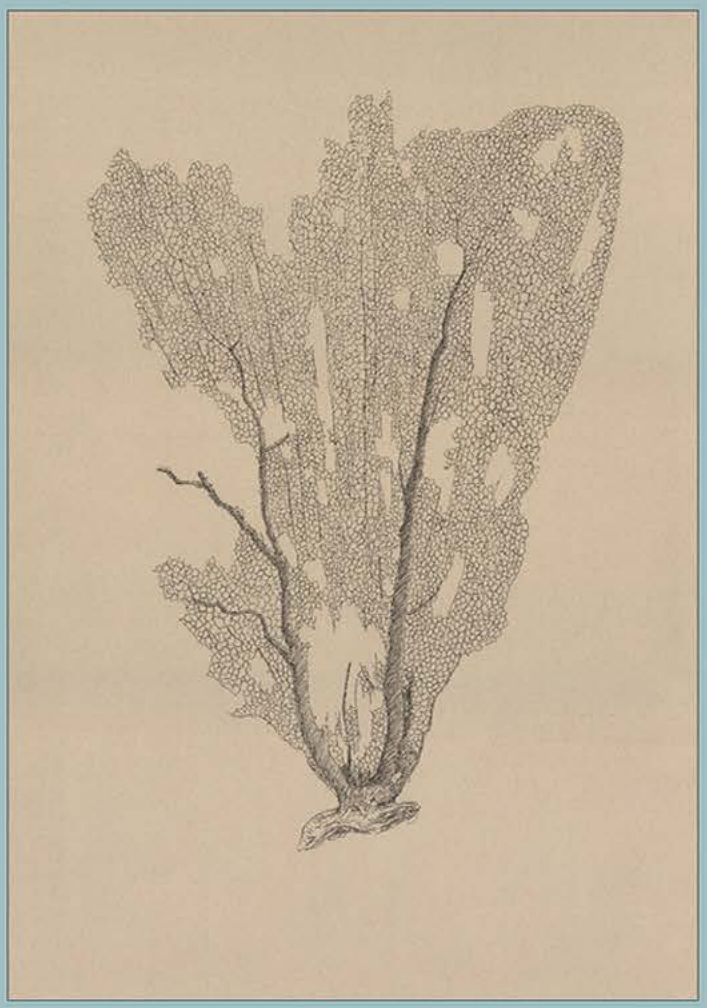
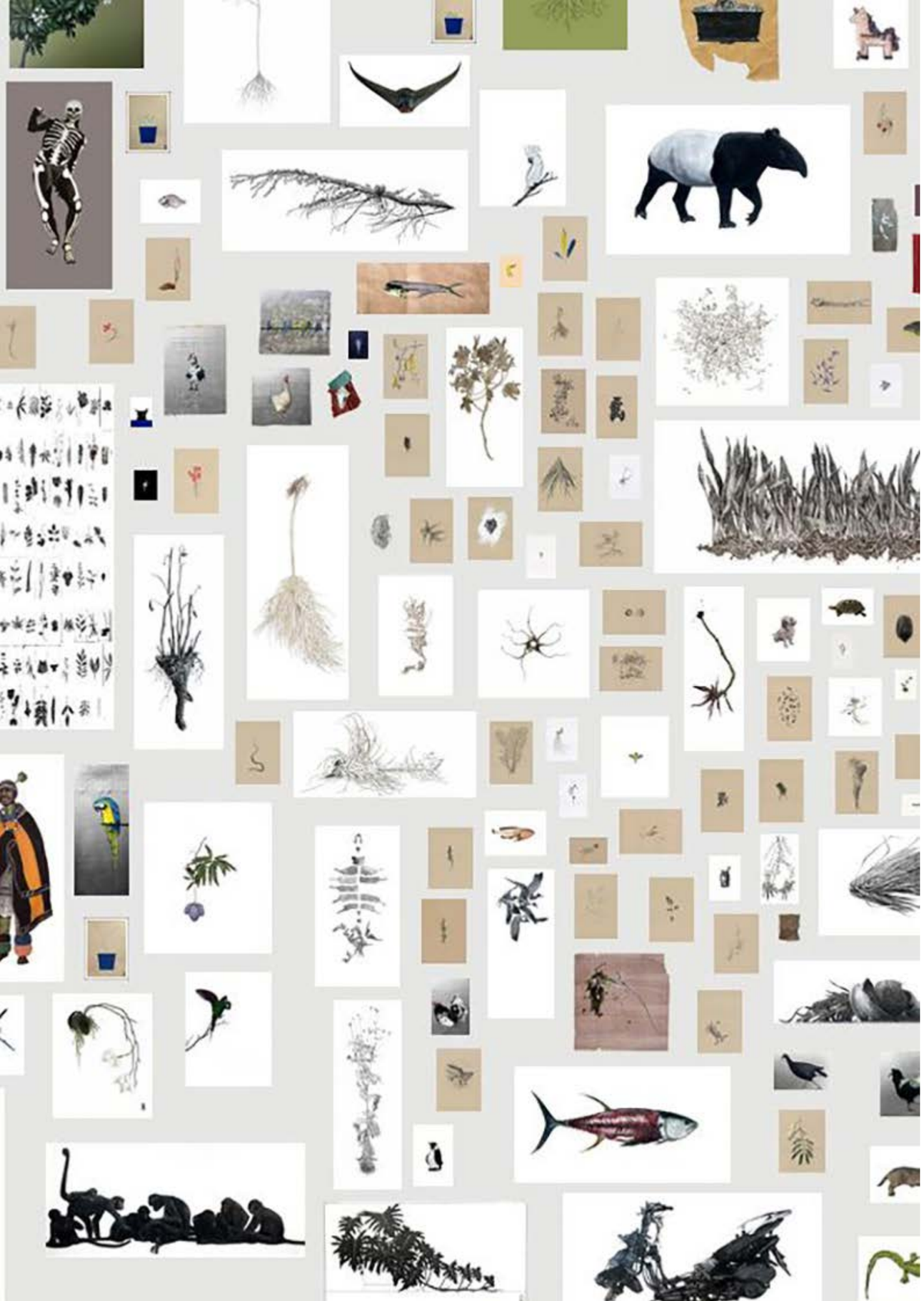
# Charles Moreau



Selected Works

2015–2026



# CHARLES MOREAU

Painting at scale

Natural history, the circulation of species, and an encyclopedic project

ARTIST STATEMENT

I paint things at their own scale.

Animals, plants, fragments, objects and figures are always represented life-size.

This simple principle gives the painting a particular function: the image is no longer only a representation, but also a measure. The painted subject retains the same physical relationship to the viewer as the actual object or living being.

This research first developed in Saint Barthélemy through *De Natura Sancti Bartolomei – Natural History of a Garden Island*, an ongoing body of work begun in 2015 and now comprising approximately two hundred works. The project records forms of life encountered on the island while examining their geographical origins and the circumstances that brought them there.

Over time, the work has expanded beyond the island. Animals, plants, objects and figures unrelated to Saint Barthélemy have entered the same system, governed by the same interest in scale, observation and physical presence.

Together, these works are gradually forming a fragmentary pictorial encyclopedia: necessarily incomplete, subjective and potentially endless, in which things separated by geography, history and status can coexist at the same scale.

*DE NATURA SANCTI BARTOLOMEI*
*Natural History of a Garden Island*

I look at Saint Barthélemy as one might examine a specimen beneath a microscope.

The island's small size makes particularly visible the movements that, on a much larger scale, have shaped the living world: migration, trade, colonisation, acclimatisation, domestication, ocean currents, winds and globalisation.

What appears today to be a natural environment is in fact the result of successive introductions and transformations.

When the first Amerindian populations arrived, Saint Barthélemy was a dry island, with limited fresh water and relatively little terrestrial biodiversity. Humans gradually carried useful plants, domestic animals, seeds and parasites with them. European settlement continued this process. Trade, gardening and eventually tourism multiplied these introductions until they produced the extraordinarily planted landscape we see today: a true garden island.

Through its plants, animals and biological fragments, natural history therefore becomes another way of reading human history.

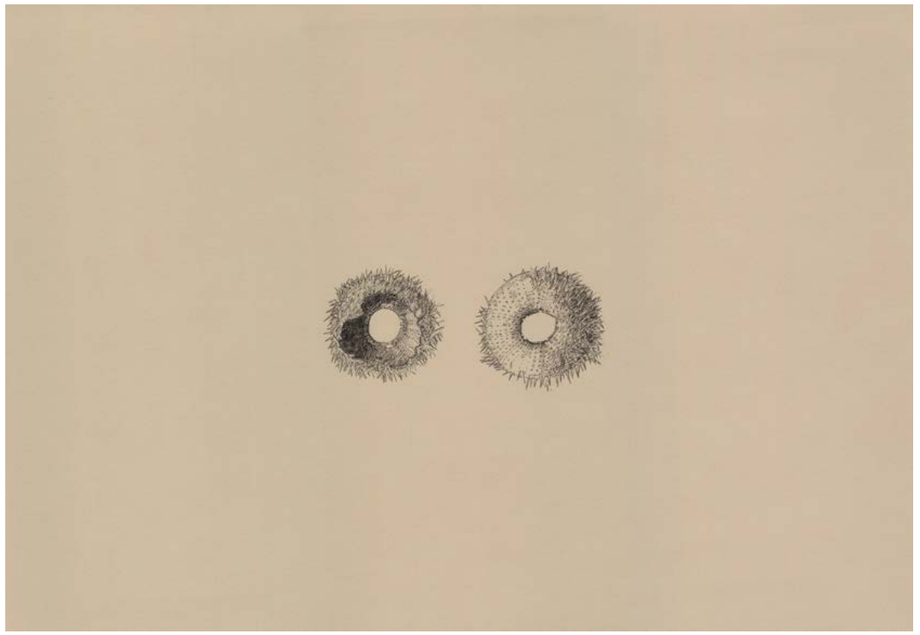


Couronne

2016

*Sansevieria trifasciata*
Origin: West Africa

Ballpoint pen and India ink on canvas
143 × 400 cm



Lunettes

2016

*Echinoida*
Origin: West Indies

Ballpoint pen on paper
42 × 9.4 cm



Mapou Rouge

2024

*Cordia sebestena*
Origin: West Indies

Acrylic and oil on canvas
105 × 166 cm

CIRCULATIONS

The project is structured around two forms of circulation.

The first is horizontal and geographical.

Every organism has an origin. Some species are native; many others arrived from the Americas, Europe, Africa or Asia. They travelled intentionally or accidentally with people, ships and commodities, but also through winds, birds and ocean currents.

A plant or animal encountered in Saint Barthélemy today may therefore represent the temporary endpoint of a journey spanning thousands of miles.

The second circulation is vertical and temporal.

I do not paint only living, intact organisms. Withered flowers, fruit, seeds, branches, dead animals, fragments, moults and remains all belong to the same inventory.

Birth, growth, reproduction, death and decomposition constitute another movement: the circulation of matter through time.

These geographical and biological trajectories constantly intersect throughout the series.

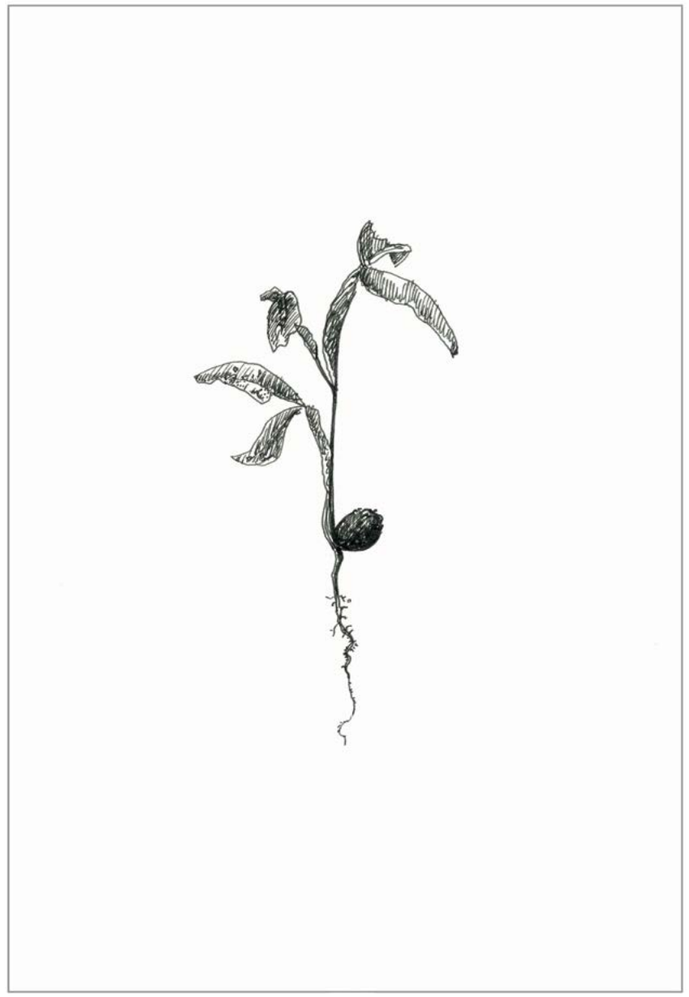


## Explosion

2016

*Cardisoma guanhumi*
Origin: West Indies

Ballpoint pen on paper
42 × 59.4 cm



Espoir

2016

*Melicoccus bijugatus*
Origin: South America

Ballpoint pen on paper
40 × 30 cm



Cabri en kit

2018

*Capra hircus*
Origin: undetermined

Oil on wood
130 × 122 cm

1:1

Life-size representation is one of the structural principles of my work.

An animal measuring twenty centimetres occupies twenty centimetres. A palm tree several metres high requires a painting several metres high.

The 1:1 relationship allows organisms that could never meet in nature to be compared within a shared physical space and makes it possible to reconstruct an environment based not on perspective, but on measurement.

The viewer is not looking at a reduced representation of the world; they are physically confronted with its dimensions.

As the body of work expands, individual paintings can stand alone or be assembled into larger constellations recalling natural-history collections, encyclopedic plates or cabinets of curiosities.



Johanna

2020

Oil on canvas
109 × 165 cm



## Fragments ailés

2017

*Limenitis archippus*
Origin: United States and Mexico

Ballpoint pen on paper
59.4 × 42 cm



## Espadrilles

2024

Oil on wood
75 × 122 cm

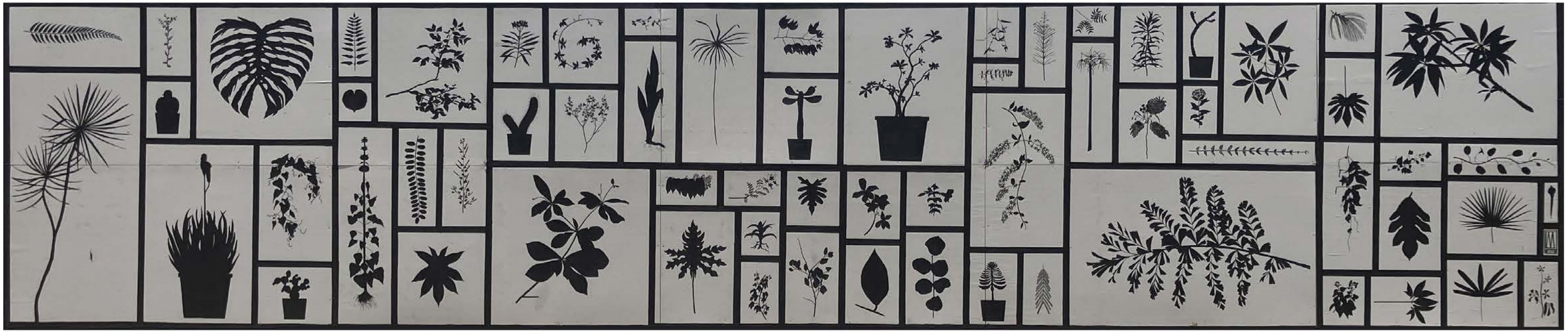
A NATURAL HISTORY WITHOUT HIERARCHY

The paintings give the same degree of attention to spectacular subjects and to apparently insignificant ones.

A seed, a lizard, a fallen flower or a fragment of an animal may contain as much information as an entire landscape.

This attention to small things is central to the project. Looking closely at what surrounds us allows histories hidden by familiarity to become visible again.

Each painting can therefore operate simultaneously as portrait, specimen, document and image.



## Herbier 2

2024

Various species

Acrylic on wood
244 × 1160 cm



Pétrifié

2016

*Gorgonacea*
Origin: West Indies

Ballpoint pen on paper
59,4 × 42 cm



Pommier de Sodome

2024

*Calotropis procera*
Origin: Africa and the Middle East

Acrylic and oil on canvas
164 × 109 cm

BEYOND THE ISLAND

An encyclopedia at the scale of the real

*De Natura Sancti Bartolomei* remains the historical core of this research, but the principle from which it developed extends far beyond a single territory.

Alongside the island project, I have increasingly painted subjects with no necessary connection to Saint Barthélemy: animals from other parts of the world, plants, objects, human figures and fragments.

They nevertheless follow the same working method: observation of the subject or its documentation, close attention to morphology, and representation at actual size.

A dromedary, a Nile crocodile, a Nubian ibex, a raven, a pair of espadrilles or a human figure can therefore enter the same visual system without belonging to the same geographical narrative.

In this way, what began as the natural history of one island is gradually becoming an encyclopedic attempt.

There is no claim to completeness. This encyclopedia is deliberately fragmentary and personal. It develops through encounters, research, curiosity, commissions and associations.

Its unity no longer depends upon a single territory but upon a method: to isolate, observe, measure and paint.




Boîte à outils

2023

Oil on wood
75 × 122 cm



Cérès

2026

*Felis silvestris catus*
Probable origin: Mesopotamia

Oil on wood
20 × 28 cm



Dromadaire

2026

*Camelus dromedarius*
Origin: Arabia

Oil on canvas
158 × 300 cm

PAINTING AS COLLECTING

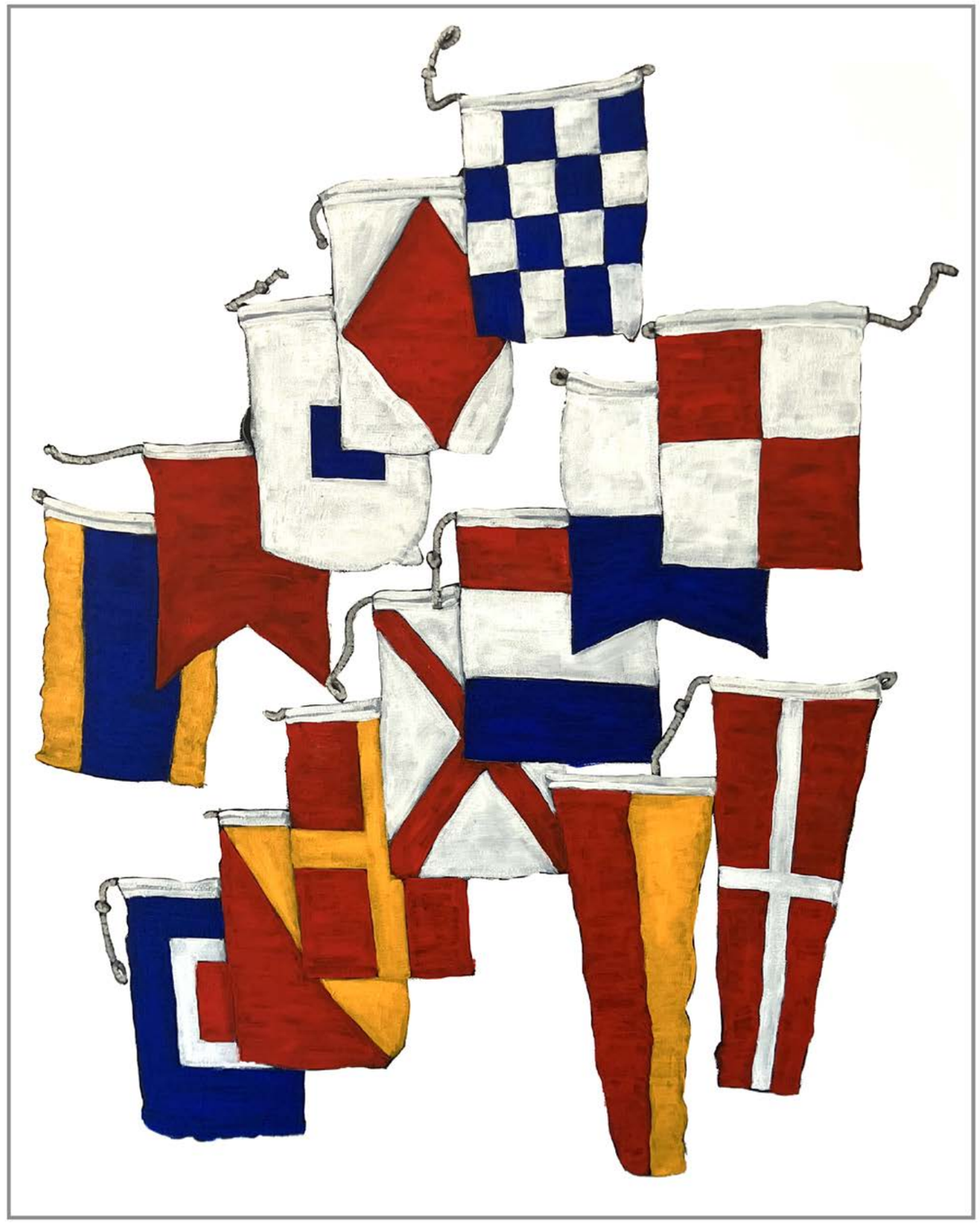
Before becoming an artist, I spent fifteen years in New York working as a dealer specialising in historical and so-called tribal art.

That experience of objects, collections, provenance and classification continues to inform my practice.

Painting a subject often begins by temporarily extracting it from the world in order to examine it, much as one might place a specimen on a table or an object in a museum case.

Unlike a material collection, however, painting makes it possible to bring together things that cannot be owned or preserved: living organisms, fragile objects, vanished forms, or subjects of monumental scale.

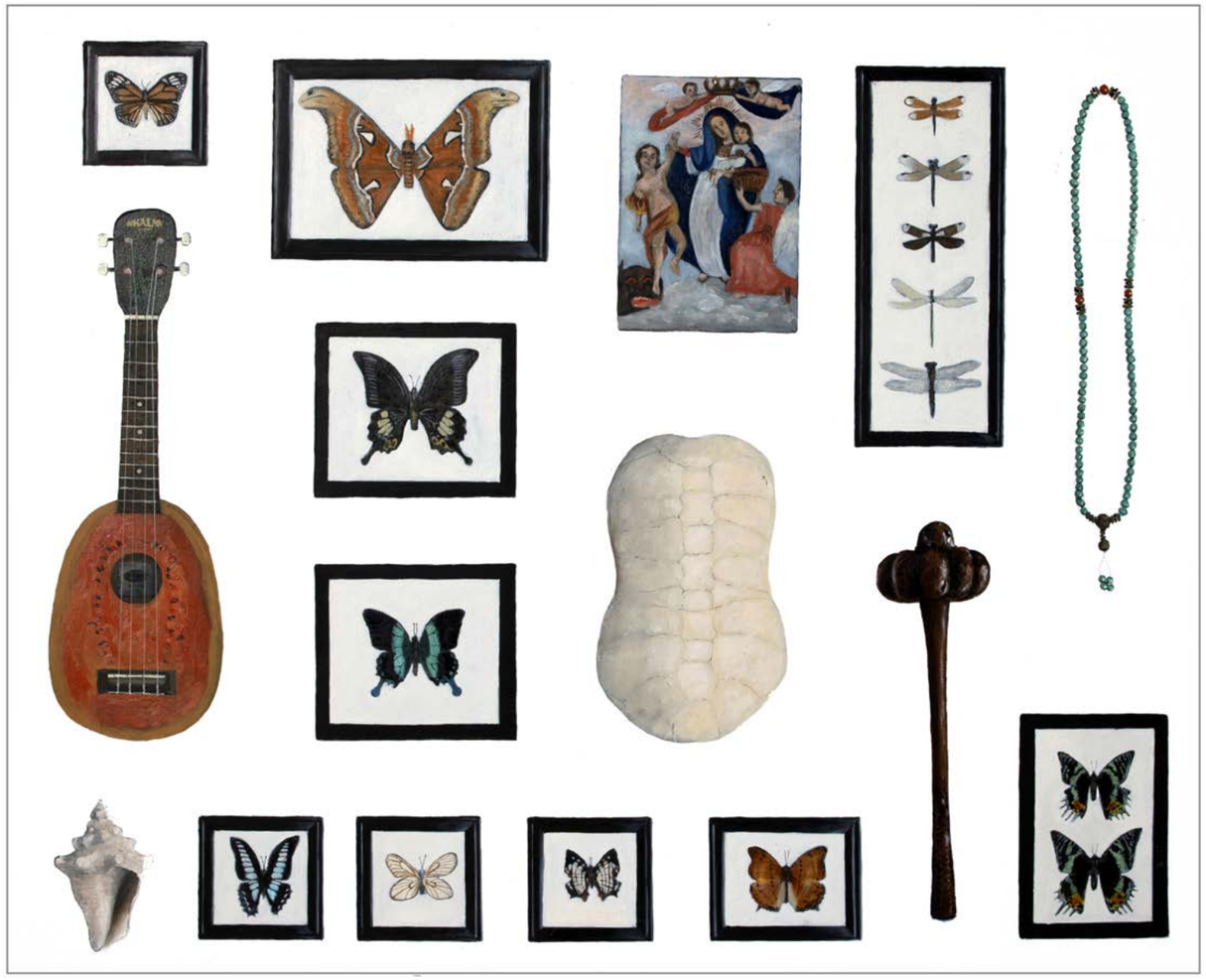
The painting itself becomes a form of collecting.



Nautical Flags 2

2025

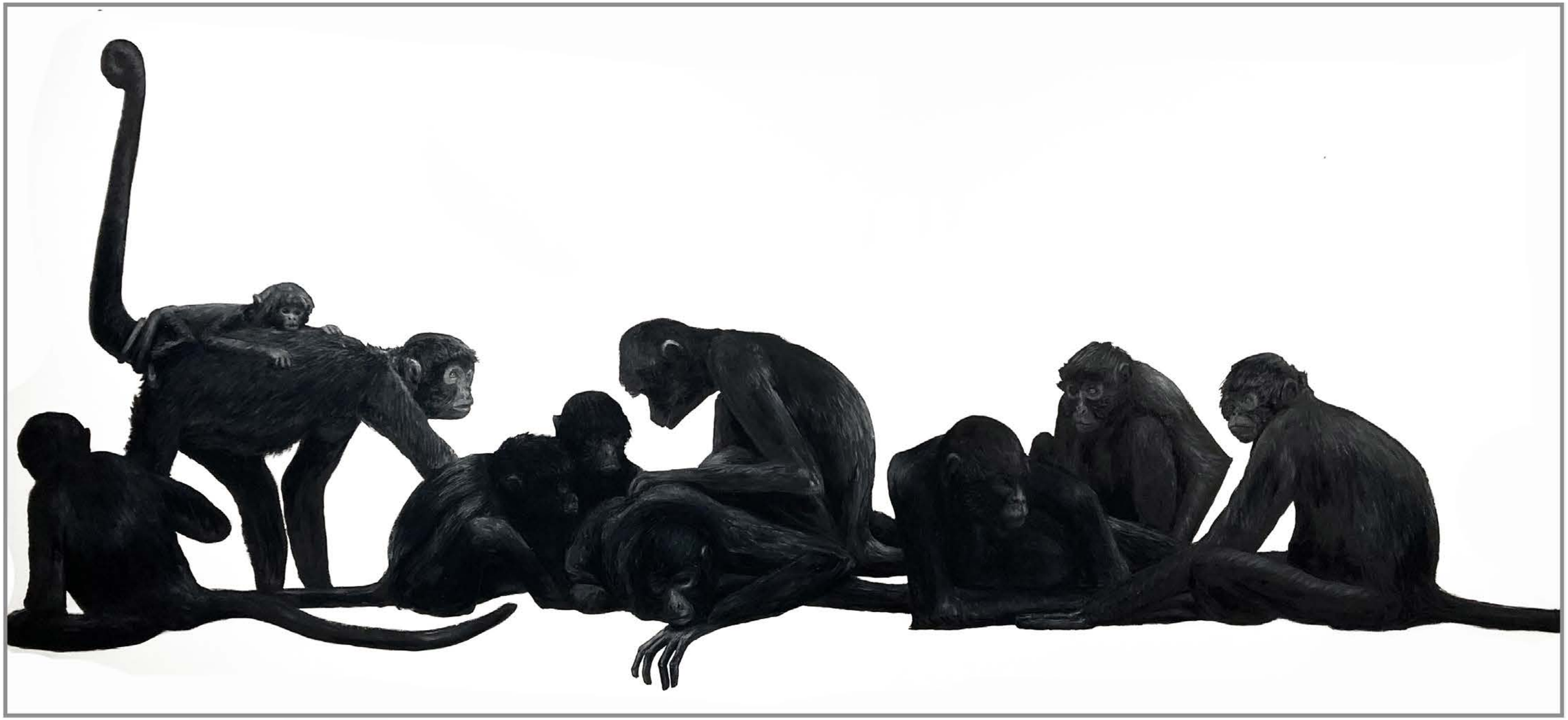
Oil on canvas
83 × 100 cm



Cabinet de curiosités

2023

Oil on wood
122 × 100 cm



La Sieste Après le Repas Dominical

2023

*Ateles fusciceps rufiventris*
Origin: Colombia

Oil on canvas
107 × 240 cm

# BIOGRAPHY

Charles Moreau lives and works in Saint Barthélemy.

Raised in a family closely connected to museums and the art market — his mother was a museum curator and his father an antiques dealer — he studied art history at Paris IV-Sorbonne before spending approximately fifteen years in New York as a dealer specialising in historical and so-called tribal art.

In 2015 he began *De Natura Sancti Bartolomei – Natural History of a Garden Island*, an extensive body of work exploring the natural history of Saint Barthélemy and the representation of living forms at actual scale.

The project led to a book published in 2017 and an exhibition at the Wall House Museum the same year

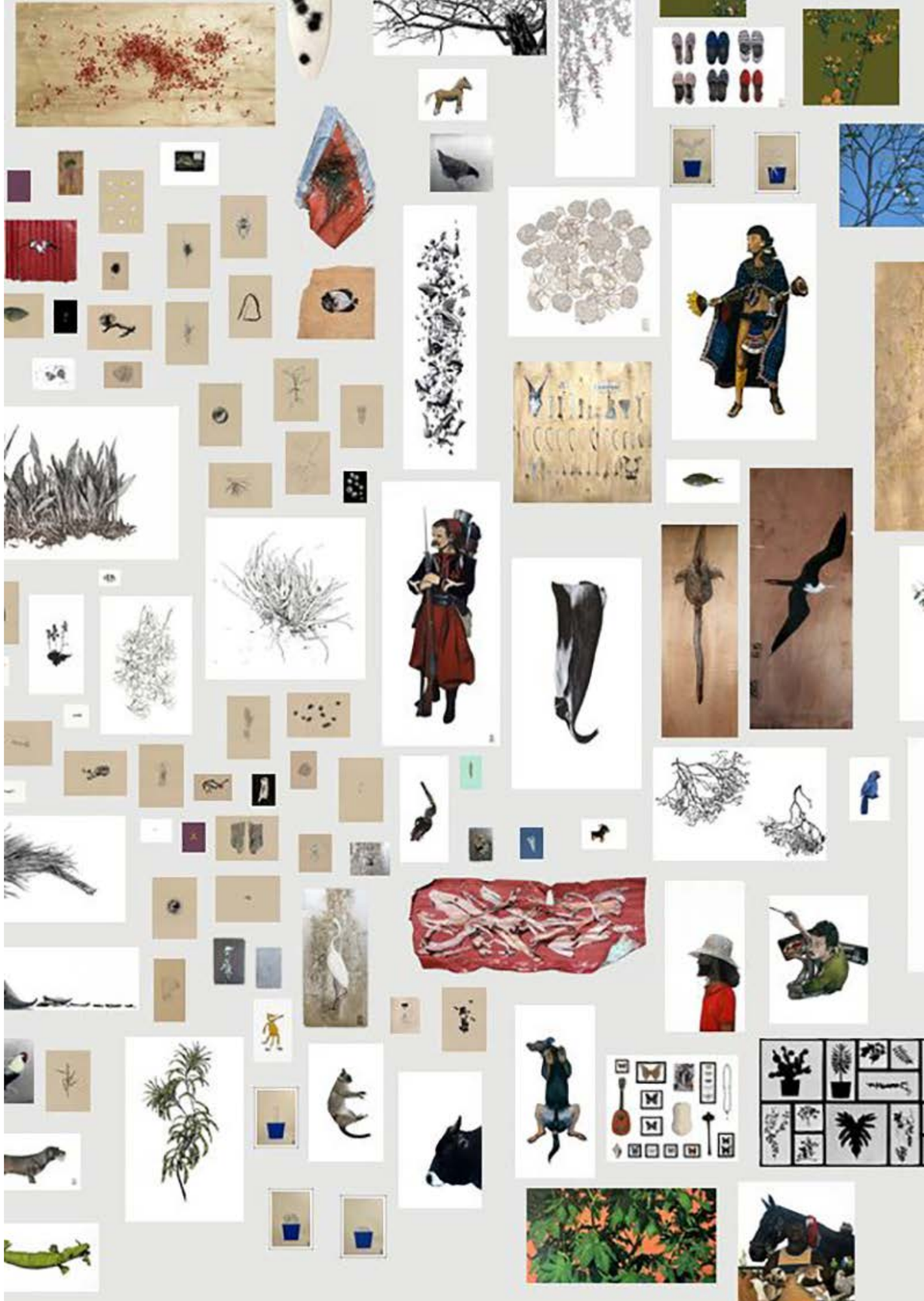
His practice has since expanded to encompass subjects from other geographical and historical contexts, gradually forming an open pictorial encyclopedia in which animals, plants, objects and human figures are connected through a shared approach to observation and scale.

Since 2021, Moreau has also served as Director of the Wall House Museum, Saint Barthélemy's territorial museum.

Approximately twenty of his works are installed in the collection and spaces of Eden Rock – St Barths.

Selected exhibitions and projects:
2017–2018 — *De Natura Sancti Bartolomei*, Wall House Museum, Saint Barthélemy
2022 — Art for Our Oceans, benefit auction, Wall House Museum, Saint Barthélemy — Art Saint Barth / Parley for the Oceans / Martinique Enchères, Lot 23
2024 — *Botanics and Other Curiosities,* Space Gallery, Saint Barthélemy

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2026