

TEREZA LOCHMANN MANUFACTURING LEGENDS

Tereza Lochmann, Manufacturing Legends

Tereza Lochmann was born in Prague in 1990. Having trained from the age of 15 in all artistic techniques in a specialised high school, she then pursued her studies at the Higher School of Applied Arts in Prague. She developed a taste for engraving in the Czech Republic, a country with an established tradition in this field, where she went on to acquire all the fundamental skills in the discipline. In search of a broader teaching approach, she moved to Paris to attend the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts de Paris, working first in Aurélie Pagès, and then Jean-Michel Alberola's studio, following which she broadened her means of expression and enriched her imagination through contact with non-European cultures.

Her artistic practice is characterised by the innovative use of engraving, with frequent uses of plywood and large pieces of salvaged wood. She reveals the engraving plates, which thus become works of art in their own right. The tools she uses, such as electric milling cutters and presses fitted with ball bearings, give her great freedom with regard to format. In her prints on paper or canvas, she plays with overlays and leaves room for chance. Her works, imbued with a certain sense of humour, address current events, with a range of references to art history or popular culture.

This monographic exhibition focuses on the artist's attraction to marginal beliefs, the rites of traditional cultures and their plastic manifestations. Akin to the works of Tereza Lochmann, based on the accumulation of tracings and the stratification of multiple layers, legends are wonderful narratives that take root in real events but are distorted by the imagination of each successive epoch. Consisting of three chapters, the exhibition begins on the ground floor with the reinterpretation of the legend of Lady Godiva, then continues on the first floor in the North Gallery where the *Dendromagie* (*Dendromagia*) cycle unfolds. The exhibition ends in the Luzarches Salon where two female figures, *la Pisseuse* (*The Pissing Lady*) and *Babaylan*, are displayed. This journey through collections allows the artist to forge links with the museum's works, in particular with two 19th-century painters, Jules Lefebvre and Henri Gambart.

Chapter I: Lady Godiva and her legends

The legend of Lady Godiva was recorded in the thirteenth century by the monk Roger of Wendover in Flores *Historiarum*, a collection of anecdotes. In the eleventh century, Count Leofric of Mercia, one of the most powerful barons in the Kingdom of England, subjected his people to exorbitant taxes. His wife Godiva (A latinised form of *Godgifu*, a good or noble gift) begged him to repeal the unfair tax known as the *tonlieu*, which was levied on trade and horses. Knowing his wife to be very pious, he promised that he would grant her request on the condition that she ride through the city of Coventry naked on a horse. To her husband's surprise, she accepted. Out of respect, the town's denizens stayed in, except for a tailor who ventured out to observe the scene. He is said to have been blinded as a punishment for his curiosity. This legend is said to have originated the English phrase "*Peeping Tom*", in the sense of a voyeur.

In the nineteenth century, this medieval legend was revived by poet Alfred Tennyson who published, in 1842, the narrative poem *Govida*. Many other artists have depicted this legend, especially English painters of the Victorian era, such as Edwin Landseer or John Collier, but also French painter Jules Lefebvre, in 1891.

Through several works, Lochmann re-appropriates and updates this legend by raising current issues, already present in the legend of Lady Godiva, such as the issue of female nudity used for political purposes, but also the relationship of humans to other animals.

While this painting by Jules Lefebvre is today among the most famous in the Picardy Museum, it was nevertheless the subject of various criticisms during the twentieth century. After being considered one of the museum's flagship paintings for a time, the canvas was banished to storage in the late 1940s. In 1979, when Véronique Alemany was named the museum's director, the *Société des Amis des musées d'Amiens* was set up to support the restoration of Jules Lefebvre's painting.

This initiative, along with the request made to local painters to withdraw works heretofore deposited at the museum, created a great deal of controversy in the local press. Critics presented this restoration project as a new quarrel of the Ancients, i.e., the proponents of academic painting, against the Moderns, as the avant-garde movements of the twentieth century were known, as well as against local artists, whose work was allegedly not being sufficiently promoted by the museum. A caricature of the director at the time, in the guise of Lady Godiva, was even published in the press. The restoration was finally completed in 1982, but the canvas was promptly withdrawn again the following year. It was finally exhibited in the Grand Salon in 2013, after a new restoration.

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Lady Godiva on her pony

2019

Engraved wood and lithographic inks

On loan from FRAC Picardie, Amiens, inv. 21-046

Tereza Lochmann brings Lady Godiva's legend into the 21st century. Starting from a 2017 internet meme, which compared actress Tilda Swinton's physical appearance to that of a small dog, the artist wrote the synopsis of a fictional film to explain her work. In this version, Tilda Swinton embodies Lady Godiva who, like the Femen movement, uses her nudity as a political weapon. In the artist's narrative, the characters are depicted as suffering the effects of contemporary ecological disasters: "Lady Godiva's mount is smaller because of the widespread pollution emitted by power plants. The horse was poisoned, and became a pony. However, our proud rider has grown somewhat, after eating food contaminated with antibiotics and pesticides". With an interest in playing with hybridisation, the artist has imbued the protagonist's face with canine features. She used pieces of reclaimed wood to fashion windows for visitors to project themselves into the role of the voyeur, *Peeping Tom*.

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Lady Godiva on her pony 2 (etching)

2019

Transfer and acrylic on fabric

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

This work is the result of the transfer on canvas of the wooden plate employed to create *Lady Godiva on her pony*, which is displayed nearby. Beyond this inverted interpretation grid, the artist has made several changes: Lady Godiva's face here takes on the features of actress Tilda Swinton, through a collage. *Peeping Tom's* figure emerges in the form of a ghostly appearance. The plate and etching offer a reflection on the notion of *doppelgänger*, or evil twin, drawn from Germanic folklore. While the dog is a dead-ringer for the woman, the horse's body is also doubled up, inspired in this sense by Francis Picabia's *Transparencies* series, of which the Picardy Museum has an exemplar, the *Portrait of Maria Lani* (1928-1929), which can be seen on the first floor.

In creating his large painting of *Lady Godiva*, presented at the 1890 Salon, Jules Lefebvre executed in the region of forty preparatory studies. These studies enable us to understand how he went about creating this work, i.e., the painter's trial and error process in search of the best solution to arrange the different elements that constitute a painting. Working from a living model, Lefebvre experimented with several poses before choosing a very modest representation, with the model's arms covering her chest.

From this body of work, Tereza Lochmann has selected two sets of six drawings among which the artist has, at times, found parallels with her own work. These two sets will be presented in alternation to preserve the paper from possible degradation caused by prolonged exposure to light.

FIRST SET: JULES LEFEBVRE (June > September)

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Tête de cheval (Horse's Head)

ca. 1890

Charcoal on paper

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv: M.P.3133-664

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva on horseback

ca. 1890

Pencil on tracing paper glued to cardboard

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-663-8

Lady Godiva on horseback

ca. 1890

Blue pencil on paper glued to cardboard

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-663-6

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva by herself

ca. 1890

Charcoal on coloured paper

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-665-11

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva by herself

ca. 1890

Charcoal on paper

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-665-15

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva on horseback

ca. 1890

Charcoal on tracing paper glued to cardboard

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-663-6 bis

SECOND SET: JULES LEFEBVRE (September > December)

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva on horseback

ca. 1890

Charcoal on tracing paper glued to cardboard

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-663-4

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva on horseback

ca. 1890

Charcoal on several pieces of tracing paper glued to cardboard

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-663-9

Jules Lefebvre

Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva on horseback

ca. 1890

Charcoal on tracing paper glued to cardboard

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930

inv : M.P.D.3133-663-10

Jules Lefebvre
Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva by herself

ca. 1890
Charcoal on tracing paper
Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930
inv : M.P.D.3133-665-7

Jules Lefebvre
Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Lady Godiva by herself

ca. 1890
Pencil on tracing paper
Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930
inv : M.P.D.3133-665-9

Jules Lefebvre
Tournan, 1834 – Paris, 1912

Hands Study

ca. 1890
Charcoal and white chalk highlights on tracing paper glued to cardboard
Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of Jeanne Lefebvre, daughter of the artist, 1930
inv.M.P.D.3133-666-1

Set on the Equine Condition

In the set entitled *The Equine Condition*, Tereza Lochmann ironically compares the behaviours of humans and horses: she literally seeks to put the spectators in the animal's skin. The hybridisation of bodies echoes the play on words embodied in this French expression ('in someone's skin' is equivalent to the English expression of 'in someone's shoes'), thus humorously revealing the absurdity of relations of domination. The artist questions the role that humanity has bestowed upon horses, at once our pets and work tools. This set was created in 2022, as part of an ARTCHEVAL residency in Saumur. Tereza Lochmann discovered the rigours of the Cadre Noir, a foundational element of the National Riding School, and also expressed interest in books such as Pierre Enoff's *Le Silence des chevaux* (*The Silence of Horses*), and its suggestion of a new model for inter-species relations.

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Fashionable hairstyle, *The Equine Condition* set

2022

Felt-tip on paper

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

To Bridle, *The Equine Condition* set

2022

Felt-tip on paper

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Sleeping while Standing, Equine Condition Set

2022

Felt-tip on paper

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Crossing Walls, Equine Condition Set

2022

Felt-tip on paper

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Out of the Shadows, Equine Condition set

2022

Felt-tip on paper

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Symbol of virility, Equine Condition set

2022

Felt-tip on paper

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Dendromagia 1

2023

Oil pastel on paper mounted on canvas

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

According to popular belief in Picardy, the so-called “rag trees” of Senarpont can be used to treat people suffering from illnesses, particularly skin-related diseases, provided that a piece of clothing previously worn by the afflicted person is tied around the tree for nine days. During her on-site residence in the summer of 2023, Tereza Lochmann attempted for the first time the oil pastel technique which enabled her to superimpose several layers of materials on which to create drawings through scratching, in an approach similar to that used in wood engraving. The composition, devoid of a central motif, encourages viewers to shift their gaze inside the drawing. This arrangement reflects the impossibility of grasping the entire site at a glance, the loss of reference points in the face of the entanglement of fabrics and the multitude of anonymous contributions. For the artist, the beauty of this site lies in the meaning it possesses to those who come to perform a symbolic act in the hope of healing.

FIRST FLOOR

CHAPTER II: *Dendromagia* and the cult of the “rag tree”

Tree worship (or dendrolatry) is a practice common to many cultures and religions around the world. In Europe, some of these pagan animist beliefs were Christianised. The “rag tree” of Saint Claude, located 50 km west of Amiens, on the side of the road linking Senarpont to Neuville-Coppegueule, is still the subject of a lively devotion.

According to popular local belief, “rag trees” may be used to treat people suffering from illnesses, particularly skin-related diseases, provided that a piece of clothing previously worn by the afflicted person is tied around the tree branches or trunk for nine days.

Informed for the first time of the existence of this site by Pascal Neveux, director of FRAC Picardie, Tereza Lochmann’s curiosity for the “rag tree” immediately resonated with her attraction for the plastic manifestations of certain marginal beliefs. This interest took shape in the form of a dual residence, organised in the summer 2023, through the collaboration of the Briqueterie, FRAC and the Museum of Picardy. This on-site research gave rise to the creation of a set of works gathered around the title of “*Dendromagie*”, a portmanteau word consisting of *dendro*, relating to trees, and magic. In relation to these contemporary productions, a little-known work from the collections of the Musée de Picardie was restored concurrently with this exhibition. This is a large painting by Henri Gambart, entitled *The Legend of Saint Valery*, created around 1891, which also illustrates a votive practice of the Gallo-Roman era, in relation to a tree marking the location of the saint’s grave at Cape Hornu.

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Bindings No. 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, and 19

2023

Charcoal drawings

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

With her charcoal drawings on the theme of “rag trees”, Tereza Lochmann expressed her interest in the various shapes of knots on clothing hanging from the trees' branches and around their trunks. The fabrics' decomposition sits in contrast to the growth of the vegetation that covers them. The artist sees in each of these bindings the expression of the hope of healing on the part of the person making the knot and, sometimes, clues to their personality, through certain characteristics of the clothes.

Tereza Lochmann

Prague, 1990

and

Renata Hovorková

Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, 1988

Practical *Dendromagia* 2023

Artist's book, embroidered cover and inkjet prints, copy 1/4

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

This residence diary interweaves sketches and texts written by Tereza Lochmann during her stay near the “rag trees” of Senarpont, with archive photos and recent shots. It also includes the transcription of interviews conducted with the inhabitants of the village. This process of artistic investigation finds its plastic form in the collaboration with graphic designer Renata Hovorková who designed the model and embroidered the book's cover.

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Preparatory studies for Dendromagia
2023-2024

Felt-tip pen on sketch paper/notebooks in display case
Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

My body is your wood

2024

Lithographic and drawing inks, engraved and painted birch plywood and reclaimed wood of various origins
Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Inspired by the “rag trees” of Senarpont, this sculpture puts forward a hybridisation between the human body and the plant kingdom. The three panels may be seen as three bodies connected by a common trunk. Clothes knotted and left on site end up intertwining with the proliferating vegetation. The latter penetrates into the fibres, which tend to turn into wood. The latticework of the leaves intertwines with the knots of the fabrics. A human arm attached to one of the trunks evokes the ancient ritual of "binding fevers", a practice consisting of binding oneself to a tree to transfer one's fever to it. The pattern engraved on the margins alludes to the notion of the *glitch*, i.e., a digital malfunction that results in image distortion, caused by coding error. This work thus connects an ancient healing ritual with the failings of the virtual, current world.

Artist's poem:

I am here
My body is your wood
Your leaves are my fingers
My roots are your legs
Your soul is in my sap
My breath is the crackling of your branches
You gave me this poisonous gift
I can't do anything about it
And every day
I chew on it, I work on it, I transform it
Until it becomes
One day
Entirely
Me

Jean Hector Henri Gambart

Péronne, 1854 – Saint-Valery-sur-Somme 1891

Legend of Saint Valery or Pilgrimage to the Grave of Saint Valery

1891

Oil on canvas

Amiens, Museum of Picardy

Gift of the Artist's Mother, 1892

inv : M.P.421

While themes drawn from the Middle Ages run through all of 19th century painting, artists working at the end of the century were more particularly interested in its earliest times, i.e., the Carolingian and Merovingian eras, the barbarian kingdoms, and the beginnings of Christianity. Such was the case with Henri Gambart in this great composition. In the 7th century, a humble family, the father of which had fallen ill, came to Saint Valery's grave to beg for a miracle. On a tree, the painter depicted all the gestures of popular piety of the time, such as *ex votos* placed on boats, healed human limbs, crutches and canes that belonged to people with miraculous powers, statues of the saint, engraved votive plates, candles, etc. This tree, which overlooks the Bay of Somme, resonated singularly with Tereza Lochmann's interest in the Sénarpont "rag tree".

A noted participant of the 1881 Parisian Painting Salon, Gambart specialised in social subjects of a miserabilist tone. In this first historically-themed painting, he blended his attraction for popular themes with archaeological restitution work specific to historical painting. He would hardly have time to continue on this path, since he died in Saint-Valery-sur-Somme, the city that inspired this unfinished painting. It was his childhood friend and fellow Peronese, painter Francis Tattegrain, who finished the painting before it was gifted to the Picardy Museum by the author's mother. Preserved on a roll since the museum's bombing in 1918, it was restored and shown to the public for the first time in more than a century on the occasion of the *Tereza Lochmann, Manufacturing Legends*, exhibition.

CHAPTER III: Female Figures of Transformation

There are many female protagonists in Tereza Lochmann's works. The artist is inspired as much by popular traditions as by the history of Western art, the legend of Lady Godiva in particular. *La Pisseuse*, a figure loaded with triviality and eroticism through the male gaze, is transformed by the artist into a character illustrating a sense of abandon and relief. Her posture also seems to be conducive to reflection, as the "pisser" becomes thinker.

Babaylan is a shamanic figure of pre-colonial Filipino culture. While the role of shaman was usually ascribed to elderly women, Tereza Lochmann depicts this figure as a young girl in one of her first works, *La Lapine*. The *Babaylan* thus appears as a hybrid creature that frees itself from its animal coat while carrots fly away, symbolising the uprooting necessary for evolution to take place. This work, with its omnipresent aquatic element, illustrates the metamorphosis of the female character, from childhood to adolescence. The reemergence of an earlier figure from the artist's repertoire makes this work an important milestone in Tereza Lochmann's artistic heft.

Tereza Lochmann

Prague, 1990

***La Pisseuse*, Off-screen set**

2021

Engraved wood and lithographic ink

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Tereza Lochmann

Prague, 1990

***Soldiers or Corn Plants*, Off-screen Series**

2021

Engraved wood, lithographic inks and "thick wood" base

Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

The pictorial motif of the *Pisseuse* comes from Dutch genre scenes depicting characters in trivial situations. Following Rembrandt, this iconography was taken up in the 20th century by Gauguin and Picasso, as well as female artists such as Marlène Dumas. In response to this heritage, as prestigious as it is cumbersome, Tereza Lochmann offers her interpretation of the *Pisseuse* through a self-portrait from behind, at the edge of a cornfield, barely protected from view by ears of corn that look like soldiers. The strange animal lurking in the shadows evokes the imaginary of creepy cornfields, a subgenre of American horror films where the threat always emerges from corn fields.

Tereza Lochmann
Prague, 1990

Babaylan 1 (print)

2019

Ink on Japanese paper, print made with an engraved wooden table
Courtesy of Kaleidoscope Gallery/Artist's Collection

Following a residence in the Philippines in 2018, Tereza Lochmann was inspired by the figure of the Babaylan, female shamans, healers and mediums, who were respected in the pre-colonial society of this archipelago. The artist's *Babaylan* assumes the features of a half-bunny girl, caught in a rite of passage that makes her evolve. To transform from an adolescent hybrid creature into a human woman, she shaves her fur which then disappears into bubbling waters. On the left, two aquatic animals emerge: the octopus, a symbol of transcendence and regeneration, and the axolotl, a sign of metamorphosis in progress.