

## ***Florentine et Alexandre Lamarche-Ovize***

*With Marion Auburtin, Jennifer Caubet, Matthieu Cossé, Ferenc Gróf, Bayrol Jimenez and The Drawer.*

In collaboration with the SMICTOM de l'Embrunais Savinois (Pralong Ressourcerie)

Exhibition from 15 April to 11 June 2016

Opening Thursday 14 April 2016 at 18:00

While the narrator of William Morris' futurist novel *News From Nowhere* or *An Epoch of Rest*, walks across an unrecognizable London, he discovers Trafalgar Square stripped of the sculpture of Nelson, displaying in its place a flowering orchard of apricot trees. Through this radical gesture, the author, who was one of the most important British supporters of the Paris Commune, thus pays homage to the destruction of the Vendôme Column in 1871. This revolutionary sequence, but most importantly its influence in the field of art, the imaginary, to use Kristin Ross' term <sup>1</sup>, that is conveyed in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Europe, consists of the historical support, as well as the decor of the new project by Florentine and Alexandre Lamarche-Ovize.

Naturally then, we find here and there in the exhibition space of the art center reimagined barricades made of bric-a-brac – appearing at once like embodying objects, like pedestals for displaying works, or like sculptures. Modeled upon the barricades built by Napoléon Gaillard<sup>2</sup>, who considered them as works of art in their own right. There exist, by the way, photographs in which he can be seen posing proudly in front of his heaps and in so doing proclaiming the right of artisans to sign their creations in the same way that artists do.

Nor is it an accident if William Morris, the writer referenced above, was also a textile designer, architect, draughtsman, painter, printer and one of the founders of the Arts and Crafts movement, seeking the reconciliation between the so-called minor arts and the fine or cerebral arts. This lack of demarcation is also visible in the Lamarche-Ovize's exhibition, where painted dishes rub shoulders with sculptures, furniture and drawings, according to a principle of equivalence and interchangeability that elevates utilitarian object to the same level as any painting or sculpture. Losing its aura, the object also thus becomes an element of the décor consisting of a multitude of pieces, including those of other artists invited by the duo: Marion Auburtin, Jennifer Caubet, Matthieu Cossé, Ferenc Gróf, Bayrol Jimenez and

The Drawer. Here decompartmentalization is linked, as in many of Lamarche-Ovize's projects, to a consciousness of collective rather than individual interest. The works of one and another artist melt into the background, contributing in this way to the sharing of know-how at work in the duo's project, who are at once ceramicists, painters, draughtsmen, sculptors and second-hand hunters. We understand that they enjoy this contribution of others, this additional level.

In Embrun, they approached the donation center (Ressourcerie) that for two years has been collecting used furniture and tableware, which make up the raw material of *News from Nowhere*, in the same way after all that the barricades were raised with what Communards had on-hand. Humble things – many shoes were used for example – that can be elevated, through a combination of factors, to the status of small monuments. The artists have inventoried, not without humor, a certain number of them in as series of paintings entitled *Encyclopédie du presque rien* (*Encyclopedia of Almost Nothing*).

Solenn Morel  
(Translation : David Malek)

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<sup>1</sup> Kristin Ross, *L'imaginaire de la Commune*, La Fabrique éditions, 2015

<sup>2</sup> Napoléon Gaillard was a shoemaker who participated in the Commune. He oversaw the erection of barricades across Paris. [TN]