



JAN FABRE

(Antwerp 1958 – lives and works in Antwerp)

Adsum qui feci (Hier ben ik, ik ben de schuldige) (I, here before you, am the guilty party). 2016.

Beetle wings on wood.

164 x 220 cm.

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by Angelos bvba / Jan Fabre, May 2021, Antwerpen. We thank the Angelos studio manager for her kind support.

Provenance: - Artist's studio. - Private collection Belgium. Born in Antwerp in 1958, Jan Fabre is one of the most innovative and diverse artistic personalities on the international contemporary art scene. Known for his drawings in ballpoint pen and his elaborate sculptures, he has made a name for

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himself over the past 40 years, not only as a visual artist, but also as a choreographer, director, author and stage designer. He uses and experiments with a wide variety of media. The Belgian first caused a stir in the 1970s with his Action Art, when, for example, he burned banknotes and resurrected them in form of ash drawings. A few years later, Fabre began to work intensively in sculpture. In this he was inspired by the Flemish Old Masters, but also by Ensor and Magritte. The body and its anatomy have been a constant theme for him ever since. For some sculptural works, he reverts to purely traditional materials such as marble and bronze, while other works are made of silicone or covered with iridescent beetle casings. In addition to these sculptural works, he also produces numerous drawings with ballpoint pens, for which not only paper, but also objects and architecture serve as a surface. Fabre's ability to work successfully in different genres in parallel, and to connect them with each other, lends his creative output the character almost of a total work of art. Central themes in Fabre's work are the human body, its development and transience, the study and reinterpretation of ancient art, the aesthetics and horrors of medieval history, and the mythology of human perception. The present works illustrate Fabre's diversity, as well as his engagement with various sciences, and the recurring link between fact-based theory and practice. For "Adsum qui feci" (2016), as in all his most significant works, Fabre employs a technique which makes a formidable impression: the work, created through a meticulous selection and installation of thousands of beetles, charts the fundamental points of his artistic practice: human life and metamorphosis, both natural and artificial. The scarabs covering the canvas and the clock they depict symbolise, in the Italian and Flemish pictorial language of the "Vanitas", the transition from the earthly dimension to eternal life. The dogs, in turn, symbolise loyalty, devotion and even submission. The motifs of fidelity and loyalty as well as vanity and transience run through his visual and theatrical work, through which the artist perceptively describes his view of the transience of earthly life. The meticulously arranged iridescent beetle casings absorb the light and, depending on the incidence of light and the perspective of the viewer, reproduce it in a dazzling palette

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A197 PostWar & Contemporary - jeudi 01 juillet 2021, 17h00

of green, blue and orange: an organic mosaic emerges. On the use of beetles in his artistic practice, Fabre explains: "I use resilient materials that appear fragile. The colour of these beetle casings will never fade because the outer membrane contains chitin, one of the strongest and lightest natural materials on earth."

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