

Edouard Malingue Gallery  
馬凌畫廊

Opening Hours  
Monday to Saturday  
10AM-7PM

Exhibition  
*Elles et moi*  
First Floor, 8 Queen's Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dates  
May 21 – June 29, 2013

Opening  
May 21, 6.30-8.30PM

Public Installation  
*Pentateuque*  
Statue Square Garden, Central  
May 21 – June 15, 2013  
Open at all times

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Edouard Malingue Gallery is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition in Hong Kong of highly acclaimed French artist, Fabien Mérelle (b. 1981). The exhibition, which commences the week of Art Basel Hong Kong, will consist of a show in the gallery as well as a public installation in Statue Square Gardens, Central. On display in the gallery will be a series of Fabien Mérelle's intricate ink and watercolour drawings as well as a sculpture. The public installation, which is also part of Le French May program supported by the French Consulate, will feature a sculpture made of silicone that brings to real life scale Mérelle's fantastical drawing *Pentateuque* (2012). This exciting on and off-site exhibition meets Edouard Malingue Gallery's aim of building an important platform for introducing emerging artists, from Asia, Europe and beyond, to Hong Kong's dynamic arts scene.

Fabien Mérelle completed an extensive cross-cultural artistic formation at the highly lauded Beaux-Arts Academy in Paris and the prestigious Beaux-Arts Academy in Xi'An, China. In 2005, Mérelle received a competitive scholarship, which permitted him to travel in the Spring of 2006 to Xi'An, where he was taught by the Chinese masters Chen Guoyang and Wang Chan. Over the course of this period, Mérelle learnt the skills of Chinese landscape painting, the art of copying and how to paint outside by carefully looking at nature. This pluralistic formation opened Mérelle's practice to new methods, materials and principles, which he has since applied to develop a distinctive style that crosses Western and Eastern techniques of draughtsmanship.

The anticipated exhibition at Edouard Malingue Gallery provides an intimate opportunity to peer into Mérelle's personal yet fantastical world. The title, *Elles et moi*, refers to his burgeoning relationship with his wife and new-born daughter, as well as his personal feelings of joy, anxiety and fear. Each drawing, created in black ink and watercolour, delineates detailed tales and personal narratives. For example, Mérelle depicts himself hunched and carrying from his mouth his daughter from the back of her neck as would a cat and his kin (cf. *Animal*, 2013), or a person may be depicted standing bare-footed on the edge of an isolated snowed-upon island (cf. *Ile, Suite*, 2013). Each drawing's fanciful *istoria* is brought alive by Mérelle's rigorous insistence on anatomical precision, which compares to that of the great draughtsman Albrecht Dürer (1471 – 1528, Nuremberg). Indeed, nature rather than the imagined seems to be the subject of Mérelle's drawings, for they depict a reality that only alternatively could be conjured.

Mérelle's solo exhibition at Edouard Malingue Gallery will furthermore present, for the first time, a monumental three-dimensional sculpture of Mérelle's drawing *Pentateuque* (2012). Created in resin and fiberglass, the life-size sculpture will show a man who, bent over, is testingly balancing an elephant on his back. While the elephant is inspired by one at Singapore zoo, Mérelle is predominantly making a witty reference to the five books of the Bible and how, for an individual, religion, societal expectations and culture at large, may amount to 'carrying a weight on one's shoulders'. The sculpture will be placed on public display in the Central location of Statue Square Gardens so that it brings elements of the curious and the absurd to Hong Kong's urban landscape.

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Fabien Mérelle's exquisite work has received increasing international recognition. In 2010, Mérelle was awarded the highly lauded Canson Prize. He has been exhibited internationally in New York, Paris and Singapore, and will be the subject of a solo exhibition at Le Musée des Beaux-Arts de La Rochelle in November 2013 as well as a group exhibition at The Centre Pompidou, Paris in November 2013.

Mérelle's work has appeared in several prestigious publications including Art Actuel, Beaux-Arts Magazine and Le Monde, and can be found in several private and public collections, including the Daniel and Florence Guerlain contemporary art foundation in Paris. Most recently, Daniel and Florence Guerlain generously donated thirteen works by Mérelle to the permanent contemporary art collection of the Centre Pompidou.

