



Bruno Gironcoli: *Wreath of Flames with Baby* (foreground), 2006, aluminum, 56 inches high; at Bernard Jordan.

The *Otolith Group*: *Chandni*, 2007, film; 46 minutes, at Glasswing



diary. In a cinematic game of mis-en-abyme, Usha follows the steps of Anjalika, herself engaged in researching the life of her own grandmother, who was president of the National Federation of Indian Women in the 1970s. The artist is especially interested in her grandmother's encounters with Soviet astronaut Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to travel in outer space. The film is built around an idea of a lineage, not only in Saga's real and invented family but within womanhood at large. Each character embodies an epoch—the progress, hopes and doubts of a generation.

When Usha looks at the year 2003, footage of London's anti-Iraq War protests are accompanied by Anjalika's pessimistic recollections, in which she notes the participants' acute awareness of the demonstration's futility. "Everyone knew America would invade Iraq," she says, "but they protested all the same, if only to claim their right to do so." Later, Super 8 clips show the little Anjalika with her grandmother sitting on a boat on London's Regent's canal. *Otolith* imposes no hierarchical relationship between the personal and the official; history is a tightly woven fabric equally made of grand narratives and small anecdotes.

In *Otolith II* (2007), Usha is still reading from Anjalika's diary, but this time the focus is on the urban sprawl of Mumbai, used as an example of the incapacity of capitalism, which "turns homes into real estate and people into commodities." While *Otolith's*

invented future serves as a device to tackle the recent past, *Otolith II* utilizes a similar imaginary future to deal with the present, a present obsessed with spectacle and haunted by modernism's failures. This recent work starts with (filmed) images of a Bollywood movie shoot at an old factory, closed following labor strikes years earlier in which a few workers had died; a site of distress is turned into a stage for entertainment. Later, the film posits a parallel between Chandigarh—the city designed by Le Corbusier as a symbol of the new India following the Partition—and the Paris suburbs notorious for riots in 2005. "Can buildings really be innocent shells that do no harm?" asks 22nd-century Usha, considering grainy footage of the now semi-derelict Indian city; "Isn't every artificial landscape the diagram of a certain psychological state?" Like Walford Reed's Atlas Group, the *Otolith Group* deftly uses an imagined perspective to enrich our understanding of the real.

—Colin Milward

PARIS BRUNO GIRONCOLI BERNARD JORDAN

Bruno Gironcoli's sculptures are unmistakable in their facture, iconography, complexity and obdurateness. Gironcoli, who was born in 1936, has been a crucial figure in Austrian art since the '70s, both as a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and as that rare artist whose new work continues to gain in invention and singularity. Having had the

run of the school's working spaces and a dedicated group of hired assistants for three decades, Gironcoli developed a treasure trove of disquietingly allusive forms, cast in fiberglass from plaster originals, which he has continually modified and redeployed to assemble his often monumental sculptures. When money is available, he recasts the large works in aluminum. Although there is a museum near Graz devoted to Gironcoli's plethoric oeuvre and a permanent exhibition of his work in Vienna, his sculptures are little known outside continental Europe.

His third show with Bernard Jordan featured three recent aluminum sculptures, one fiberglass piece from the '60s and two works on paper. The four sculptures can each be linked to furniture: a cradle, a bed, a stool and an ottoman. But the works' abundance of repetitive, dreamlike detail subverts any functionality. Gironcoli's pieces often seem to hover above the floor, rising from small points of contact, such as the rounded tips of conical feet. In the 56-inch-high *Wreath of Flames with Baby* (2006), an elliptical enclosure of twisting, flame-like spear points shelters the supine body of a baby girl, her arms and legs flexed; she's been one of the artist's leitmotifs for years. Nine additional flames sprout upward from the little body, which appears to float within this improbable cradle. As in most of Gironcoli's works, whether brushed-metal, as here, or resin, the surface is inert, even off-putting. An ambiguous sculpture, *Wreath of Flames with Baby*



Frédéric Loutz: *The scene, 2008*, mixed medium on paper, 61 by 82 inches, at Galerie Poullet

is alternately horrifying and strangely serene, like medieval renderings of tortured saints.

A second sculpture (untitled, 2007-08) takes the form of a 7-foot-long inclined bed propped up on a peg leg. The head and foot furl out in two bolsterlike open cylinders; each bears a small, elongated shape suggesting an armrest, further complicating our reading of the piece. The would-be mattress is covered with a grid of eroded, soft-seeming cones, like a giant Dr. Scholl's sandal. One can imagine it a perverse psychoanalyst's couch or a bed of nails, albeit comically rendered. Here, as throughout his oeuvre, Gironcoli mixes the organic with the mechanical, summoning a presence both compelling and awkwardly decorative. This artist is best when working at grand scale; if the sculptures in Paris lack the eerie intricacy of his major works, they do offer a too-rare glimpse of his exemplary particularity.

—Wade Saunders and
Anne Rochette

PARIS FRÉDÉRIQUE LOUTZ CLAUDINE POULETT

The refined and creepy drawings of Frédérique Loutz have made quite a splash in the Paris art world over the past few years, when contemporary drawing has itself become something of a hot topic. Born in 1974, Loutz grew up in the culturally and linguistically contested region of Lorraine. Having first established herself in the Parisian suburb of Clichy, she recently decamped to Berlin, after a

year at the Villa Medici in Rome. So the peculiarly Teutonic humor and graphic stringency of her current works may owe something not only to her newest adopted city, but also to her cultural roots.

Often diminutive and fine-grained, Loutz's mark varies wildly in its impact. Even when she scales up her drawings, she doesn't emerge the mark's no less, impressionist slashes here. Color is deployed in a sparing, flirtatious, almost withholding manner, with strong patches of watercolor or colored pencil restricted to the images' edges. Dense networks of pen-and-ink crosshatching are one of her signature modes; double images, often anamorphic, are another. Loutz's earlier watercolor rebuses of grotesque variations on familiar figures—Pinocchio, characters from Grimm's fairy tales, Mickey Mouse—here give way to starker, more obscure revivifications of veridical-style still lifes, Manet's *Olympia*, and incubus and succubus imagery from Fuseli, Goya and Rops.

Loutz's new "Fleasures of tears" series, with its 14 small, square-format line drawings of sibylla meetings between the mythic pair, features lots of sex. There are sausage jokes, flying penetrations from above, spread legs, viewed di sotto in so, disgorging male heads, and predominantly German captions, such as "Arach mit Orren" ("ess with war") for one large-buttocked figure. The drawings seem to aspire to a state of etching and aquatint, and, in fact, one of the most intriguing objects in the show was a boxed set of altho-

graphs, *Fleures et le vrain petit tour* (Michael Woolworth Publications, Paris, 2009), with a title page that bears a fierce targetlike image of concentric German phrases, made in collaboration with the poet Ernesto Castillo.

Generating drawings of large size seems to be a central challenge. The *Vitrine* (2008), a layered and ambitious mixed-medium work on paper, spins at first to depict a proscenium view of a reclining female nude being assailed by animals still-life objects. Sets of yapping dentures, each carefully depicted in colored pencil on a string of triangular pennants, dangle over flowered wallpaper. The figure's face is left all but blank. Most discordantly, a small chrome-framed color photograph is affixed beside her pudendum. (In fact, the snapshot documents Loutz's 2007 window installation in St. Germain, which included found objects and a drawing of a female nude.) This snapshot, which can be seen as an index and an aide-memoire for the larger drawing, suggests many new directions Loutz's large drawings could take.

—Brooks Adams

BERLIN BOJAN ŠARČEVIĆ CARLIER I GEBALER

The issue of space has always been crucial to the medium of film in various ways. There are the perspectival spaces within the filmic image itself, the architectural context of the film's presentation (cinema, museum or