

## José Levy

GALERIE EMMANUEL PERROTIN  
76, rue de Turenne, 10 Impasse St Claude  
January 17–March 17

If it seems that urban life, particularly one fettered by economic devolution, has turned us all into rats in a maze (or hamsters on a wheel), José Levy's first exhibition under this gallery's recently launched design program attempts to free our inner rodent. Here, the mice are chess pieces—the pinks against the blacks—in a fanciful set, *Échecs et Mat au Luco* (Checkmate at Luco), 2009, surrounded by a sleek black garden. As the exhibition's title, "Oasis: LucoNoctambule," suggests, this is a refuge for denizens of the evening; glamorous, narcissistic night owls who enjoy nature as still, quiet, and reverent in their presence. Inspired by Levy's journeys to the Jardin du Luxembourg, this farcical space is populated with usable items that have taken a decadent turn. For example, the glossy, black-lacquered *Mikado Tree*, 2009, *Shadow in Water*, 2009, and the slim, mirror-sided *Chinese Lantern Mirror*, 2009, offer illumination in the form of trees. As these works balance themes of hard and soft, light and dark, and synthetic and organic, a black bird, presumably a night bird, descends into the scene with its own light, proposing the same witty binaries.

The only textile in the installation, *Paris Carpet*, 2003–2009, takes the shape of an outline of Paris, complete with demarcated arrondissements, the Seine horizontally milling through, and a rendering of the Eiffel Tower. Levy employs the bourgeoisie blue from the French tricolor, suggesting that Paris at night is for the city wanderer, a contemporary flaneur who just might happen on this twilight party.

— Courtney J. Martin



View of "José Levy," 2009.