

## Meaningless objects: on the edges of sculpture

*Thing-Power: the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle*<sup>1</sup>.

Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*

No artwork can exist without a form of support: a frame, a canvas, a pedestal. In the frame of Kevin Hoarau's practice, the notion of support morphs into the work itself, rendering his sculptural constructions both supports and containers. Seen in this way, his works become a double trigger. His working practice begins with a first phase of collecting trivial objects — a chair, a board, a blanket — that the artist sees as sculptures in the making. After this initial step, a series of gestures take place, both through the artist's hand but also through his gaze. And it is these same gestures that repurpose the objects through a multitude of associations, focusing on their earlier state, their « time before ». The notion of a « time before » refers to a different regime of time, one that is both turned towards the past but also moves towards a future, full of potentialities. The artist's objects of float between these temporal directions and denote a sense of waiting that would make one expect their sculptural power to manifest, to simply come to be. This power of the objects, however, is both *powerful* but also *possible*. As the artist himself eloquently notes, these powerful objects bring about a « latent sculptural potential ». It is in this way that his work seeks to challenge the limits of sculpture, through unexpected arrangements of trivial objects, arrangements arranged both by the artist and the objects. Hoarau thus finds a way to bridge the immateriality of time with the mundane nature of quotidian objects.

Designer Matthias Dietz has explained that all the objects we use in everyday life are systematically redrawn through our gestures, they are in a state of obsessive neurosis they are restyled and repurposed repeatedly; they travel from one form to another<sup>2</sup>. Out of step with several contemporary practices, Hoarau does not direct his objects towards an abstract form, as for example someone like Abraham Cruzvillegas would do<sup>3</sup>. The association of objects he orchestrates voluntarily dwell in an enigmatic realm, perhaps thanks to their semi-functional status. The presence of a chair in his work, for example, is neither an object to sit on nor a sculpture. As if animated by an unknown force, at the sight of some his pieces the spectator is brought to the edge of frustration and impatience: will the object in front of us be switched on (almost like a machine)? This is the case for *The way of nature or the thickness of time* (2017). Standing in front of it, the visitor can only wonder if this is a packing machine or a conveyor belt at an airport. In his universe, we encounter poor, uncluttered forms that derive from a multitude of functional objects but are, above all, quite precise. Moving from a chair in *A way to hide a window* (2016) to a bag serving as a repository for different battery items in *Weights and measures*, created in the frame of the show *In silence or in noise* (2015), when we arrive at more recent works like *I remember always talking about running away* (2017), it is the act of arranging things, rather than their isolated meaning, that seems to matter the most.

Through concise actions, the artist continuously covers, fills up, ties up, or arranges ob-

jects into new forms. The resulting tension that emerges between the materials themselves and the shapes they produce, sometimes surprisingly organic, erases their industrial roots (as, for example, in *This sweet company at the foot of the desk*, 2017 or *Teach mime to a shadow*, 2017). His artistic manipulations remind us of the obsessive restyling evoked earlier, going beyond the archaic intuition to change the appearance of things. In Hoarau's universe, it is the object itself that suggests its potential future form. Amplifying secluded aspects, connecting unexpected things, mending different parts of dissimilar objects; the gestures of his work involve elements of (material) adaptation but also improvisation. Through a questioning of the edges of sculptural practice, the artist manages to carve out the artistic features of the object. Fusing geometric structures and building materials, Hoarau's work references an anti-functional sphere, that is, his art does not claim functionality but seeks to put forward the image of function: this is function in a state of limbo, function without the object that provides it and without intention of functioning.

In an environment where we are surrounded by no longer functional or at least semi-functional objects — waste, technological artefacts, piles of residues, as Jane Bennett puts it — Hoarau unveils the materiality of time's passing. Within his artistic vocabulary, the often-hidden temporal nature of objects gushes out like a piece of forgotten evidence. But the nature of time, in which the artist is interested, remains a delicate question to grasp: it is immaterial, therefore fleeting, almost impenetrable. The different objects he tethers to each other come close to the bodily-ness of one body touching another, becoming reminiscent of the affective and material entanglements living bodies are caught in. This formal metamorphosis, of objects linked together, finds its expression in space and distorts the passage of time, perhaps in an attempt to momentarily control it. Human agency, or for that matter artistic agency, is thus muddled, overlapping with that of objects in mysterious ways. In Hoarau's artistic universe, things do things and pave the way to novel material configurations beyond the artist's mastery.

Kyveli Mavrokordopoulou,  
Art historian and critic

<sup>1</sup> Bennett, Jane, *Vibrant matter*. A political ecology of things, Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010. p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Dupuis, Véronique, "Psychopathologie des objets quotidiens", in *Intramuros* 61, October-November 1995, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Neves, Joanna, "Finalement même ça disparaîtra", in *Pour un art pauvre (inventaire du monde et de l'atelier)*, exhibition catalogue, Carré d'art, Nîmes, November 4 - January 14 2012, pp. 10-35, p. 30.

**Work selection**







**Previously**

Exhibition view *Les fragments se fondent à la nature puis, bizarrement, ils deviennent la nature elle-même*

2022

Collectif d'en face, Rouen

© Kevin Hoarau

**Black Andromeda**

2020

30 x 62 cm

Cork, pins, concrete

© Kevin Hoarau











Previously  
**Filtre de culture**  
 2022  
 Ventilation grid, black sand  
 Exhibition view *Les fragments se fondent à la nature puis, bizarrement, ils deviennent la nature elle-même*  
 2022  
 Collectif d'en face, Rouen  
 © Kevin Hoarau

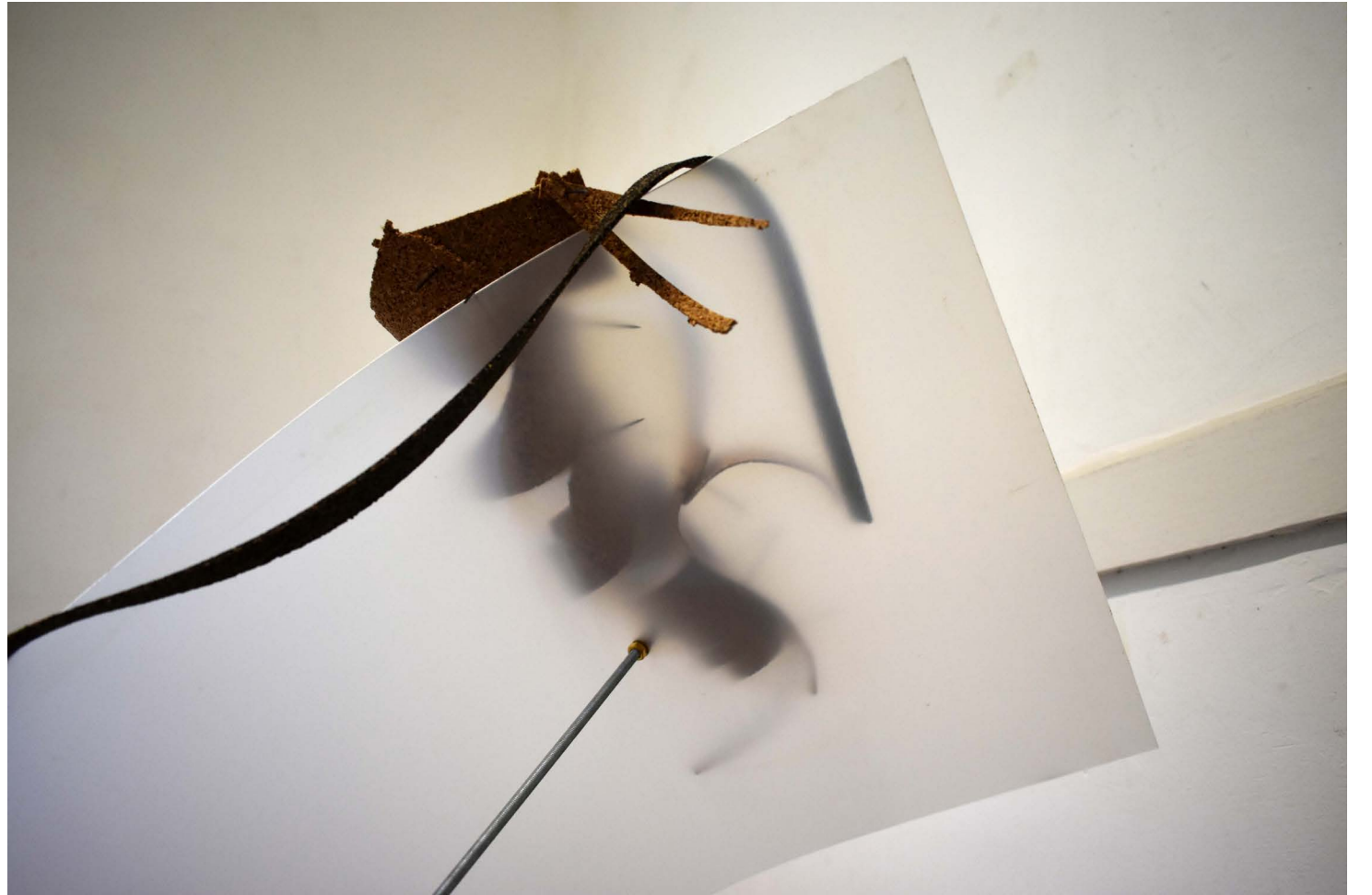
**Autel au volcan**  
 2020  
 44,5 x 33 cm  
 Cork, polished glass, lampshade  
 © Kevin Hoarau











Previously and above  
**Complexe mortuaire**  
 2020  
 125 x 79 x 95 cm  
 Cork, polypropylene, threaded rod, iron wire, pins  
 © Kevin Hoarau





**The caretaker**  
 2020  
 15 x 85 cm  
 Cork, paper  
 © Kevin Hoarau



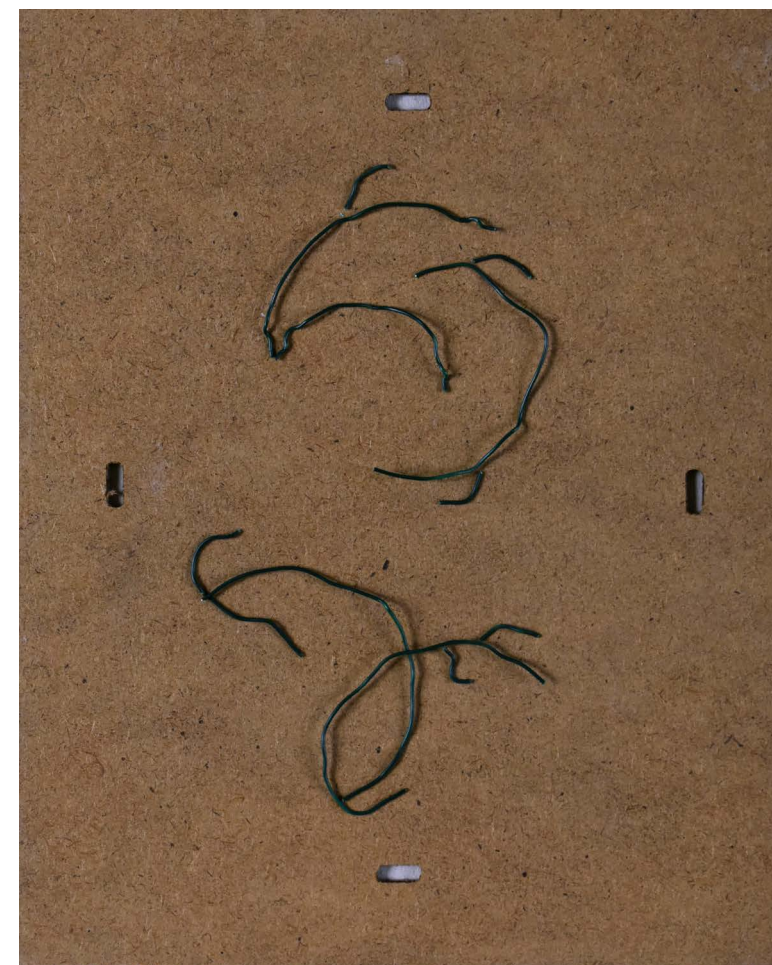




193



180



186

**Réplique et replicant (La collection de Monsieur Robot)**

2019-  
30 x 24 cm  
Cork, iron wire, foam, wood, glass, polypropylene  
Série en cours  
© Kevin Hoarau





99



109

**Simulations (La collection de Monsieur Robot)**

2019-2020

31 x 25 cm

Cork, paper, watercolor, bubble wrap, frame

Collection of FCAC (Art Contemporary City Funds of Rennes)

© Kevin Hoarau





123



111

**Simulations (La collection de Monsieur Robot)**

2019-2020

41 x 31 cm

Cork, paper, watercolor, bubble wrap, frame

Collection of FCAC (Art Contemporary City Funds of Rennes)

© Kevin Hoarau





**Green waste garbage**  
 2019-  
 Cardboard, markers  
 60 x 42 cm  
 Work in progress  
 ©Photos Kevin Hoarau













Two previous pages and above  
 2018  
 Sound composition, PVC ducts, burlap, collar  
 Variable dimension  
 Exhibition views *Ton carrosse est le mien*, Fort de Sainte Marine, Combrit  
 © Benjamin Mouly and Aurélie Jacquet







**D'où quelques-uns penchent...**

2018

Renovation paper, wall sconce, light bulb

© Raphaël Lecoq

**Previously**

Exhibition view *Dans l'attente, je vous prie d'agréer à l'expression de mes sentiments distingués*

Médium Argent, Rouen

© Raphaël Lecoq







## La poudre d'escampette

2018

Wood, paper, door knobs

Exhibition view *Dans l'attente, je vous prie d'agréer à l'expression de mes sentiments distingués*

Médium Argent, Rouen

© Raphaël Lecoq







**L'épreuve du soleil**

2018

Cork, linseed oil

Exhibition view *Dans l'attente, je vous prie d'agréer à l'expression de mes sentiments distingués*

Médium Argent, Rouen

© Raphaël Lecoq





Above  
**Ces choses en attente**  
 2015-2016  
 Various materials  
 © Kevin Hoarau

On the right  
**Ces choses en attente** (Je me souviens avoir toujours parlé de fuite)  
 2017  
 Various materials  
 Production GENERATOR - 40mcube, EESAB, Self Signal  
 Exhibition view *L'extension des ombres*, Zoo Galerie, Nantes  
 © Kevin Hoarau







**Ansi va la nature ou l'épaisseur du temps**

2017

2 x 3,6 x 2 m

Steel, moving blanket, bubble wrap, various materials

Production GENERATOR - 40mcube, EESAB, Self Signal

Exhibition view *L'extension des ombres*, Zoo Galerie, Nantes

© Kevin Hoarau





**Les contres** (Apprendre le mime à une ombre)

2017

175 x 15 x 26 cm

Moving blanket, bubble wrap

**Ces choses en attente** (Cette douce compagnie au pied du bureau)

2017

175 x 15 x 26 cm

Various materials

Production GENERATOR - 40mcube, EESAB, Self Signal

Exhibition view *Ce sont des mirages dans des chemises*, Galerie Art et Essai, Rennes

© Kevin Hoarau





**Une manière de cacher une fenêtre**

2016

Plywood boards, chairs

Variable dimensions

View of the DNSEP, 2016, EBABX, Bordeaux

© Kevin Hoarau



**Biography**



Kevin Hoarau

12.01.1992

Lives and works in Rennes

Studio at B612

kc.hoarau@gmail.com

Driver license

http://kevinhoarau.com/

Instagram : kevin.c.hoarau

Solo shows

2022 : *Les fragments se fondent à la nature puis, bizarrement, ils deviennent la nature elle-même*, Collectif d'en Face, Rouen, France

2019 : Rendez-vous à Saint-Briac édition # 4, Saint-Briac, France

2018 : *Dans l'attente, je vous prie d'agréer à l'expression de mes sentiments distingués*, Medium Argent, Rouen, France

Group shows

2023 : *Canyoning 1*, FRAC Bretagne, Rennes, France

Rendez-vous à Saint-Briac édition # 7, Saint-Briac, France

2022 : *Voilà l'été !*, EESAB site de Quimper, Quimper, France

2021 : *Collection 9*, Art Contemporary City Funds, Thabor's Orangery, Rennes, France

2018 : *À claire-voie*, in collaboration with Claire Chassot, Rennes, France

*Ton carrosse est le mien*, Fort de Sainte-Marine, Combrit, France

2017 : *L'extension des ombres*, Zoo Galerie, Nantes, France

*Ce sont des mirages dans des chemises*, Galerie Art et Essai, Rennes, France

2016 : *Bleu Bleu*, Lieu Commun, Toulouse, France

*Den Lille Havfrue*, La Réserve, Bordeaux, France

2015 : *Dans le Silence ou dans le Bruit*, Shed Centre d'Art Contemporain de Normandie, Notre-Dame-de-Bondeville, France

2014 : *Working Hard*, Ubi Rouen, France

*Poteau, le retour*, Stork galerie, Rouen, France

Contributions

2020 : Contribution to Benjamin Mouly's project *For the birds* during his residency at the Casa de Velasquez, Madrid, Espagne

Since 2017 : Secretary of SHED, Centre d'Art Contemporain de Normandie, Notre-Dame-de-Bondeville, France

2016 : Contribution to *Ergo* project during the event : *Dernière nuit avant travaux* at Confort Moderne, Poitiers, France

Since 2015 : Member of the board of directors of SHED, Centre d'Art Contemporain de Normandie, Notre-Dame-de-Bondeville, France

2014 : Participation to the activation of Franz Erhard Walther's works in the exhibition : *The body decides* au Capc, Bordeaux, France

Acquisitions, supports

2023 : Art Contemporary Departmental Funds of Ille-et-Vilaine

Creation support grant of Rennes

Private collection

2020 : Art Contemporary City Funds of Rennes

2018-2021 : Beneficiary of a studio of the city of Rennes

Workshop, assistantships

2017 : Workshop, PREAC Formation, Rennes

2015 : Assistantship for the exhibition : *La résistance des matériaux*, Shed, Centre d'Art Contemporain de Normandie, Notre-Dame-de-Bondeville, France

2014 : Assistantship for artists Josué Z. Rauscher and Stéphanie Nava for the exhibition : *Pan*, 180, Rouen, France

2014 : Assistantship for artist Jonathan Loppin

Residence

2016 - 2017 : Generator, 40mcube, Rennes, France

Edition

2015 : *Valeurs Silencieuses*, 150 ex, le SHED

Formations

2022 : Contracts between artist-authors and broadcasters : better understanding to better negotiate - 40mcube - Rennes - France

Finding the right funding and partners for your project - 40mcube - Rennes - France

Setting up an accounting system adapted to the creation - 40mcube - Rennes - France

Mastering the social and fiscal procedures for your activities - 40mcube - Rennes - France

2016 : DNSEP with congratulations - EBABX (School of fine arts of Bordeaux)

2014 : DNAP Avec mention - ESADHAR (School of fine arts of Le Havre/Rouen)-Campus of Rouen

2010-2011 : Professional drama section-Conservatory of Rouen



