



KOCHXBOS PUBLISHERS AMSTERDAM

Ciou

~COLLECTED WORKS~

LIMITED ART BOOKS
SINCE 2014

Rewind back to May 2008 - downtown Amsterdam. At KochxBos were just starting to build something of a name for ourselves as an independent underground Art Gallery. On a lovely spring afternoon this young woman - fully dressed in black - entered the gallery to ask if we would like to take a look at her work. Just through talking and enjoying each others presence there was a spark even before we laid eyes on the preciously precise art. Ever since, we have been working closely with Ciou as her best-selling gallery, mutually exchanging our thoughts on art and experiences in life.

Please enjoy this book. Let yourself be swept away by Ciou's unique style, the dazzling lineation of her art and its exciting, vibrant colours as she shifts between cuteness and cruelty. It is this fine level that makes her a 'One-of-a-kind' International Contemporary artist. We are so very proud of it.

Esther Koch & Hans Bos
KochxBos Gallery Amsterdam

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KOCHXBOS PUBLISHERS THE NETHERLANDS

Front cover: Royal Party, 2013

Back cover: Birds Paradise, 2014

(page 6.) Inside You And I (zoom) 2012, 61 x 46 cm



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fatales of mythology: wood nymphs, mermaids, amazons, priestesses. Powerful and exotic, they exert their fascinating power over the wild creatures that surround them, but also over the spectator who is bound to be hit by the sulfury charm of the scenes painted by Ciou.

The conception of such works takes several successive tasks of variable difficulty, always executed with the greatest attention. The first stage concerns the pasting of vintage paper cuttings on a panel. The selection of the paper fragments, with Ciou having a marked preference for old natural history dictionaries and books about anatomy, medicine, astronomy or magic. All these books -bargain hunt loot from various flea markets - have in common that they tell the story of the world and its functioning. And on top of them comes Ciou with her own stories, giving birth to her own world, like an inverted palimpsest* of some sort. In her mind, the yellow colour of the vintage sheets associates with that of the tanned skins she has been around with since childhood in her parents' furrier workshop. She sees an evident connection between the patched underlayer of her paintings and the parts of sewed skin forming the structure of the clothes they create. If you read between the lines, there is a very revealing story to be found in those early years at the workshop that explains the origin of Ciou's present work.

With this backdrop in place, Ciou sketches the main lines of her composition with pencil. She paints tinted areas and gradations with acrylics. The setting of the characters and their colourization follows an inimitable conception of reality. Her aim is not to recreate nature but to give a symbolic visual representation of her interior world. To do so, she doesn't feel an obligation to tradition and drops the linear perspective that has been dominant in the West since the Renaissance. This means she is not guiding the eye of the beholder towards a fixed point of the painting but rather invites him to let his gaze wander in the image. This flatness of the composition, which can also be found in Katsushika Hokusai's

work, is particularly indicative of the Japanese influence on her art.

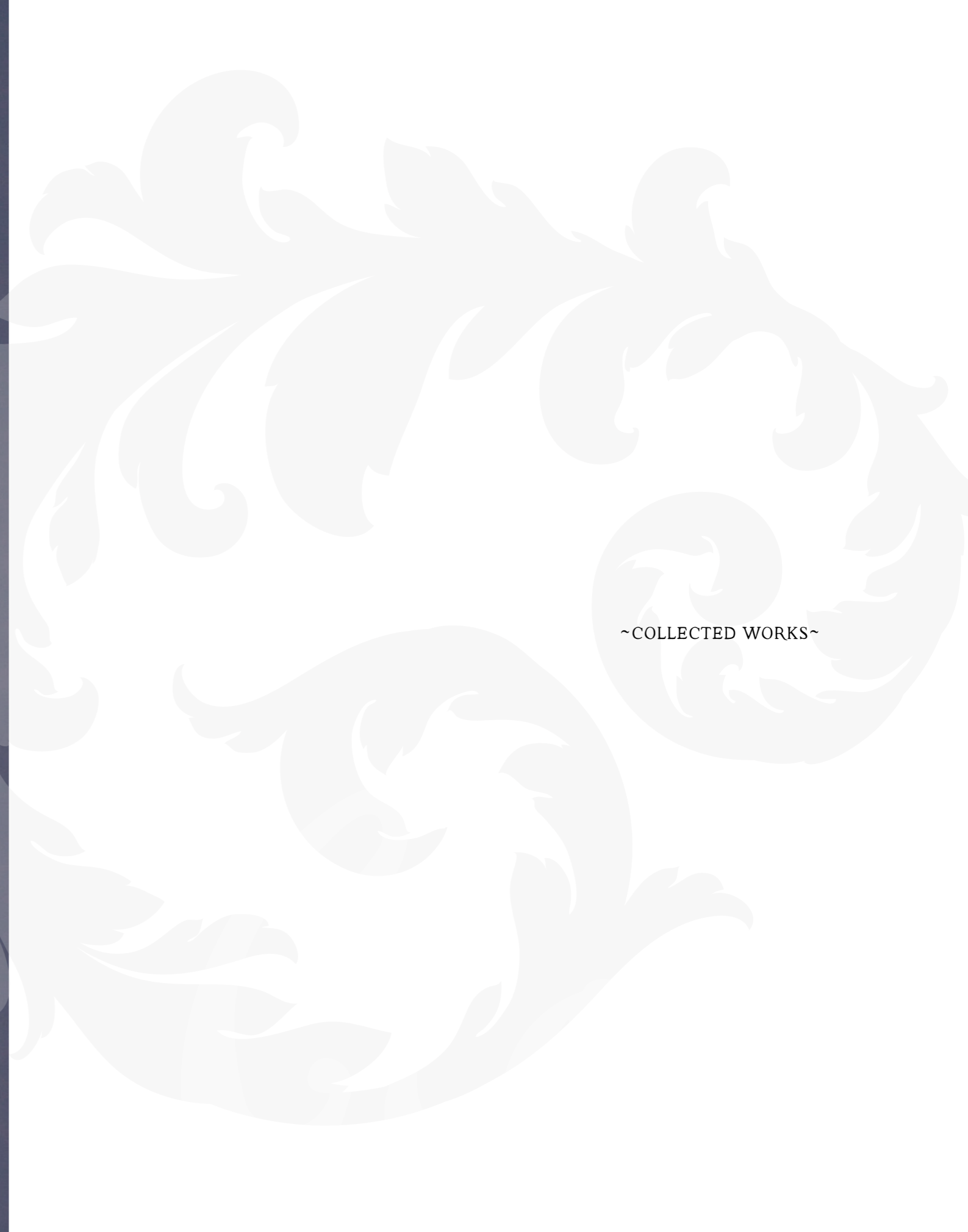
Switching medium, she then takes on the important job of drawing with the *Rotring* pen, generally used for technical drawings such as industrial design or architecture plans. Ciou relies on a set of lines and arabesques to trace the soft and round contours of her characters. She texturizes and darkens her nymphs' hair and the feathers, fur and scales of her shape-shifting animals. She dresses them with festive finery: top hats, fascinators, fishnet stockings, pasties and garter belts, cashmere or psychedelic patterned fabric, while embellishing the feminine bodies with all-over tattoos and... scars. The space surrounding the figures is adorned with stars and fine dots during the last step of the process.

This profusion of meaningful detail reveals an open conception of art and a cosmopolitan general knowledge. Taking an interest in the art of the old masters, Ciou reinvents history in the light of the teachings of the past. The fancy lines, all in curls, for instance are borrowed from *Rococo* (1730 – 1758) and *Art Nouveau* (Late 19th – Early 20th century). The curvy, meandering shapes contain a captivating power, a beauty and a mystery tainted with evil which recalls Symbolism (1866 – 1900). Moreover, the blue colour with which she tattoos the bodies of her heroines, alludes to Delftware and the artistic legacy of the Dutch Golden Age that she discovered during the time she spent in Brussels (Belgium) between 2007 and 2010. Painters from the North of Europe impress her with their amazing craftsmanship, as well as the precision of their works of art. More and more drawn to complex ornaments, she gives in completely to her obsession with detail and the tools she currently uses to illuminate her creations are ever more refined. This progression towards the miniature is particularly visible in her most recent works. Coming from universal esoteric, and therefore macrocosmic, subjects, this rhizomic proliferation makes us enter deep inside the artwork: at the heart of Ciou's microcosm.

*) manuscript page from a scroll or book from which the text has been scraped or washed off so that it can be used again.



CIOU
by Cindy Frey



~COLLECTED WORKS~



20. Cat's Empire
2013, 28 x 24 cm







46. Lady Circus
2011, 20 x 15 CM



Evil Beauty
2011, 20 x 15 CM



54. Nymph And The Spirit Of The Sky
2009, 40 X 30 CM



Pirates And The Circus Of The Sea
2010, 20 X 15 CM



Pināta
2010, 40 X 30 CM



When We Are Together
2010, 40 X 30 CM



Tattooed Lady Circus
2011, 20 X 15 CM



Skull
2009, 24 X 18 CM



féerie astrologique
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126. 'Féerie Astrologique', twelve stamps for La Poste (National French Post Office). Issued January 17, 2014 in an edition of 3.000.000. The original designs are part of the Museum La Poste Collection. Graphic Design: Valérie Bresser.