

An abstract painting featuring several faces rendered in a sketchy, expressive style. The faces are primarily in shades of pink, grey, and white, with some areas of yellow and black. The background is white, with numerous black ink splatters and drips scattered across it. The overall composition is dynamic and somewhat chaotic.

Karim
Boumjimar

*Pandemonium
Paradiso*



ISBN: 978-87-94311-30-4
EAN: 9788794311304

Karim Boumjimar
Pandemonium Paradiso
Exhibition period: 30.08.2025 – 26.10.2025

O—OVERGADEN
Overgaden neden Vædet 17, 1414 København K,
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INTRODUCTION

It is a great pleasure to introduce this publication as a companion to Karim Boumjimar's solo exhibition *Pandemonium Paradiso* at O—Overgaden. Throughout the last years O—Overgaden has, with the generous support of the Augustinus Foundation, published a monographic series in conjunction with our large-scale solo exhibitions, aiming to expand the conversations around each show and produce new, offspring material.

In this particular case, writer, filmmaker, and artist Basyma Saad has written an explosive text about the hedonistic society and feast that also unfolds on the walls in Boumjimar's exhibition and Cédric Fauq, Chief Curator at CAPC in Bordeaux has contributed with "a further unfolding of the works and their themes". A warm and heartfelt thank you to both contributors. I wish to thank the whole team at O—Overgaden for their efforts in realizing the exhibition, as well as the graphic design team at fanfare for their always dedicated work, and of course not least the artist, Karim, for generously sharing conceptualizations and co-thinking with all of us, through both the exhibition and this publication.

Karim Boumjimar's painterly motifs spill fluidly, often erotically, from one figure to another—assembling animals, public personas, nightlife, the artist's friends, cruising, and mythological creatures.

As an all-encompassing installation, the exhibition at O—Overgaden includes a large-scale mural, created on site during the weeks leading up to the opening,

letting the artist's literally fabulous, transgressive, and polyamorous universe take over the institution's white walls, like a midsummer night's dream on acid. Growing out of the walls, four 2-meter-tall vases informally pop up, mushrooming around in the spaces, as if constructing a forest to cruise in. Looking closer at the vases, shapes rise from the clay, carved out from its skin—as if cut back to expose secrets or hidden bodies beneath the surface.

The quick, draft-like quality of the lines make Boumjimar's stable, permanent artworks—drawings and ceramics—feel like living, transient performances. Stemming from an intuitive, "deconditioned," or unhinged bodily flow of experiments, the works at O—Overgaden have come about largely unplanned, almost like automatic drawings. The result is a gigantic Dionysian feast in the year 2025 or an interspecies orgy, including high heels, chimeric birds, a devilish horn-clad figure flashing his anus, archers, fable-like trans women connected by flows of hair, erect phalluses, horses, angels of the night. Encircled by a colossal headless serpent or garland, Boumjimar's world is one of hallucinating, queer connectivity across bodies that transcend binary identities. The fables of the archaic vases merge into our present: Like a dizzying trance of contemporary clubbing, this is both a place of demons and a chaotic present-day wonderland—*pandemonium paradiso*.

Rhea Dall,
Director and Chief Curator, O—Overgaden
September 2025

PARADISO: ASTAGH- FIRULLAH!

Basyma Saad

It is high time. The villagers are rambunctious, swept up, glistening ochre in the pre-sunset which feels like it has lasted hours. It has not lasted hours, but the inebriated villagers are not ones to say.

They flock to the massive, oblong table under the belittling mulberry tree in the village square. A ritual is about to take place.

As if adhering to a general rule, the ritual itself has no bearing on the hierarchies, habits, handshakes, or humdrum in the village. The ritual does not turn the clock forward or backward on the social relationships outside of itself.

In fact, there is no clock. There are only blistered palms, wanton toilers, the tilled fields.

And yet, during the ritual, there is the fancy of playing at overturning fate and, if the stelliferous sky gets its chakras aligned, there is the possibility of finding oneself in a jacquerie, or a Zanj rebellion, or at least some kind of millenarian orgy.

The ceremonial banquet is set up to be rich in calories and deficient in politesse. All manner of cooking, curing, and serving horse meat (and only horse meat) are represented in the banquet. The color of the food is thus exclusively in shades of crimson, due to the horse meat's high degree of vascularization and myoglobin content.

Around the table sit many a big personality, about a dozen of the biggest fish in the small pond that the village continues to be. The surface of the table presents a rolling cartography, with two and a half mountain ranges, innumerable small hills and geological formations, and a handful of waterways and aquifers. This terrain-in-lieu-of-a-piece-of-furniture has the effect of rendering the people around it exceedingly primordial, as though each of them were a natural disaster sprouting out of the immemorial Earth and imminently befalling both the living and the dead.

Nothing in particular announces the start of the ritual: it is experienced as a gradual lull in the general garrulousness of the spectators giving way to the first signs of showmanship at the table.

Out of the crowd there comes the village clairvoyant. She is veiled in a long and narrow gauzy fabric, the sheerness and proportions of which defy practicality, leading her to wrap it around her head multiple times very tightly. This lends her the air of a mummy. She chaperones a puppet in the shape of a monkey from the crowd and takes her seat at the one remaining empty chair. She whips the puppet to life by its strings and ventriloquizes through it a sort of sour malediction.

Two seats down, past the obligatory jester and the neurotic arsonist, is the picky faggot, in fact the pickiest faggot this side of the Silk Road. He remains lithe and hairless, known to have weathered his twink and post-twink years without ever dropping his standards. As the only scantily clad non-hairy young man in the village, he is used to shouts of "*Astaghfirullah!*" (I ask for God's forgiveness!) from the older men upon his passing. The men blurt this out as apologia for having sinned by desiring this specimen of the same sex, or for having broken a fast by desiring at all.

The picky faggot does not intend to break anyone's fast on this sacred day. His contribution to the potluck is a classic. He gets into formation: face down, ass up, next to a sign that reads "NO LOADS REFUSED!"

But at one promontory in the unusual geometry of the table sits the most out-of-place figure among the gathered. Here is the heraldic imperial eagle, fresh off of its cameo in Dante's *Paradiso*, Canto XVIII. The bird is diaphanous, wispy, a luminous sight to behold, totally unlike its stocky and frigid depictions on flags, coins, and armor by the Germans since the Holy Roman Empire. In the golden light it is an elongated shadow slithering in its seat, composed of a hundred human faces bleeding into one another, eyes darting around erratically and mouths spewing a faint ambient score in Nostratic glossolalia. According to Dante, the faces are those of the corporate body of souls of all the just rulers that have ruled thus far. Divine justice is present.

Soon enough, as the eagle starts making its way atop the table's earthen surface, both table company and spectators come to utter silence. The eagle slaloms to the gaping canyon between the two primary mountain ranges on the table and appears to crouch, dignified and reverent. Its sedate, see-through faces gently close their eyes in unison.

An air of solemn, appreciative grace sweeps across the crowd. There is exhalation and cooing, as well as the sound of placid collective reflection about the nature of being and its injustices.

Then, all of a sudden, the faces of the eagle appear to tense up and agitate, furrowing brows and tightening shut eyes, vibrating in place all at once. Still crouched, the eagle spreads out its wings in flutter, not in an attempt at flight but rather to say that it needs a moment. A dark cloud begins to form at its rear, as a sulfuric stench takes hold of the company. Out of its translucent rectum there comes a great and continuous mudslide, inundating the terrain atop which it starts to run around in circles, squeaking loudly and unheraldically. It spares none of those seated at the table or those standing front row behind them. Squeals of scandal and disgust fill the village square. The heraldic eagle has taken a dump across the land.

An outside observer not accustomed to the traditions of the village may have expected everyone to disperse after what appears to have been a non-starter, a scatological force majeure. But after the momentary shock and frenzy, followed by some provisional wiping on the part of those directly affected by the excretion, a certain intentness seems to return to the assembly.

The eagle, now restored to its pre-fecal state of beatitude, prances back to its seat. It looks to its left, where an oversized human infant sits in a high chair staring blankly ahead. The baby in question is double the height and girth of a standard baby from the village.

The eagle leans in toward the baby, bringing its beak until it is almost touching the baby's nose. Parental instincts kick into full gear: The villagers are apprehensive, scrutinizing the scene with bated breath. The child continues to stare at nothing. The eagle's beak opens slowly and widely, until the space between its jaws is greater than the head of the baby. Then with all the force of its constituent souls, it snaps its beak thunderously, just grazing the infant's nose and causing it to snap out of its torpor.

The baby, now alert, lifts a pudgy index finger to its nose and starts to feel out the inside of its right nostril.

The village clergyman, seated across the table from the ensouled eagle and the outsized baby, bolts to action, proclaiming: "We must not allow these has-been souls to terrorize the Babe! The Babe is a manifestation of the body of our very own King.

We may not see our King, but we can see the Babe!"

At this statement, the baby belches joyously, "Wa wa wee wa!"

The call and response between the clergyman and the baby rouses an audible suspicion among the villagers:

Which souls are unworthy?

Who is the clergyman to judge entire lineages of previous rulers, both victors and vanquished?

What is between him and the Babe?

What time is the orgy?

Loud whispers are heard among conspiring neighbors.

To the clergyman's rescue comes the Hermaphrostitute. Broad shoulders, big tits, still smeared in shit but unfettered, she climbs and strides to the center of the table. She is also used to the *Astaghfirullahs*.

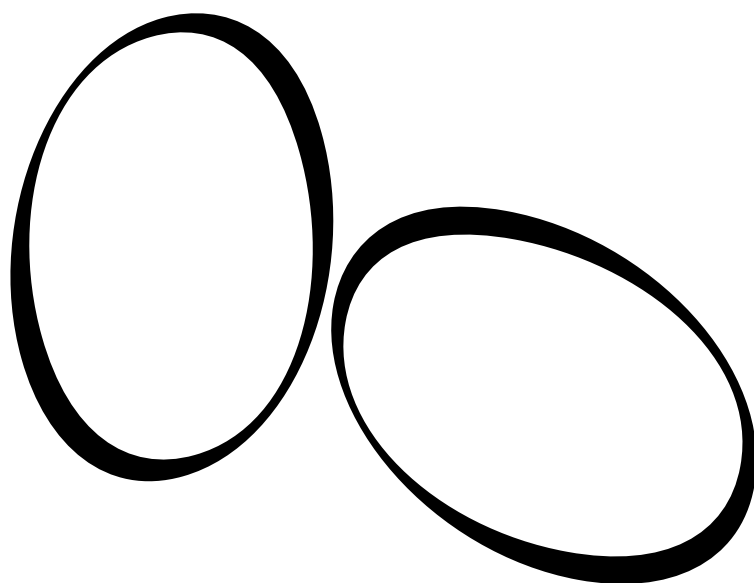
The Hermaphrostitute loudly exclaims in the direction of everyone present: "I have no strong feelings about the eagle or the baby but I'll let you know that all you village men should be ashamed of yourselves! The priest is the only man in the entire village who did not want to be cuckolded, penetrated, or disemboweled! All he wanted me to do was wear a bib and squeal like the Babe. It was a relief, a welcome respite from the domination expected of me. I'll defend him till the day I'm stoned to death!"

While she delivers her speech, the largest landowner in the province—a settler who owned even the village square where the ritual was taking place—tries to take his turn on the picky faggot. Even though the "NO LOADS REFUSED!" sign is still up near the latter's asshole, the landowner feels compelled to claim that he is owed the fuck regardless, because this is, after all, entirely his property—to which the faggot mutters "ew!" and promptly refuses the load.

Then, in adulation of the Hermaphrostitute, the faggot crawls on all fours and devotionally offers her his asshole. She bends down, grabs the two moons of his buttocks, and yells into the hole: "IT'S MY DAY OFF!"

VISCOUS ENTITIES, MELTED MYTHOLOGIES

Cédric Fauq



I have never met Karim Boumjimar “in the flesh”/IRL (in real life), but I feel like I have seen the image of his body—often *quasi*-naked, glistening—many times in the past 10 years, notably through the documentation of performances by the collective Young Boy Dancing Group (founded in 2014), and other images posted on his Instagram account. Quite often, these images were manipulated so his limbs looked excessively long, or body particularly bendable, striking impossible poses. Other times, they gave the impression that he was just coming out of a bath filled with viscous liquids, born anew.

These experiments in pliability and stickiness could be considered mere aesthetic exercises, but they carry much more meaning—one that has extended to his more recent works, using primarily ceramics and drawings.

For his latest exhibition, titled *Pandemonium Paradiso*, Karim Boumjimar upscales these two parallel practices. The show revolves around four two-meter-tall vases—respectively baptized *Demon Strike*, *Life Goes On*, *Elysian Dolls*, and *Erect Labyrinth*—adorned with his distinguishable drawing style. The other component of the exhibition, a monumental mural work flooding the entire space, gave its title to the exhibition: *Pandemonium Paradiso*.

The paradoxical nature of the exhibition title—*pandemonium* referring to the capital of Hell, where Satan and his peers assemble, as coined by English poet John Milton (1608–1674)—is the first gate to access Boumjimar’s cosmovision. The universes depicted in the mural and on the vases appear equally desirable as they are monstrous. As one makes their way into the space, they might encounter a fiery horned devil eagerly opening his hairy asshole, face high-heeled nymphs executing lavish dances, pass by winged figures such as angels and fairies, or gaze at a never-ending snakeskin.

The protagonists of this *queer* assembly, in their respective poses and attitudes—some of them come across tired and scared, others seductive and horny, while their neighbors look brave and combative—all share creature-like features, blending mythological references to historical figures and contemporary fashion accessories. In that respect, Boumjimar’s mural blurs the lines between the religious fresco, the history painting, and comics. Appropriating these genres while refusing their codes, the artist not only manages to figure a fragile and unstable queer gathering but does so while adopting a queer methodology.

In comparison to a previous mural work, *Spring Has Arrived* (2023), it is also crucial to underline the unsettled quality of *Pandemonium Paradiso*. By allowing the ink to drip from the lines of the drawn silhouettes and only filling certain portions of the mural with watercolors, the creatures acquire a state of potentiality which prevents them from being “fixated.” That very fragile state of the queer figure is one that should be cared for vehemently, to avoid the violence of recuperation, surveillance, and policing. French philosopher Quentin Dubois, in his recent essay “Puissance de (dé)figuration du queer” [The power of queer (de)figuration] writes:

Figuration must acknowledge its own precariousness [to] then become something other than representation: a slowdown, an allusion, a trace a presence that resists violence [that] produces a break in the continuum of global violence. To speak of the power of disfiguration is to place within figuration a power that does not cancel it out but rather specifies it: it is simply a matter of making the figure not a fixed entity but a rhythm that destroys fixations.¹

In line with this proposal, it should be said that Boumjimar didn’t make any preparatory sketches nor take any notes before applying his ink to the walls of the gallery space. He never does. The work is thus the fruit of an improvised performance—one that does not seek to represent *anyone* but rather a multitude, in contrast with the ways contemporary artists busy with queerness have been relying on naming individuals and referencing specific figures or groups in their work

1. Quentin Dubois, “Puissance de (dé)figuration du queer,” *Trou Noir* 5, October 2025.

—which doesn’t mean that this strategy should be invalidated altogether. In that sense, Boumjimar’s work is closer to the practice of an Ovartaci, for example. If we turn to the series of large quasi-amphoras pacing *Pandemonium Paradiso*, one can only notice their “imperfect” nature. In stark contrast with the usually clean lines defining the art of ceramics, Boumjimar works with the clay to make its unstable nature felt after the firing process. A closer look might also display hands and fingerprints, layered underneath the populated painted scenes. Like the figures parading in the mural, the vases seem to carry the potential for mutation. As their dimensions suggest that they could host a human body, they turn into vessels for transformation.

Boumjimar mentioned that each vase touched upon specific experiences: “clubbing, the mundanity of life, the force of nature and orgies”. Four cornerstones of the artist’s life, the vases serve as fictional amplifiers more than archival records. Here, I want to summon the words of queer scholar João Florêncio who recently co-authored *Crossings: Creative Ecologies of Cruising* (2025) with Liz Rosenfeld. In an essay titled “Drugs, techno, and the ecstasy of queer bodies” he wrote:

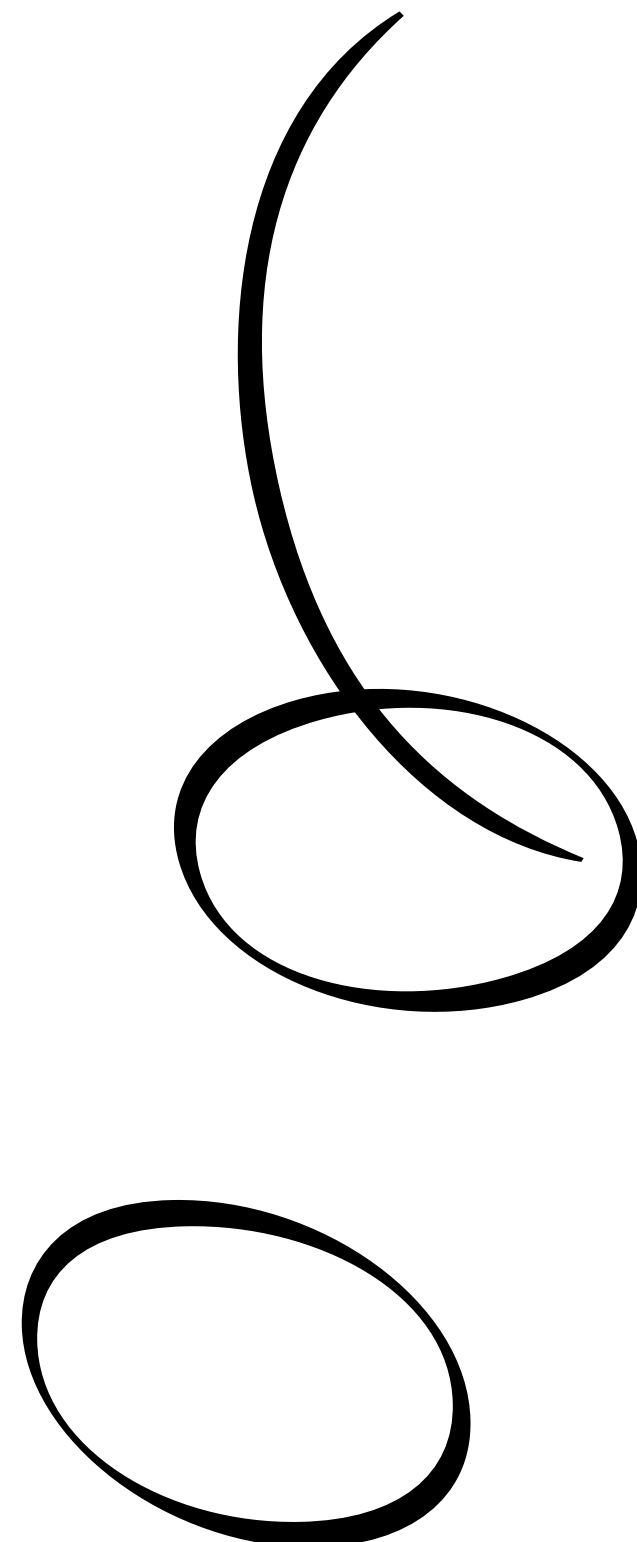
Entertaining the subjunctive “might be” as a mode of queer becoming, the queer techno party is a world-making machinic assemblage that triggers “ripples across identities” by “[opening] up one’s sense of bodily horizons of possibility and, in doing so, [pushing] the boundaries of previously defined identifications” [Susanna Paasonen]. It is a laboratory for seriously playful experiments that enact “an ‘inflation’ of both the individual and social body” with drugs as a common catalyst [François Gauthier]. Our bodies are sensory interfaces that can be reconfigured, re-formed, remapped “through a kind of wild and experimental free play that re-marks, reinscribes orifices, glands, sinews, muscles differently” [Elizabeth Grosz]. As a result, rather than discovering itself and its body, the subject creates itself, subjunctively.²

Obviously, I wouldn’t equate Boumjimar’s *Pandemonium Paradiso* with the experience of a queer techno party, per se. But it is interesting to me to think of the exhibition as “a laboratory for seriously playful experiments,” one that accepts, and enhances, the viscosity of queerness and doesn’t try to make it consumable nor digestible. In that regard, we could only wish for the exhibition to have the same faith as Gustav Klimt’s *Beethoven Frieze* (1902)—which also contains a large snake-like figure—painted for the 14th Secession exhibition in Vienna. Art historian and curator Stephan Koja reports:

Klimt’s works, which are so popular today, were regarded by many of his contemporaries as incomprehensible, scandalous and “obscene.”

2. João Florêncio, “Drugs, techno, and the ecstasy of queer bodies,” *The Sociological Review* 71, no.4, 2023.

The lascivious eroticism of the Gorgons and the depictions of Lust and Excess were simply rejected by many as “painted pornography.”³



3. Stephan Koja “...just about the nastiest women I have ever seen...”: Gustave Klimt’s Beethoven Frieze: Evolution and Programme,” in Stephan Koja (ed.), Gustav Klimt: *The Beethoven Frieze and the Controversy over the Freedom of Art*, 2006.

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Karim Boumjimar
Pandemonium Paradiso
Exhibition period: 30.08.2025 – 26.10.2025

Karim Boumjimar (b. 1998, ES) is a Copenhagen-based visual artist and member of the performance collective Young Boy Dancing Group. Boumjimar graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Spring 2025 and has exhibited and performed at venues including TINA Gallery, London (2025); Liljevalchs, Stockholm (2025); O Days Festival, Copenhagen (2024); Centre d'Art La Panera, Lleida (2023), ARIEL – Feminisms in the Aesthetics & Dag H 42, Copenhagen (2023); Alice Folker Gallery, Copenhagen (2023) and Kunstverein in Hamburg (2021).

ISBN: 978-87-94311-30-4
EAN: 9788794311304

Editor: Nanna Friis
Text: Rhea Dall, Basya Saad, Cédric Fauq
Translation: Nanna Friis
Copy editing: Susannah Worth
Photo: David Stjernholm

This publication is funded by Augustinus Fonden

Karim Boumjimar's exhibition has received support from The Danish Arts Foundation, Lemvig-Müller Fonden, Billedhuggeren, professor Gottfred Eickhoff og hustrus, maleren Gerda Eickhoffs fond, Den Hielmstjerne-Rosencroneske Stiftelse, The Visual Arts Council of the Copenhagen Municipality.

Graphic design: fanfare
Typography: Glossy Magazine, Bold Decisions
Printed at: Raddraaier, Amsterdam

Printed in edition of 150 copies























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Karim Boumjinmar (f. 1998, ES) er billedkunstner og medlem af performance-kollektivet Young Boy Dancing Group bosat i København. Boumjinmar tog adgang fra Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademi i foråret 2025 og har performet og udstillet på blandt andet TINA Gallery, London (2025); Liljevalchs, Stockholm (2025); O Days Festival, København (2024); Centre d'Art La Panera, Lleida (2023); ARIEL – Feminisms in the Aesthetics & Dag H 42, København (2025), Alice Folkers Gallery, København (2025) og Kunstverein in Hamburg (2021).

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Redaktør: Nanna Friis
Tekst: Rhca Dall, Basyrna Saad, Cédric Fauq
Oversættelse: Nanna Friis
Korrektur: Sofie Vestergaard Jørgensen
Foto: David Styjernholm

Denne publikation er støttet af Augustinus Fonden

Karim Boumjinmars udstilling har modtaget støtte fra Statens Kunstfond, Lemvig-Müller Fonden, Billedhuggeren, professor Gottfred Eickhoff og hustrus, maleren Gerda Eickhoffs fond, Den Hielmsstjerne-Rosencronneske Stiftelse, Rådet for Visuel Kunst i Københavns Kommune.

Grafisk design: fanfare
Typografi: Glossy Magazine, Bold Decisions
Trykt hos: Raddraaier, Amsterdam
Trykt i 150 eksemplarer

PARADISO: ASTAGH- FIRULLAH!

Basyma Saad

Og der, ud af trængslen, kommer landsbyens clairvoyant. Hun er tilsjoret, hyllet ind i et langt, snævert, gazeagtigt stykke stof, hvis proportioner og transparents trods er enhver praktisk anvendelighed, og som hun derfor vikler stramt om sit hoved adskillige gange. Det giver hende en slags mumiepræg.

Hun er anstandsamt for en abedukke, skærmer den for menneskemængden og tager plads på den eneste tomme stol, der er tilbage. Hun får liv i dukken ved hjælp af dens snore, og så bugtaler hun en indædt forandelse ud gennem den.

To pladser længere henn, efter den obligatoriske hoftar og den neurotiske brandstifter, sidder den kræsnе bøsse, faktisk den aller mest kræsnе bøsse på denne side af Silkevjen. Han er stadig smidig og hårløs, kendt for at være kommet igennem

De flokkes om det massive, aflange bord under det bagateliserende morbrætre på landsbyens torv. Et ritual skal til at begynde.

Som var det en regel, der skulle overholdes, har ritualer ikke noget at gøre med hierarkierne, vanerne, håndtrykkene eller den øvrige trummerum i landsbyen. Ritualer får ikke uret til at gå forlæns eller baglæns i forhold til sociale relationer udenfor sig selv.

Faktisk er der intet ur. Der er kun vablede håndflader, letlevende arbejdere, de opdyrkede marker.

Og alligevel er der under ritualer den her forkærlighed for at lege med noget skæbnecomstyrende; hvis den stjernermaetede himmels chakraer står på linje, er der mulighed for at befinde sig midt i et oprør, en Zanj-opstand eller i hvert fald en slags tusindårsorgie.

Den ceremonielle festmiddag er gjort klar til at blive rig på kalorier og fattig på høflighed. Alle måder at tilberede, salte og servere hestekød (og kun hestekød) repræsenteres ved denne festmiddag. Al maden er således nuancer af blodrød på grund af hestekødets høje vaskularitet og myoglobinhindhold.

Rundt om bordet sidder mangt en stor personlighed, et par håndfulde af de største fisk i den lille sø, som landsbyen fortsat er. Bordets overflade er en rullende kartografi, to en halv bjergkæde, utallige små bækker og geologiske formationer og en håndfuld vandførende jordlag og sejlrender. Dette terræn-frem-for-møbel har den effekt, at mennesker omkring det fremstår særdeles ur-agtige, som var de hver især en naturkatastrofe spiret ud af den ældgamle jord, der snarligt ville overgå levende og døde.

Det er ikke noget bestemt, der markerer ritualets begyndelse: Det opleves som en gradvis lullen ind i menneskemængdens generelle snakkesalighed, og vejen banes også for de første tegn på showmanship rundt om bordet.

Og så, pludselig, forkommer ørnens ansigter anspændte og foruroligede, rynkede bryn og sammenknæbne, lukkede øjne, med et vibrerer altting.

Ørnen ligger stadig på lur og breder sine vinger ud, flagrer, ikke i et forsøg på at flygte, men som for at sige, at den har brug for et øjeblik. En mørk sky

begynder at tage form omkring dens bagende, og en svovidunst overmander selskabet. Og ud af dens halvgennemsigtige rektum kommer et mægtigt og vedvarende mudderskrud, der oversvømmer terrænet, som den begynder at løbe rundt i cirkler på, mens den hviner højt og ikke-forkyndende. Den sparer ikke nogen af dem, der sidder ved bordet eller står lige bag det. Skandalen hvin og væmmelse fylder landsbyens torv. Den heraldiske ørn har skidt hen over landet.

En udefrakommende, som ikke er vant til landsbyens traditioner, ville muligvis forvente, at selskabet opløses efter det, der ser ud til at være en semi-flasko – en afførings-force-majorette. Men efter det kortvarige chok og kaos, efterfulgt af noget provisorisk aftørring af de direkte ekskrementsstrømme, forkommer en vis spændthed at gribe forsamlingen igen.

Ørnen, der nu er tilbage på et præfakalt salighedsniveau, spankulerer over til sin plads igen. Den kigger til venstre, hvor en enorm menneskebaby sidder i en høj stol og stirrer udtryksløst frem for sig.

Den pågældende baby er dobbelt så høj og dobbelt så tyk som landsbyens standardbaber.

Ørnen læner sig mod babyen, indtil næb og baby næse næsten rører hinanden. Forældreinstitutter sætter i gang for fuld udblæsning: Landsbyboerne er ængstelige, nærstuderer scenen med tilbageholdt åndedræt. Barnet bliver ved med at stirre ud i intetheden. Ørnens næb åbner sig langsomt op på vid gab, indtil afstanden mellem dens kæber er større end hele babyens hoved. Og så, med alle sine sjæles kræfter, smælder den torødenagtigt næbbet sammen og stræjfer kun babyens næse, så den vækkes fra sin sløvhed.

Babyen, som nu er på dupperne, stikker en buet pegefinger op til næsen og begynder at føle på ydersiden af sit høje næsebor.

Landsbypræsten sidder på den anden side af bordet, over for den besjælede ørn og den store baby, han skrider til handling og erklærer: "Vi kan ikke tillade, at disse forældede sjæle terroriserer Barnet. Barnet er en manifestation af vor egen Konges krop. Vi kan måske ikke se vor Konge, men vi kan se Barnet!" Efter dette opråb bøvsar babyen muntert "wa wa wee wa!"

Den her call-and-respond-samtale mellem præsten og babyen vækker en hørbart mistænkelighed blandt landsbyboerne:

Hvilke sjæle er uværdige?

Hvem tror præsten, han er, sådan at dømme hele slægter af tidligere herskere, både de sejrtrige og de knusende?

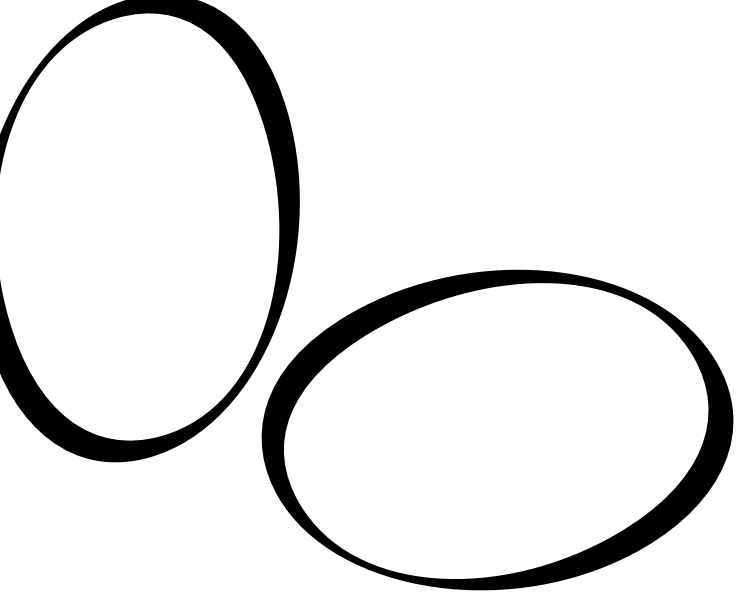
Hvad foregår der mellem ham og Barnet? Hvad tid er orgiet?

Høj hvisken høres blandt de konspirerende naboe. Den Hermaphroditiserede kommer præsten til også vant til Asaghfirullah-råb.

Mens hun holder sin tale, forsøger en af provinsens mægtigste jordejere, en nybygger, der ejer selv landsbytorvet, at komme til hos den kræsnе bøsse. Selvom INGEN LADNINGER NÆGTES-skiltet stadig står oppe i nærheden af hans røvhul, følger jordejeren sig kaldet til at pasta, at han har et knald til gode uanset hvad, for når alt kommer til alt, er det her hans ejendom – hvortil bøssemumler "adi" og omgående nægter at modtage hans hadning.

Som et forsøg på at smigre den Hermaphroditiserede kraver bøssem på alle fire hæn og tilbyder hende hengivent sit røvhul. Hun bøjer sig ned, griber de to måner, som hans baller er, og råber ind i hullet:

"DET ER MIN FRIDAG!"



TYKT- FLYDENDE VÆSNER, SMELTTEDE MYTOLOGIER

Cédric Raug

Til sin seneste udstilling, *Pandemonium Paradiso*, har Bouunjimar opskaleret disse to parallelle praksisser. Udstillingen er centreret omkring fire vaser, der alle er meterhøje og dekoreret i tråd med hans markante tegnestil – og respektivt er døbt *Demon Strike*, *Life Goes On*, *Elysian Dolls* og *Erect Labyrinth*. Det andet element i udstillingen – som den også deler sin titel med – er et monumentalt vægmaleri, der oversvømmer hele rummet.

Og netop det paradoksale ved denne titel – som den engelske poet John Milton (1608-1674) formulerede det, refererer *pandemonium* til Helvedes hovedstad, hvor Satan og hans ligesindede samles – er den første indgang til Bouunjimars verdensbillede. De universer, der er afbildet på væggene og vaserne, forekommer lige så forførende, som de er monstretse. I takt med bevægelsen ind i udstillingen møder man måske en hidsig, hornet djævel, der blotter sit behårede rovhul, måske støder man på nymler i høje hæle, der danser ekstravagant, eller man passerer forbi bevingede figurer såsom engle og fecer og uendeligt meget slangeskind.

Protagonisterne i denne queer-forsamling, med deres forskelligge udtryk og attituder – nogle forekommer trætte og bange, andre forførende og liderlige, mens deres naboeer ser tapre og krigeriske ud – deles alle om væsensagtige træk: Mytologiske referencer til historiske figurer blendes sammen med mode og accessories. I den forstand udvisker Bouunjimars vægmaleri grænserne mellem religiøse freskoer, historiemalerier og tegneserier. Han approprierer alle genrerne, forkaster på samme tid deres koder og former på den måde både at udforme et queer midt dagselskab og adoptere en queer metodologi.

I sammenligning med et tidligere vægmaleri, *Spring Has Arrived* (2023), virker det vigtigt at understrege noget forutroligere ved *Pandemonium Paradiso*. Ved at lade blækket dryppe og løbe ned ad væggene fra figurerens silhuetter og ved kun at farvelægge dele af maleriet indtræder værkets væsner i en slags potentialitetstilstand, der forhindrer, at de bliver for "fastlåste". Det meget skrøbelige stadie, som queer-figurerne befinder sig på, kalder på heftig omsorg, hvis man skal undgå voldspræler, overvågning og kontrol. Den franske filosof Quentin Dubois skriver i et nyere essay, *Puissance de (de)figuration du queer* [The power of queer (de)figuration] (Trou Noir, 2025): "Figuration must acknowledge its own precariousness [...] [to] then become something other than representation: [...] a slowdown, an allusion, a trace [...] a presence that resists violence [...] [that] produces a break in the continuum of global violence. [...] To speak of the power of disfiguration is to place within a figure not a fixed entity but a rhythm that destroys fixations."

Jeg har aldrig mødt Karim Bouunjimar i virkeligheden, men jeg følger, jeg har set billeder af hans krop – ofte kvasi-nøgne og glinsende – mange gange gennem de sidste 10 år. Særligt i form af dokumentation af Young Boy Dancing Group-performances (et kollektiv, der blev etableret i 2014), men også andre billeder fra hans Instagram-profil. Ret ofte er billeder blevet manipuleret, så hans krop ser meget mere langlemmet og smidig ud, ofte i helt umulige positioner. Andre gange får man indtryk af, at han netop er steget op af et kar fyldt med tyktflydende væsker – som født på ny. Disse eksperimenter med smidighed og klæbrighed kan godt opfattes som rent æstetiske øvelser, men de indeholder langt mere betydning – og har også udvidet sig til at omfatte hans nyere værker, primært i form af keramik og tegning.

I tråd med denne pointe bør det nævnes, at Bouunjimar ikke arbejdede med skitser eller på anden måde tog forberedende noter, inden han gik i gang med at male, direkte med blæk på kunsthallens vægge – hvilket han i øvrigt aldrig gør. Værket er på den måde frugten af en improviseret performance. En performance, der ikke stræber efter at repræsentere nogen bestemt person, men derimod en stor, broget skare – i modsætning til måder, hvorpå mange andre samtidskunstnere, der beskæftiger sig med queerness, gør en dyd ud af at nævne enkeltpersoner, -figurer eller -grupper – hvilket selvfølgelig ikke er en strategi, der bør ugyldiggøres som sådan. Man kan sige, at Bouunjimars arbejde i den forstand er tættere på eksempelvis Ovaraci.

Retter man blikket mod den serie af kvasi-amforacer, der rumligt strukturerer *Pandemonium Paradiso*, kan man ikke undgå at bemærke deres 'upferke' natur. I stærk kontrast til de som regel rene linjer, der definerer keramikhåndværket, arbejder Bouunjimar med leret på en måde, hvor dets ustabile natur også kan fornemmes efter brændingsprocessen. Kigger man efter, er det også muligt at få øje på hænder og fingeraftryk alligevel under de tætpakkede, malede scenerier. På samme måde som de horder af figurer, der bevæger sig gennem vægmaleriet, lader vaserne til at rumme et muterende potential. Efftersom størrelserne antyder at der faktisk er plads til menneskekroppe i dem, bliver de en slags transformationsfartøjer.

Ifølge Bouunjimar peger hver vase på specifikke øvelser: "clubbing, en dagligdags tilværelse, naturens og orgiets kræfter". Som fire hjørnerne i kunstnerens liv fungerer vaserne som fiktionsforstærkere snarere end arkivoprettelser. Jeg får lyst til at genkalde mig queer-forskeren João Florêncio, der for nylig udgav bogen *Crossings: Creative Ecologies of Cruising* (Routledge University Press, 2025) sammen med Liz Rosenthal. I et essay med titlen "Drugs, techno, and the ecstasy of queer bodies" (*The Sociological Review*, 71(4), 2023), skrev han: "Entertaining the subjunctive 'might be' as a mode of queer becoming, the queer techno party is a world-making machinic assemblage that triggers 'tripples across identities' by 'opening' up one's sense of bodily horizons of possibility and, in doing so, [pushing] the boundaries of previously defined identifications" [Susanna Paasonen]. It is a laboratory for seriously playful experiments that enact an "inflation" of both the individual and social body' with drugs as a common catalyst [François Gauthier]. Our bodies are sensory interfaces that can be reconfigured, re-formed, remapped through a kind of wild and experimental free play that re-marks, reinscribes offices, glands, sinews, muscles differently [Elizabeth Grosz]. As a result, rather than discovering itself and its body, the subject creates itself, subjunctively."

Jeg vil naturligvis ikke sætte lighedstegn mellem Bouunjimars udstilling og den øvelse, der er at være til en queer technofest. Men for mig er det interessant at betragte udstillingen som et "laboratorium for seriøst legesyge eksperimenter", der accepterer – og forstærker – det tyktflydende ved queerness, og hverken forsøger at gøre det til noget, man kan forbruge eller fordøje. I den forstand kan vi kun håbe på, at udstillingen får samme skæbne som Klimts Beethoven-frise (1902) – der også viser en stor, slangelignende figur og blev malet til den fjortende Seccession-udstilling i Wien. Kunsthistorikere og konservator Stephan Kojas beskriver i sit essay "...just about the nastiest women I have ever seen..." (Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze*: Evolution and Programme" (2006):

"Klimt's works, which are so popular today, were regarded by many of his contemporaries as incomprehensible, scandalous and 'obscene'; the lascivious eroticism of the Gorgons and the depictions of Lust and Excess were simply rejected by many as 'painted pornography.'"



OVERGADEN

ISBN: 978-87-94311-30-4
EAN: 9788794311304

O - OVERGADEN
Overgaden neden Vandet 17, 1414 København K,
overgaden.org

Karim Boumjinmar
Pandemonium Paradiso
Udstillingsperiode: 30.08.2025 – 20.10.2025

Det er en stor fornøjelse at introducere denne publikation, der udkommer i forbindelse med Karim Boumjinmars soloudstilling *Pandemonium Paradiso* på O – Overgaden. Over de seneste år har O – Overgaden med gæsterne støttet fra Augustinus Fonden produceret en publikationsrække, der udgives i forbindelse med kunsthallens soloudstillinger. Målsætningen med denne serie er at mangfoldiggøre samtalene under og efter udstillingerne og åbne op for, at nyt materiale kan udspringe heraf.

I dette tilfælde har forfatter, filmskaber og kunstner Basyma Saad bidraget med en eksplosiv tekst om det hedonistiske selskabsliv, der også udfolder sig på væggene i Boumjinmars udstilling, og Cédric Faug, chefkurator på CAPC i Bordeaux, har bidraget med en værkner udfoldning af udstillingen. En stor og varm tak til begge bidragsydere. Derudover vil jeg gerne takke hele O – Overgadens team for den store indsats i forbindelse med udstillingen, og naturligvis også fanfare, vores grafiske designere, for deres dedikerede arbejde på denne publikation. Sidst, men ikke mindst, en særlig tak til Karim for at dele sit materiale – fra koncept til udvalgte samtaler – med os alle sammen, både gennem udstillingen og denne publikation.

Karim Boumjinmars maleriske motiver flyder, ofte erotisk, fra en figur til en anden; tænk på et møde mellem dyr, kunstnerens venner, nattevild, historiske personer, cruising og mytologiske skabninger.

Udstillingen på O – Overgaden er skabt som en altomsluttende installation og viser et stort vægmaleri,

laver i rummet i ugerne op til åbningen, hvor Boumjinmars bogstaveligt talt fabulerende, grænscooverskridende og polyamorøse univers overtager institutionens hvide vægge – som en psykodelisk skærsommernats drøm. Ud af disse vægge nærmest skyder fire 2 meter høje vaser som svampe, der skaber en skov af cruise i. Ser man nærmere på vaserne, rejser en del af motiverne sig fra lerets overflade, der er ridset eller åbnet, som for at lukke hemmeligheder ud eller fritskære skjulte kroppe. Den hurtige, skitsede kvalitet i Boumjinmars strek får de fysiske eller permanente kunstværker – tegninger og keramik – til at føles som levende, flygtige performances. Værkerne på O – Overgaden er blevet til stort set uden planlægning, som en intuitiv, 'affæret' eller ustyrlig kropslig strøm af eksperimenter – næsten som automattegninger. Resultatet er en gigantisk, dionysisk fest anno 2025 eller et orgie på tværs af arter. Her er alt fra høje hæle, kimæriske fugle, en djævelfigural med horn, der blotter sin anus, bueskytter og hestekroppe til engle af natten, fabelagtige transkvinder, hvis hår flyder sammen, og erigerede fallosser. Boumjinmars univers, som omkranses af en kolossal, hovedløs slange eller gultlændt, skaber et hallucinerende, queer netværk af forbindelse kroppe, der overskrider binære identiteter. De arkaiske vaser flyder hængende i vores samtid. Som i klubkulturens svimlende trance er dette på en gang et sted for dæmoner og et kaotisk eventyrligt land af i dag – et *pandemonium paradiso*.

Rhea Dall
Leder og chefkurator på O – Overgaden,
september 2025

INTRODUKTION

