

CREATIVE ENCOURAGEMENT. MONKEYPOX VIRUS

(ENGLISH)

Anima Creativa is a multidisciplinary project inspired by the scholar, Paracelsian doctor, mystic and enlightener, of English origin, Robert Fludd, in his book "Macrocosm and Microcosm" from the 17th century. In his famous illustration "The Mirror of Nature and the Image of Art" from that manuscript, the female figure "Anima Mundi" or soul of the world appears, who holds a monkey through a chain, which holds a globe while measure an area with a compass. On the cover of his treatise "De Natura Simia", the monkey is represented looking towards the viewer, while pointing with a stick, an arithmetic table.

The monkey has been included in the iconographic pantheon of many cultures, the Egyptian with the Baboon of the God Tot and the Mayan with the God Chuwen. The monkey God Hanuman of Hindustani cosmogony appears in the Ramayna epic as a loving, wise and knowledgeable god of Sanskrit, a tireless fighter in the face of adversity. In the ancient Chinese culture, the monkey from the zodiacal point of view, symbolizes versatility, constant movement and the agile thinker. The Chinese legend of the Monkey King or Sun Wukong is collected in Wu Cheng's book "Journey to the West" (written in the 16th century) and is considered one of the four main classic works of Chinese literature. The epic of the monkey king is closely related to the journey in search of enlightenment, inspired by Buddhism. In all these cultures, the symbology of him is interconnected with the creative world, be it the invention of writing, ceramics, crafts, dance, etc. They were also intercessors in the creation processes and even had some symbolic nuances such as the passage of time or destiny.

However, in the traditional Catholic Christian religion, the figure of the monkey was identified with lust, at the same time that it was also used as an iconographic element of mockery or derision. The chained monkey in Christian iconography has symbolic negative connotations such as the eradication of sins and if it appears with a mirror, it represents the weaknesses of the human being. Fludd was a Protestant and a Renaissance thinker, influenced by the Greco-Latin tradition and for him, the ape is the symbol that connects man with his creative nature and, at the same time, protector of the world.

In this series, I have dedicated myself to studying the different iconographies of the monkey throughout visual culture to show it as a totem, a form of creative drive that tries to communicate and make us reflect on what the role of man in this world should be. The totem monkey is synonymous with good omen for some cultures, it displays an innate energy of communication, through play, which is also a form of learning that leads to reflection. At the same time, from the dream point of view, it represents the fight against the conventional, a dissatisfaction with the mental world that surrounds us. It also manifests the ability to overcome obstacles, relativize

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conflictive situations and seek a new meaning in life through irony. The monkey plays with the objects and gives them a utility from chance, giving them another meaning.

This series was made in the middle of the Coronavirus pandemic and in an almost symbolic way, it shows the loss of that interconnection of man with Nature. The concatenated crises in recent years have exposed the weaknesses of globalization and we need to seek a paradigm shift at the socioeconomic level. Two years after the crisis caused by Covid19, an outbreak of "Monkey Smallpox" sparked an international debate on the danger of a new pandemic. Worst of all, is that a part of our society tried to stigmatize a certain group, as happened in the eighties and nineties of the twentieth century with AIDS. The World Health Organization (WHO) made it clear that these were very isolated cases. And although this same institution has also tried to change the nomenclature of "monkeypox", to avoid demonizing primates again, the real virus that destroys ecosystems and the natural balance on our planet is us. Isn't it time to try to transform our habits and become guardians of this planet again? My criticism of this aspect has been manifested through my queer consciousness, which tries to establish paradoxes through humor.

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