

Catherine Henkinet
Hybrids - After the flood

After the flood

Without distinction of genus or species, the artist Maen Florin (BE, °1954) draws her inspiration from all living things and is nourished by the relationships that can be woven between one being and another. In this latest series, begun in January 2023, we find anthropomorphic plants and hybrid creatures represented on the same scale of values and united on the same ground. Through a crossbreeding of half-human, half-animal and half-plant forms, she highlights the turmoil of a society whose anthropocentric models need to be rethought in the direction of greater inclusivity.

Starting out in clay, as a sculptor, she shapes this turmoil with her hands, like so many buried nightmares to be triturated, like so many SF projections to be brought to light. The acronym SF is to be taken here in the broadest sense, as formulated by Donna Haraway: "These two letters can refer to science fiction, science fantasy, speculative fabulations, scientific facts or even games of string". Donna Haraway's work invites us to compose new narratives that reflect on our position in the world. To open up to other models of thought, such as symbiosis or the development of new biological networks for a more permeable, less situated theory of evolution, as proposed by the philosopher of science Donna Haraway.

Going beyond the elitist and destructive anthropocene vision means opening up the field of possibilities by paying attention to other ways of thinking and living, to what surrounds us, what exists, what lives even in invisible or still unknown ways. Like these corals or molluscs sculpted in human form. These living elements are represented in large numbers in Maen Florin's latest works, but they are usually undervalued, buried in their deep darkness. These octopuses, cuttlefish and other flexible species are among the oldest in the animal kingdom, and some even possess the ability to rejuvenate... As far back as antiquity, mythological accounts attributed divine powers to them. Thanks to this artist, they are back in our stories. A speculative passageway to other poetic and sensitive worlds where any union would be possible.

A work that deploys the multiple tentacles of the living to think of a common future. So let's be, for a moment or an eternity, the new gorgons standing up to the human being who has remained made of stone in the face of the massive destruction he is inflicting on the earth. Let's build a new ark for all the refugees of the Anthropocene.

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Donna J. Haraway, Vivre avec le trouble (translated from English by Vivien Garcia), Les Editions des mondes à faire, Vaulx-en-Velin, 2020 (Edition translated into French), p.22 (First published in English, 2016, Duke University Press).

Anthropocene (from Greek *anthropos*, man, and *kainos*, new): The current period in geological time when human activities are having a major impact on the planet's ecosystems (biosphere), transforming them at all levels (the beginning of the Anthropocene is thought to coincide with the beginning of the , in the 18th century) in: www.larousse.fr

For example: *Turritopsis dohrnii*, a species of jellyfish in the hydrozoan class, has the unique ability to achieve biological immortality by reversing the ageing process. For more information, see : *Turritopsis dohrnii* in: www.fr.m.wikipedia