

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Beausse, Pascal, "Huang Yong Ping: Kamel Mennour/ École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts-Paris" Flash Art, January – February 2010, pg.96

REVIEWS

HUANG YONG PING

KAMEL MENNOUR/ÉCOLE NATIONALE SUPÉRIEURE DES BEAUX-ARTS- PARIS



For this double exhibition, Huang Yong Ping developed a syncretism of myths belonging to cultures that are radically different from each other. Pursuing confrontation between East and West, human and animal, religion and politics, art and life, creation and dismantling, the artist finds narrative inspiration in both religion and philosophy, drawing up the allegories of our times.

Arche (2009) is exhibited inside the chapel of l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, a Christian place filled with copies of Italian Renaissance masterpieces, and is the artist's contemporary version of the biblical episode of the Flood and Noah's Ark. In a big Chinese paper sampan, pairs of taxidermic animals belonging to an impressive number of different species are gathered. The representation is not completely faithful to the text, but rather affirms the permanence of violence. In a time of environmental consensus, Huang Yong Ping chooses to dissociate the flood/ark and to suggest imminent destruction caused by its own victims. The danger comes from within, as in the Théâtre du Monde. Placed in front of a

copy of Michelangelo's *Doomsday*, this work becomes a mirror: "The animal becomes the man, or the man becomes the animal," says the artist.

At Kamel Mennour Gallery, *Caverne* (2009) stands out like a big rock obstructing the space. It is necessary to move around it to get to the next room and be able to see its interior through a hole in the wall. Opposing figures are sitting in it, looking at the entrance of the cave, giving their back to a magical lantern casting shadows of bats. Buddhist monks and Talibans are prisoners of this neo-platonic cave in times of iconoclasm.

Huang Yong Ping invites us to move away from the obsession of the contemporary crisis to outline the break between dream and reality. It is a subtle critique of beliefs.

Pascal Beausse

HUANG YONG PING, *Arche* 2009. Wood, paper and taxidermized animals, 18 x 4 x 8 m. Installation view at the Chapelle des Petits-Augustins, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Courtesy the artist and Kamel Mennour, Paris. © Huang Yong Ping. Photo: Marc Domage.