

Galerie Daniel Templon

Paris

Press Release

December 2, 2013

GERARD GAROUSTE

Unspeakable Tales

January 11 – February 26, 2014

Opening: Thursday January 11, from noon to 8 pm



Wagner, Méphistophélès et l'Homunculus, oil on canvas, 2013, 61 x 73 in.

Three years after his last exhibition, Gérard Garouste is returning to Galerie Templon with *Contes ineffables (Unspeakable Tales)*. The new exhibition journeys into **the world of myths and fables**, a voyage the artist uses to evoke universal questions such as our relationship to time, other people and knowledge.

Following on from his exploration of Goethe's *Faust* in 2011, with these new works Gérard Garouste has chosen not to confine himself to a single subject: paintings, gouaches and sculptures are given a dreamlike structure, their underlying logic rooted in unpredictable currents that create an **effect of ambiguity** which provides the exhibition with its main theme. The artist is suggesting that knowledge is enriched by means of a two-tiered interpretation, based on what reason tells us and on what our eyes tell, a process wherein we are necessarily guided by our imagination.

These "subliminal images", built of **reminiscences and associations between ideas**, contain a panoply of references, from **Tintin** and Snowy in Hergé's comics to the **Talmud**, **La Fontaine's** fables and Ashkenazi legends, from Don Quixote and Faust to art history, Grünewald, Millet and romantic landscapes.

The artist endows the protagonists of his works with the features of his nearest and dearest as well as his own features. He takes on a variety of roles in his numerous **self-portraits**: the invalid, the biblical hero, a mysterious animal. These visions mirror the autobiographical narrative the painter constructed in 2009 with *L'Intranquille : Autoportrait d'un fils, d'un peintre, d'un fou*.

The works are hung in the manner of an installation, suggesting the affinities that flow between the pieces, from *Saint Hubert* to *Rabbin et l'oiseau*, *Jonas à l'Ane au crépuscule* and *Prince Valet* to *Cigares du pharaon*. *Contes ineffables* pulls together the fragments of a disjointed mind, thus charting a **mental journey** that will vanish once the exhibition is over.

Born in 1946, Gérard Garouste lives and works in Normandy and Paris. One of the most popular French artists of his generation, he occupies a unique position in the international art world.

During the 1970s, dominated by conceptual forms of expression, he made the daring choice of creating a timeless figurative painting style. Gérard Garouste draws on the old masters and ancient texts for inspiration, an approach that allows him to then re-examine the great myths: the Bible, The Divine Comedy, Gargantua and Don Quixote. According to Michel Onfray, this approach makes him "**perhaps the most modern of all.**"

He has been represented since the 1980s by leading American dealer Leo Castelli. His work has been shown worldwide (USA, Japan, Germany, Latin America and Italy) and can be found in many major public collections, including Paris' Musée national d'art moderne-Centre Georges Pompidou and Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, and the Ludwig Museum in Vienna. In 2009, the Villa Medici in Rome held a major retrospective of his work, entitled *Le Classique et l'Indien*. In 2013, his monumental bronze sculpture, *Le Défi du Soleil*, was on display at the Saint-Cloud park just outside Paris. The artist also recently took part in the landmark exhibition *Les aventures de la vérité* at Fondation Maeght in St-Paul.

An 80-page **catalogue** will be published for his new exhibition at Galerie Templon, with contributions from writer Hortense Lyon.

Address : Galerie Daniel Templon, 30 rue Beaubourg & Impasse Beaubourg, 75003 Paris. **Hours** : Monday-Saturday ; 10 am-7 pm

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