CHAT MAÎTRE POLYGON - MANIFEST

3d Print / Coated PA12
29 x 11 x 24 CM

Edition of 3 + 1 AP

My Grandmother Annemarie Monteil worked as a journalist in the field of contemporary arts. Over 40 Years she wrote about artists and their work. Me and her have been discussing and watching things together and being very critical about what is good and what is lets say mediocre in design, arts and Christmas cookies from visitors. The Giacometti's were clearly on a very high rank for both of us. Actually she indoctrinated me with Giacometti things firsthand.

When she got older, she started to sort out her wast archive of catalogues. Even the boiler-room was full of books and a particular source for treasures. For a while, each time I visited her, I went home with half a cubic-meter of books. Sometimes she also sent me inspirations cut out from books and catalogues. No boundary in cutting books in half for her. They sometimes even get better or at least lighter.

Then in a particular Kornfeld catalogue I found an image of the Chat Maître d'Hôtel. Made by Diego Giacometti. I instantly fell in love with this sculpture.

Me as a 3d-artist knew nothing better than to remodel this figurine digitally to understand the form. Then it got forgotten somewhere on a hard-disk. In 2008 when everybody was speaking about crisis and since I was mainly freelancing for entertainment and advertisement industry, naturally job assignments dropped to a lower frequency. Then over 4 weeks of fanatically working I built a polygon-reduced version as a paperfold. Now here is where design and technology meet:

Since I wanted to have it standing on my table but had no means for milling or 3d printing, paperfolding was the next thing I could come up with. Then paperfolding is a technique where you abstract round shapes into flat surfaces. Something 3d software is using for reducing data, which is called polygon-reduction. For paperfolds the more polygons you have, the longer you work. The software I was using, warned me that it will take a very long time to assemble the model and asked me, as programs sometimes do, if one is sure. Four weeks after pressing yes, the figure started to shape out on my desk.

Until quite the end I didn't know if it would work at all. But at that moment I knew that this is what I want to do:

Create sculptures and forms in real space. It is not about forgettting the digital form creation process in virtual space. But these forms need to be ported into realspace.

There was another such moment later in the British Museum watching the figures from Egypt creators. And here it is: Always go for the source. In this case the ancient Egyptian culture. Alberto and Diego are both inspired by the ancient Egypts; something which gets obvious once you know it. In ancient Egypt cats were praised for killing snakes and other crawling venomous things. Thus the cat evolved in to a symbol for protection. This is why we find so many Egyptian cat figures.

The original paperfold model had its place at Annemarie's home. When she died in 2018 I let it wander on in the family. Which leaves me having no Chat-Maitre at all which was not the idea. So I decided to do another batch. But this time 3d printed since it does not make any sense to repeat the process from years before and 3d printing is technology from this century. The Egyptians and Diego would have readily adapted it.

This series of 3d printed cats are a homage to Diego and Annemarie - maybe protecting them in their afterlife as the Egyptians believed. For us still here they are something which ports this very old shape in to new forms and ideas and maybe protect us a little from venomous things.

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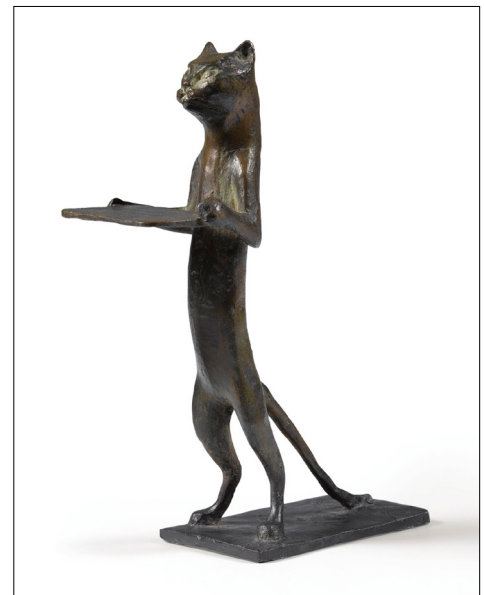
Chat maître d'hôtel / Diego Giacometti 1961

Chat maître polygon / Paperfold 2018