

BINELDE HYRCAN BIO

Born in 1982 in Luanda, Binelde Hyrcan spent the first years of his life in Angola. A child during the war, he was profoundly marked by the deaths and massive destruction in the city. The youngest of a family of thirteen children, he soon felt the desire to build walls to shield himself against a world of despair. At the age of ten, he built a giant bicycle from pieces of scrap iron that he found next to his home. Always a peculiar engineer, he also sewed parachutes for dogs and cats... An enfant terrible, yet inventive, the premise of his work was already evident...

In his teens, he went to study in France and it was there that he began his artistic studies. After completing a BA in Nice, he joined the School of Fine Arts in Monaco: the Bosio Pavilion. There, he staged a performance that would make him the talk of every police station across the city. While sitting in a cage he had made himself, he asked passersby to push it, or rather, he ordered them to, because he claimed to be a king. It was a performance about territory and the absurdity of power; when you are a king but in a cage... He later reproduced this performance, entitled *King*, in Luanda, Angola, as well as in Maputo, Mozambique. This would be his first step towards work that contained as common themes the absurdity of power and mocking of human vanity.

He then worked on a series of stuffed chickens that he dressed in human costumes: soldier-chickens under the wing of a king rooster, a queen hen and a judge chicken that led them to death. In front of them, coffins the size of chickens. Also on display was a cosmonaut chicken giving a speech. *Delusions of grandeur* (art pieces exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Lisbon, the Museu Coleção Berardo, in the exhibition *No Fly Zone*, in 2013, as well as in Marseille)... A Napoleon chicken, an orgy of chickens (exhibited in Milan and Monaco, 2014); chickens everywhere and in all positions, always, however, with the intention of ridiculing the power of those who are too powerful and thereby breaking free. His art piece at the *La Biennale di Venezia* was one of the best

«A poignant short video in the Angola Pavilion by the young artist Binelde Hyrcan sums it up: Four young boys sit chest deep in holes in the sand, looking out to the sea, and they talk about the future. The littlest one in front is the limo driver, and the two in the back are the “big shots” arguing about who will have the better life. “I’m going to America,” one says, “and live in a building; you’re going to stay here and live in a house made of cans!» *the wall street journal*.

This is Binelde Hyrcan’s quest: in his installations and performances he wants us to reflect on the absurdity represented by political and social customs and attitudes. To this end, he sits on a giant chair in the middle of Luanda, right in front of a state building, more significantly directly under a somewhat special tree, the one that contains the most birds in the city and hence the largest amount of excrement droppings. One day, for the whole day, Binelde Hyrcan, dressed elegantly, would receive a hail of excrement on his head. He named his performance *White Rain*; the white rain of bird droppings... Everything was filmed and shown at an exhibition in Monaco. A Jack of all trades, Binelde Hyrcan does not stop at performances and installations. He also took part in the set design of the exhibition *Jacques Tati* in 2009 at the Cinématographie française; he invented the *Moye Chair*, a chair based on computer keyboards, in collaboration with Domeau & Perès for Pharell Williams; he has directed many music videos for musicians such as Mathieu Chedid (*Le roi des ombres*), Tahiti Boys and Jack N’Kanga; he did the set design for a concert of the very popular singer Patrice; he filmed kids in Luanda dreaming of driving a large sedan while sitting in a sand pit on the beach and made a short film about them entitled *Cambeck*. Binelde Hyrcan is also those little characters who populate canvases, cardboards, wood planks and wine bottles; little characters very simply called *Naïve boys*. With a big smile on their lips, they are naive about life but wear T-Shirts that speaks volumes about their desires: «Suck me», «Be happy», «I can see you», «Do you think I’m special?»... Desires ever greater, better and blessed. «We will repaint the world,» says Binelde Hyrcan very often.

Jean-Baptiste Gauvin