

LOVE

#ANIMALVEGETABLEMINERAL

VICTOIRE DE CASTELLANE AT THE GAGOSIAN GALLERY, DAVIES
ST, LONDON

Photography by Chris Brooks



Last night saw the opening of Victoire De Castellane's second solo exhibition 'animalvegetablemineral' at the Gagosian Gallery in Mayfair. A mesmerising display of glittering snakes, slithering into pools of Australian opal ('like holograms'), and resting upon sculpted silver rocks; a trio of 'masculine' works made of 'precious precious' stones crystallised so naturally onto their shiny cubic plinths; and exquisite flowers of vivid lacquered gold and precious stones 'poisoning themselves' in their silvery leafy cases - the 'babies' of her first show 'Fleurs d'excès'.



In keeping with her principal collection, each piece is a piece of art not just a piece of jewellery - a wearable element of jewellery living on its own sculpted base - but, as she describes it, it is a much more classical proposition.

'We are not selling jewellery, i don't like the idea. I love the idea of making precious objects and then - voila! - in the middle you can take something and wear it. They give you joy every time you look at them. They are part of your decoration, part of your apartment. Suddenly you are happy because it's like flowers without dying.'

'I work in the traditional way of jewellery, a big stone in the centre, but around it i don't like to play traditionally. They are all made in traditional workshops, all made by hand, they are all unique. This is a classic collection for me - a classical proposition.'



What informed the making of this particular collection and where did the title 'animalvegetablemineral' come from?

'Well I love to play with nature, and i love to play with family and the idea of relationships. The relation between people and nature and how we manage to live together. It's always so complicated. It's three worlds coming together in one world. There are three families. But in the end they are all like human beings for me, they are little human beings - my babies.'

And baby snakes...

'The snakes are the darker side. The idea is that the snakes are sleeping under the moonlight. That's why i wanted to make them with a special matt colour. This one is glitter, and with Australian opal and aquatic diamonds. I love opal, it's a magical stone, so strange like a hologram. And then there is one who is drinking the diamonds. The idea of the rocks comes from the monkeys rocks at the Bois de Vincennes zoo, made like a Hollywood set in plaster. I love this idea of this innocent way to make it. For children.'

The flowers are blooming beautiful, are they taken from nature or from your imagination?

'They are all imaginary. I think we're living in a world where there is no more romanticism. For me I think it's really important to advocate this. That's why i love the idea of exaltations, of sentiment. I hope that it is feeling in my work!'

So much so. Its like nothing else! Can't we keep it here forever?

The collection is travelling, the exhibition is going to New York for a month in March - to discover America! Its the first time in London and then in New York, and maybe after Abu Dhabi. The babies are travelling. Like a circus.

Like Dumbo!

'Yes! I love that. I always imagine that things happen to them. Like a Dumbo travelling circus. I love that music as well. Le danse des éléphants.'

What's the process like when you're working, what is the studio like? Are you inspired by music, or other things around you?

'What inspires me a lot is the relationship between people together. I think it's always very interesting to analyse how people are together, as we have to live together. How we manage. All the feelings that happen - that's so interesting for me. Human nature. I am inspired with joy, with hate, with jealousy, with sadness, with all the feelings - and love.'



animalvegetablemineral is on show at the Gagosian Gallery, 17-19 Davies St, W1 until 1st Feb