



Mark Dion, *The Salmon of Knowledge* (2015), sculpture epoxy resin, steel, tar, wood, foam, paper, aerosol enamel, acrylic paints, adhesives, glass eyes, mixed media 300.5 x 90.5 x 196 cm (detail)

Courtesy In Situ gallery

# KOMUNUMA

PHOTOGRAPHY: GABRIEL FABRY & CONSTANTIN KYRIAKOPOULOS

LAST OCTOBER, FOUR FRENCH CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERIES – AIR DE PARIS, GALERIE SATOR, GALERIE JOCELYN WOLFF AND IN SITU FABIENNE LECLERC – JOINED FORCES TO OPEN A SPACE SPANNING NEARLY 110,000 SQUARE METERS IN ROMAINVILLE, RENOVATED BY FONDATION FIMINCO. BAPTIZED KOMUNUMA, WHICH MEANS “COMMUNE” OR “COMMUNITY” IN ESPERANTO, THE VENUE, CONSISTING OF SEVERAL BUILDINGS, ADVOCATES FOR EXCHANGE AND CONVERGENCE BETWEEN SEVERAL DISCIPLINES AND WAYS OF THINKING. KOMUNUMA WILL HOST AN ARTIST RESIDENCY AS WELL AS AN EXHIBITION SERIES LAUNCHED BY FONDATION FIMINCO AND JEUNE CRÉATION, WHICH WILL PROMOTE EMERGING ART. FRAC ÎLE-DE-FRANCE / LES RÉSERVES WILL ALSO OPEN ITS DOORS AT THE SAME ADDRESS IN 2020. FABIENNE LECLERC AND VINCENT SATOR TELL US MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT, THEIR VISION FOR GREATER PARIS AND THE ROLE OF ART GALLERIES TODAY.



A CONVERSATION WITH FABIENNE LECLERC & VINCENT SATOR

## VINCENT SATOR

**AL:** How did the Komunuma project start? And how would you define it?

**VS:** Komunuma is a cultural collaboration project focusing on contemporary creation between actors of different types and backgrounds, but who all share a common sense of collective values. Four art galleries (Air de Paris, In Situ Fabienne Leclerc, Jocelyn Wolff, Sator), an artist association (Jeune Création), a corporate foundation with an international residency program (Fondation Fiminco) and a public institution (FRAC Île-de-France) have come together on the Romainville site, where they will soon be joined by the Parson School of Art & Design, choreographer Blanca Li and other galleries.

**AL:** You decided to move outside of Paris. Was that a difficult choice to make?

**VS:** Absolutely not. On the one hand, the scale of the city is changing. More and more centers are emerging in and around Paris, so the perception of distance is changing in turn. On the other hand, a site of this scale would be unthinkable in the middle of the city. Romainville's post-industrial district gives us room to develop this type of project. Finally, Komunuma is very easily accessible by public or personal transport (twenty minutes by

Metro Line 5 from République to the Pantin-Bobigny-Raymond Que-neau station).

**AL:** Do you believe in the "Grand Paris" project?

**VS:** Deeply! That said, it is not a question of believing in it or not, but of recognizing a real project in the making and supporting it. Paris is saturated, which makes it harder to find housing and leads to a more tense lifestyle. This has caused a change in how people use the city. Things are no longer based on a center/periphery opposition, but now revolve instead around the permeability of various districts. As far as our field is concerned, the region is already very culturally rich: the Centre national de la Danse, Magasins Généraux, the CNEAI, the Centre National des Arts Plastiques and Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery in Pantin, as well as MC93 in Bobigny and La Galerie art center in Noisy le Sec.

**AL:** How did you choose the galleries present?

**VS:** The project was originally based on a meeting between the galleries Fabienne Leclerc, Air de Paris and Jocelyn Wolff with Fiminco, the owner of the site. For my gallery, the Sator Gallery, we were directly approached by the Fondation Fiminco. Several other galleries will soon join us.

## FABIENNE LECLERC

**AL:** You opened your first gallery more than twenty-five years ago. How do you think the role of gallery owner has evolved? Has your job changed?

**FL:** At the end of the 1980s, our profession was still relatively traditional. The galleries were the main representatives for the artists and our role was above all to set up exhibitions in our spaces, sell their works, promote our artists among museum curators, the press and foreign galleries, and, if we could, to work on publishing catalogues. Without the galleries, the work of lesser-known artists often went unseen. Over the past twenty years, the number of art fairs has increased considerably. Now it is even out of the question to skip some of them, at the risk of dropping off the radar of collectors and institutions who all visit these major events – often at the expense of gallery space attendance. We are also asked to help artists produce their works, both for our own exhibitions and for their external projects. Developing media like photography, video or installations incurs costs that artists can rarely cover on their own. This means that galleries need to find funding or risk losing their artists. Communication has also taken on a more important role, so that galleries can remain visible within an ever expanding field. Maintaining a website and presence on social

media like Instagram and Facebook is a very time-consuming and recent addition to our role.

**AL:** What do you think of the effect of globalization on the world of contemporary art, especially with gallery behemoths like Gagosian or David Zwirner? Is this a "problem" for you? Do you also plan to open branches abroad?

**FL:** Globalization has allowed for exchanges between countries as never before, which is exciting, but it has also generated a lot of noise and strengthened the biggest art fairs and biennials, in order to make the various artistic scenes more accessible and readable. This type of economy carries substantial costs, and also forces artists and galleries to constantly seek out innovative new things, which is even more difficult for those without the necessary means. Hence the power of the Mega Galleries, which, thanks to their capital, attract all the Star Artists by offering them museum sites, vast means of production and access to a global market through their numerous spaces and participation in major art fairs. However, they risk having such immense power over artists that they will gear their work towards a speculative market based on showiness and appearance. Artists' freedom is essential to creation and I fear that the power of the market will

muzzle them, or even manipulate them. I'm not interested in operating a space abroad. I prefer to spend my time at artist studios and exhibitions rather than on planes, and I like the idea of collaborating with other galleries that have a thorough understanding of their local scene. I am in favor of finding time to think rather than running from one space to another.

**AL:** Do you see a new generation of collectors appearing? How do you think the role of the collector has changed?

**FL:** At the end of the 1980s, we had a few dozen potential collectors in France who wandered between galleries and institutions, mainly in European cities and at some fairs (Basel, Fiac and Cologne). We started going to New York regularly, attracted by the massive galleries akin to Soho lofts and frequented by collectors with tremendous means compared to French collectors. Then, in the 1990s, a new generation of galleries, artists, schools, art magazines, fairs, biennials, institutions and foundations appeared all over the world, as well as in emerging countries. This explosion of the international art scene has generated many vocations and

above all a passion for collecting contemporary art. Before the 1990s, adventurous collectors who bought contemporary art were often ridiculed. They were seen as wasteful squanders, at best poets. These buyers were passionate, highly educated and had a true respect for artists. The vast diversity of buyers is interesting, but it makes the exchange more difficult because many deals now happen in the hustle and bustle of crowded fairs and openings. In addition, many collectors today use advisors because they are afraid of making the wrong choice and losing money. Some collectors even become dealers, and invest only for the resale value, creating a parallel market that threatens artists and galleries. These speculative approaches have a sanitizing effect on the art scene because they encourage a kind of uniformity that pleases the greatest number of people and allows the market to cast a wide net. Artists are researchers. The most gifted are often difficult to decipher and their work requires time to be understood in its complexity. You have to give them time and freedom, and also be willing to take risks to defend them.

**AL:** How do you think the status of French artists has changed on the international scene?

**FL:** Several French artists enjoy excellent visibility abroad and have entered some major galleries. However, I notice that they often do not stay there for long. Is this again because of market pressure? Our artists never fetch the sky-high prices that American, English or German stars do, and I think that the most powerful galleries, which too often think only in terms of profitability, grow tired of them. There is a lot of work to be done in France by institutions, the press, galleries and foundations to boost support for the French scene and improve its international appeal.



# CORPORATE



**PHOTOGRAPHERS:**  
CONSTANTIN KYRIAKOPOULOS  
& GABRIEL FABRY,  
**STYLIST:**  
ARMELLE LETURCQ,  
**MODELS:**  
MANON LELOUP,  
CAI LEE &  
YOUSOU CAMARA

**MANON**  
FENDI –  
LEATHER COAT  
WITH FF LOGO,  
LEATHER TOTE BAG  
UNIQLO –  
KNITTED SWEATER

**YOUSOU**  
DIOR HOMME –  
COTTON T-SHIRT  
AND PANTS,  
SHEARLING PARKA,  
TECHNICAL FABRIC  
SNEAKERS WITH  
BUCKLE DETAIL,  
LEATHER BELT

**From left to right**

Laurent Tixador,  
*Chasse à l'homme*  
(2011) (detail)

Otobong Nkanga,  
*Alterscapes*  
*Stories: Uprooting*  
*the Past*  
(2006-2016)  
(detail)

Otobong Nkanga,  
*In a Place Yet*  
*Unknown* (2017)  
(detail)

Courtesy In Situ  
gallery



**DIOR** –  
COTTON POPLIN SHIRT,  
TECHNICAL TAFFETA  
JACQUARD COAT,  
COTTON LOW BOOTS  
**FALKE** –  
TIGHTS

Otobong Nkanga,  
*In a Place Yet  
Unknown*  
(2017)  
Courtesy  
In Situ gallery  
(detail)

**RIGHT PAGE**

**MANON**  
**PRADA** –  
SILK FAÛLE JACKET  
AND PANTS WITH  
ROSE PRINT,  
LEATHER SHOES,  
COTTON SOCKS  
**UNIQLO** –  
KNITTED TURTLENECK

**CAI**  
**CHANEL** –  
JERSEY T-SHIRT,  
COATED COTTON JACKET  
AND PANTS,  
PATENT LEATHER SHOES,  
RESIN AND METAL  
NECKLACES  
WITH PEARLS

**YOUSSOU**  
**DIOR HOMME** –  
KNITTED T-SHIRT,  
COTTON PANTS,  
SHEARLING PARKA,  
TECHNICAL FABRIC  
SNEAKERS WITH  
BUCKLE DETAIL,  
LEATHER BELT,  
BRASS BRACELET  
SADDLE BAG IN **DIOR**,  
OBLIQUE JACQUARD  
AND ALEX FOXTON  
FLOWER PRINT

**From left to right**

Diego Bianchi,  
*Smiles* (2017),  
epoxy clay, wire,  
cables,  
epoxy resin,  
toothpicks,  
acrylic,  
wood, iron,  
120 x 36 x 36 cm  
(detail)

Elodie Seguin,  
*No. 38 A/B/C/D*  
(2016),  
Polyurethane, ink,  
wood, plaster,  
copper wire,  
variable  
dimensions  
(detail)

Courtesy  
Jocelyn Wolff  
gallery



LANVIN –  
KNITTED DRESS,  
LEATHER BAG

Shimabuku,  
*Noël dans  
l'hémisphère Sud*  
(1994/1999)  
(detail)  
Courtesy  
Air de Paris gallery



**CAI**  
CHANEL –  
JERSEY T-SHIRT,  
COATED COTTON  
JACKET AND PANTS,  
PATENT LEATHER SHOES,  
RESIN AND METAL  
NECKLACES WITH PEARLS

**FLORENCE BONNEFOUS**  
IS WEARING HER  
OWN CLOTHES

**MANON**  
PRADA –  
SILK FAILLE JACKET AND  
PANTS WITH ROSE PRINT,  
LEATHER SHOES,  
COTTON SOCKS  
UNIQLO –  
KNITTED TURTLENECK

**YOUSOU**  
DIOR HOMME –  
KNITTED T-SHIRT,  
COTTON PANTS,  
SHEARLING PARKA,  
TECHNICAL FABRIC  
SNEAKERS WITH  
BUCKLE DETAIL,  
LEATHER BELT,  
BRASS BRACELET,  
SADDLE BAG IN DIOR  
OBLIQUE JACQUARD  
AND ALEX FOXTON  
FLOWER PRINT

**From left  
to right**

Clemens  
Von Wedemeyer,  
*70.001* (2019),  
video, colour,  
sound, 16:9,  
screen wall  
(4 or 9 monitors,  
4 single channel  
interviews,  
headphones  
(detail)

Diego Bianchi,  
*Smiles* (2017),  
epoxy clay, wire,  
cables, epoxy  
resin, toothpicks,  
acrylic, wood,  
iron,  
120 x 36 x 36 cm  
(detail)

Elodie Seguin,  
*No. 38 A/B/C/D*  
(2016),  
Polyurethane, ink,  
wood, plaster,  
copper wire,  
variable  
dimensions  
(detail)

Franz Erhard  
Walther,  
*K rper davor I*  
(1985), cotton  
cloths, wood,  
270 x 340 x 35 cm

Courtesy  
Jocelyn Wolf  
gallery





**FORTE FORTE –  
SATIN POLYESTER COAT,  
JACQUARD,  
LINEN AND LUREX DRESS  
LANVIN –  
CALF SUEDE SANDALS  
PRADA –  
SUNGLASSES**

Guy de Cointet,  
Blue chair,  
Yellow chair  
[*De toutes les  
couleurs*, 1982]  
(2018)

Guy de Cointet,  
*Untitled* (ca.1980)

Adriana Lara,  
*Wall Piece #3*  
(2015)

Courtesy  
Air de Paris gallery



**BOTTEGA VENETA –  
COTTON JUMPSUIT  
DELVAUX –  
BRILLANT MM S  
LE DIVA BAKELITE BAG,  
BAG RINGS**

Mark Dion,  
*The Salmon of  
Knowledge*  
(2015),  
sculpture epoxy  
resin, steel, tar,  
wood, foam,  
paper, aerosol  
enamel, acrylic  
paints, adhesives,  
glass eyes,  
mixed media  
300.5 x 90.5  
x 196 cm (detail)

Courtesy  
In Situ gallery

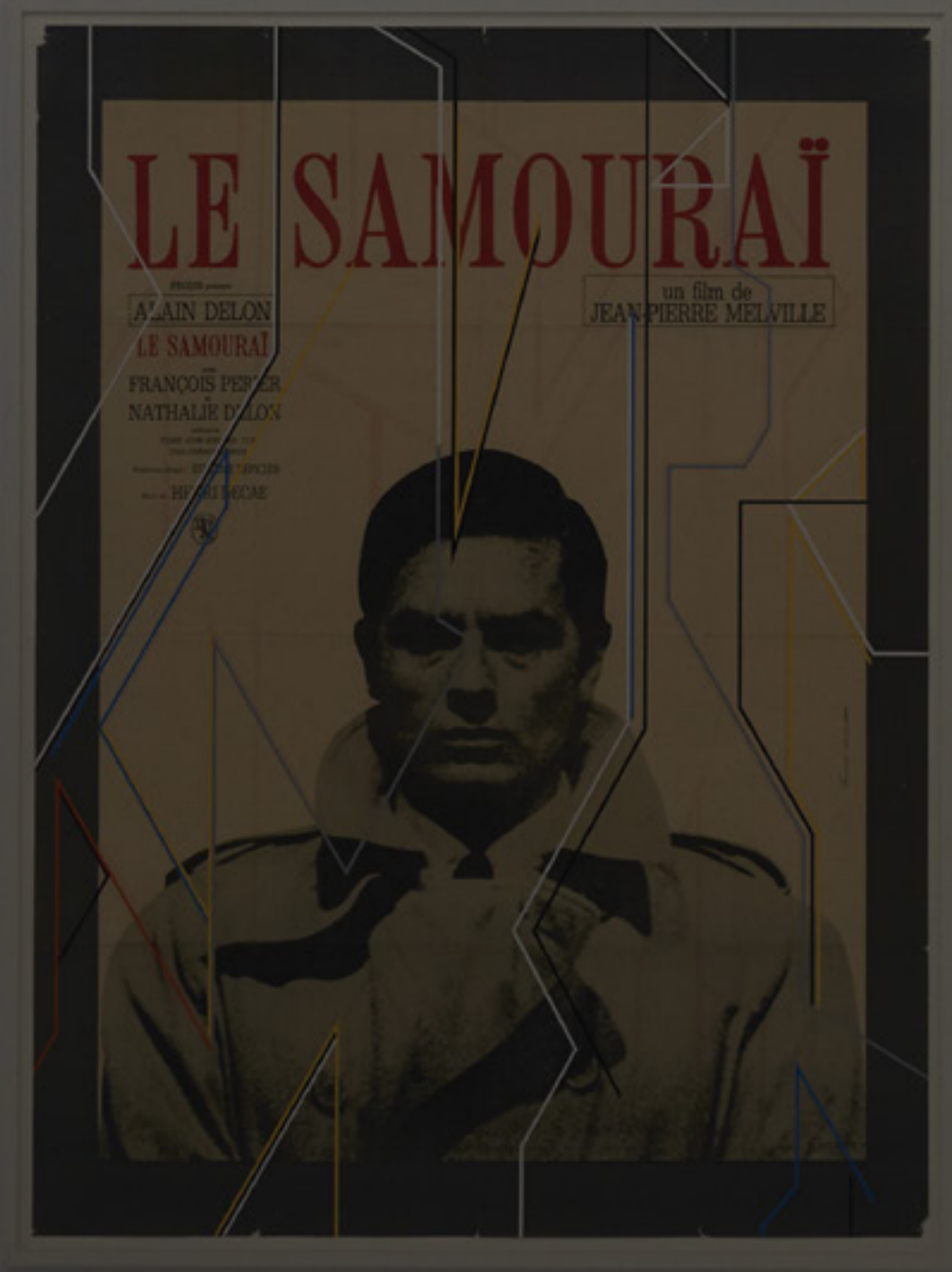




**BURBERRY –  
GRAFFITI-PRINT  
TURTLENECK BODYSUIT,  
COTTON-GABARDINE  
TRENCH COAT,  
LEGGINGS,  
SILK-SATIN PUFFER CAPE  
& LEATHER ANKLE BOOTS,  
MEDIUM HORSEFERRY-  
PRINT CANVAS  
CAMERA BAG**

Liam Gillick,  
*A Search for the  
Centre Ground  
Kept in Check by  
Violence, Disorder  
and Conspiracy*  
(1998)  
Courtesy  
Air de Paris gallery

**LEFT PAGE  
MIU MIU –  
SATIN DRESS**



HOMME PLISSE  
ISSEY MIYAKE –  
COTTON T-SHIRT,  
PLEATED JACKET,  
KNITTED PANTS  
DIOR HOMME –  
FABRIC SNEAKERS  
WITH BUCKLE DETAIL

Sarah Morris,  
*Tiger*  
[Le Samourai]  
(2017)  
Courtesy  
Air de Paris gallery





**BURBERRY –  
LOCATION-PRINT T-SHIRT,  
BRONZE SUBMARINE AND  
SEA PRINT REVERSIBLE  
PACKAWAY JACKET WITH  
LOGO APPLIQUE,  
PUFFER JACKET WITH  
PACKAWAY HOOD  
AND LOGO APPLIQUE,  
BRONZE SUBMARINE-  
PRINT SHORTS**

**RIGHT PAGE  
LOUIS VUITTON –  
JACQUARD TOP  
AND PANTS,  
ACETATE AND METAL  
SUNGLASSES**

Carsten Höller,  
*Double Mushroom  
Vitrine (Tendfold)*  
(2018)

Pierre Joseph,  
*Marlboro cow-boy  
decor*  
(Richard Prince)  
(1992/2019)  
(detail)

*Sadie Benning, X*  
(2016) (detail)

Courtesy  
Air de Paris gallery



**MANON**  
MAX MARA –  
PRINTED VISCOSE KNIT  
TOP WITH PRINTED SILK  
CRÉPE DE CHINE  
STRIP DETAILS,  
PANTS AND JACKET  
IN PRINTED  
CRÉPE DE CHINE  
WITH STRIPS,  
SUEDE SHOES

**CAI**  
MIU MIU –  
SATIN DRESS,  
COTTON SOCKS,  
LEATHER SHOES

**YOUSOU**  
SAINT LAURENT BY  
ANTHONY VACCARELLO  
– SUEDE SAHARIENNE,  
DENIM SHORTS,  
PRINTED CANVA  
SNEAKERS "BEDFORD",  
STRAW HAT WITH  
FEATHERS RIBBON

**From left to right**

Elodie Seguin,  
*No. 38 A/B/C/D*  
(2016),  
Polyurethane, ink,  
wood, plaster,  
copper wire,  
variable  
dimensions  
(detail)

Franz Erhard  
Walther,  
*K rper davor I*  
(1985),  
cotton cloths,  
wood,  
270 x 340 x 35 cm

Courtesy  
Jocelyn Wolf  
gallery



SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO — EMBROIDERED BUSTIER — DRESS WITH SAROUEL SKIRT, LEATHERS SANDALS VALENTINO — SUNGLASSES UNIQLO — KNITTED TURTLENECK FALKE — TIGHTS

RIGHT PAGE

SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO — SUEDE SAHARIENNE, STRAW HAT WITH FEATHERS RIBBON

