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**« Game on » Jaime Hayon**

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Exhibition :  
Paris  
from May 21st  
until September 19th, 2015  
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Opening :  
Thursday May 21st 2015  
from 6.30pm to 8.30pm  
Open from Tuesday to Saturday  
from 11am to 7pm  
.

London  
from June 3rd  
until September 5th, 2015  
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Opening :  
Wednesday June 3rd 2015  
from 6.30pm to 8.30pm  
Open from Tuesday to Friday from  
10am to 6pm  
Saturday 12am to 6pm  
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In one of the preparatory drawings for his collection “Mon Cirque,” Jaime Hayon imagines a character with a sarcastic smile: is he a modern Harlequin? A self-portrait? With pointed shoes and dotted clothes, he aims his water guns at circus figurines: vases become personages, clowns transform into lamps, and table feet turn into pagodas. Above his head, a comic strip bubble in the shape of a heart warns: « Let’s play now ».

This generous, malicious, and delicious injunction runs through the production of Jaime Hayon, sometimes literally with the Toy2R toys (2002) or more metaphorically in most of his creations. He has been described by Time Magazine as one of the 100 most relevant creators of these times, and has been named “Breakthrough Creator” by Wallpaper magazine. In 2003 his ceramic project *Mediterranean Digital Baroque*, a set of “games for adults,” brought his name to the forefront of contemporary design. Jaime Hayon, Spanish designer, born in 1974, studied industrial design in Madrid and at the École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (ENSAD) in Paris; he then became an important member of the Fabrica by Benetton and a partner of Oliviero Toscani between 1997 and 2003. He now heads his eponymous studio since 2000. Pleasure, humor, and both visual and physical well being became his signature: a prolific, hybrid design, with technical precision as well as coherence from a single black line to charged shapes. On the occasion of his retrospective *Fantastico* in 2013-2014 at the Groninger Museum of Groningen (Holland) Sue-an van der Zijpp described his design as “serious fun.” We could add “whimsical strangeness”: from his collaboration with Fritz Hansen, B.D. Barcelona, or Magis, to the limited edition series for Baccarat, Bosa Ceramiche, and Lladro; from monumental unique pieces such as *The Tournament*, a gigantic chess board installed in 2009 on Trafalgar Square in London, to the interior design projects of Camper Shop (Tokyo, 2009), the restaurant *Le Sergent Recruteur*, (Paris, 2013); and *Fabergé Salon* (Genève, 2010).

For his first collaboration with Galerie kreO, following the “Carnival Series” collection of mirrors in 2014, Jaime Hayon has created a collection inspired by sports—a theme in tune with Galerie kreO’s DNA as Clémence and Didier Krzentowski both come from this industry, having participated in the production of the Olympic Games of Albertville in 1992. In a similar manner when Hayon stages fauna, flora, Circus or games, the inspiration of sports allow the Spanish artist and designer to bring to life cartoon-like pieces playing with metamorphosis, scales, and disguises. These transformations bring us back to the flawless imagination of Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann (1879–1933), one of the most honorable interior decorator of the 20th century; who came up in 1929 with the *Chaise-longue aux skis* also known as « Maharadjah », where the feet of the chair morph into bronze skis. The visual theme of sports also allows Hayon to play with forms, colors, and patterns—graphic lines of sports fields, aerodynamic curves, ergonomic structure. For example the *Golf Side Table* mimics the pattern and texture of a golf ball in precious Carrara marble.

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As often the case with Jaime Hayon, each piece proposes a scenario of use, precisely conceived, and stems from a singular vision: “I wish to freeze a moment of my imagination,” he wrote in 2013. If the work is often joyful and ornamental, it originates from rigorous conception and production. It is one of the gifts of the talented designers to never make the audience feel the pain of the workload but just the joy of the process, the pleasure of creation.

“What matters is participation,” declared Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the Olympic Games; “what matters is imagination,” claims Game on at Galerie kreò. Here the daybed Sledge Sofa plays on its resemblance with a sledge or bobsleigh, conveying speed and recklessness only here to invite sleep and relaxation, an oxymoron if you will. The Podium cabinet suggests we hierarchize the way we store our goods, and the mirror Ping Pong Hanger seems to spring from a hallucinatory experience of Olympic proportions. But the pieces are much more than an invitation to a dream-like state, and reveal a precise technique of design allied with the vocabulary of the sports industry: research, efficiency, technical demands ... and it is with a perfect knowledge of metamorphosis that Jaime Hayon successfully meets the expectation of functionality. The many disciplines invoked: gymnastic for Trapeze Light, ping-pong for Ping Pong Table, collective sports for Sports Lights and Basket Side Table—bring coherence to the collection. Furthermore, Jaime Hayon decided to give the collection a final twist: the use of artisanal and noble materials (his favorites ceramic, wood, marble, hand-blown glass, leather) instead of the obvious high-tech and composite materials preferred today. As always crossing the line.

Just imagine a world where things are no longer what they seem to be, limited by what we think they can be; a world where objects can be whatever they want; this world is the one of a certain Alice, daughter of Lewis Carroll and generations of dreamers, this world is one where an acrobatic trapeze lights up in neon (Trapeze Light)—where your minimalist ceiling light hosts your tightrope walker dreams. This world is the one in which Jaime Hayon has been living for the past ten years; designing in an open and non authoritarian manner, where the quest for ornament and the cartoon-like quality of the drawing is combined with noble materials, such as in this dynamic Game on, functional and playful, technical and surreal.

Clément Dirié