

HUBERTY
& BREYNE

Milan JESPERS
Cénotaphes



Yellow Crippled Figure
Watercolor on paper, 26,6 x 21,2 cm

26.05
> 17.06.23

BRUSSELS | Châtelain

33 place du Châtelain,
1050 Bruxelles



Draped Figure Standing
Watercolor on paper, 43,9 x 27 cm

The Huberty & Breyne | Châtelain gallery is delighted to announce that, from 26 May to 17 June 2023, it will be hosting the first solo exhibition by the Brussels-born artist Milan Jespers (b. 1992).

The title of the exhibition – “Cénotaphes” – refers to a monument commemorating a dead person but containing no physical remains. Each work is executed with extreme skill and pays homage to some aspect of humanity – mutilated bodies accompanied by delicately transformative motifs; rites and rituals; joyous, painful and vainglorious mysteries of our civilisation.

The artist uses 19th-century photographs as his primary inspiration. These images reflect an era where spirituality and superstition, though dying out, nevertheless continued to coexist with the new world of modernity, rationality and industrialism.

Most of the work in the exhibition – paintings, drawings and engravings – was produced between 2021 and 2023.

Milan Jespers came early to painting. From a tender age, he was already winning prizes for skilfully painting on small figurines and revealing a sharp eye and a love of detail that are both still evident in his work today.

At the age of 23, Milan Jespers graduated from the ESA Saint-Luc, in Brussels, where he was enrolled on the comics programme. His keen interest in history and in the narrative aspects of comic strip remain major influences in his current practice and watercolour gradually became central to his whole way of working, which he explains as follows:

“When I paint, I make my images look a little like photographs from historical, medical and anthropological archives – the sort of thing one might have seen in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

I am constantly on the lookout for documents (photographs, motifs and other materials), linking, cross-referencing, decontextualising and recontextualising, and then reappropriating them through painting. I use watercolour in an unconventional way, adding layer on layer to give it a density that is rare for watercolour as a medium.

I borrow aspects of early photography such as the highly static pose, the sense of solemnity, and the standard approach to centring and technical blurring. I apply them to my work while simultaneously integrating contemporary elements.

By associating and interpreting imagery in this way, I recreate something akin to the archives of a late-19th-century naturalist: a deliberately loose narrative inventory of images that sheds a different light on recent Western history, the way it represents bodies, its social and aesthetic conventions, its predatory policies, its relationship to Antiquity and to nature.”

The work of Milan Jespers is an ode to seeing, capable of transforming – for the length of an exhibition – our relationship with history and with the present.



Noli Me Tangere
Metal engraving: etching and aquatint, manual printing,
31 x 26,7 cm



Carne 2
Multiple, 22 x 18,2 cm



Delftware Medical Casts
Watercolor on paper, 24,7 x 21,4 cm



Zinc
Watercolor on paper, 58 x 36 cm

Milan JESPERs

Cénotaphes

OPENING

Thursday 25 May, from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm
In the presence of the artist

EXHIBITION

from 26 May to 17 June 2023

BRUSSELS | Châtelain

33 place du Châtelain, 1050 Bruxelles
Wednesday > Saturday 11.00am - 6.00pm

PRESS CONTACT



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HD Visuals available on request
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HUBERTY & BREYNE

The Huberty & Breyne Gallery is a key reference point in the world of Comic Art and has been specialising in original cartoon work for almost 30 years now. Operating out of Brussels and Paris, Huberty & Breyne offers collectors a choice selection of original works by the greatest comic book illustrators of all time - the likes of Hergé, Franquin, Martin, Hubinon and Schuiten. It is the only gallery to represent the work of Milo Manara and also collaborates with contemporary artists such as Philippe Geluck, François Avril, Jean-Claude Götting, Loustal, Miles Hyman and Christophe Chabouté.

The Gallery is closely involved with the international art market scene and a contributor at major art fairs such as Brafa (Brussels Antiques & Fine Arts Fair), 1 – 54 London, Art Paris Art Fair and Drawing Now.

Alain Huberty and Marc Breyne are also advisors to Christie's regarding the sale of works of Comic Art.

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Wednesday > Saturday 11 am - 6 pm

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Monday > Saturday 11 am – 7 pm

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