

Galerie Francesca Pia

Fillette

New works by Mai-Thu Perret

Fillette

Monika Baer, Andrea Büttner, Susan Cianciolo, Isabelle Cornaro, Daan van Golden, Seth Price, Carol Rama, Hayley Tompkins, Sue Tompkins, Richard Wright and an anonymous Tantra painting
curated by Mai-Thu Perret and Fabrice Stroun

January 26 - March 10, 2018

Opening: Thursday, January 25, 18:00 - 20:00

Galerie Francesca Pia is pleased to announce the opening of two interconnected exhibitions, *Fillette*, featuring new works by Mai-Thu Perret and *Fillette*, a group show curated by Mai-Thu Perret and Fabrice Stroun.

For her fifth show at Galerie Francesca Pia, Mai-Thu Perret is exhibiting bronze bells shaped like organs of the human body– the heart, uterus and lungs– a large scale installation comprising three ceramic nesting dolls, as well as new series of drawings and fabric banners.

The sound of bells is associated with the power of exorcism and purification: it wards off evil influences or warns at their approach. The idea of casting bells in the shape of human organs, while surrealistic and playful, has a long history. For example, Roman wind chimes, usually made of bronze, were called *tintinnabula* and were hung in gardens, courtyards, and porticoes where wind movement caused them to tinkle. They were believed to ward off malevolent spirits and were often combined with a bronze phallus, another symbol of good fortune and a charm against evil.

The Russian Dolls elaborate on a number of formalist issues intrinsically linked to questions of ceramic and sculpture: the relationship between monumentality and the human body, generic forms such as pots and urns (and therefore the antinomy between sculpture and containers, or arts and crafts), issues which inevitably lead into the question of gender. The nesting shapes of the Russian Dolls are generic folk artifacts that traditionally evoke maternity and reproduction. Executed here at a scale large enough to contain a human body, they also bring up images of sarcophagi or funerary vessels.

The drawings and banners extend the artist's foray into abstraction, where motifs borrowed from Indian Tantric painting or the Spiritualist Hilma af Klint merge with the desiring machines of Dada's mechanomorphs.

Fillette is also the title of a parallel group exhibition, co-organized by Mai-Thu Perret

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and Fabrice Stroun. Works by ten artists and an anonymous Tantra painting from Rajasthan were selected as the singular terms of an open-ended rebus that includes Perret's new sculptures and banners.

The historically connotated spirituality of Andrea Büttner's woodcuts. Seth Price's fabric envelope containing a security print for Corbis, the image licensing company. Poured paintings by Hayley Tompkins evoking the iridescence of digital gradients. A hand-lettered, stuttering motto by Richard Wright. The quotidian magic of Daan van Golden's photographs. A 16mm film announcing one of Susan Cianciolo's arts and crafts meets grunge fashion collections from the 90s. Carol Rama's drawings of mad cows and rotting teeth. Isabelle Cornaro's rubber cast bas-relief of decorative chains and piles of coins. Monika Baer's painting of a lactating breast on stone-washed denim. Sue Tompkins' painting reading "SHE DID".

Mai-Thu Perret has exhibited internationally since the early 2000s. Selected institutional solo exhibitions include Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2016), Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aargau (2011), Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2011), Mamco, Geneva (2011), Aspen Art Museum (2009), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2008), The Kitchen, New York (2008), The Renaissance Society, Chicago (2006), Chisenhale Gallery, London (2006). Recent institutional group exhibition include The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2018), Kunsthaus Zurich (2018), Kunsthalle Basel (2018), Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2017), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2016), Swiss Institute, New York (2015), Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht (2015) and Migros Museum, Zurich (2015). Her work forms part of the collection of many major institutions.

Mai-Thu Perret & Fabrice Stroun have worked as a curatorial team when they co-directed the program of Forde, L'Usine in Geneva (1999-2000). Subsequent projects include *Les Jardins de la Violence* for Expo 02, in collaboration with Daniel Baumann and Johannes Gachnang. *Fillette* is their third group exhibition for Galerie Francesca Pia.