

HUBERTY
& BREYNE

PROJET
MYCÉLIUM

Florent CHAVOUET

Là-bas vu d'ici



16.12.2023
> 27.01.2024

PARIS | Chapon
19 rue Chapon,
Paris 3^e

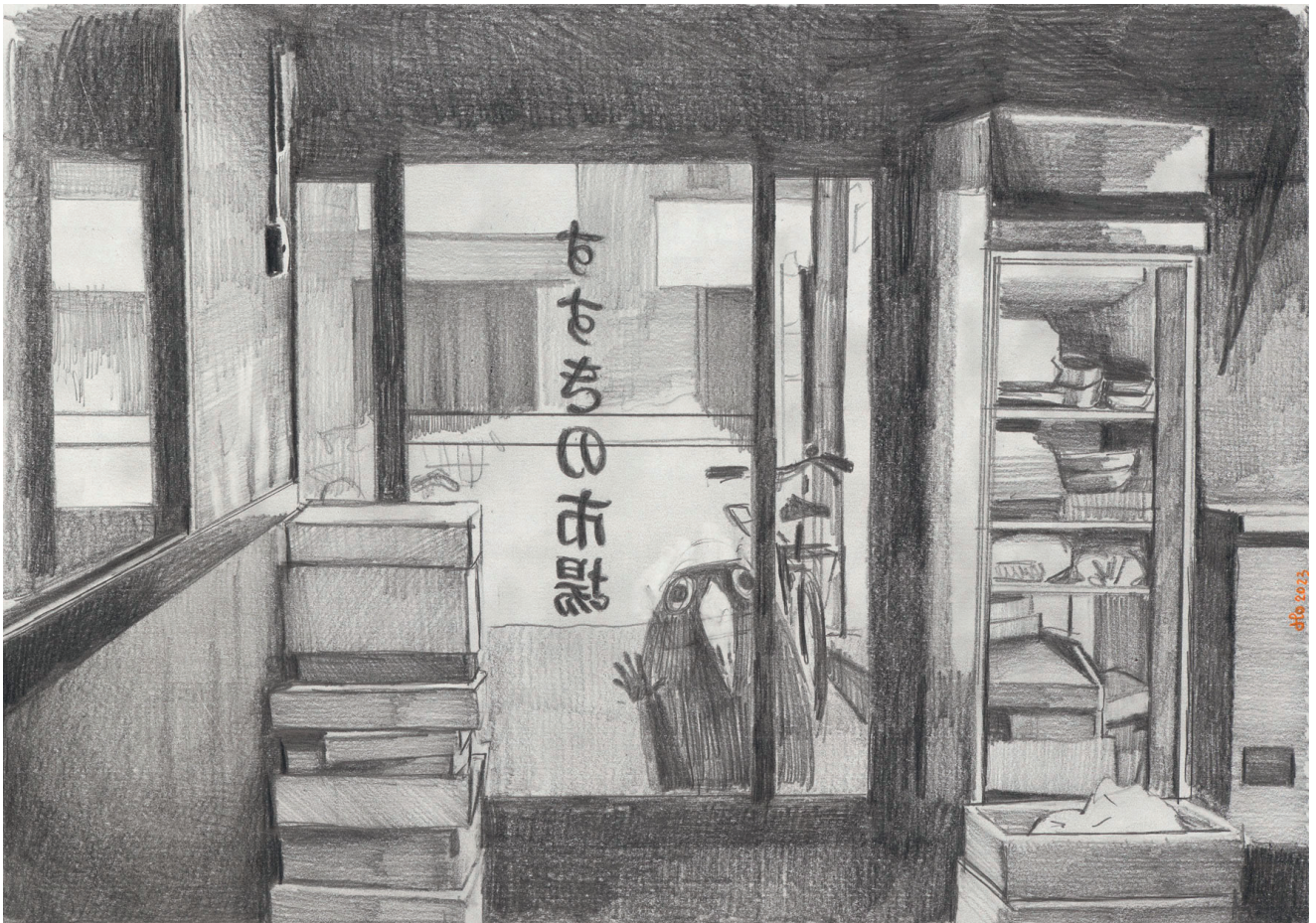
Florent Chavouet is not an easy artist to pigeonhole. With his pencils sharpened and his eyes peeled, this Japanophile sets off in search of material to draw, ready to whisk the viewer from sketchbook to cartoon strip, from caricatures alive with schoolboy humour to the precise marks made by a map maker.

For his very first exhibition, "Là-bas vu d'ici", no passport or backpack was needed ... Instead, Florent Chavouet elected to work within the four walls of his studio in central France and let Japan come to him. With his paper firmly placed on his desk but his mind still free to wander... The result – more than 40 new drawings that hover between misty memories and nocturnal fantasies.

Japan and Florent Chavouet – a chance encounter that would give rise, in 2009, to *Tokyo Sanpo*, published in more than a dozen different countries. In this hybrid travel journal, the artist takes his time, settling down to observe the tiniest details of life in Japan's vibrant capital. A label on a piece of fruit, a mayonnaise brand, an

asphalt landscape, the veins on a leaf fallen from its branch... Nothing escapes Florent Chavoux's eager pencils. He observes closely and sketches what he sees – the day-to-day life of Tokyo, its strangeness, its uniqueness.

A year later, it was a more intimate vision of Japan that Chavouet was drawing – Manabeshima, an island within an island, the epitome of insularity, or the hidden face of Japan, the number of coloured pencils in Florent Chavouet's pencil case matched by the number of inhabitants in this village of fishermen (some 200). The artist stayed on Manabeshima for two months. On foot, by boat or by bicycle, he travelled around the island, working and reworking his drawings, which regularly served as a means of communication with the locals. As in the case of *Tokyo Sanpo*, his choice of technique was based on practical concerns. Sturdy and taking up very little space, his colour crayons could travel with him wherever he went and proved equally useful whether accompanying his sketchpad or perched on the corner of a table between bottles of shochu and glasses of saké.



Dessin préparatoire Coucou 3 - Crayon sur papier - 21 x 29,6 cm - 2023

Tokyo Sanpo and *Manabe Shima* – the artist's vision of urban Japan and rural Japan, respectively – are works full of formal daring: narrative sequences, full-page illustrations, a map for unfolding, notebook fragments, the whole punctuated with humorous commentaries and descriptions provided by the author, who offers up intense visual narratives which are a mixture of graphic art, journalism, geography, anthropology and poetry. A project with a quasi-sociological flavour that enabled Chavouet, once back in France, to create from scratch the settings for *Petites coupures à Shioguni*, his first work of fiction, awarded the Fauve Polar at the 2015 International Comics Festival in Angoulême – a nocturnal investigation full of the dazzle of neon signs and with, once again, a map to help us find our way through the twists and turns of the story. With *Touiller le Miso*, Florent Chavouet returns to Japan, but this time he travels light, limiting himself in terms of the size of his sketchbook and the distance travelled, and setting himself the challenge of writing a haiku each day. He captures atmospheres and emotions, textures and qualities of light, during each of his wanderings, offering us what can best be described as visual poetry. Where his earlier works were chatty, here, encouraged by the formal constraints of the haiku, he moves towards verbal simplicity, creating for the current exhibition wordless

drawings, isolated images or series, which offer a different style of narration. This is Chavouet's way of contemplating rather than observing and of presenting a more profoundly felt vision of Japan.

In March 2020, Florent Chavouet prepared to embark on a new expedition – one that would bring his Japanese series to a close. He had travelled the length and breadth of the country, and his aim now was to approach it from the sea, by kayak, stopping at some of the many hundred islands that lie scattered off the mainland. But the global pandemic made such a journey impossible, and the artist found himself confined to dry land, stuck within the four walls of his studio, miles from the sea... There might be no inland sea, but there was his own internal world from which to draw. Thus began a different sort of journey than the one envisaged, but something equally interesting. In the immobility of his studio, the paper itself became a territory to be explored. The artist experimented, trying out new techniques (linocut, ink on wood, alcohol-based ink pens...), varying his formats and proving that he could draw equally well on a postage stamp (in 2017, he illustrated a series of stamps with tree themes for the Postal Service) and on the gigantic displays which he created for the Galeries Lafayette's Christmas windows in 2022.



Collège fou fou - Crayon, encre et feutre sur papier - 21 x 15 cm - 2023

For this, his first, exhibition, Chavouet plays around with formats, freed from the technical constraints imposed by either a book or a physical journey. As a result, he can approach each page differently, horizontally on a corner of his desk or vertically, up against his bay windows, when his drawing table becomes too small. Deprived of the opportunity for a physical journey, but not deprived of movement, for "Là-bas vu d'ici", Florent Chavouet varies his position and his physical gestures. In the sanctuary of his studio, the artist can reach for his inks and his watercolours, combining them with his talent for using colour pencils. He plays with transparencies, and with textures, switching between busy drawings and drawings that are pared back, between the point of his pencil making furrows in the paper and the subtle, barely-there touch of his brush diluting ink and making colour sing.

Florent Chavouet immerses himself in the photos and sketchbooks from his past travels, navigating his memories, calling on his sensory memory rather than on precise observation. The resulting images are a series of

blurred reflections, vaporous landscapes, drawings that reveal themselves in modulations of light and shade. Chavouet varies the season and the light as the inspiration takes him. In this series of drawings, the movement is no longer towards the "other", towards other living beings (human or *yōkai*/spirit), which are frequently absent altogether from these works or, at most, reduced to a mere silhouette of varying clarity. Instead, Florent Chavouet appears to be turning his gaze inwards, so that he can focus on impressions and recreate horizons, streets that exist now only in his memory.

Windows – a recurrent motif in these drawings – may be lit or misted over and invite us to imagine what is happening on the other side of the glass. A frame within a frame, they reflect or reveal something other. A point of intersection between outside and inside ... which is, more or less, where this exhibition is located – in the territory of memory, lived or imagined, in an elsewhere composed of real or imaginary horizons, the distinction between the two of no consequence.



Coucou 4 - Crayon, encre et feutre sur papier coloré - 20,6 x 30 cm - 2023

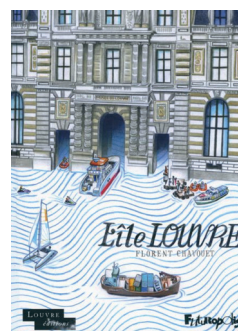
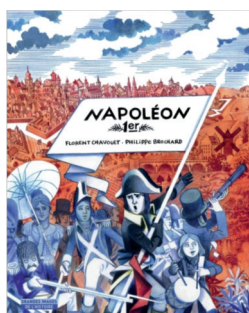
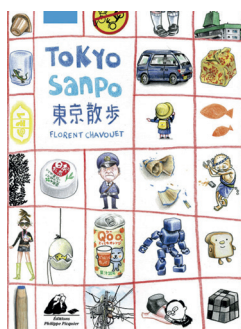
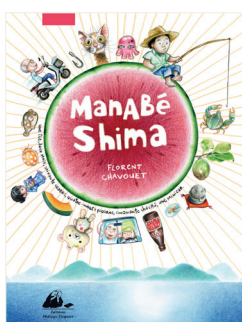
Biographie

Florent Chavouet, born in 1980, lives and works in Clermont-Ferrand.



Florent Chavouet © D.R.

- Tokyo Sanpo, Éditions Philippe Picquier, 2009
Prix Ptolémée, International Festival of Geography, Saint-Dié-des-Vosges
Grand Prix, "Rendez-Vous International du Carnet de Voyage" Travel Journal
Festival, Clermont-Ferrand, 2010
- Manabe Shima, Éditions Philippe Picquier, 2010
Prix Pierre Loti, 2011
Angoulême International Comics Festival Official Selection, 2011
- Petites coupures à Shioguni, Éditions Philippe Picquier, 2014
Fauve Polar SNCF, Angoulême International Comics Festival, 2015
- L'île Louvre, Futuropolis and Louvre Éditions (co-edition), 2015
- Le Moyen Age, Éditions L'école des loisirs (text by Philippe Brochard), 2017
- Napoléon, Éditions L'école des loisirs (text by Philippe Brochard), 2018
- Touiller le miso, éditions Philippe Picquier, 2020.



Florent CHAVOUET
Là-bas vu d'ici

**PROJET
MYCÉLIUM**

OPENING

Friday 15 December 2023, from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm, in the presence of the artist
Saké tasting (courtesy of Brasserie Chevalier)

RECEPTION AND BOOK SIGNING

Saturday 16 December 2023
4.00 pm: opportunity to meet Vincent, creator of artisan teas (Kodama)
5.00 pm: tea tasting and book signing (Éditions Picquier)

EXHIBITION

From Saturday 16 December to Saturday 27 January 2024

PARIS | Chapon

19 - 21 Rue Chapon 75003 Paris
Mercredi > Samedi 13h30-19h

PRESS CONTACT

Amélie PAYAN
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Visuels HD disponibles sur demande
© 2023 - Florent CHAVOUET

MYCÉLIUM

The Mycélium project is a new Huberty & Breyne initiative. Conceived as a novel approach to the graphic arts, exploring the point at which these arts (in all their ramifications) intersect with one another, Mycélium aims – through a mixture of collective and solo exhibitions – to establish an artistic identity that is both coherent and eclectic.

Amélie Payan, who devised the project, is passionate about literature and the visual arts and eager to explore what happens when the two come together – the tenuous relationship between words and drawing, narrative and emotion, reading and looking.

Seen from this perspective, the hybrid art of comic strip offers an ideal medium for the artist who is simultaneously the writer – or vice versa – to keep coming up with new ideas and breaking formal rules, and so invent a potent sensory writing that mediates an artistic dialogue where the mark drawn can become a word, and the

word can become a mark. In this “amphigraphic” art, drawing and narration come together to create a new visual language.

The idea behind the Mycélium project is to be present at this cross-over point and explore just what the drawn line can do – to go beyond drawing as a utilitarian or transitional concept and treat the medium as an experimental “vocabulary”, explore different artistic “ways of writing” and thereby consolidate the continuum of the arts.

The artists involved in this project – both established and emerging – explore multiple graphic forms that enable them to keep extending the expressive power of drawing. Drawing is affirmed as a creative, organic and living act, a vibrant thing that resonates with other art forms, in the same way that, for the poet Charles Baudelaire, “perfumes, colours and sounds correspond”. The idea is to explore the porousness of artistic boundaries, allow drawing to vibrate, like a living language, and so provoke thought.

Represented artists:

Donatien Mary - Sabien Clement - Margaux Meissonnier - Lisa Blumen - Florent Chavouet - Louise Duneton - Vahram Muratyan...

HUBERTY & BREYNE

Huberty & Breyne is a contemporary art gallery specialising in original cartoon work. Operating out of Brussels and Paris under the direction of Alain Huberty and Marc Breyne, the gallery – which has been in existence for almost 30 years – represents both established and up-and-coming artists linked to, or inspired by, the 9th art.

Its exhibitions of original plates, paintings and sculptures champion contemporary art in all its guises and provide a platform for the crossover of different disciplines. A key reference point in the world of comic art, the Huberty & Breyne gallery offers collectors a rigorous selection of works by both household names and promising newcomers.

The gallery is closely involved with the contemporary art market scene and a contributor at major international fairs such as Brafa (Brussels Antiques & Fine Arts Fair), 1 – 54 London, Art Paris and Drawing Now. It occupies a 1,000m² exhibition space in Brussels, in place du Châtelain, and two further exhibition spaces in Paris, in avenue Matignon and rue Chapon.

Aside from running the gallery, Alain Huberty and Marc Breyne also advise auction houses regarding the sale of works of comic art.

BRUXELLES | Châtelain

33 place du Châtelain
1050 Bruxelles
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Wednesday > Saturday
11.00 am – 7.00 pm

PARIS | Matignon

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+33 (0)1 40 28 04 71

Tuesday > Saturday
11.00 am – 7.00 pm

PARIS | Chapon

19 rue Chapon
75003 Paris
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Wednesday > Saturday
1.30 pm - 7.00 pm

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