

A genesis, destinies...

Istanbul, July 2014... Choking tear-gas, groups of young people running through the streets. The need to protest passes from mouth to mouth. Young people at boiling point, supported by a broad section of society, are refusing to let themselves be dominated by a reactionary conservatism that is contaminating the political class, the public space, and the world of the media. The courage and determination of these women and men in asserting their rights touches and inspires me.

In contact with them, I am seized with the desire to draw their silhouettes, the bonds that unite them, their faces. To observe, meet with, bear witness and pay tribute to these ordinary resistance fighters engaged in extraordinary struggles.

So then I started searching on the Net. I was bewitched by the work of portrait photographer Peter Hapak. The Arab Spring in Tunisia, the Egyptian revolution in Cairo, the Plaza del Sol movement in Madrid, the uprising of the Indignants in Greece, Occupy Wall Street in New York, and Occupy Oakland... Throughout 2011, the man was travelling to meet dozens of players in protest movements. His images are published in Time Magazine. What's more, that same year, the magazine designates "The Protester" Personality of the Year.

I make sketches from a selection of his portraits, contact the photographer and obtain his approval: Peter is very much in tune with my approach and invites me to carry on.

Then I plunge deeper into this panel of portraits. From the street to my line – I decide to place them back into the heart of the common public space.

I decide to get in touch with all of them. One by one, I trace their lives, discover their identities: they are bloggers, engineers, fathers, students, police officers, politicians. All social classes are represented. Then I launch a project on the Kisskissbankbank crowdfunding website which lets me, with the help of a great many of you, support part of this project.

In this way, I set off to meet them, in company with anthropologist Yuvany Gnep, who helps me produce photographs, video loops, and interviews. The idea? Display and bring their portraits to light in the streets of New York, Oakland, Madrid, Tunis, or Athens. Gather and archive the reactions, exchange with certain citizens who are indignant, who react and dare. Examples of struggle and resistance that defy a great many established rules, here or elsewhere.

This project is entitled "Small is big". Small is big is you, it's us. The most powerful creative and anti-establishment mouth-piece, front, muscle there is.

The project is followed by La Marseillaise, a French newspaper established during the second world war to support the resistance movement. The newspaper opened a dedicated blog called Small is blog where we publish articles we write during the trip.

Born around the Mediterranean basin, Small is big is still only at an early stage. Through this action to take back ownership of these struggles, I am seeking to experience and bear witness to the major currents of social conflicts. A common denominator for exploring the international "Contre-feux", as Pierre Bourdieu liked to call them. Whistle-blowers, refugees, activists within humanitarian organizations, and Femens are just a few of the fractures, combats, and engagements destined to be featured in my work.

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