



MARKUS ÅKESSON & LUCY GLENDINNING
THE MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS



January 9th through February 20th, 2016

Opening reception in presence of the artists on Saturday January 9th, from 2 to 8 pm

Lady Macbeth: Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be / What thou art promis'd. Yet do I fear thy nature, / It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness / To catch the nearest way.

Lady Macbeth: Tu es Glamis et Cawdor, et tu seras / Ce qu'on t'a promis... Mais je me défie de ta nature : / Elle est trop pleine du lait de la tendresse humaine / Pour que tu saisisse le plus court chemin.

William Shakespeare, Macbeth (act 1, scene 5, 15-18)

After participating in exhibitions at the Musée Cognacq-Jay, the Musée de la Halle Saint-Pierre or the Royal Abbey of Saint-Riquier, British sculptor Lucy Glendinning and Swedish painter Markus Åkesson return to the Galerie Da-End to present their most recent works. Reunited for the first time, the two artists have decided in this exhibition to engage in a dialogue between their respective worlds.

Making the human figure their main research subject, they deliver a body of paintings and sculptures with a persistent sense of unease. In Lucy Glendinning's work, the living is going through physical evolutions. Half-animals, half-humans, her hybrid beings are the fruit of genetic engineering that has led mankind, in a close future, to modify its own genome. «*In these works I am beginning an exploration of the animal within us,*» she explains. «*Looking at the idea that children are closer to the animal instinct than adults. I am interested in our subconscious, how this irrepressible instinct affects us.*» The artist de facto reconsiders the ancient debate opposing nature to culture in the light of the current ecological changes. As the global population grows to past the point of sustainability, does this bring the animal instinct to the forefront ?

In response to these new works, Markus Åkesson also explores the idea that people are not always what they seem. Dissimulating their real intentions to the audience, the juvenile characters to whom the artist gives life with his brushstrokes appear from behind, ducking their head or with a masked face. Their soul weightiness, though kept at a distance, nevertheless manifests itself because of the omnipresence of skulls adorning their attire. Shaping the human face like a mirror at the surface of which each hardship seems to show, Åkesson never stops delving deeper this enigmatic in-between word of his.

Double-dealing seems to be the key to understand the artists' work, and also a way for them to pay tribute to the notions of ambivalence and imperiousness of subconscious drives, as highlighted in the tragedy Macbeth.