

GALERIE CATHERINE PUTMAN

Agathe May
Le miroir aux alouettes

16 January- 13 March 2021



Agathe May *Un si petit jardin* (detail), 2017-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 42 x 63,5 cm

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Galerie Catherine Putman has great pleasure in presenting Agathe May's new exhibition:
Le Miroir aux alouettes (The Reflecting Illusion)

These astonishing objects—traps used by hunters to attract larks—gave the popular expression that says what it has to say: the bird is seduced, attracted and fooled. The movement and 'supernatural' brightness of the object makes the bird attracted and incapable of resisting. The titles of the works exhibited use the name of the exhibition and then extend it by *Un Fil à la patte* (With Strings Attached). They are thus at the heart of the contemporary question represented here by faces focused on the ground and lit by the screens of portable computers and other digital devices. Faces in this raw light are hypnotised, absorbed by the source of energy, recreating as in Georges de La Tour's works an impression of a person surrounded by darkness. In *La Caverne*, an ultra-connected man, dulled, is fettered and dependent on an entwined network of cables and connections. He no longer has the need to face the reality of the world. Virtual things and beings are enough for him. His eyes are used to the light of a computer screen and no longer see the sky. He lives in grogginess. *Le Rideau* (The Curtain) is closed: an imitation world is better, even if we know that it is insufficient and unsound. As a counterpoint to these works, women seem to gain a more courageous and solar position, more anchored to *Entre ciel et terre* (Between Sky and Earth) in spite of the constraints, traps and obstacles that they are used to, and live in a shrunken world that has become *Un si petit jardin* (Such a Small Garden). Children continue to build their *Cabane* (Hut) still dreaming of their future adult lives. An animal observes the human being in almost every engraving. While humans take shelter by making do with the illusory and become blind, deaf and dumb, animals are the most lucid and the most able to judge the folly of men.

This is a curious exhibition where all the themes can be seen against the background of past or present situation events. But they always contain a measure of premonition when you examine the dates of the works—from 2016 to 2019.

The show finishes with *À fleur de peau* (Thin Skin and Sensitive) in which the artist shows herself as if on a pyre, burned by the information in a daily paper, blocking her ears and refusing to see, no longer to be put up with the dramas, complaints and pains of the world. The saying *Le Miroir aux alouettes* shifts towards another proverb: 'faire l'autruche' (to bury one's head in the sand). There's nothing new in the world.

Each exhibition by the artist shows her extreme sensitivity to the world and her critical view of contemporary society.

Les Cracheurs showed adolescence and the relation with the body, human relations were questioned in *Haute et basse cour* and the relation with nature was examined in *Outrage*.

In *Le Miroir aux alouettes* the artist addresses the abuses in equality and communities in a word in which humans are more bound than released.

Born in 1956, Neuilly-sur-Seine. Lives and works in Montreuil.
Graduated from Ecole nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs, Paris, in 1979.
She was resident at the Villa Medici and the Villa Kujoyama, Kyoto, Japan.
In 2017, she received the Mario Avati prize from the Beaux-Arts de Paris, followed by a solo exhibition at the Institut de France.

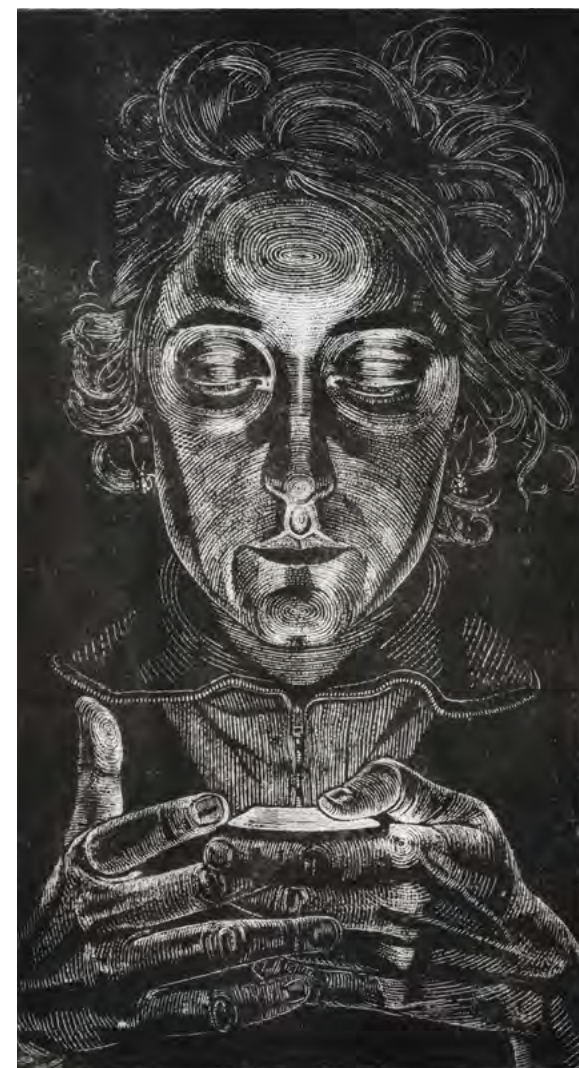
Agathe May's engravings are inked like paintings, hand-printed, assembled, stuck together, set off. The artist makes of each print a unique work, an image always reinvented.

Le miroir aux alouettes is Agathe May's fifth exhibition at the gallery since 2007.





Agathe May *La Caverne*, 2017-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 164 x 131 cm



Agathe May *Un fil à la patte*, 2019-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 96 x 61 cm



Agathe May *fleur de peau*, 2018-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 147,5 x 97 cm



Agathe May *Entre ciel et terre*, 2017-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 191 x 97 cm



Agathe May *Un si petit jardin*, 2017-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 137 x 107 cm



Agathe May *Le Calice*, 2018-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 125x 57 cm



Agathe May *Un si petit jardin (detail)* , 2017-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 39 x 30,5 cm
 Agathe May *Entre ciel et terre (detail)*, 2017-2020 | woodcut on Japan paper | 35 x 35 cm



Agathe May *Le miroir aux alouettes* - exhibition view - January 2021 - Galerie Catherine Putman









Agathe May *Le miroir aux alouettes* - exhibition view - January 2021 - Galerie Catherine Putman



Agathe May *Le miroir aux alouettes* - vue de l'exposition - janvier 2021 - Galerie Catherine Putman