



## **ABALON**

An exhibition by **Jean-Marie Appriou**  
September 15 - December 17, 2017

Nine glass butterflies perch in suspended motion on gallery walls. Their once molten forms are now glossy and iridescent, the gnarled and luminous products of alchemy. These butterflies are the chorus to a cast of solitary characters, the absent rhythm for their honed maneuvers. To blow a horn, to dive underwater, to pull a bow taut each require the measured breath of supreme focus.

The unfolding narrative carries the torch of Symbolism. It is nonlinear and hardly allegorical. Like Gustave's Moreau's visions, each character has been conjured in aluminum, bronze, and glass from intuitive gestures, forged in tableau. They do not work together, but stand alone, absorbed in the roles they are poised to perform.

Their scenography is terrestrial, transformational, possibly operatic—ocean and forest, monumental and shallow. Behind a crashing wave, a grotto is lit by blown-glass candle. A refuge for a hermit maybe, or in this case, a psychotropic journeyer in the form of a nutmeg hull. Divers wriggle along the seafloor as a three-headed huntress readies her arrow nearby. Her posture gestures to stolid women of antiquity; she is impassible, chest puffed in deep inhalation. Like the divers, her breath is her passageway to concentration.

At the entry to a forest, a child plays the flute as another holds a blowgun to his mouth. Like the ambulant nutmeg hull, the child-hunter teeters on the precipice of psychedelia. Sucking, not blowing the poison. And then, around the bend, a woman stands alone in deep meditation. Her role is, simply, respiration. In Sanskrit, prana describes the energy that all life on earth is imbued with, but also signals breathing, the most elemental human action.

Breathing is imperfect; it catches on unsmooth surfaces, smells of lunch, cigarettes. And yet reminding oneself of its binary form—in and out—is to re-centre oneself inward, to clear the mind, to find a craggy portal to awareness: "If the doors of perception were / cleansed everything would appear to / man as it is, infinite (William Blake)."

**Jean-Marie Appriou** (born 1986, Brest, FR) lives and works in Paris. His work has been exhibited at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, FR, at the David Roberts Art Foundation, London, UK; Vienna Biennale, Vienna, AU; La Loge, Brussels, BE; as well as at Jan Kaps, Cologne, DE and Simon Lee, New York, USA. ABALON is Jean-Marie Appriou's second solo exhibition with the gallery.