

**Elizabeth Garouste presents her "Chimeras"
at Polad-Hardouin gallery**

19 November 2015 / 13 January 2016
Vernissage on Thursday 19 November at 6 pm

An internationally acclaimed designer for 30 years, Elizabeth Garouste unveils her secret gardens at Polad-Hardouin gallery from 19 November to 13 January. After a first exhibition of drawings in 2011, Garouste's chimeras unfold in three dimensions and in the whole range of her trademark eclectic materials. For the first time, her mysterious ideas and automatic daydreams take a boldly outlined shape, filled with personality and audacity.

Starting from drawing... At the root of her work is drawing. Automatic drawing, executed anywhere and anytime. Bold and phantasmal, it fills the void and exorcises nightmares with passion and humour.

Thus, Garouste's sculpted, painted and assembled work reveals first and foremost her freedom as an artist and as a woman. As discrete as she is bold, Garouste creates a universe that makes one smile and shudder, a universe that talks of libido and demons, life and death, transformation, the couple, and femininity.

Pure black and white, wrought iron, mirrors, painted earth, rough tapestries and coloured fabrics create an ensemble whose functionality is never entirely absent, but distorted in such a way as to remain open to interpretation. Her chimeras, characters, animals and plants, multi-faced masks and mirrored figures, describe a world that is both creative and ever-changing, a world where everything is relative and where one can recognize oneself only through the juxtaposition of perspectives. Her "potatoes" look like votive offerings for travelling from one world to the next, hanging from a leafless tree of life. Her reclining figures, with a touch of Arte Povera, are timeless in spite of their decisively contemporary, almost manga-like traits as they interact with scenes that seem to come from a painting by Hieronymus Bosch. Her couple of candleholders explicitly evoke feminine and masculine sexuality, but on closer examination the flower looks quite poisonous...

About Elizabeth Garouste

After starting off as an interior decorator and designer of furniture and objects, since the 1980s Elizabeth Garouste has been working between unique pieces and iconic industrial design. In 2011, the artist started gradually uncovering a more intimate side of her work at Polad-Hardouin gallery, in Paris. There her drawings and sculptures reveal other territories, secret and adventurous.

Theatre sets, private interiors and furniture, tramways, the office of the Prime Minister, an iconic carafe and flask: her design work has been presented at major galleries and museums in France and abroad. Her line of furniture, characterised by unexpected materials (bronze, wrought iron, wood, ceramic, glass and resin) and by traits that are at once baroque and barbaric, was produced by the design galleries En attendant les Barbares, Mouvement Moderne and Granville. Showcased at Ralph Pucci gallery in New York,

Garouste joined Polad-Hardouin gallery in 2011.

Decorative arts and theatre. After her studies at Ecole Camondo, in 1980 Garouste worked with the painter Gérard Garouste on the decoration of Le Privilège, the restaurant of Le Palace. The next year, she designed the costumes and set of the play "On loge la nuit" by Gérard de Nerval, directed by Jean-Michel Ribes and performed at the Studio des Champs-Élysées in Paris. From 1981 to 2001, she worked with Mattia Bonetti.

Since 1981, her work has been presented in the greatest international galleries from Paris to New York and Tokyo: first by interior designer Jansen in rue Royale in Paris, then by the Parisian gallery En Attendant les Barbares, at the Twentieth Century gallery in New York, at Shisheido galleries in Tokyo, Néotu gallery in Paris and New York, David Gill in London, the Hydra Foundation in Greece, and Avant-Scène and Kréo in Paris.

During the same period, Elizabeth Garouste, created numerous interior designs and furnishings for private clients worldwide, e.g., for the private quarters of H.R.H. Princess Von Thurn und Taxis at Regensburg Castle, or the design of Boisgeloup castle for Bernard Picasso.

Some of her landmark collaborations include Christian Lacroix, Christian Louboutin, Nina Ricci and Ricard. In 1987, she decorated the salons of Christian Lacroix's Maison de haute couture, as well as its designer stores and graphic identity. In 1991, Garouste was awarded the Creator of the Year title at the Salon du Meuble, before receiving in 1992 the Oscar for the best packaging for "Le teint de Nina Ricci". This was followed by the creation of a line of cosmetic products and flacons for the same fashion house. In 1995 she designed Ricard's new carafe and ashtray. In 1998, the furniture of the Théâtre Royal de Namur in Belgium. In 2009 and 2011, the designer stores of Christian Louboutin in Paris and Moscow.

Garouste's public commissions underline her creative freedom, celebrated by so many museums and art centres today. In 1994, the city of Quimper commissioner her a walkway in honour of Max Jacob. The Mobilier National commissioned her to design the Prime Minister's office and waiting room. In 2000 and 2006, the city of Montpellier asked her to design its first two tramway lines and the furnishings of the stops. Among the museums that presented the works of Elizabeth Garouste, let us mention, in France, the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Museums of Decorative Arts of Bordeaux and Paris, the Centre d'Art in Meymac and the V.I.A. In Europe, the Venice Biennale, the Salon de Bâle, Le Grand-Hornu and La Maison particulière in Belgium, the Kunstmuseum Dusseldorf im Ehrenhof, and the Victoria Albert Museum in London.

En 2011, Elizabeth Garouste presented for the first time an ensemble of Indian ink drawings and painted wrought-iron sculptures on the occasion of a personal exhibition titled "Tohu-Bohu". If this work was the object of a few collective exhibitions and partial presentations in Paris (Centre Rachi, Ecam, 2013), at Mans (2014) and Annonay (2015), its new territories will be again unveiled by Polad-Hardouin gallery on 19 November 2015.

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