

# SUZANNE TARASIEVE PARIS

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12 October – 30 November 2019

### **WOODS**

**With: Romain Bernini, Eva Jospin, Youcef Korichi, Kriki, Markus Lüpertz, Shanthamani. M, A.R. Penck, Anne Wenzel**

Opening Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 6pm to 9pm

Artists have always been inspired by the forest—both as a real space, endangered today by our destructive lifestyles, and a symbolic space, a place of the unconscious and the repressed. The forest is ambivalent. Far from the hustle and bustle of the city, it is comforting, evoking freedom and tranquility; yet it can also have a disturbing, wild, even hostile presence. Galerie Suzanne Tarasieve decided to bring together works that capture the beauty, the calm, and the savagery of the forest, as a site and source of inspiration to artists.

Eva Jospin creates forests from cardboard, an everyday material that is itself made of wood, and thus belongs to the plant world. Her monumental works, which have been exhibited in the central courtyard of the Louvre, at Beaupassage, and at the Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire, can be disturbing. In the romantic, poetic scenes she creates, the flat surface becomes a space for the viewers' mental projections, a setting in which they can image different stories unfolding. Her woods are those of fairytales, of the metaphorical unknown, danger, and initiation. It invites us to embark on an introspective mental journey.

Romain Bernini's woods are also metaphorical: their acid colors are defiantly anti-naturalistic. A shaman watches over the forest. Bernini titled the work *Chipko* (2019), a reference to the Chipko forest conservation movement, started in India in the 1970s, a community of environmentalists who used tree-hugging as a non-violent means of protesting the overexploitation of their forests.

In Kriki's work, woods are populated by ephemeral artists, their wings burned by the sun, a derisive analogy between the natural world and that of contemporary art.

Youcef Korichi painted the ancient oak tree of the Domaine de Lousson, a reminder of the infinitely long cycles of nature and their magical dimension.

Shanthamani. M, an artist from Bangalore whose work was included in the 2014–15 Kochi-Muziris Biennale, adopts a radically different perspective. She uses natural materials, charcoal from trees and bamboo, to create sculptures and drawings. Her *Upside Down Tree* (2019) is an inverted tree, made of bamboo then cast in aluminum, evoking the major ecological challenges of our time, the accelerated processes of development and urbanization, and the depletion of natural resources.

Anne Wenzel's ceramics also evoke nature in agony. Her large sculptures are spectacular floral arrangements, seemingly frozen in a state of decomposition. A great fragility emanates from these representations of a faded nature. By choosing to represent decomposing flowers, rather than bouquets in bloom, Wenzel captures what remains of the living as she bears witness to its disappearance.

A.R. Penck's sculptures are made with a great economy of means. Suzanne Tarasieve presents his work *Ohne Titel, n.d* (1985), an exceptional sculpture of painted wood, a totemic work that joins his painting. Strongly symbolic, it is an important recurring figure in Penck's work.

Markus Lüpertz's sculpture is diverse: the artist makes assemblages using everyday materials—polystyrene, concrete, plaster, stone—which he captures in his bronzes. He then paints these in bright colors, following in the great tradition of ancient statues, which were once brightly painted. The artist often appropriates the great figures of classical mythology. In this sculpture and in several gouaches, he captures Daphne at the moment of her metamorphosis into a laurel tree.

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