

# La Kaz

FABIEN VILRUS

NICOLAS GUICHARD

CURATED BY JUAN CORRALES

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La Kaz («home» in Reunionese Creole) is an exhibition of works by photographer and film-maker Fabien Vilrus and fashion designer Nicolas Guichard who were both born on Reunion. The show explores and questions the access native people of the island have towards creative domains in visual arts. The exhibition presents the viewer with an understanding of their community and dismantles the narrow conception of their culture that France and the Northern Hemisphere have towards them. For the series of photographs «La Kaz», Vilrus and Guichard traveled to Saint-Paul in the western part of the island during the summer of 2019. They photographed groups of locals, observed traditional homes, and related feeling the danger of losing the local cultural values and history.

Fabien Vilrus is a self-taught photographer and film-maker from Reunion. Balancing between fashion and art, his work combines cultural documentation and visual storytelling. Vilrus most recent projects include the short film «Believer» which focuses on beliefs and superstitions among the island's community. In this artistic film, he aimed to explore how faith could shape islanders vision of life. Through his films and photography, his images are often carefully composed with vibrant colours, intimate moments and a narrative dimension.

Born and raised in Reunion Island, Nicolas Guichard launched his first collection «POOL PARTY STONE LOVE» in 2019. Guichard was researching archives of Dancehall Party culture and translated its energy and exuberance into his work. The collection is a celebration of this influential subculture movement combined with Reunion Island's lifestyle. Moreover, Guichard approaches fashion design like a personal journey, mixing various experiences he felt living on the island, including the understanding of its creole culture. The collection is full of nostalgia and underlines the relation women from the island have with their bodies.

La Kaz is curated by Brazilian stylist and artist Juan Corrales, co-founder of the art publishing collective Bouquet Magazine. Corrales's work is an ongoing questioning of fashion, not only as a medium of expression and consumption but also a place to dialogue and to give access to dissident bodies and visions through questioning the common standards of aesthetic and of thinking, thus proposing a documentary and social view of images, either exaggerating it or repositioning it. This is their second time curating an exhibition at Balice Hertling.

For their first exhibition, Fabien Vilrus and Nicolas Guichard had the support from Reunionese political scientist, philosopher and decolonial feminist Françoise Vergès, who wrote a text on the situation of Reunion Island nowadays, the relation with France, the cultural erasure and the reappropriating the island suffers. Françoise Vergès is the author of publications such as "Un féminisme décolonial", "Le ventre des femmes: Capitalisme, racialisation, féminisme", "Monstres et révolutionnaires" and also co-founder of the collective Décolonisons les arts.