



# L'herbe rouge

Villa Cameline, Nice

17.06 – 17.07.2011

Frédéric Nakache was born in Rouen in 1972. He first won the support of the La Station artist collective, and in 1997, he was involved in two of their Nice-held collective exhibitions. This was when gallery owner Evelyne Canus got interested in his work. A year later, she made it possible for him to set up his first personal exhibition. He was also given the opportunity to present his video work at the Art Fair in Basel. His videos were also on display, along with works by other French artists, at the Kiasma, the Helsinki Museum of Contemporary Art, for the “Young and French” programme. Frédéric Nakache has since then demonstrated his intense creative skills and has taken part in a number of contemporary art fairs, such as Paris Photo, video festivals and other exhibitions, both in France and abroad.

L'Herbe Rouge –Red Grass- is a title with explicit references. “I decided to focus this exhibition on Boris Vian’s novel L’Herbe Rouge, Frédéric Nakache explains. In this story, the hero creates a time machine allowing him to relive his own past, so that he may forget it. This novel resurfaced into my life as I was working on the project. The Villa Cameline is a rather spacious place, an old Niçoise house which was uninhabited for a long period and still bears the marks of the past.” The new exhibition by Frédéric Nakache subtly merges past and present and, most certainly, opens a window onto the future. In this exhibition, a thoroughly multi-temporal approach to work is introduced, with such pieces as the photographs from the Senex series, some black and white studies, some of the work recently displayed at the La Tête d’Obsidienne Gallery, and new original Polaroid pictures. “This artistic choice led me to look back on previous work. All this brought some memories and emotions back into focus, feelings I thought I’d totally forgotten about, the artist ads. For me, the Villa Cameline has functioned like the time machine from Vian’s novel, creating an opportunity to bring previous work back to artistic life, and to endow my photographs with a vivid sense of the present reality, as well as with new perspectives.” Offering a new approach to Frédéric Nakache’s work, the photographs on display in each room as well as in transition spaces generate new (inter)links and provide the visitors with new interpretations, as they bridge the gap between distinct meanings, the meaning of the location, and that of the art exhibited. Again, the key theme of memory pervades both place and work. It appeals to the various forms our own memories may take, the way time may often alter them, for good or bad. “I’m literally fascinated by such a process, he explains, and all the more so as photography and the notion of memory are so intricately linked. As Roland Barthes once wrote, whatever the image produced, the idea, the concept of its very existence always remain. I’m deeply interested in this relation between reality, photography as the mark of such reality, and the interpretation of that reality made by the artist and the spectators, through memory”. The exhibition includes studies, which can be perceived as embryonic memories of the photographer’s future projects, and as such, they work as an introduction onto potential future creations. Could raising the notion of future be the best way to address memory?

Sophie Rosemont  
Translation : Elisa Ferrero

This text comes with the “L’Herbe Rouge” exhibition, set in the Villa Cameline.

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(Contemporary Art and the Côte d’Azur – An area for Experimentation, 1951-2011) event.