

Press release

Frankfurt am Main, 24.05.2017

Mapping Dreams: The Art of Marc-Antoine Mathieu 3 June to 15 October 2017

Press preview: Thursday, 1 June 2017, 11.30 am

Exhibition opening: Friday, 2 June 2017, 7 pm

His drawing style is unmistakable: the clear black line he handles with such infinite variation and consummate skill, the elaborate play of shadows along the boundary between reality and the imagination. The Frenchman Marc-Antoine Mathieu is considered one of the most innovative comic artists of the present. For thirty years he has been publishing albums that change and break the rules and codes of the genre. With precise draughtsmanship and profound linguistic wit, they show readers unaccustomed perspectives and provide insights into the enigma of things.

The exhibition *Mapping Dreams: The Art of Marc-Antoine Mathieu* will introduce visitors to the œuvre of this exceptional storyteller and translate the reading experience of his disconcertingly surreal and labyrinthine comic-book realms into the museum interior. From 3 June to 15 October 2017, an exceptional exhibition design will build the bridge to Mathieu's comic cosmos. Room-filling installations and adaptations of passageway and transition motifs from his works will bring the intricate self-reflective / meta-reflective structures of his stories to life and turn the narrative quality and imaginative force of his comic œuvre into an intense sensorial experience.

The show will also present a selection of more than fifty original drawings, and thus a cross-section of the albums produced by the draughtsman, writer and scenarist since the early 1990s, as well as unpublished sequences from his current work in progress. Bronze sculptures and animated films by Mathieu will also be on view, broadening his narrative palette by offering alternative mediums of access to his œuvre.

Mathieu's comic protagonists are explorers in a barren imaginary world, stoically pursuing their paths through changing topographies. Overpopulated, walled-in cityscapes, sometimes bursting at the seams, and endless vacant landscapes made of gorges, loops and swirls mutate with every step as in a dream – or, indeed, a nightmare –, denying the reader a sure footing. All the while, Mathieu playfully shuffles and reshuffles the mix of language, image and action, calling into question their function for our consciousness. Anything and everything can become material for the storyline: the four complementary colours popping up abruptly to shake the hero's worldview to the core; the vanishing point which, once lost, sends the protagonist off on a search for perspective; even the pages themselves, out of order, torn from the binding or missing altogether, posing riddles to the hero and the reader alike. Mathieu constantly involves his works' recipients, for example by having them don 3-D specs to accompany the characters on a journey to the third dimension. Or he abruptly intertwines narrative and reality, for example when protagonist Julius Corentin

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Acquefacques's excursion takes him right into the artist's own world by way of a spiral that pops out into real space at the turn of a page.

The exhibition is being carried out in co-production with *Frankfurt in French – The 2017 Frankfurt Book Fair with France as the Guest of Honour*.

Marc-Antoine Mathieu: A biography

Marc-Antoine Mathieu was born in Antony near Angers, France in 1959, and lives and works in Angers today. In 1984, after studying at the École des Beaux-Arts d'Angers, he founded the studio *Lucie Lom* with Philippe Leduc.

His career got underway with participation in various comic productions; he published his first album, *Paris-Mâcon*, in 1987 with his brother Jean-Luc Mathieu. It was in 1989 that he began work on his award-winning series about Julius Corentin Acquefacques, a clerk at the Ministry of Humour. Meanwhile comprising six volumes, it was first published in France by Delcourt. Part one of the series, *L'Origine* ('The Origin'), received numerous prizes worldwide and established Mathieu's reputation as an ingenious storyteller and dramaturge and a master of the interplay between black and white. Concurrently with his work on this series, he developed several individual albums which have been published by Futuropolis and Delcourt.

Within the framework of his studio *Lucie Lom* he has also been successful as a scenographer, sculptor, curator, and graphic artist for exhibitions and installations in the public space. He has served as creative director of such exhibitions as *Espagne – Espagne* for the *Festival International de la Bande Dessinée d'Angoulême* (1989) and *God Save the Comics* (Angoulême, 1990), as well as major retrospectives on Moebius/Giraud (2000) and Will Eisner (2017).

His latest album *Otto, l'homme réécrit* came out in France in 2016. The exhibition *Mapping Dreams* will provide a sneak preview of his current work in progress, *Homo Faber* (working title).

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Mapping Dreams: The Art of Marc-Antoine Mathieu
3 June to 15 October 2017

Director

Matthias Wagner K

Curator

David Beikirch

Location

Museum Angewandte Kunst
Schaumainkai 17
60594 Frankfurt am Main

Information

T +49 69 212 31286
F +49 69 212 30703
www.museumangewandtekunst.de

Opening hours

Tue, Thu–Sun 10 am – 6 pm, Wed 10 am – 8 pm

Admission

9 EUR, reduced 4.50 EUR; free for children, teens and students of the Goethe University Frankfurt and the Städelschule

Press contact

Dorothee Maas, Julia Ditsch and Julia Quedzuweit
T +49 69 212 32828 / 73243
F +49 69 212 30703
presse.angewandte-kunst@stadt-frankfurt.de

Press downloads

www.museumangewandtekunst.de

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Presse contact France Guest of Honour

Agence BUCH CONTACT
Murielle Rousseau
T +49 761 296040
buchcontact@buchcontact.de