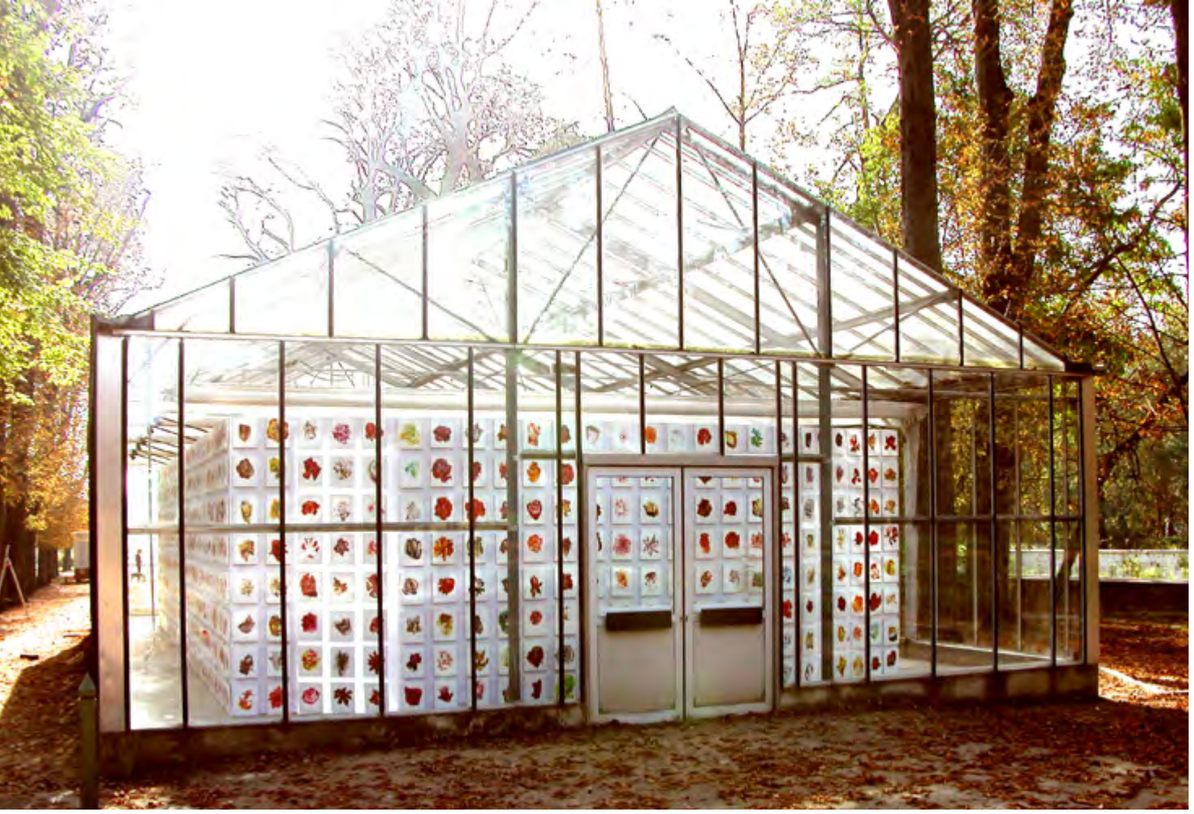


Rosacerdoce
Peinture mise en serre
View of the exhibition

Installation of 1000 paintings (Oil on canvas)
St-Cloud Park Paris
2004



The living at heart

Since the 1980s, Claude Como (born in 1964, lives and works in Marseille) has used oil paint, ceramics, resin, charcoal and wool to fathom her own history. She also experiments with her complex relationship to the realities of the world, where the living finds a central place.



Biosynthèse
Oil on canvas
260x157cm
1998-2002



Still life
Oil on canvas
130x97cm
2011



Medusa
Oil and resin on canvas
116x89cm
2018



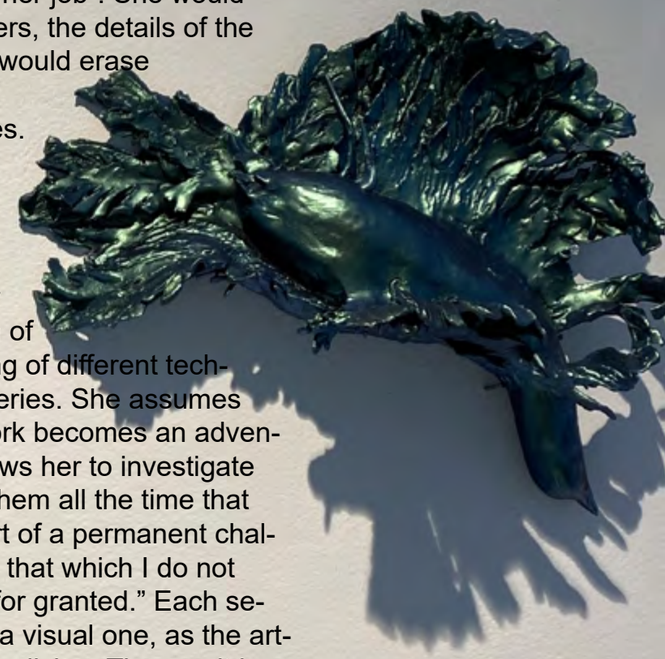
Still water
Oil on paper
65x50cm
2010

Abidjan

Claude Como grew up in Ivory Coast. Her father, a chemist, moved to Abidjan the year she was born. She lived there until she was sixteen, and still has a visceral attachment to a country where she lived freely, in a collective way, close to the living. Since her difficult departure, Claude Como thinks of herself as a floating body, neither really here nor there. An in-between body that addresses the questions of home, wandering, roots and belonging.

She began drawing at the age of five. Every Saturday, in front of a blackboard on an easel, she “does her job”. She would imagine a ballet: its staging, its characters, the details of the costumes. The following Saturday, she would erase the blackboard and recreate new situations according to very precise rules. In the end, this is what the artist has continued to do since the 1980s. She creates new worlds out of images gathered from her memories, her sensations, but also from the art history she continues to explore. The figuration of these worlds goes through the mastering of different techniques for the realization of long term series. She assumes that she knows nothing so that each work becomes an adventure in itself. This thinking by series allows her to investigate deeply into her subjects, dedicating to them all the time that is required : “My artistic approach is part of a permanent challenge, that is also a game. I go towards that which I do not know how to do. Nothing is ever taken for granted.” Each series involves a technical reset, but also a visual one, as the artist immerses himself in a new area of the living. The result is a plural writing that adapts to the subjects to which she devotes herself fully.

She says that she has no style, that she is not programmed to write in a unique manner. “I don’t have a single way of doing things. I follow my intuitions even if I am not recognized. It is in the long run that my work unfolds.





Icarus I
Ceramic
27x16x10cm
2019

Icarus II
Ceramic
38x13x20cm
2019

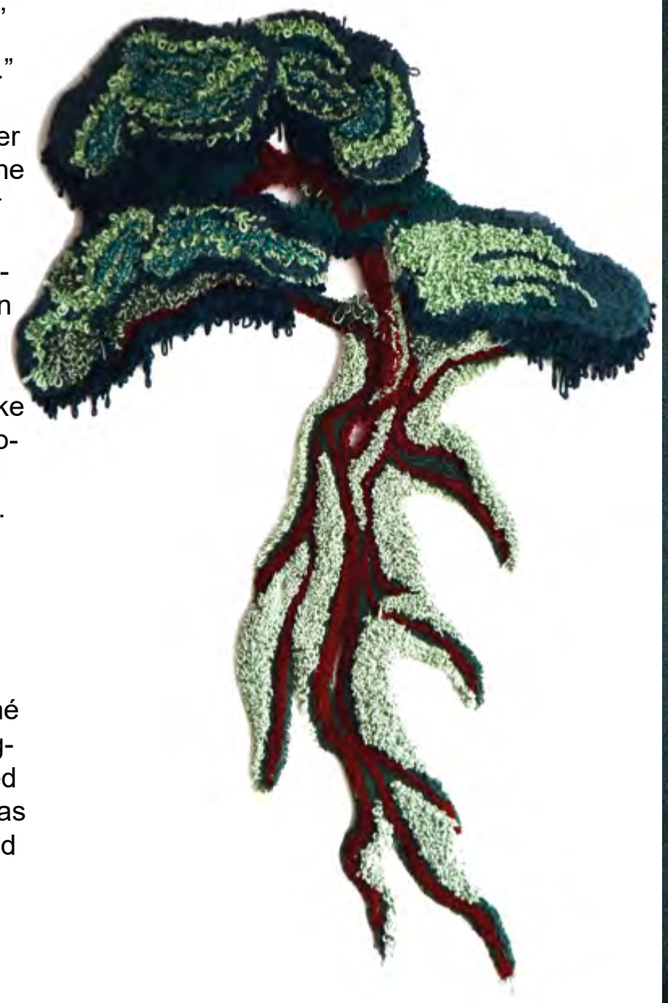
Abyss encounters II
Porcelain
30x20x10cm
2018



Exiting the Anthropocene

Since 2015, Claude Como is gradually moving away from an anthropocentric representation in favor of a physical and mental dive into the heart of the living. Human figures hybridize with vegetal elements or fade away into the abyss and cataclysms, and animal figures like the jellyfish – a majestic floating body. “I like the movements of the living: a volcanic eruption, a fire, a hurricane. It manifests itself violently as if it were breathing very hard, it overwhelms and impresses me.” The Gaia series (2018) brings together terrestrials (animals, plants and other living organisms) to decenter the place of the human and think more deeply about the interdependencies that exist between beings and their environments. Another series is dedicated to animals. Since her childhood, the artist has had an intense relationship with them. “When I was little, my friend was an otter.” She represents in particular the strangeness of their bodies. “They are clusters of feathers and hair, I want to treat the material, the sensuality of bodies.” Like a scientific observer, Claude Como decomposes, radiographs, fragments, opens or hybridizes animal bodies to reach a dimension as mysterious as it is monstrous.

In 2019, we observe the emergence of an unusual technique: tufting. Armed with a tufting gun, traditionally used by craftsmen to make rugs, she projects wool threads to create works that are both supple and monumental. The result is two first works: J’aurais aimé t’envoler, a pair of white wings with a three-meter wingspan, and Tributes to Masters, an open and suspended animal carcass that reminds us of Rembrandt as well as Soutine or Bacon. These works open a new writing and a new relationship to space.



Déracinés II
Handtufted wool
170x140cm
2019



A l'origine
Oil on canvas
180x130cm
2010



Déraciné IV
Oil on paper
50x65cm
2020



Déraciné XIX Déraciné XX
Handtufted wool
2023

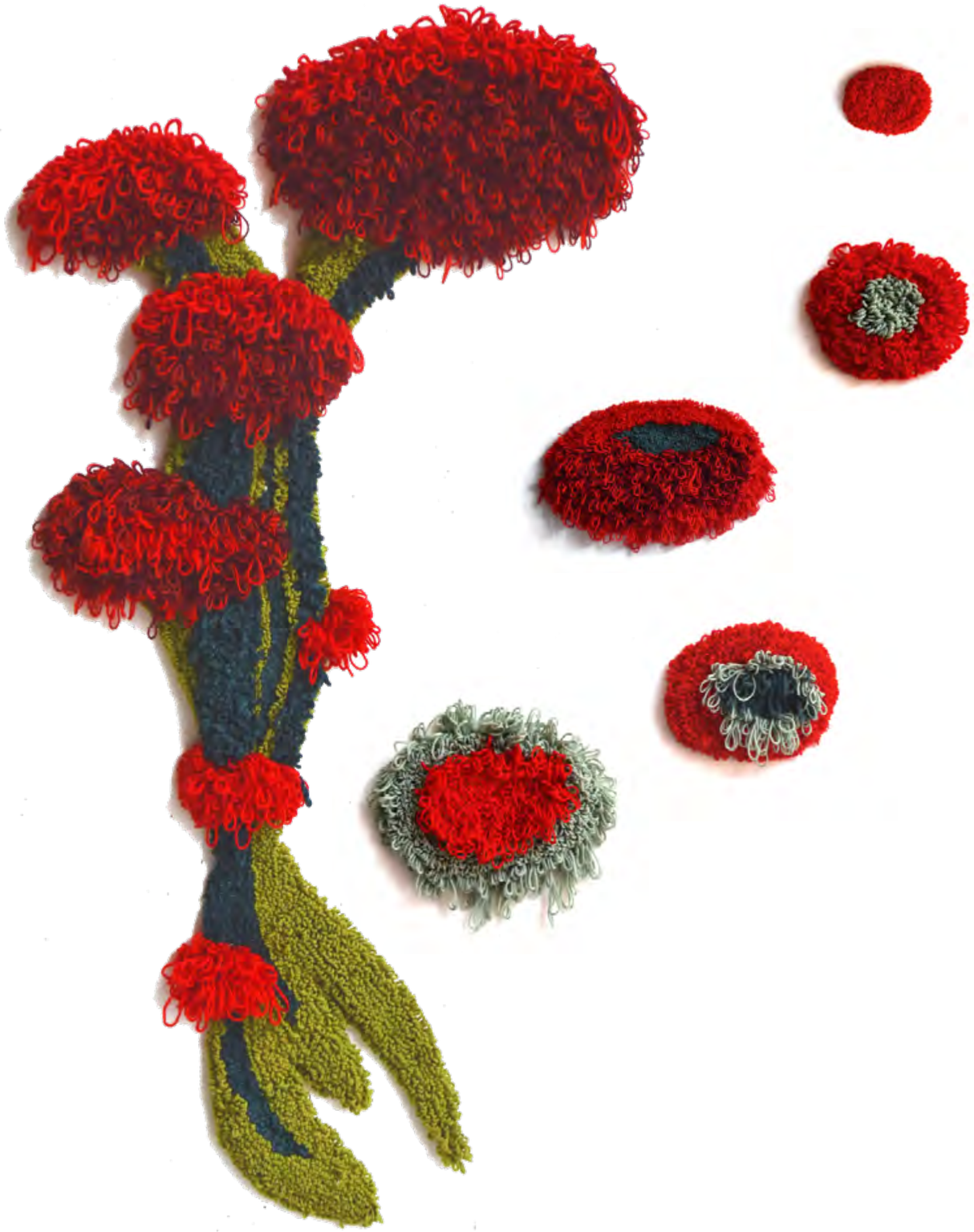
« Supernature »

Claude Como then begins a series of tufted tapestries that represent abundant vegetal elements, luxuriant micro-organisms. We can find there: seeds, stones, buds, roots, flowers, foliage or even mushrooms, endowed with bright and assertive colors.
The motifs come from an image bank where microbial universes and botanical illustrations meet.
The artist is an attentive observer of plant, mineral or cellular forms.
“Matter influences the form, and vice versa”. The source images drift and transform through gestures, technical shifts and fictional necessity.

Claude Como expresses a physical and spatial imperative of proliferation. “It is an explosion. I need to experience intense feelings through my work.” To make works that reflect a more joyful and vibrant dimension of the living. The most recent works resonate with the ecological thoughts of Bruno Latour, Dénètem Touam Bona, Véronique Mure, Starhawk, Gilles Clément and many others.
Since humans globally choose to turn away from the living, Claude Como endeavors to represent it in a disproportionate manner. We are physically taken by the presence of the tufted artworks. The images of the living impose themselves on us. They demand our attention.

Déracinés IX
Handtufted wool
200x80cm
2020

Full Mellow Yellow
Handtufted wool
220x400cm
2020



Déracinés V et five cells
Handtufted wool
160x90cm
2020



Bubble Tuft
Handtufted wool
200x350cm
2020

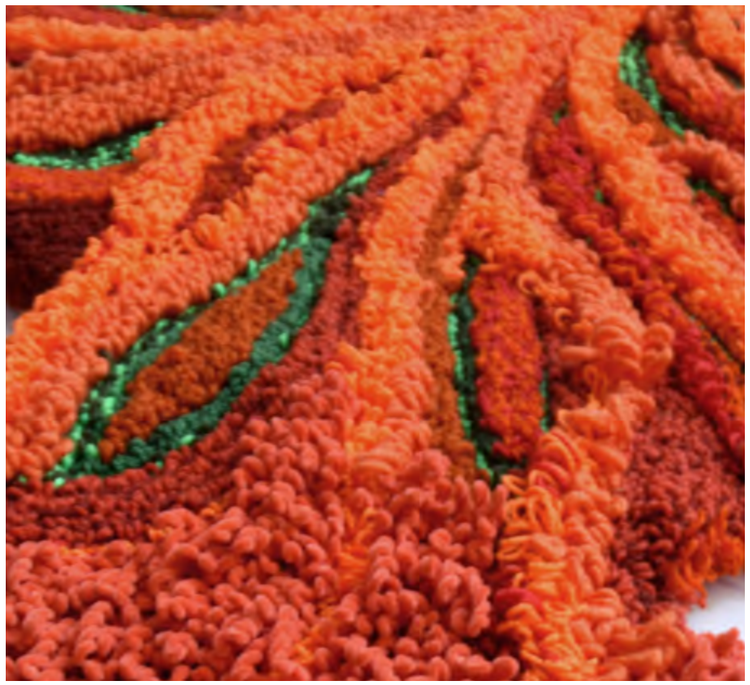
300x2 300x2020200c2020m 00cm



Blood & Burning
Handtufted wool
360x240cm
2020



Le dernier Volcan
Oil on canvas
280x200cm
2011



Blood & Burning detail
Handtufted wool
2020

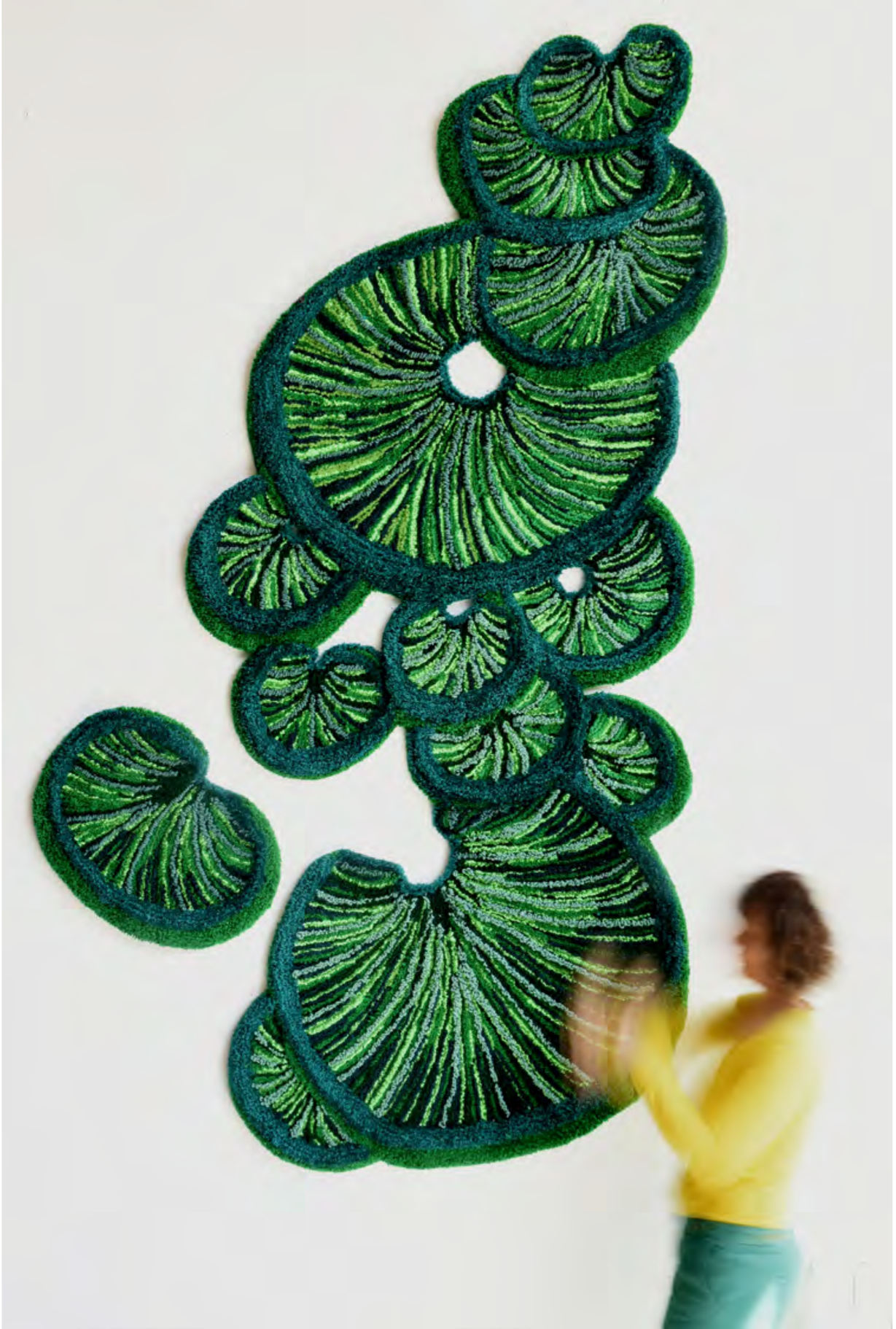


Arrières pensées II
Dry pastel on paper
65x50cm
2022



Blue velvet
Handtufted wool
300x110cm
2022

Supernature
Révolutions work in progress
Handtufted wool
2021

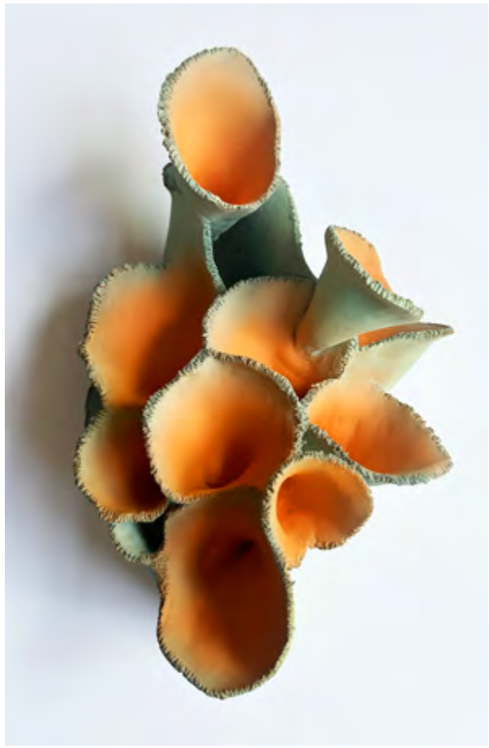


Green Funky Fungus
Handtufted wool
245x120cm
2021

About that technical choice, the artist prefers the word touffeté, it calls for a greater tactility of the woolly material and the colors. To a greater sensuality also. The tufted tapestries emancipate themselves from the rigid and constraining formats. “I wanted to free myself from the canvas frame, to free the forms.” By their flexibility, they extract themselves from the frame to literally colonize the walls and give an organic dimension to the architecture that hosts them. If Claude Como used to tie her forms to the limits of the painting, she now chooses to float, to multiply and to regenerate. Each element is autonomous and has its own title. If the works can be presented separately, it is collectively that they find their plastic power. On the walls, the artist (de)composes infinitely for an immersive and sensitive experience of an extraordinary biocenosis.

Getting rid of “natures mortes”

The choice of tufting places the artist in the history of tapestry. Indeed, since the Middle Ages, works representing the plant and floral world have been woven. From Millefleurs to Verdures, through trees of life and stylized motifs, the approaches evolve over time. The history of tapestry combines symbolic, religious, naturalistic, decorative, figurative or abstract approaches.



Capucines
Ceramic
17x25x42cm
2024



Sun Seeds
Handtufted wool
3x(75x160cm)
2020

If she confesses that she “feels very small in front of a world that she is learning to know”, Claude Como likes to explore the history of Western art in order to rework and (de)represent the great classifications or subjects considered traditional: vanity, animal figures, human anatomy, psyche, portrait, landscape, architecture, etc. Representations of the living (the word “nature” is voluntarily excluded, since it constitutes an argument to maintain a binary and mortifying thought between nature and culture) are here generous. Supernature thwarts the question of the “nature morte” – still life or, literally, “dead nature”–, which, if one thinks about it, is a nonsense since the living is an ecosystem in perpetual metamorphosis.
The tufted works contribute to a reactivation and an extension of the history of tapestry. Nothing is fixed, everything is redefinable. The cut-out forms are mutually articulated resulting in tentacular, moving and rhizomic installations – cut-out forms which inhabit, by the way, the whole of the artistic approach of Claude Como, constantly confronting volume and flatness.

With a mixed feeling of wonder and gravity, she presents decontextualized bodies, scenes deprived of horizons, suspended ecosystems. The artist, who has long experienced herself as a marginal being, has built her work around notions such as uprootedness, movement, absence, impermanence, death and possible rebirths. Nourished by a strong autobiographical dimension, her protean work is built in the long run. She thus compares her approach to that of a spider weaving its web. The ramifications between the series generate the embodied narrative of a terrestrial and psychic cosmogony – as intimate as it is collective.

Julie Crenn
Doctor in art history, art critic (AICA) and independent curator



Sweet Home
Handtufted wool
150x84x62cm
2023

On the wall
Joy Division
Handtufted wool
350x200cm
2023

Supernature
View of the exhibition
Gallery Le Cabinet d'Ulysse
Marseille
2021

Photo Studio Tropicalist



In vino veritas
Handtufted wool
View of the exhibition
Henri Martin Museum Cahors
400x200 cm
2023



Sexual Healing
Handtufted wool
View of the exhibition
Henri Martin Museum Cahors
350x200 cm
2023



Palm Spring
190x230 cm
Handtufted wool
2022

Révolutions
View of the exhibition
Supernature
Louviers Museum
2023



Révolutions V

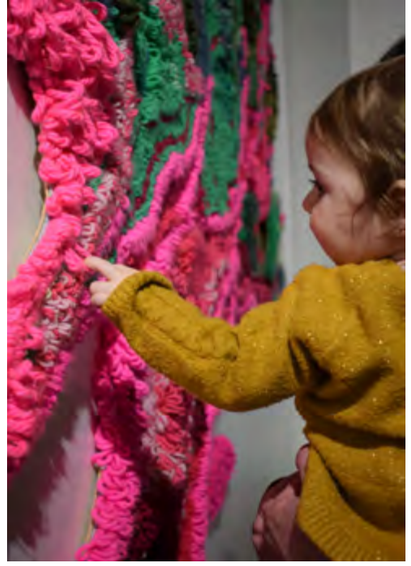
View of the exhibition *Végétal*
Centre d'Art Jacques Brel
Thionville 2024

Jeu minots

A fully tufted interactive game
for children ages 0 to 2

Mille formes Art Center Production
2022





Contemporary Art Center Mille formes
Views of the game

Clermont Ferrand
2022







Louis Vuitton Fondation
Views of the game

Boulogne
2023



Inspiré.e.s - Acte 3 - Arts textiles
View of the exhibition
Centre d'art contemporain l'ar[T]senal Dreux
2023





Arrières pensées IX
Dry pastel on paper
70x100cm
2024

Dans la vague
View of the exhibition
Centre d'Art de Campredon L'Isle sur Sorgue
2024





Supernature Révolutions III
Work in progress
View of the studio
2023



Sweet symphony
View of the exhibition
Palais de l'Europe de Menton
2024



Indicible Nature
Ceramic
50x40cm
2024



Rencontre d’un soir
Dry pastel on paper
65x50cm
2024



Corps étranger
Ceramic
60x 43x25cm
2025



Arrières pensées XVIII
Dry pastel on paper
65x50cm
2024

Atomic City
Ceramic
55x37x87cm
2025

Podgorny gallery

View of the exhibition
Saint Paul de Vence
2025

Icarius II
92 x 120x 45 cm
Bronze
2025

Icarius IV
100 x 91 x 21 cm
Bronze
2025

Icarius V
100 x 77 x 32 cm
Bronze
2025

Icarius





Icarius III
98 x 150 x 50 cm
Bronze
2025

Photo Pierrick Verny

View of the studio
2022