



WHITE MIRROR

**Itinerant exhibition
2019 -2020 by Didier Guillon**

FREE ENTRY

La Maison Valmont Munich

Maximilianstraße 22, 80539 Munich

PRESS RELEASE



EXHIBITION ORGANIZED BY



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



and The Hope School



Fondation Valmont is proud to partner with famous Munich-based **SOIS BLESSED** concept store, which – among other inspiring pieces - offers an exclusive collection of clothes and home accessories designed at **The Hope School** by children in need. Based in Cape Town, the school provides day education to 240 HIV-infected children, whose colorful drawings and patterns give unedited optimism to pieces crafted by SOIS BLESSED.

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In the glimmer of dawn, luminescent forms move across the horizon. Yet they are anonymous, shunned from the world, huddled under a blanket of survival, shrouded in fog, enveloped in obscurity as their only solace. Lost and alone, these abandoned souls wander blindly through the City, the illustrious Promised Land.

The question appears like a mirage: in the urban jungle, is a new horizon of dreams and desires off limits to people from beyond our borders?

“White Mirror” gazes through a two-way mirror to cast light on the darkness. (...) The “masks” fall away and reality emerges from illusion.

With his compelling work “White Mirror”, author Didier Guillon starts a meaningful conversation and sparks a debate on the border between art and politics. Using migratory movements to convey the interdependence of the souls drifting through our society, Didier Guillon shows us that there is no clear boundary between the observer and the observed, between lands of exile and lands of welcome.

One day, each one of us will find ourselves on one side of the mirror or the other.

Through the international language of symbolism, Didier Guillon creates a poetic world that challenges us to truly see the humanity of this contemporary geopolitical phenomenon, from an individual or universal perspective. And it gives the suffering of humanity a face imploring us to take another look at life and what it may reveal about ourselves.

Text written by Caroline Spir



Didier Guillon, « Hansel & Gretel », Venice 2019

“In the forest of mysterious shadows where pretty white lost souls murmur their joys and sorrows.”

Didier Guillon

HOW WAS “WHITE MIRROR” CONCEIVED?

Venice. Always, forever

A city of inspiration, dreams, happiness and visions for Didier Guillon.

The city where art reigns in all flamboyance, free from the world’s chaos and economic concerns.

The city where all artistic expressions are praised for their soul.

The city where *Fondation Valmont* has contributed to the artistic scene with major exhibitions showcased during the two last contemporary Art Biennales.

The city where *Fondation Valmont* has acquired a pure Italian palazzo, *Palazzo Bonvicini*.

The city where the Valmont Group engaged in the fragrance business with *Storie Veneziane*.

The city where this new achievement was born...

Venice.

Venice, 2019

The first intention of “White Mirror” was initiated and showcased during the Art Biennale. Baptized “Hansel & Gretel”, the exhibition unveiled Didier Guillon’s latest works, around the concept of a white forest populated with totems in honeycomb cardboard and *papier-mâché* masks. White faces, all identical, staring at the visitor... or maybe not. Their eyes blind to any presence, as a metaphor of loneliness in a crowd.

And this question: are you wearing a mask?



Hansel & Gretel, “White Mirror”, Venice 2019



White Mirror's Installation, Tokyo, New York, Milan, Chengdu, Munich

Tokyo, New York, Milan, Chengdu, Munich

Didier Guillon features a second collection of works, deeply influenced by front-page news, geopolitics and sustainability concerns. This new interpretation presents totems in honeycomb cardboard, golden and white *papier-mâché* masks and golden balls... which question visitors:

- Are we lost in the city?
- Are men hiding behind masks?
- Is the human race hiding reality under golden covers?
- Are some men hiding behind golden masks?

This collection of about 30 works entirely designed by Didier Guillon will come to life in La Maison Valmont Ginza (Tokyo) beginning of October, before flying to New York (393 NYC Gallery), Milan, and landing in La Maison Valmont Chengdu and Munich.



Didier Guillon
Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, 1953
President of the Valmont Group
Curator and artist

Didier Guillon descends from a long lineage of major art contributors, throughout history: merchants such as Charles Sedelmeyer, sculptors and art historians as Stanislas Lami. He takes pride in his filiation with emblematic sculptor and Egyptologist Alphonse Lami, whose father François was the illegitimate son of Francesco Borghese... Prince Aldobrandini General and Grand Equerry of Napoleon.

An artist himself, Didier Guillon draws from this phenomenal genealogy his passion for arts, as his profound bond with Italy... more specifically Venice, where he managed the purchase of a *piano Nobile* at *Palazzo Bonvicini* for *Fondation Valmont*.

True to his nature, Didier Guillon exhilarates as he relentlessly works to fine-tune his ideas. Over the last years, he designed multiple works in various media, several dimensions, skillfully combining a wide array of materials. He likes to think of new ways to approach, discuss and appreciate contemporary art.

As a fundamental pillar of the Valmont Group and a passion shared by Sophie and Didier Guillon, Art provides each Maison with a unique dimension. It plays a role in every initiative, complements the most spectacular launches and shines on its own through *Fondation Valmont*.

From the very beginnings of the Group, Didier refused to be quarantined within the borders of cosmetics and thus worked to build bridges with the world of arts. His choice was obviously motivated by personal pleasure, but also acknowledged that nowadays, no company can limit itself to its own microcosm.

He hence developed sponsoring projects, arranged traveling exhibitions in unexpected venues including spas and department stores, organized auctions to benefit humanitarian activities and put together a unique collection of nine works by selected artists celebrating Valmont's 30th anniversary, among other endeavors. The tone was set: Didier the art lover had found the perfect medium of expression.

When Art
meets
Beauty

Fondation Valmont repeatedly distinguishes itself through its international exhibitions, continued involvement in the Venice Biennale, projects blossoming in iconic locations and other exhibitions arranged locally in the Group's subsidiaries.



The Valmont Group dedicates three luxury cosmetics and fragrance brands, with contemporary values where effectiveness, seduction, sensory and olfactory experiences intermingle and combine along with a virtuous passion for art. To bring to light modern-day Venice, Sophie and Didier Guillon have transcribed their Venetian tales, olfactory fables inspired by the creative cauldron of the Venetian lagoon in the latest brand *Storie Veneziane*. They combine and express their favoured fields, art and alchemy. The art of perfumery extolled, mask of Murano glass enthroned and Italian leather in all its beguiling glory.

When *Fondation Valmont* anchors in Venice, Palazzo Bonvicini breathes...

Further to its two exhibitions during the 2015 and 2017 Biennales, *Fondation Valmont* decided to make a deeper commitment to Venice by taking residence in an historic palace, *Palazzo Bonvicini*. Inaugurated in May 2019 with the exhibition "Hansel & Gretel", this jewel brings a significant contribution to the local arts scene.

The residence offers the perfect nest to present exhibitions every year during the Biennale exhibitions of contemporary art and architecture. A genuine Venetian palace in the purest 16th century Renaissance style, *Palazzo Bonvincini* displays authentic refinement. Its crafted walls and ceiling moldings enhance the beauty of the gleaming frescos, while lush terrazzo floors serve as a vibrant tribute to the *savoir-faire* of the lagoon.



Fondation Valmont presents the one-of-a-kind Munich concept store SOIS BLESSED – a store that represents Valmont values by offering a non-profit collection as its centrepiece alongside a diverse range of fashion, lifestyle and interior décor items. SOIS BLESSED was created in cooperation with the HOPE SCHOOL in East London, which gives 260 HIV-infected children a real chance at a better life. 100% of the profits from sales of this collection go back to the school.

Fondation Valmont selects SOIS BLESSED and its 'Hope School' as its charity partner... Charity work



HIV-Giving back to the community has always been one of the Valmont Group's core values.

To celebrate this new exhibition at La Maison Valmont, the company decided to support the Hope School's work with a number of donations.

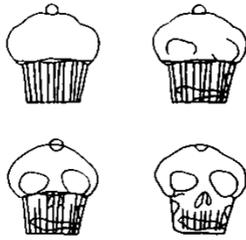
The Hope School in East London (South Africa) is a day school for 260 HIV-infected children who live with poverty, violence and hunger, and face an uncertain future. **They are picked up every morning from their township and spend the day not only learning, but also experiencing peace, security and love. They also receive food and medical care.**

In collaboration with the children of the HOPE SCHOOL, SOIS BLESSED has developed a diverse collection of silkscreen prints from their colourful and imaginative drawings and patterns. With plenty of love and hard work, these designs have been fashioned into a non-profit collection filled with unique products. These one-of-a-kind fashion, lifestyle and interior décor items are authentic, life-affirming creations with a truly unique character.

With its very own non-profit collection, SOIS BLESSED hopes to make an ongoing contribution to giving these kids a real chance at a better life, and to really make a difference by giving something back.

Valmont supports the Hope School with the following concrete actions:

- Valmont will donate 10 euros for every item sold from the exclusive L'Elixir des Glaciers skincare line and the Storie Veneziane fragrance line.
- Especially dedicated original artworks will be sold to benefit the Hope School.



“Skull Cake”

by Isao

Serigraphy, edited in 20 pieces
5 pieces for sale

€ 200



“Gold Mirror”

by Didier Guillon
& Leonardo Cimolin

Murano glass, edited in 5 pieces
5 pieces for sale

€ 250



“The mad Hatter”

By Didier Guillon

Drawing, pastel painting
and collage
10 pieces for sale

€ 200

Until September 26th, 2020

10:00 am > 06:00 pm

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PRESS CONTACT

Katja Koellner

+49 172 959 4632

presse@pr-koellner.de