

JEAN-PAUL GOUDE

BIOGRAPHY

Expressing himself for over 40 years now through drawings, posters, photography, films, videos or events, Jean-Paul Goude has always impressed, in every sense of the word, our imagination.

From the “minets” (adolescent playboys) of the '60s to the legendary *Esquire Magazine* in the following decade, from the New York of Warhol and cultural hybrids to Grace Jones (to whom he played Pygmalion), from the spectacular French Revolution bicentenary parade in Paris in 1989 to the celebration of “style beur”, and from Kodak or Chanel advertising to variations on Laetitia Casta, Goude has always managed to capture the mood, or spirit, of the time in a definitive form.

And it is the richness and intelligence of all this work that a series of epochal books and exhibitions have been highlighting since 2005, including the publication of *Tout Goude*, biographical summation and artistic manifesto, in France, Italy, the UK and the United States, followed in 2009 by *Chronique d'une image* (tracing over a decade of work for Galeries Lafayette), and in 2011 by *Jean-Paul Goude, la jungle des images* – an illustrated biography by Thomas Cadenne and Alexandre Franc – and *Gourdemalion* (in French and English).

The latter accompanied an enormously successful retrospective at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, which was followed by another at the Théâtre de la Photo et de l'Image in Nice (2014) and participation in “Image Makers” at the Museum Design Site in Tokyo with David Lynch, Bob Wilson and Noritaka Tatehana.

Others would maybe have taken advantage of these well deserved tributes to rest a while on their laurels, but not Jean-Paul Goude, for whom living is creating and who cannot stop fleshing out the images that inhabit his mind, whether this happens through his advertising work for Chanel, Kenzo, Guerlain, Vionnet or Shiseido, or through regular contributions to magazines like *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vanity Fair*, *l'Officiel*, *V* or *Paper Magazine*.

Some of the metamorphoses that Goude has worked on iconic figures in the fashion world (Nicolas Ghesquière, Ricardo Tisci, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Karl Lagerfeld, Azzedine Alaïa, Christian Lacroix...) and show business (Mariah Carey, Katie Perry, Oprah Winfrey, Pharrell Williams, Scarlett Johansson, Pedro Aldomodovar or Kim Kardashian, whose photo enflamed the web) have become impressed in our collective memory.

Curiously, at a time when images and digital techniques provide all the transformations and manipulations you could want with a simple click, and even though he obviously makes excellent use of such means, Goude would never abandon pen and pencil and continues to draw, as precisely as possible, every one of his projects. It is this obstinately graphic dimension of his work that attracted *M*, *le magazine du Monde*, when they gave him *carte blanche* for three months in 2014, or *Vogue* for their Christmas issue of the same year. One

of his most recent exploits was the hypnotic scenography created in January 2015 for the Schiaparelli Haute Couture show in the courtyard of the Hotel d'Evreux.

One last observation (essential for understanding the sense of his untiring activity and the enormous success it's had): Goude's work, which by its very nature is "commissioned", is for him merely another aspect of a deeply individual adventure, a pathway (signposted by encounters with and exaltation of female figures along the way) that's grown into a sort of personal mythology. Life and work are impossible to separate for Goude, which incidentally gives his oeuvre a very particular imprint and elevates it above mere images.