

Auréli e Sl oni na
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Drifting Meteors / 2020 / Installation of 5 modules / variable dimensions
Contemporary Art Center La Maréchalerie

Concrete gardeners, in the style of street furniture of the 60s and typical of the development of cities and suburbs, cross the exhibition space of La Maréchalerie. Here the gardeners do not contain plants and their primary role of beautifying the city disappears. They are monolithic, sliding in space like drifting meteorites, unidentified flying objects coming to ground on earth. It mixes with a feeling of weightlessness and immateriality, a disturbing futuristic vision.



Off-ground / 2020 / Sculpture / glazed ceramic / 90 x 35 x 25 cm

Contemporary Art Center La Maréchalerie

Off-ground is a glazed ceramic sculpture, representing a young character, wearing a virtual reality headset on his eyes. The technology figured in the sculpture in opposition to the manual and artisanal aspect of the work makes him a hybrid character, born from this confrontation. Like off-ground cultures, where plants appear natural but cultivated in an artificial environment, the character gives the contradictory feeling of being present and absent at the same time.



Escape / 2020 / Sound video editing / 16: 9 format / 5 min loop

Contemporary Art Center La Maréchalerie / video / 1min loop

Escape is a video montage made of a succession of photographs that show natural elements in contexts that are in turn wild or completely domesticated by man. A topiary of the Castle of Versailles, a Californian desert, a roundabout, the escape of an orchard and many more superimpose on one another. A chaotic and repetitive rhythm gives the feeling that nature is looking for an escape. The film is accompanied by a soundtrack composed by Olivier Pianko. In music, an escape is an intentionally non-harmonic musical note.



Guests / 2017 / Series of four photos / 75 x 50 cm

Guests # 1, # 2, # 3, # 4, are pictures of ephemeral installations with blues plastics tarps. These tarps are used in the construction of shelters wich are multiplying in the urban landscape. Folded like napkins in the shape of lotus flowers or lilies, these imposing origamis are proposals of structured forms, like small individual architectures. They redouble the gesture of migrants who grow shelters as plants grow.



Fluorescence / 2015 / Stencils / variable dimension

Fluorescence, are stencils representing weeds, painted on the walls with a fluorescent green marking paint. They represent and multiply weeds by a symmetrical arrangement in space. They extend the comparison between graffiti and weeds as spontaneous generation that the city strives to control, if not erase.



Sunrise / 2015 / Enamelled porcelain / variable dimension

Shoes, plastic bag, dandelions, barbed wire, laces, and an astronaut costume lie in a neon yellow surface. They are like abandoned objects after an ecological disaster.



Replicant / 2017 / Weeds / 4 x 4 m

Replicant is the perfect replica of a floral composition settle in the gardens of Versailles, moved in social housing in Paris. The sophisticated composition is strictly the same as the heirs of Le Nôtre, but the flowers have been replaced by weeds: dandelions, thistles, nettles are meticulously arranged on the mound. Replicant looks like a flying saucer and borrows from science fiction the futuristic idea of displacement both in the layers of space-time and social classes.



Di amond / 2014 / Protective tape + stakes / 400 x 400 x 150 cm Exhibition realized with the support of Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

The protective tape, usually used in urban spaces to indicate danger, draws the 3-dimensional structure of a diamond. Located in a natural setting, Diamond looks like an unidentified urban object.



After Nature / 2010 / Protective tape + stakes / 30 x 30 x 1 m

At Chamarande contemporary art center, and in connection with Pascal Rivet's exhibition 'Concession' and his exploration of the link between human beings and their work tools, I suggest walking the course of a tractor ploughing a field.



French weeds / 2009 - 2012 / Weed + humus + become felted géotextile + paillage / 16 x 12 m / Parc culturel de Rentilly / Musée de Aalst - Belgique / CACLB - Belgique / INRA - Versailles

Aligned with a formal French garden, or in a cloister, I reproduce the embroidery of a flower bed designed in the 17th century by Le Nôtre, except that mine is entirely made of weed. On the natural grounds of the park, I lay out in a very deliberate and extremely precise way dandelions, brambles, nettles.



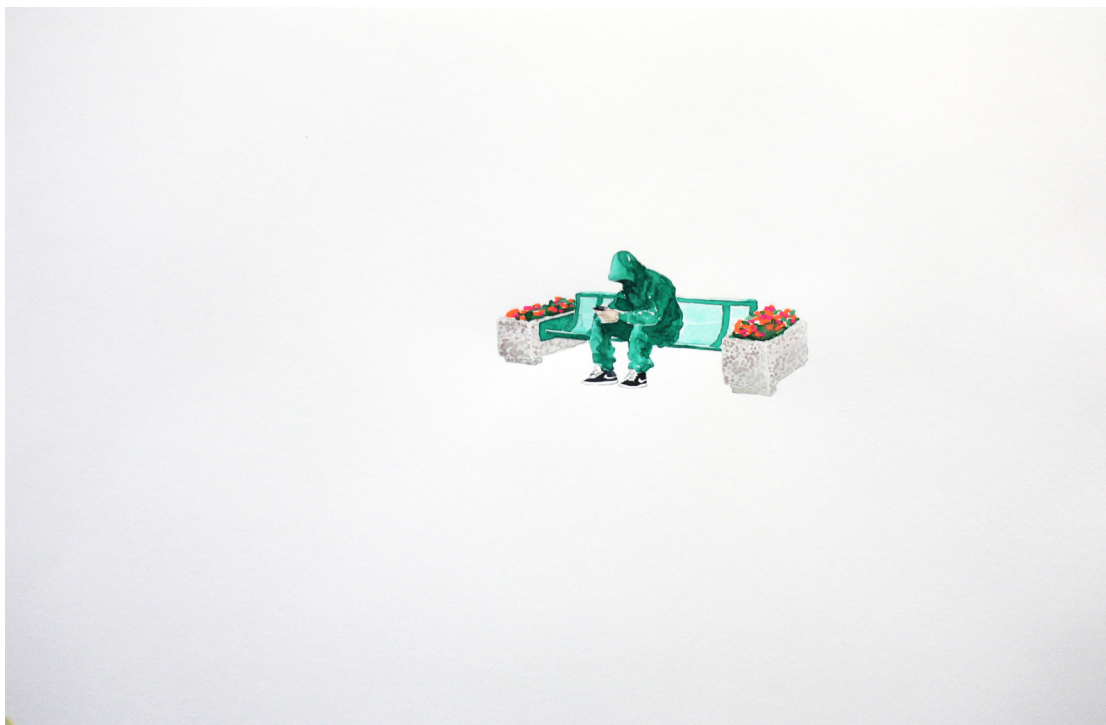
Nettle Labyrinth / 2010 / Nettles + wood shavings / 800 x 800 cm

A labyrinth composed of nettles is settled in a public park. The nettle plant is public space enemy number one. The labyrinth disciplines, masters it to give it at last control of the game.



WILD / CRASH / PUSH / 2008 - 2011 / Wood + polyester resin + geranium artificial / 270 x 80 x 40 cm / 310 x 100 x 40 cm / 270 x 80 x 40 cm / *Point Ephémère* / *Centre d'Art contemporain Micro onde – Vélisy* / *Musée Ianchelevici - Belgique* / *Musée de Aalst - Belgique* / *Chic art Fair* / *Palais de Tokyo*.

Graffiti artists “subvert” places, they “tear” walls; they are enraged. They paint their tags everywhere possible, wanting them to be seen as much as possible. Those who take care of a window box achieve something pretty, ornate their balcony or their window. Curiously, both graffiti artists and window box owners seem to mark their territory, although maybe in antithetical ways.



Eden / 2013 / Watercolor + neon color / 60 x 40 cm

Eden is a watercolor series representing urban amenities such as flowery roundabouts, urban flower pots... These green spaces bring together a sample of nature at its most artificial, sophisticated, rich. These islands of nature seem to be the only natural resources of the city. They are like fragments of isolated nature, that we cannot access. They appear to form a scenery. These spaces are shown as a lost paradise, an unattainable Eden.



Green touch / 2014 / Enamel ceramic + jogging / 170 x 70 x 50 cm Exhibition realized with the support of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

Green touch represents a hipster – beard, sunglasses, sneakers, cap, hood and iPhone – but his singularity is to wear green sweatpants. He has the « green touch ». A dandelion covering his sneakers also seems to escape description. The enamelled ceramic gives a craft and a delicate look to the character that contrasts with the stereotype it represents.



Black hole / 2015 / Curved sunglasses / 5 x 4 cm

Recessed into the wall a curved sunglasses in which we can see circular signs like infinite.



Undulatory trellis / 2012 / Wood paints / 350 x 220 x 0,5 cm This project awarded a grant by the DRAC Ile-de-France

A trellis, support for climbing plants or wall sceneries, usually depicting a French perspective, here takes the form of an electromagnetic field. The vanishing point is diffuse. The waves emitted by electronic devices are becoming the essential motive of our urban landscape.



Small middle-class explosion / 2012 / Enamelled ceramics / 19 x 14 cm / 14 x 9 cm

Tiny explosions are modeled after pictures from TV or computer screens. These are home explosions, tamed, domesticated explosions. Violence takes a lower middle class shine.



E. T / 2012 / Enamelled ceramics / 30 x 10 x 6 cm

E. T is a young man whose look and attitude – jogging, basketball, hood, hands in pockets – call to mind projects youth. Its green color singles him. He is a hybrid character born out of the improbable encounter between an urban environment and nature.



Big bang / 2012 / Bowl with facet + Mushroom of stump / 50 x 30 cm

Big-bang is a disco ball on which a mushroom has grown. Such natural excrescence on an artificial objects creates or results from chaos.



Hepatica fistulina #1 / 2010 / Resin polyester / 220 x 170 x 50 cm / *Bûtes Chaumont* – COAL, WWF

A monumental shelf fungus is clinging to the cliff in the Buttes-Chaumont park. This mushroom is growing from the artificial rock and expresses both the emergence of nature in its wildest, most uncontrollable guise and the artificial, genetically modified side of a disproportionate, mutating nature.



Hepatica fistulina #2 / 2010 / garden's furniture + synthetic wood paints / Variable dimension

Courtesy Courances Castle – Ile-de-France

Two monumental shelf fungi cling to resin outdoor pieces of furniture, such as a table, chairs and a bench. It is an alien body, a kind of tumour on the body of the object. Its monumental size makes it unreal. It bursts forth, as if exploding from the plastic matter. The garden furniture becomes a kind of cell carrying a virus it has generated and that is now feeding off it.



Games / 2006 / Plastic playhouse + play dough / 180 x 160 x 130 cm

Games is an outdoor plastic playhouse, covered in flames made out of modelling clay. Here fire can be controlled, the awareness of danger is virtual. Games conjures up our fascination for virtual games. Games which are not immediately dangerous.



Burning bush / 2009 / Bush + Aluminium structure + LED / blinking bright garlands (yellow orange red) / 200 x 180 x 170 cm

A burning bush in the monastic square of the Maubuisson Abbey on the night of the 'Nuit Blanche'. A miracle is an event; today's art events are miracles of technology. The magical, festive, immediate effect created by winking fairy lights conjures up our sometimes thoughtless fascination for the latest scientific or technological developments. What is this mutating bush made of? What wood is this that never burns away?



Sea freshness / 2009 / Resin polyester / 250 x 130 x 60 cm

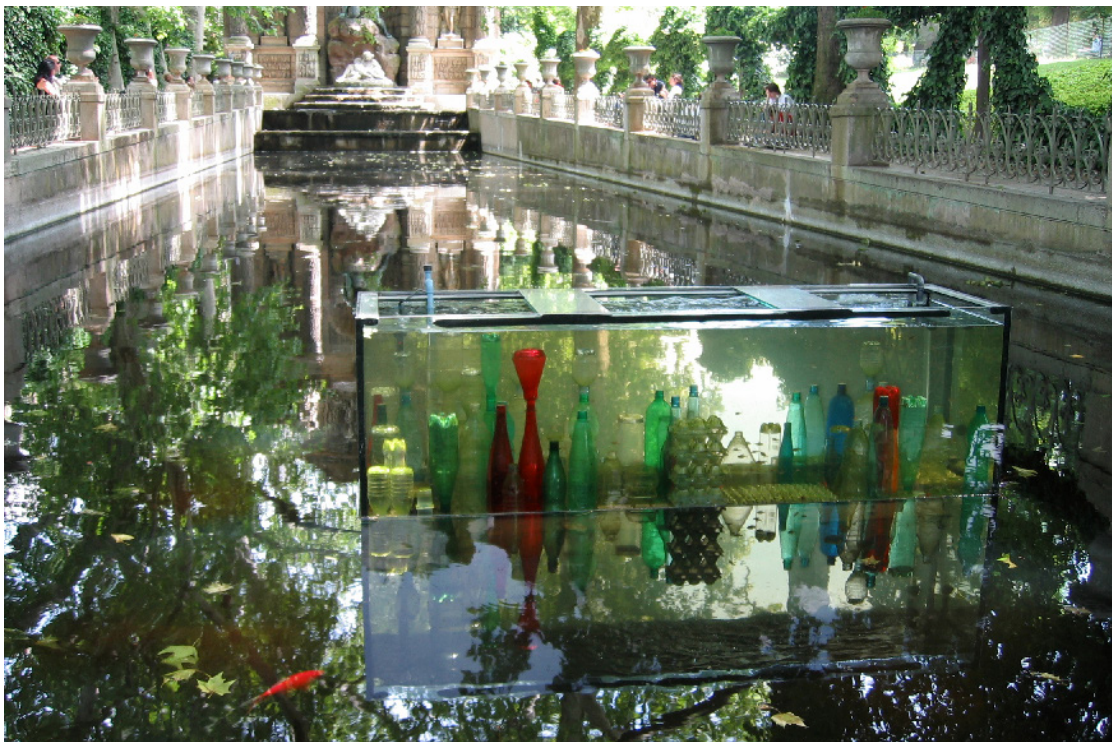
Biennial contemporary art #3 - Anglet, FR

A decorative artefact and a room fragrance diffuser, the air freshener boasts a new scale and a new scope here, freed from its domestic settings and faced with the actual scent of sea freshness. Its density increases. It bears witness to the natural/artificial, attraction/repulsion dialectics. It also boasts a great plastic strength, an invitation to explore other dimensions of reality, other perception possibilities.

Didier Arnaudet, art critic, curator of the Anglet biennial art fair.



Plant freshness / 2012 / Resin polyester / 250 x 130 x 60 cm
Stadspark Aals, BE / CACLB, Belgian Luxembourg



Aquapolis / 2006 / Aquarium + recyclable packagings + fishes / 190 x 50 x 60 cm
Garden of the Luxembourg, Paris, FR

Exactly at the surface of a basin rests an aquarium in which fish evolve through an ideal futuristic city. The buildings of this city are made out of recyclable plastic objects, packagings from daily life such as water bottles, egg boxes, etc. The fish swim in the heights of the city, like spaceships. The three elements constitutive of this city - water, fish, objects which can be recycled out of plastics - although of different nature, are all transparent.



Teleportation portals for pigeons / 2006 / Concrete + plexi + aluminium + paint + posters
/ variable dimension / Residence with the Pépinières Européennes pour Jeunes Artistes
in Berlin

These cabins are at the same time a way given to birds to escape their inhospitable suburbs and a possible explanation of how they arrived! Offering cabins of teleportation to the pigeons of a city questions the freedom of movement which exists in such places, i.e. at the same time, the means by which one gets there, the attachment to one's own city, and finally the need to escape from it.

Exi bi ti ons

- 2022 (In progress) *Urbanité verte*, curator Julie Sicault Maillé, Centre Tignous d'Art contemporain, Montreuil, FR
- 2021 *Semer, tracer, cligner des yeux*, commissaire Pauline Lisowski, Le 6b, Centre de création et de diffusion, Saint-Denis, FR
- 2020 *Salon Maison Contemporain*, Espace Bertrand Grimont, Paris Le Marais, FR
La dérive des Météores, exposition personnelle, Centre d'art contemporain La Maréchalerie ENSAV, Versailles, FR
- 2019 *Sélest'art*, 23ème Biennale de Selestat/ FRAC Grand Est, FR
Sentier Homme-Nature, Parc naturel régional de la Montagne de Reims / Champagne, FR
- 2018 *Exposition des cinq nominés pour le prix Maif pour la sculpture* / MAIF Social Club, Paris
Infiltration, curator Valérie Barot, Apdv, centre d'art, Paris, FR
- 2017 *Serial migrant #2*, curator Susan Ossman, MMTW / Moving Matters Traveling Workshop, Berlin, DE
Absurdité, curator Rohan Graeffly, Musée de plein air du Fourneau Saint Michel, Saint Hubert, BE
Paper Tigers, Syndicat Potentiel, Strasbourg, FR
- 2016 *On the line*, curator Susan Ossman, MMTW / Moving matters traveling Workshop, Riverside, California, EU
- 2015 *Sunrise*, curator Isabelle Le normand, Westwood, Los Angeles, EU
- 2014 *Unkraut !* Villa Ohmke, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, DE
- 2013 *Le vivant & l'énergie*, INRA Versailles, FR
L'autre, Camille Lambert contemporary art center, FR
- 2012 *Vegetal invader #1*, curator Lorraine Hussenot, Jeune Creation Gallery, Paris, FR
Nature et dérision, CACLB, Luxembourg Belge
The museum which hides the forest, Ianchelevici museum, BE
- 2011 *Chic art fair*, curator Lorraine Hussenot, Cité de la mode et du design, Paris, FR
Wild / Push / Crash, Point Ephemere, Paris, FR
Vélizy-discovery, Balade en Yvelines, curator Sophie Auger, Micro Onde, FR
- 2010 *According to the nature*, Chamarande contemporary art center, FR
Naturel brut, Curator Lauranne Germond / COAL – WWF / Paris, FR
Fake !, curator Jan de Nys, Alost park, Stedelijk museum, BE
Temporary Botanical Zone, Glassbox, Paris, FR
Panorama, curator Lorraine Hussenot, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, FR
55ème Salon de Montrouge, curator Stéphane Corréard, FR
- 2009 *Nuit blanche*, Abbaye de Maubuisson, FR
Microclimate, Rentilly park, FR
Summer Show. When crooks roam the streets, Olivier Robert gallery, Paris, FR
Biennal contemporary art #3 Anglet, curator Didier Arnaudet, FR
Hors d'oeuvres #4, Camille Lambert contemporary art center, FR

- 2008 *Less is less, more is more, that's all*, curator Charlotte Laubard, CAPC Bordeaux, FR
ATC + Looptopia, Around the Coyote Riverwalk gallery, Chicago, EU
Dripsy, the new deal of the Graffiti, Olivier Robert gallery, Paris, FR
- 2007 *Art4lux*, Casino Luxembourg
Everybody can a bit, La Peripherie gallery, FR
Jeune Création, La Grande halle de la villette, Paris, FR
- 2006 *The marvellous attenuating*, Camille Lambert contemporary art center, FR
Teleportation portals for pigeons, Internationale kulturentum Schlesische, Berlin, DE
Gardens in city, General Council of Indre et Loire, Hotel Gouin museum, FR
Jeune Création, La Bellevilloise, Paris, FR
- 2005 *Touraine in New York*, France Embassy, New York, EU
The city in art and art in the city, Art Senat, Paris, FR ArHEC, HEC campus, FR
Jeune Création, La Bellevilloise, Paris, FR
- 2004 *à plus*, Junge kunst aus Frankreich, Kolonie Wedding gallery, Berlin, DE
Jeune Création, La Grande halle de la villette, Paris, FR
- 2003 *re-play*, La Peripherie gallery, Malakoff, FR Trafi[k], Arts Decoratifs school, Paris, FR
- 2002 *Return to sources*, Garden fair 9th edition, Park of Saint-Cloud, FR
- 2001 *E132*, ENS -Ecole Normale Supérieure- Paris, FR
- 1998 *Pour un objet dard*. Dildo show, curator Stéphane Moreaux, Paris, FR
- 1996 *20 ans... le plus bel âge*, Passage de Retz, Paris, FR

Price & Residences

- 2019 Nominated for the MAIF prize for sculpture
- 2018 6B, Saint-Denis, FR
- 2017- Los Angeles, California, EU
- 2015 Berlin, DE
- 2013 Street Art session, ECM Le Chapelin, Mantes-la-jolie, FR 2012 6B, Saint-Denis, FR
- 2011 La Générale en manufacture, Sèvres, FR
 DRAC - Grant from Regional Direction of Cultural Affairs of Paris
 Edition of a multiple, edited by Chamarande contemporary art center, FR
- 2008 Chicago, Illinois, EU
- 2006 Europeenes Pepinieres for young artists, Berlin, DE
- 2002 First price of « Trafi[k] award 2002 », organised by ENS / ENSAD 2001 Berlin, DE
- 1997 Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, FR

Press & Catalog

- 2019 "Séminaire, Relations hommes/animaux : questions contemporaines", musée du quai Branly, Frédéric Keck, EHESS (invités: Emmanuele Coccia : La métaphysique des plantes, Aurélie Slonina : Friche à la Française)
- 2018 Guillaume Lasserre "Aurélie Slonina, l'art de l'infiltration positive", Le club de Média part Catalogue, prix Maif pour la sculpture / MAIF Social Club, Edition 2018
- 2015 "Alter Zeitgeist", Marielle Chabal, Sextant et plus, La Friche belle de mai
- 2014 Sylvie Pouteau, «Le vivant et son énergie», Une exposition-laboratoire pour de nouvelles médiations environnementales, INRA, Science & Impact
Curating the postcard, publishing Klet & Ko
- 2013 Sophie Peyrard to GREENKISS
Arte creative, Laurence Rilly
Catalogue «L'autre», Centre et Ecole d'Art Camille Lambert, Les portes de l'Essonne
- 2012 Catalogue «Saison 2012», CACLB, Centre d'Art Contemporain du Luxembourg Belge
Catalogue «Promenons nous dans les bois / Le musée qui cache la forêt», Musée Ianchelevici
- 2010 Catalogue «FAKE! Zomerproject beeldende kunst stad aalst 2010», Editions Stad Aalst Denderend
- 2009 Paul Ardenne «Anglet. 3ème biennale d'art contemporain», Artpress 359, p 90
- 2008 Catalogue «DRIPSY, la nouvelle donne du graffiti», Galerie Olivier Robert, Edition Kitchen 93
- 2007 «Les lois de l'hospitalité», Vacarme, hiver 07, n°38, couverture
- 2006 Catalogue «Le merveilleux édulcoré», espace d'art contemporain Camille Lambert, Juvisy sur Orge
«Contraintes formelles et imaginaire du vivant», Elselneur, n°21, couverture
- 2005 Jean-Luc Chalumeau, Catalogue «L'art et la ville», Editions cercle d'art, pp. 68-69
- 2002 Celia Mercier «Une «ville» pour les poissons rouges au parc de Saint-Cloud», Le Parisien, n° 17967, p. v.
- 2000 Fabienne Fulchérie «L'art dans les squats», Le journal des arts, n° 105, p. 20
- 1999 Patrick Williams «La tentation gay», Technikart, n° 29, pp. 62-63
- 1998 Patrick Williams «Le sens de l'engagement», Technikart, n° 27, pp. 80-81
- 1996 Catalogue «20 ans... Le plus bel âge...», Cergy Pontoise, Edition Adam Biro

Educati on

Ecole Normale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris

2003 Master AII (Picture and computer science)

Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Art de Paris Cergy

1994 DNSEP

1992 DNAP

In the city, nature is but small islands, sanctuaries of tamed vegetation. Supposed to give to the city-dweller a touch of authenticity, testimony of the mythical garden of Eden, these pieces of nature are not natural still. Aurelie Slonina makes apparent the new strangeness of these hybrid entities, of nature fully planned and fashioned by man. Flying saucers or virtual landscapes of video games, the new nature has become supernatural. Yet her work does not send us back to a long-lost state of nature or to wild nature, which would have existed before or beyond cities and human civilization. Such a virgin nature free from all human artifice is myth only, and Aurelie Slonina does not cease to show us the entwined complexity of artifice and nature. What is nature in this new era which we called the anthropocene, when human activities no longer take place merely within nature but have begun to have a decisive effect on the whole planet? Botanist and urban gardener, Aurelie Slonina observes with fascination and minuteness these artifacts, these hybrids of nature and human culture. In the manner of ever-resourceful nature, she cultivates all sorts of materials in order to give life to these objects and to offer them for us to see. At this hour, when cities of the world are being reinvented so as to no longer oppose nature, with green corridors, by favoring biodiversity and local species, Aurelie Slonina invites us, with humor, to re-appropriate our technological urban milieu, spawned of both nature and human invention. In the heart of cities themselves must nature be cultivated.

Those chosen squares of flowers we exhibit amidst concrete are nature. Electromagnetic waves superimposing on a grid covered with cultivated plants, our new environment, is nature. Nature is the “natural” smells we capture in plastic boxes by the synthetic mixing of molecules. Impossible to separate the artificial from the purely natural. By relocating air fresheners in their “natural” space, now wafting a sea or forest breeze, Aurelie Slonina reveals the incongruous artificiality of this object faced with the elements there are supposed to give our senses. What we see is not some “real” nature. To the contrary, the installation reminds us that our gaze always transforms nature by giving it meaning. Here, we see the landscape through (the nose of) an air-freshener, new avatar of the romantic traveler contemplating the sea.

Banish the thought of a definitely enclosed, totally domesticated nature. For those plants we have designated as weeds still grow in the gaps of sidewalks, and nettles still itch our ankles. These weeds follow contours, assuming the lineage, as does Aurelie Slonina, of the neat and symmetrical garden in the French style—they toy with our perfect plans. Mushrooms reclaim possession of an outdoor dining room, they grow on the man-made walls of the Buttes Chaumont, perturbing and reappropriating what we had define as nice, civilized nature. Growing, re-growing, until we ourselves are growing, as evidence by this hooded man, a green citizen, a vegetable mutant. This silhouette, which reappears from a distance in the work of Aurelie Slonina, is at the same time recognizable and unidentifiable. Cosmopolitan figure of everything Urban: perhaps he is a “ghetto youth” or a “hipster.” Under the camouflage of his cosmopolitan uniform, he is himself standard urban furniture, an organic hybrid, rejected by technology and this city. Aurelie Slonina does not give him a predetermined meaning, no more than for any other of the human figures she places here and there throughout her work. It’s up to these characters to invent themselves—it is up to us to invent ourselves and define our role through the choices we make within the social world.

And meaning springs from the city, as in the vegetal graffiti imagined by Aurelie Slonina, and that people expose, exploding from their balcony. In this urban environment, the natural becomes exceptional, and it signifies. Revived by Aurelie Slonina, graffiti-geraniums, distant descendants of a burning bush witnessed by Moses, are now the locus of expression for meaning, energy, or frustration unbound by the city. There is tension too, as in Games, when Aurelie Slonina goes so far as to show the whole house on fire. Here, again, she offers some clues, a few traces to follow: imminent danger or simple game, that’s for us to decide....

Your latest exhibition at the Galerie Jeune Création (Young Creators Gallery), was entitled Vegetal Invaders #1. A plant invasion ?

One of my works was a series of stickers that could be placed anywhere, like street art. They were giant, urban window boxes. Those were more concrete than plant life, and this time they look more like flying saucers floating in space, come to invade us. Like a modified type of nature, the type we grow in green houses, the type we use fertilizers on. In my work, nature has two forms: the 'modified' one, and the wild one, the unwanted plants... It reminds me of your other creation, Wild/Crash/Push, those graffiti shaped geranium flower boxes...

Yes, another example of 'modified' nature, like those flowers one puts on the window sill and on balconies, that you can buy at Truffaut or Jardiland, all that nature-in-a-box on one side, and on the other, graffiti that grows like weeds, which we strive to get rid of, and that keep coming back. These special window boxes were born from the clash of these two worlds, hybrid objects sprung from two opposite ideas. Clean meets trash, order meets chaos.

You also have a creation called Mauvaises Herbes (Weeds), can you tell us a little about it ?

I drew up plans for a French garden, like the ones created by Le Notre in the XVIIth Century, but distorted. Those gardens are very controlled, rigorously drawn by man. But instead of planting rose bushes and box trees, I put nettles, brambles, and other weeds that I had collected in urban settings. I was fascinated by the improbable mix that sprung from this association. The absurdity of it all illustrates mankind's excessive control over nature that ends up getting out of hand, slipping into chaos... all the way down to GM foods and plants. I wanted to show that too much control over nature leads to abnormality.

I am also a great fan of a piece you made called « Fraicheur Marine » (Sea Breeze), which was very funny and offbeat. Can you tell us about it ?

All of the time, I get an idea because I have to work off the cuff. I was invited to the Anglet's art festival, which was on the sea front. I was working at the time on the relationship between nature and artificiality, so I automatically came up with this idea : a sea-shore air-freshener ! On my arrival, the smell of salt water was so strong... Once it had been build, it almost felt like the smell came from the art instead of the sea ! It is completely artificial but fits beautifully in the background because it is almost the same colour as the sky, so much so that it sometimes is hard to see. It also looks like a surf board or a boat's keel... It was like an artificial lung which was managing to integrate perfectly into a natural landscape.

What does working on 'modified' nature tell us about yourself ?

I grew up in a privileged neighbourhood where nature was very controlled. There were little streams, artificial lakes and bridges, very 1900's. That is what I grew up with, what made me who I am. This artificiality, like a giant Smurf village, is also something I can't stand. I needed to breath, I went out looking for urban waste lands.

Do you believe that artists are meant to influence our vision of nature and the environment ?

I am very aware of environmental issues, and I think we should take a stand. But I don't think my line of work is about preaching, saying « we have to eat organic food ! We have to take care of our planet ! » That is not what I am trying to convey. I do not think it is my place to do so. An artist has to create wonder, surprise and questions. Sometimes it is through surprise that thought occurs.

Can you tell us a secret ?

My wildest dream would be to visit another planet.

Aurélie Slonina creates an art «after nature», but the nature in question here has nothing to do with the pastoral visions of yesteryear. This nature has not only been domesticated, but synthesised, and adapted to the urban word - a nature that has become «green spaces», a purely negative definition of what nature is (in other words, everything which in the city is neither tar nor concrete). This negative space may be the result of urban planning, as in couvre-feu, or a «wild» (read: individual) intervention, as in Wild, where the flowery decoration (of balconies) is utilised as some sort of graffiti or tag, applied flower pot-wise. Both are actually a sort of signature or expression of self, a way of signalling one's own presence in the urban space, of individualising a part of the territory.

A different Wilde (first name Oscar) thought that it was nature that imitated art. That it was the London fog which imitated the painting of Turner or Monet, and not the other way around. Our present-day nature is no longer the same as the one in London in the 19th century, it imitates abstract painting (the colza fields make great Peter Halleys), but also Dada and New Realism; it has also turned to recycling everything within its reach. What is deemed natural today, is above all the whole concern regarding base materials. By recycling forms and objects, the-visionary- art of the 20th century has played its pioneering role in what has become an economic and ecological imperative (recycling), and we can discern in Aurélie Slonina's work, which is an image of art as much as of the nature it imitates, an attempt at looping the loop.

The function of fertilizers, air fresheners, and artificial colouring is to make actual nature closer to ideal nature. Thus artifice applied to nature fits into a kind of classicism. By suggesting it is sending out the scent of the sea, Fraîcheur Marine [Sea Freshness] (a sculpture in the shape of a giant room fragrance device set on the coast line) casts doubt on the true origin of "scent" (which is to the sense of smell what 'green space' is to nature). It is therefore coherent that Aurélie Slonina should explore other forms of classicism, such as formal French gardens, or their distant heirs, such as the succession of central reservations and roundabouts in Couvrefeu [Curfew], whose sequence conjures up a Morse sentence. From the underlying ideal of classicism also sprung the objective to bring nature under control, which is still guiding our civilization. In Aurélie Slonina's work, the formal French garden, an expression of the Cartesian will to become "masters and owners of Nature", meets with the universal childlike pleasure of controlling miniature worlds. Both these ambitions are fairly mischievously called upon to cancel each other.