



Cabinet Da-End 01

Da-End is set to create it's first cabinet de curiosités. The first edition of a series of collective and annual exhibitions that gathers the works of contemporary artists and ancient objects around the classic themes of a cabinet de curiosités: 'artificialia, naturalia, exotica, scientifica'.

A collage of 12 images illustrating various aspects of the history of anatomy. The images are arranged in a grid-like fashion on a dark background. The top row features a classical anatomical drawing of two figures with a red vascular system, a green-tinted image of a dissected organ, and a black and white photograph of a large, detailed anatomical model of a flower. The middle row includes a black and white photograph of a man in a lab coat performing a dissection, a small anatomical drawing of a flower, and a black and white photograph of a long, thin anatomical structure. The bottom row shows a dark, dramatic scene with a skull and a lit candle, and a black and white photograph of several anatomical models of different shapes and sizes.

With the kind help of Pierre Bazalgues, Alexandre Bernand, Jean-Louis Ceccarini, Paul-Emmanuel Dubois, Christophe de Fabry et Judith Schoffel.

DA-END, L'art du cabinet de curiosités

The cabinet de curiosités has long belonged to the collective imagination, having vanished from contemporary interiors it has recently been brought back into the present.

It was between the XVI and XVIII centuries that the archetype of the cabinet de curiosités was formed. Usually formed of a locked room, reserved for the intelligensia, or a precious cabinet containing treasures. Beyond the wondrous and entertaining, it is a vision of the world and its mysteries, which is presented.

The aesthetic, the eclecticism, the arranging of the objects and ties to the Enlightenment only increase the cabinets fascination. It is in this context that the artists exhibited by Da-End have re-appropriated the rule book. This singular style of collecting has survived over the centuries well beyond the Ancien Régime. The success of the public auction in 2003 of André Breton's studio, bares witness to this. Over the course of a month, minerals, fossils, stuffed animals, books, ancient and modern art, religious objects, statues and tribal masks provoked unexpected interest and fierce bidding.

The same interest can be seen in the exhibition presented to the art lover by the Da-End Gallery.

Our contemporaries have in fact revived the traditional codes of the genre by combining them with their personal tastes, whether they be for popular, religious, brutal or avant-garde art, photographs, scientific instruments, vanitas, or erotic objects

The bizarre is confronted with the sublime: works of art to exotic knick-knacks leading, possibly, to the renewal of Japonisme. The artists, the objects exposed and the collections presented by Da-End continue this memory of the cabinet de curiosités. It is this recurrent theme in art which has paradoxically never inspired a present day gallery. The gathering at the Da-End Gallery bears witness to this constant presence.

This is why, loyal to its founding mantra of anachronism and troubling experiences, that Da End has chosen not to compartmentalise its vision of a world peopled by out of date, barely developed creations. In a singular microcosm that works on many different levels, from the fantastic and the surprising to the marvellous and the bizarre. The boundaries are then also blurred between ancient illustrated works and contemporary drawings, memento moris and living robots, or even between idle dreams and the human condition.

All the pieces, whether they be ancient or modern, are as eternal as the themes they portray to those who must answer to their image, to their memory or to society. This ecumenical approach to the compositions mean that one goes beyond the easy clichés of 'universality', beyond their beauty and forgotten uses. The works, therefore, maintain their own force and develop a modern language of their own.

Regardless of the explanation, what remains, at the end, is an ensemble both eclectic and coherent, the fruit of a year of searching and encounters, grouped together for the first time for a few weeks on the rue Guénégaud. An ephemeral gathering which will long be remembered.

Emmanuel Pierrat, lawyer & writer.

Author of *La collectionnite*, Paris, Éditions Le Passage, march 2011;

& *Les nouveaux cabinets de curiosités*, Paris, Editions Les Beaux Jours, march 2011.