

Marguerite Humeau (FR, 1986)

*Gisant 1*

Polystyren, fiberglas, resin, hvid maling, akryldele, latex, nylon, højttaler, hardware, lyd, metalstativ

Marguerite Humeau er en fransk kunstner, uddannet som designer og bosiddende i London. De sidste år er hun især blevet kendt for sit engagement i den fremskredne videnskab for genoplivelse af uddøde dyrearter. Denne videnskab er aktuel, idet tab af dyrearter accelererer. Hendes arbejde bliver til i dialog med eksperter bl.a. inden for biologi, palæontologi, kirurgi, musikvidenskab, lyddesign og 3D modellering. Da genoplivelse af uddøde dyrearter kræver kvalificerede gæt på og forestillinger om, hvordan noget, der ikke længere findes, engang har taget sig ud, betragter Humeau dette forehavende som skulpturelt og kunstnerisk.

I sit seneste projekt har Humeau været optaget af at skabe et dyr, der aldrig har, men kunne have eksisteret. Med udgangspunkt i den videnskabelige hypotese, at den lille forskel på mennesker og chimpanser er artikuleret tale takket være den tilfældige mutering af genet FOXP2 for 100.000 år siden, har Humeau forestillet sig, at denne mutation har fundet sted i elefanten frem for mennesket. Resultatet er en verden, hvor elefanter er den dominerende art. Humeau har været optaget af elefanter, da de bl.a. tilskrives, hvad vi mennesker betragter som komplekse følelser såsom sorg, hvilket kommer til udtryk i deres begravelsesritualer. Den døende elefant *Gisant 1* præsenteres på et specialdesignet stativ i, hvad Humeau forestiller sig, er et biologisk showroom i en verden, hvor bevidsthed og følelser kan fabrikeres og sælges. Humeaus praksis afspejler bl.a. fornyet videnskabelig interesse for kunstig intelligens og udødelighed, herunder omvendt aldring.

Humeau har beskrevet sine bestræbelser på følgende vis: "*Jeg søger altid at få det til at se ud som om, at mine skulpturer har rejst på tværs af tid og rum, men måske er de blot spøgelser, der kan fordufte når som helst.*"

Marguerite Humeau (FR, 1986)

*Gisant 1*

Polystyrene, fibreglass, resin, white paint, acrylic parts, latex, nylon, speaker, hardware, sound, powder-coated metal stand

Marguerite Humeau is a French artist and a trained designer. She lives and works in London. In recent years she has become especially known for her keen interest in de-extinction, i.e. the science of reviving extinct species. The research conducted within this field is relevant at a time of accelerated loss of biodiversity. Her work is created in an ongoing dialogue with experts within biology, palaeontology, surgery, musicology, sound design, and 3D modelling. Since de-extinction requires qualified guesses about the appearance of something that no longer exists, Humeau regards this endeavour as sculptural and artistic in scope.

For her most recent project Humeau was interested in creating an animal that never existed, but might have done so. Taking her starting point in the scientific hypothesis that the real difference between human beings and chimpanzees is articulated speech, a difference that arose due to a random mutation of the gene known as FOXP2 some 100,000 years ago, Humeau imagined this mutation taking place in elephants instead of in human beings. The result is a world where elephants are the dominant species. Humeau has long been interested in elephants, partly because they are ascribed what we humans regard as complex emotions – such as grief, expressed through funeral rituals. The dying elephant *Gisant 1* is presented on a specially designed metal stand in what Humeau imagines as a biological showroom in a world where consciousness and emotions can be fabricated and sold. Humeau's practice reflects a renewed scientific interest in artificial intelligence, immortality and so-called reverse ageing.

Humeau has described her endeavour in these terms: "*I always want my sculptures to look like they have traveled through time and space, and maybe they are just apparitions and that they could fade at any time.*"