

Ciaccia Levi

Chalisée Naamani

Jt'oublierai vite j'te ljure

4 Sept. — 16 Oct., 2021

It's in the midst of flowers and hearts, gold chains and costume hangers, behind Tati curtains and above an *almost* branded Comme des Garçons carpet, that Chalisée Naamani's cosmopolitan universe unfolds. At once virtual and real, dreamlike and authentic, and always 100% bling.

Tales and countries, references and hashtags, something old, something new, and something blue, all joyfully mix, bang, but without bothering each other – as true witnesses to the happy nature of Ciaccia Levi's newcomer. Her universe is a flow of key words, punchlines and catchy hooks interwoven in a patchwork of images that the artist invites us to explore. Whoever ventures to dive into it will perhaps get a glimpse of personal and family fables, intimate and collective stories, or all of them at the same time. Whoever takes a step on the carpet will be majestically received, welcomed into a space reminiscent of one's home, or a souvenir store from here and there, or rather from everywhere at the same time. Whoever comes in is invited to stay, even though remaining a bit, on the go.

The first French artist of the gallery is also Iranian, and she knows her Hafez well, his endless praise and embrace of the pleasures of wine, gardens and good friends that drip throughout his verses. Whoever takes up the offer to cross the threshold of her store will be met with pleasant flowers, intimate stories of the artist, and with her way of listening to the rustle of the world and of navigating it. The exhibition is really an *invitation to the voyage*. From Tehran to Los Angeles, without forgetting Paris, suitcases, bags, and garment covers open the path to daydream and memories, adventurous journeys, and round trips. Everything overlaps and interlocks, as an eternal return or perpetual renewal, constantly enhanced and evolving through the eyes that look, the hands that grasp, the voices that narrate or that are heard.

The Pierre Cardin garment bag belonged to the artist's grandfather, who bought it in Paris, brought it back to Tehran, and which was then taken back to France by his daughter, and finally enhanced with a flamenco skirt in the hands of his granddaughter. The medieval armor and its imposing shell remind us that the taste for volume in regards to body representations cannot be limited to any gender, period, or body part. If plaid boxing gloves poke out of it, it's because the fight will be poetic and aesthetic in order to shape History. A History that's written with a capital letter for personal stories. Homage and cocking a snook, cross-dressing is here a commentary on History and an attempt to get a grasp of it. A way of debunking heroes, of any sex and of any time, and of sewing chapters together with Chalisée Naamani's heart-shaped motifs and threads; symbols which overcome time, culture, and borders.

The hybrid works of the artist outline a liquid universe, with porous borders, and in which the names of cities or monument memorabilia are enough to spark a plethora of images and create new journeys. The sculptures, installations, and wallpapers of Chalisée Naamani are in fact collages, proving that the source from which the Dadaists and Surrealists, – and actually all the “ism” movements of the beginning of the century– drew their inspiration from, is far from being an outdated medium. She is fueled by brands and advertising – understood as fetishes of our past, present and future times –, by the environment that surrounds her – the carpet mirrors the historic ceiling of the gallery, which, after revamp construction work, revealed delicate floral moldings –, but also by feeds that the pre-Internet avant-gardes would not have even dared to dream of.

Instagram and her iPhone are boundless sources from which Chalisée Naamani fishes out a jumble of iconic or intimate figures, that she combines in a perfectly controlled effervescence. The wallpaper let out her readings, and sometimes her own reflection, or even those of the places and symbols that make up her world, itself a fragment of a digital-virtual macrocosm in which the flow is never completely contained, but where life is pleasant once you manage to uncover connections and bonds.

- Horya Makhlof, 2021

Chalisée Naamani (b. 1995, Paris) lives in Paris. She graduated from the Paris Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, in 2020.

Jt'oublierai vite j'te ljure is her first solo exhibition at Ciaccia Levi gallery.