy in Lausanne where he created three different pieces.

In 2018, he released a serie of twelve stop-motion shorts with director and clown Martin Zimmermann, entitled The Adventures of Mr. Skeleton. This autumn, he exhibited his work in Tokyo, Beirut and Shenzhen.

Rebetez is represented by several galleries including Nicola Von Senger in Zurich and Stieglitz19 in Antwerpen. He has published several books.

In 2019, his main project will be a major solo show at SESC Consolação in São Paulo with curator Adelina von Fürstenberg.





WE ARE GHOSTS TRYING TO RECOME VISIBLE WE LIKE RITUALS RELIEVE IN SHAPOWS AND WHISPERS WE WORK FOR THE MIGHT IN CUR POCKETS ONLY OUR NOTHING OUR ARMS ARE 00G5 HANDS OUR CRANIUMS ARE BOWLS WE HEAL WITH SMALL WOUNDS
OUR ART IS MOTORIZED AND SWILLS DOWN KEROZINE WE CAN GO EVERYWHERF
WE HAVE TEN LIVES WE
ARE JET FIGHES PARACHUTES MINERYA KEROZENE CASTS TO TWIST YOUR LIFE WE CREATE ACCIDENTS WE LAY DUR EYES AND EYERYTHING UPON GRASPS US

A FRAGILE DRIZZLE OR A SLAP
THIS IS WHAT WE LIKE TO OFFER
AND IF
OUR DREAMS TRICKLE DOWN YOUR
UMBRELLA THEN IT IS NICE WEATHER
HERE ARE THE WORDS THAT AGREE
WITH US
IF NOTHING SATISFIES YOU

WE ARE THE APPETITE THAT



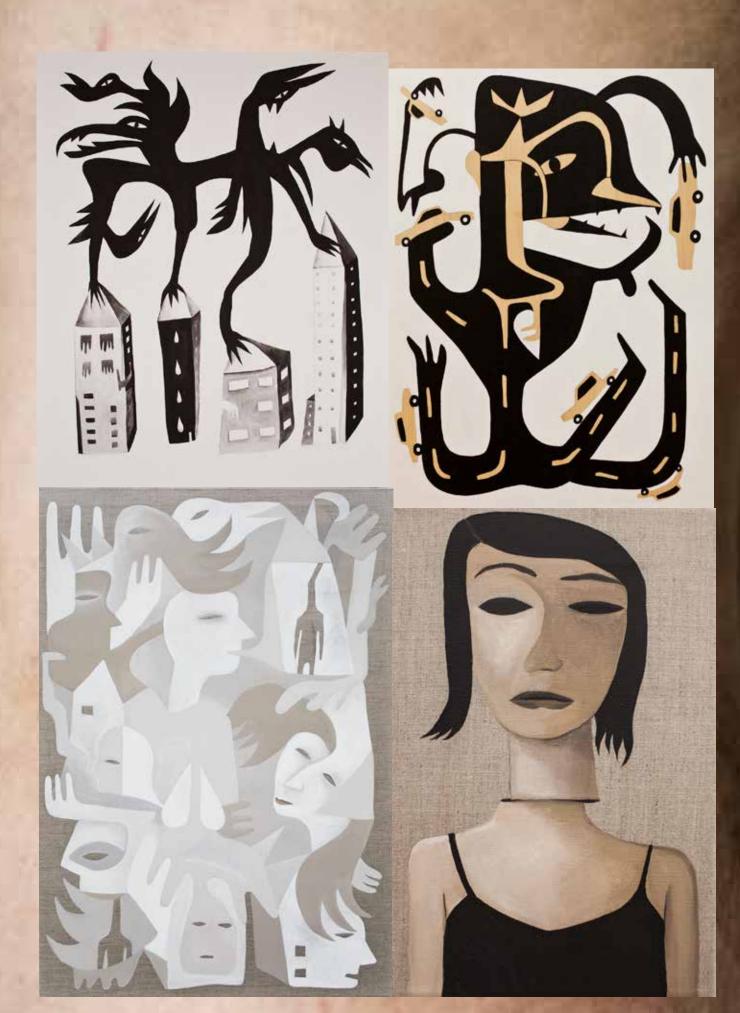


















Arrière-tête (mécanismes), Images Vevey, 2014



arrière-tête (mécanismes), Feldbusch Wiesner, Berlin, 2015



Factory behind your brain, Centre Clark, Montreal, 2015



conference of birds, MBAL, Le Locle, 2016









Augustin Rebetez

by Claudia Küssel, FOAM Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam, may 2015

Being one of the most striking voices of a new generation of Swiss artists, Augustin Rebetez (1986) was selected as one of the Foam Talents in 2013 and as the winner of last year's Vevey International Photo Award. In a short period of time Rebetez has developed a rich and strong oeuvre, expressing his vivid inner poetry through dynamic forms and media. His work represents a personal, surreal universe that offers a stage to mysterious, tragicomical characters and bizarre situations. Masked figures and animal-like creatures are the theatrical performers in a continuous narrative which is energetic, dark, humorous and loaded with subconscious references. Most of all, Rebetez' work bursts with creative and visual power.

Although his works are based on pre-conceived ideas there is a lot of spontaneous, intuitive creation in situ that comes straight from the heart and results in a hybrid of related media. With photography as the starting point, his images, films, animations, drawings, sculptures, installations and performances are blended in a Gesamtkunstwerk in which all forms respond to one another. He embraces collaborations with friends and colleagues, and knows no restrictions in realising his inner vision. According to Rebetez a good picture brings emotions, dreams and a constellation of ideas and is the result of his ongoing artistic research. Not easy to define and without any rules, he directs the viewer with an extensive manifesto that seems to be proclaimed by a few black animal-like creatures: 'We are ghosts trying to become visible. We like rituals. We believe in shadows and whispers. We work for the night.'

The night is an important time and place where many of Rebetez' creations originate from or are constructed in. In his earlier series which culminated in the publication ANTHILL (METEORITES) published by RVB Books, Rebetez presents raw nocturnal séances that took place in his house in the Swiss mountains. He invited some friends and they became the protagonists in an enigmatic narrative that has the feel of a party gone wild. Rebetez presents a world of fiction and reality where the artist is a director, a participant and a witness at the same time. In experimental settings, using contrasting vibrant colours, installations, sculptures, drawings, photography, he invites the viewer to dwell in the artists' inner world.

As rich as the final outcome of his work, he finds his inspiration in a wide range of mysterious practices like dreams, rites, energy, Spiritism, automatic language, besides important themes as the theatre and the circus where all his subconscious figments seem to assemble. In an interview for Foam Magazine, Jörg Colberg asked him about the artists that are important to him. Not surprisingly Rebetez named Louise Bourgeois, Buster Keaton, William Kentridge, as well as artists from Art Brut and literature. As we look at his drawings there seems to be some local influence too like from Paul Klee. The characteristic black animal-like figures that populate his work also bring the paintings from Hieronymus Bosch to mind. Especially his most famous painting The Garden of Earthly Delights, with its fantasy creatures that inhabit both paradise and hell.

Recently some of his works seem to be more defined, also in their aesthetic approach. There are many references to the melancholia and naiveté of the clown Pierrot whose character has developed into the alter-ego of the artist during the 19th and 20th century. Rebetez also allows more light to enter his work, the narrative is less personal and more abstract. Marionette puppets and figures from the theatre of shadows perform a silent play. However, in contrast to the still images, his amazing energetic stop motion films have kept the dynamism that is typical for his work. And even more than that. At some points hilarious and spookily dark, the creatures who are performed by acrobatic friends, seem to be trapped in an inefficient 'perpetuum mobile' with a lot of Buster Keaton style melodrama. Rebetez makes endless objects come to life in original and surprising settings. All this creativity must be born from a free spirit with an endless imagination. The characters and the humour are refreshing and inevitably catching. Once you have entered the rollercoaster that takes you to the haunted house of Rebetez' mind, there's no way of escaping. The little ghosts who proclaim the manifesto end it as follows: "if nothing satisfies you we are the appetite that you need. we will blow your mind eventually, so go for it!"



Sculpture Sean O'Hagan on photography

theguardian

Unseen photo fair: the Amsterdam weirdfest jampacked with genius

From barbecued photobooks to inflatable bouncy-castle clouds and the madcap brilliance of Augustin Rebetez, many shades of weird are converging in Amsterdam for the 2014 show



Tasty — Lifotitied, from the series Arrière-Tête (Mécanismes) by Augustin Rebetez. Photograph: Rebetez/Galerie Nicola von Seriger and Festival Linages

Earlier on, I had been introduced to Augustin Rebetez with the words, "You should check out this guy's work. It's pretty wild." I did. It is. Rebetez makes photographs, drawings and films obsessively. At the Galerie Nicola von Sanger, his work covers two walls: primitive paintings, collages and photos of strange things that show a singularly dark imagination. Children look like zombies. A bald woman with kohl-rimmed eyes could be their undead mother. The legs of what look like a row of homemade electric chairs sprout shoes.



Another piece by Rébetez. Photograph: (I) Augustin Rébetez/Galerie Nicola von Senger and Festival Images:



On a third wall, a bizarre single-frame animated film plays on loop: a dead crow flies from a wooden case and flutters around a house, in which bodies emerge from drawers, slither across bare floorboards and up a flight of stairs then disappear. Makeshift machine-men whirr frantically as though they are trying to take flight. It is as if Rebetez's photographs and drawings have come to life in homage to the Quay Brothers. (Watch some of his videos here.)

Over at the book market, RVB books are selling Rebetez's new book Anthill Memories, which captures his relentlessly active imagination. Like the films, many of the the photographs were constructed around his house in the Swiss Jura mountains with the help of his friends - many of whom seem to be circus performers. Strangeness abounds: there's a collapsing caravan, a crumpled house in a field of snow and the outline of Nosferatu on a battered fence. It is hard to know what is real and what created, but the sense of playful pranks is present in all his work. His website he tells us, "My father also publishes my books. My cousin has a brewery. My sister is a dancer and many other stuff"..." The "many other stuff" betokens a strange and singular creative imagination that is one of the highlights of the richest and most surprising Unseens so far.





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