



I am an Iranian artist based in Paris since 2011. My practice unfolds through photography, video, drawing and installation.

My time spent working with filmmakers has influenced the way I consider and question the construction, dissemination and reception of images. I aspire to make these processes visible but also to construct my own visual fictions.

Today I am interested in the images that are offered to me. I collect documentary images found on the internet or in films as well as photos simply captured with my camera during my wanderings. I consider these recorded visuals for what they are - compositions - in order to divert the paradoxical relationship that exists between image and the idea that we have of reality/verity.

More precisely I am looking for the space/transition between photo and video, using the video projector as a light source to make my prints.

It seems to me that the image is produced by fraction - for an image inscribed in space, a thousand other images can literally be born from it - and by effraction - by dependence and emancipation, even detour, of a visual economy which dominates our modes of perception and our cognitive schemes.

Ambiguities and transitory states interest me more than affirmations. It is in this state of mind that I seek bridges between mediums and continually test new techniques. I look for the poetic accidents that result from these marriages, which I compare to black holes opening up to horizons to be explored.

**POOYA ABBASIAN** (IRAN/FRANCE, 07/02/1985)

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024 - *Maltournée*,  
MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie), Paris, France.  
2022 - *Œil pour œil*,  
FRAC Île-de-France, Le Plateau, Paris, France  
2018 - *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*,  
Galerie52 Folkwang, Essen, Germany.  
Galerie des Petits Carreaux, Saint-Briac, France.  
2017 - *Telesm*,  
Kulturkapelen, Berlin, Germany.

### DUO EXHIBITIONS

2022 - *Pooya Abbasian XX Grand8*, La Generale, Paris, France.  
2021 - *RCO*, La Marbrerie, Montreuil, France.  
2011 - *Nature Regulate*, Galerie Mohsen, Tehran, Iran.  
2009 - *Aklil-Al-Molook*, Mohsen Gallery, Tehran, Iran.  
2007 - *Exopalasht*, Azad Gallery, Tehran, Iran.  
2006 - *Related/Unrelated*, Art House, Tehran, Iran.

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTED)

2024 - *MAD(Made Anywhere)*, Fondation Fiminco, Romainville, France.  
- *La logique des lieux*, Fondation Fiminco, Romainville, France.  
- *Faire image*, Galerie Michel Journiac, Paris, France.  
- *Nord-Est*, Poush, Aubervilliers, Paris, France.  
- *La Box une première histoire (1990-2024)*, Bourges, France.  
- *Soli Loci*, LaTour Orillon, Montreuil, France.  
2023 - *Courser l'Été - Territoires Buissonniers*, Placement Produit Paris, France.  
- *Let us try to assume our fundamental ambiguity*, Poush, Aubervilliers, France.  
- *Art93*, Poush, Aubervilliers, France.  
2022 - *Dip into the Bleu*, Maison Touchard, Luxembourg, Luxembourg.  
2021 - *Memento*, Zeto project space, Paris, France.  
2020 - *Le Radeau des Cimes*, Villa Belleville, Paris, France.  
2019 - *En Cas de Pluie* (Jeune Création), Friche Etex, Paris, France.  
2018 - *Artvilnius*, contemporary art fair, Vilnius, Lituanie.  
2016 - *Face à Face*, La Source, La Guéroulde, France.  
2014 - *Transparency*, Galerie Petits Carreaux, Saint-Briac, France.

2013 - *Cousu Main-le temps passé*, Galerie Petits Carreaux, Paris, France.  
- *Art On Paper*, Bozar, Bruxelles, Belgium.  
- *Interdit aux mineurs*, Galerie Petits Carreaux, Paris, France.  
2012 - *Slick Paris*, Le Carreau du Temple, Paris, France.  
- *AnimaFac Festival*, Grande Halle de La Villette, Paris, France.  
2010 - *Window*, Mohsen Gallery, Tehran, Iran.  
- *Obligatory military service*, Mohsen Gallery, Tehran, Iran.  
2008 - *9th Biennale of Tehran*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran.  
2006 - *8th Biennale of Tehran*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, Iran.  
- *Limited Access 2nd edition*, Azad Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran.

### RÉSIDENCES

2023 - Fondation Fiminco, Paris, France.  
2022 - SHIFT, Artist Support Program (amac), Paris, France.  
2021 - Residency at Drawing Factory with Cnap, Paris, France.  
2020 - Residency at La Box ENSA, Bourges, France.  
2019 - Residency at la Villa Belleville, Paris, France.  
2018 - Residency at Galerie des petits carreaux, Saint-Briac, France.  
2017 - Residency at l'association La Source, La Guéroulde, France.  
2016 - Residency at l'association La Source, La Guéroulde, France.  
2013 - Residency at with Arte tv at Forum des images, Paris, France.

### GRANTS

2024 - Production grant at Fondation Française pour l'art contemporain.  
2023 - Production grant at Fondation Fiminco, Paris, France.  
2021 - Production grant after Masterclass with Wim Wenders,  
Institut Français/Institut Goethe, France, Germany.  
2020 - Acquisitions collection CNAP for *Lumen* series, Paris, France.  
- Bourse de Pépinières européennes de Création.  
2019 - CNL Bourse aux auteurs for the book *Les Secrets de Sinavar*.

### TALKS

2022 - Talk at IESA (Ecole internationale d'arts et culture) Paris, France.  
2021 - Talk at ENSA(école de beaux-arts) Bourges, France.  
2018 - Talk at Folkwang Universität, Essen, Allemagne.  
Conversation with Gisela Bullacher on alternative photography.

- Talk at Festival Pictoplasma, Berlin, Germany.
- 2016 - Talk at Bétonsalon, centre d'art et de recherche, Paris, France.
- Interdisciplinary meeting Tehran: identities/urbanities.
- Intervention at Centre Pompidou, Paris, France.
- Intervention on the cinema of Abbasi Kiarostami and Jafar Panahi.

#### **PUBLICATIONS (AS AUTEUR/ILLUSTRATOR) (SELECTED)**

- 2019 - *De Lamour, Fragments...* published at Actes sud.
- 2019 - *Sinavar et d'autres contes d'Iran*, published at Gallimard.
- 2019 - *Terres et Hommes*, published at Actes-sud.
- 2018 - *Les Poulpes futurs maitres du monde*, published at Actes-sud.
- 2017 - *Mes amis monstres*, published at Actes-sud.
- 2016 - *Un arbre pour ami*, published at Gallimard.

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

- *Maltournée*, MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie).
- *Une révolution iranienne : Femme, Vie, Liberté*, Beaux-arts de Paris.
- *Contemporary Iranian Art: New Perspectives* by Hamid Keshmirshakan.
- *Signing Tehran – Eine Designreportage* by Julia Kahl.
- *Urban Iran* by Biranna Olson & Michael Pope.
- *Houseletters N°2* by Bethany Holmes.

#### **PRESS/INTERVIEWS**

- |                         |                 |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| - Interview Magazine    | - Premiere      | - Pijaf               |
| - Kaltbult Magazine     | - Libération    | - Doolittle           |
| - Art Tomorrow          | - Étapes        | - Le journal des arts |
| - Herfeh Honarmand      | - Etemad        | - L'Œil Magazine      |
| - Transmettre le cinéma | - Le Telegramme | - Milk Magazine       |
| - France Culture        | - France Inter  | - Art Tomorrow        |
| - Herfeh Honarmand      | - Etemad        | - Arté                |

#### **COLLABORATIONS/COMMISSIONS**

- 2022 - Maison Margiela  
Realization of cyanotypes for the communication of the new collection.
- 2021 - Zadig Films  
Collaboration with Jean-Pierre Limousin on his documentary film.
- 2020 - Les films Palleas  
Post-production of short film Hidden.

- 2019 - collaboration with Morad Montazami on Melehi exhibition, Réalisation des vidéos et la scénographie pour l'exposition *Melehi*.
- 2018 - Collaboration with Jafar Panahi on movie *Three Faces*:  
Script development and supervisor of post-production.  
- Collaboration with Morad Montazami on *ARABÉCÉDAIRE* and *Dusted Water* exhibition at Mosaic Rooms London.  
Producer of videos and art direction.
- 2016 - Directing a videos for Louis Vuitton fondation:  
Creating videos for Daniel Buren Installation, *Icônes de l'art moderne*.  
- Collaboration with Centre Pompidou on Jafar Panahi's exhibition *Images/ Nuages*: Collaboration with Clément Chéroux on art direction of the exhibition, image editing and preparation of prints, post production of short film *où en êtes vous ?*.
- 2015 - Collaboration with Jafar Panahi on movie *Taxi Téhéran*:  
Supervisor of post-production.  
- Directing a video for Birdpen, for title *Equal parts hope and dread*:  
Script, directing, edit, post-production.
- 2014 - Directing videos for La Cinémathèque française.
- 2013 - Directing a video ABBY (universal music) for title *Monsters*:  
Script, directing, post-production.  
- Collaboration with Jafar Panahi on movie *Pardé*:  
Supervisor of post-production, edit, graphic designer.
- 2012 - Collaboration with Jafar Panahi on movie *This is not a film*:  
Supervisor of post-production.
- 2009 - Collaboration with Abbas Kiarostami on *Les Murs* exhibition:  
Artist assistant, image editing and preparation of prints.  
- Collaboration with Sadegh Tirafkan on *Assar* exhibition:  
Artist assistant, image editing and preparation of prints.

#### **LANGUAGES**

- French
- English
- Turkish
- Persian

#### **CONTACT**

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+33 6 25 17 63 27

#### **INSTAGRAM**

[@pooyaabbasian](https://www.instagram.com/pooyaabbasian)

## ONGOING PROJECT

In Paris, I live near the Père Lachaise Cemetery. A very good friend of mine, who passed away 7 years ago, is buried there. During my visit, I cut a wild plant growing on the side of his grave, took it home with me, and planted it in a pot. It was a way for me to keep his presence with me. In a sense, it's a process of metaphorical memory transmission: a body giving life to a plant, which is then transferred from a place of death to a place of life.

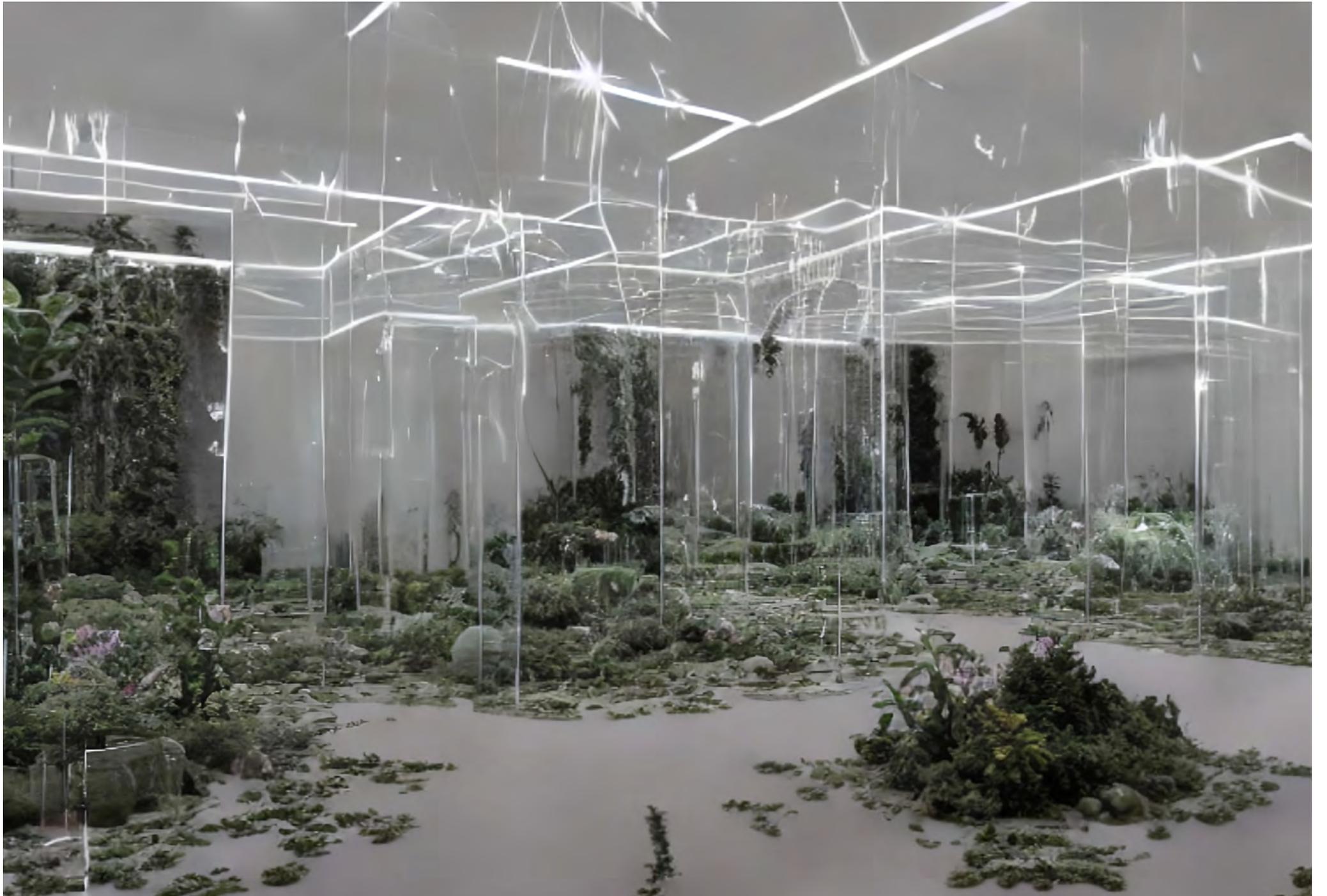
In my practice, I explore the complex relationships between memory, lived experience, and place. The question of how to harness and transmit these elusive phenomena has formed the basis of my material experimentation with photography, video, and installation.

I later developed this idea of memory transfer after a conversation with a friend, Germano Cecere, who leads a research team in epigenetics at the Pasteur Institute. He studies the mechanisms of epigenetics and inheritance. He explained to me that they are currently testing the hypothesis that epigenetic changes that occur during our lives could be transmitted to subsequent generations: genes have a memory that can be passed on

to new individuals. I found this idea fascinating and began conducting research that brings his scientific studies closer to my personal obsession with questions related to memory. This made me reflect on the omnipresence of the past in our present and the relationship of this concept to identity through the excavation of memory.

The title of this project is History of the Future, an expression borrowed from the philosopher Franco Bifo Berardi. This oxymoron resonates with my interest in the paradoxes present in the image and highlights the role of fiction in what is presented as official history, and conversely, how the past haunts our present and influences our futures.

The project would include an installation based on wild plants that I will extract from different places dear to me, combined with large-format prints of photos taken with expired medium-format films. I like the idea of working at the intersection of different mediums, confounding what we expect of them by mixing noble and raw techniques and materials. This adds a sense of timelessness, by reusing something that has already lived and giving it another life.



3D study for the project *History of the Future*.

## PORTFOLIO

## OXALIS, VIDÉO-ENGRAVING

The “Oxalis” series, created in 2024, explores states of ambivalence and the possible transitions between the mediums of video and painting.

This series of 21 prints presents engravings that use video projection as a source of impression. Time-lapse videos are projected onto photosensitive lithographic offset plates for a duration of 24 hours. Six videos capturing flowers and weeds were used to create these photogravures, printed on the presses of the engraving workshop at the Fiminco Foundation.

Aiming to give materiality to video, the series and its technique reveal the states between video and printed result, capturing those moments when an image is no longer quite what it was, nor yet what it will become. It explores the bridges between mediums, seizing the movement and temporality of video while attempting to transform light into painting. These transitions open intervals where images emerge and disappear simultaneously, capturing spaces of uncertainty and discovery.

The oxalis, the plant chosen for this installation,

perfectly embodies these concepts of ambiguity and displacement. Considered a weed in gardens, it is paradoxically prized by consumers at florists.

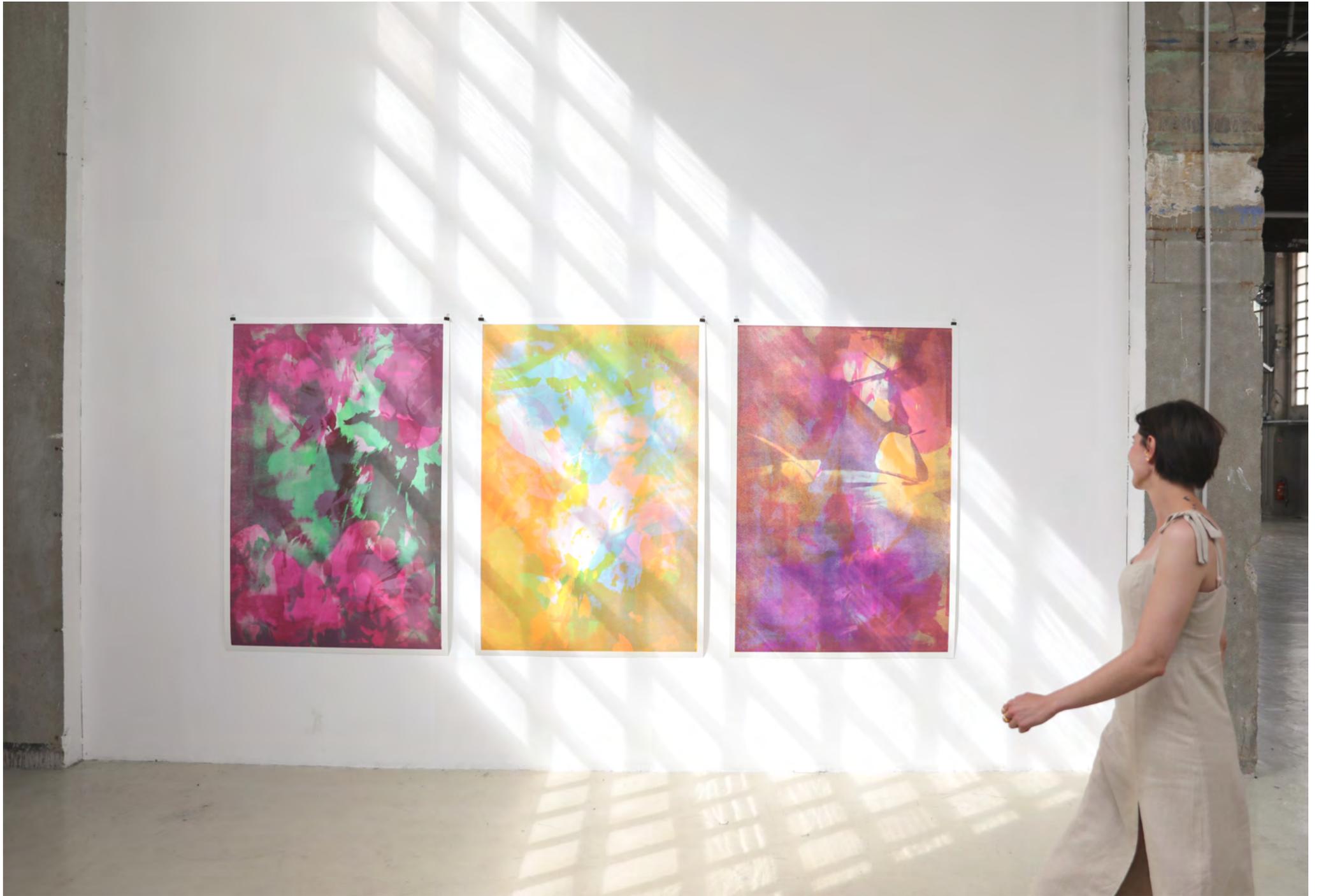
Each print is a unique work from a series of 21 prints.

159 cm x 106.5 cm on JS Opal 250 gr paper, 2024.



View of the *Oxalis* Series Installation, La Fondation Fiminco, 2024.





View of the *Oxalis* Series Installation, La Fondation Fiminco, 2024.





View of the *Oxalis* Series Installation, La Fondation Fiminco, 2024.

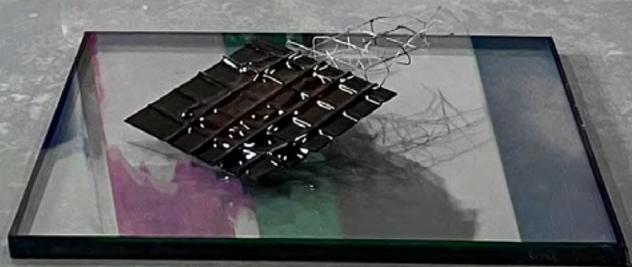




View from the open studio at La Fondation Fimenco, 2024.  
Installation with Photogravure Plates.



Photogravure Plate Inked Before Printing.



View from the open studio at La Fondation Fiminco, 2024.  
Installation with Photogravure Plates.



**Pooya Abbasian —**  
*Maltournée*

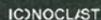
 **MEP**



# MALTOURNÉE

*Maltournée* is a medium-length documentary film created during a masterclass with Wim Wenders on «A Sense of Place».

A missed rendez-vous with a refugee community by the canal in Saint-Denis, France. A poetic observation of the traces of past lives left in the post-industrial landscape of the Parisian suburbs, the film weaves a personal story with a structural situation.





*Maltournée* / Germany, France, Iran / 2023 / 25 min

[Watch the trailer](#)

Selected Festivals:

CPH: DOX  
Sheffield Dokfest  
Beldocs  
Kerala  
DMZ  
FEKK Lubjana  
Arkipel Indonesia  
Rome Independent film festival  
Sinema Transtopia Berlin

## **MALTOURNÉE**

MEP (EUROPEAN HOUSE OF PHOTOGRAPHY)

### **FRAGMENTS OF A SUBURBAN MEMORY**

Photography (whether we think of it as analogue or digital) is both everywhere and nowhere in Pooya Abbasian's work. It seems to appear as much as it disappears, to show (itself) as much as it hides (itself), to evaporate or liquefy when we think we have grasped it. Recent experiences such as the installation *Lumen* (screenshots of documentary images printed on large Perspex panels) demonstrate Abbasian's perpetual oscillation between still and moving images. They overlap or capture each other, although his use of film as a cinematic object is even more recent – and therefore experimental.

Far from taking a purist approach to the medium, the photographic/filmic image in his work is elusive, ambiguous, even treacherous. Far from acting as a guarantor of the reality that it would authenticate, it catalyses the underside of reality, even its aftermath, rather than its shadow. It is less concerned with the tangible evidence of reality itself than with the traces that are rendered sub-real; or with the signs and fragments of lives that are unauthorised, unaccounted for and undigested by our "reality". This is not to say, however, that his approach to the image is entirely

devoid of a documentary dimension, far from it. In fact, Pooya Abbasian's images seem to navigate a delicate balance between non-objectivity and speculative realism, *cinéma vérité* and collective cinema – all the while rejecting the common notion of "reality", which he tends to deconstruct through caesuras, shifts in time and audiovisual collages.

Take, for example, his fragments of ceramic impressions, which depict suburban anti-landscapes and weeds in an almost magical way, via photographic emulsion, like rayographs that could have been formed over thousands of years by the reflection of sunlight on pieces of archaeological stone. Ordinary images, Abbasian's printed ceramics are distant reminders – through botanical kinship – of William Henry Fox Talbot's images in *The Pencil of Nature* (1839). Considered the first published book illustrated with photographs, it symbolises a euphoric visual modernity in which mechanical images take on magical powers and feed endless urban reveries. Visionary images, they also resemble digital fossils destined for the archaeologists of the next century, whose task it will be to study today's society in all its recesses, fringes and most melancholy margins. Would they be able to see to what extent Talbot's reveries and Baudelaire's *flâneries* gave way to a social and ecological no-man's-land on the verge of collapse? The result is fragments of landscapes and faces whose time and origin we

can no longer identify; they confuse our steps as we walk down the corridors of the past/present/future, inviting us to drift through the nonplaces of memory.

In the MEP Studio, Pooya Abbasian has created an exhibition in which the ceramic prints interact with the space, showing and hiding themselves, elevated to the status of the images on display and at the same time returning to dust beneath our feet. They also serve as psychic clues (or fragments of film fallen off the editing table and become petrified in contact with the radioactivity in nature), interacting with the videos exhibited by Abbasian, specifically *Maltournée*. It's as if the ceramic impressions had been found in the hirsute wastelands and beneath the shadowy bridges of Seine-Saint-Denis, a territory well-known to the artist, who has been working there for a long time, forging connections not only with passers-by but also with vagrants and the community at large.

The film *Maltournée* can be seen as a post-modern journey to the end of the night, echoing the song written by the Swiss guard Thomas Legler in 1793: "Our life is a journey/ through winter and night/ We look for our way/ in a sky without light." Included as an *exergue* to Louis-Ferdinand Céline's famous novel, this brief poem has a particular resonance with the overlooked lives of displaced people and those in exile, who have no right to a name or a face; and with

Abbasian's equally occult images in *Maltournée*, which seek neither to follow nor to identify these people, but rather to document their "absence" – understood here as a particular mode of presence. In Persian, for example, the most common expression for missing someone is "Your place is empty" (*Jât khâli-e*), which implies a presence and a materialisation of emptiness or absence. In this instance, the mainstream media are there to disseminate images of the (often violent) evacuation of "migrant" encampments (a word that should be banished out of sheer resistance to a certain populist and racist Newspeak) by the public authorities, with a view to the definitive expulsion of these people over the longer term. To demonstrate that the State has total control over its territory and its population, it must do everything in its power to repel all foreign bodies, to the point of eradicating them from public space. Demonstrations of force or the use of "legitimate violence" are also reflected in a more general policy of refusing to accept foreigners, despite the fact that we know that they are fleeing war, drought and various other crises that await us in the near future; as "Westerners", we are in fact not immune to any of these crises, but prefer to turn a blind eye to them.

*Maltournée*'s approach to conveying this physical, psychological and political violence is to let the places speak for themselves rather than attempting to speak

for the displaced. Abbasian sensitively avoids any form of sensationalism or journalistic sentimentality, instead creating a fragmented narrative based on serendipity: A piece of paper lost in the brambles, blown by the wind, leads to an encounter with a local resident, who in turn leads us to an all-night vigil where a few people are still wandering around; all the while questioning the conditions of the eviction and its treatment by the media, but with as little direction as possible. The man with the camera hardly asks any questions; instead, he listens to murmurs and shivers, letting the roles change regularly as the encounters evolve (who is speaking? who is deciding which way to go? what should we look at?...).

Abbasian's long, meditative and analytical shots through these wastelands and anonymous spaces represent the reverse angle of the state of emergency that governs us. The State believes that the Convention on Human Rights does not apply to its empty lots and dead zones where asylum seekers take refuge. It creates lawless zones on its own soil, risking apartheid, detention camps and humanity's worst nightmares.

As Pooya Abbasian's other video, Aubervilliers, shows, the abandoned lots and nonplaces of Seine-Saint-Denis, haunted by this awareness of the worst, merge with the construction site of the Greater Paris project. The montage (which is also formed for the viewer

between the images of Maltournée and Aubervilliers) creates a clash between legal and humanitarian no-man's-lands and new urban utopias. By calling into question both the structures and the ruins of these new utopian spaces, Abbasian brings us to ask ourselves: is it about pushing back or reproducing, underlining or erasing the border – both real and imaginary – between the centre and the periphery, or between the city and the “banlieue” (which have become synonymous with social relegation). This term, which should be placed in quotation marks and reflects so many of the illusions and failures in the social and urban policies of recent decades, now seems to have been buried by a new “suburban” awareness of the humanitarian and ecological challenges facing a generation of artists of which Pooya Abbasian is a worthy member.

Morad Montazami  
Director of Zamân Books & Curating  
April 2024

Translated by  
Laurie Hurwitz



Exhibition view *Maltournée*, La MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie), 2024.



*Untitled, 2024*  
Photosensitive Emulsion on Ceramic, 25x15x3 cm.



*Untitled, 2024*  
Photosensitive Emulsion on Ceramic, 25x15x3 cm.



Untitled, 2024  
Photosensitive Emulsion on Ceramic, 31x20x3 cm.



Installation view from *Maltoutnée*, La MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie), 2024.



Untitled, 2024  
Photosensitive Emulsion on Ceramic, 17x15x3 cm.



*Sans titre*, 2024  
Émulsion photosensible sur céramique, 25x17x3 cm.



Exhibition view *Maltournée*, La MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie), 2024.



Poster of the *Maltournée* Exhibition in the Entrance of the Studio, La MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie), 2024.

## THE LOGIC OF PLACES

Influenced by cinema, Pooya Abbasian interrogates in his practice the modes of construction, dissemination, and reception of the image. Through photography, film, or installation, he aims to make these processes visible to better witness the manipulations wrought by the circulation of images, thus giving them a moment of scrutiny and ambiguity. Continuing a series of films exploring various peripheral territories, the works presented here grapple, through different mediums, with the processes of cultural appropriation and gentrification in Seine-Saint-Denis. With Romainville as the backdrop, his new film is a *mise en abyme* of an artists' residence as well as the buried history of this territory and its flows, oscillating between a documentary and speculative approach.

Élodie Royer



End-of-Residency Exhibition at La Fondation Fiminco

## SLAVE TO TRENDS

*Slave to Trends* is a project that explores the complex dynamics of cultural appropriation and gentrification in the 9-3 (Seine-Saint-Denis). Building on reflections initiated with Les Bas Pays, this project highlights how a territory's identity can be transformed into ephemeral fashion, influenced by contemporary artistic trends.

The exhibition begins with an interactive experience where visitors are invited to get temporary tattoos of the 9-3 logo in pink. This simple act of marking one's skin with the suburb's identity becomes a symbolic gesture of appropriation, emphasizing the paradox between the deep identity of the 9-3 and its exploitation for aesthetic or commercial purposes. Although temporary, the tattoo serves as a reminder of how elements of suburban culture are often superficially adopted.

The project also features a series of screenprints on glass, where images from protests in Aubervilliers are printed on salvaged construction glass.

The exhibition culminates with a video installation

featuring a song by the Black-Metal band Emperor. The song's lyrics have been rewritten and reinterpreted to give voice to the gothic 9-3 logo, transformed into a character in its own right. This logo, once rejected and now trendy, speaks directly to the viewer, reflecting on its future: "I'm gonna be uncool and hateable again."

*Slave to Trends* sheds light on the mechanisms by which underground aesthetics and local culture can be absorbed by mainstream currents, only to be discarded later. The project questions the durability of these trends and the real impact of such appropriations on the communities they draw from, leaving viewers confronted with an uncomfortable reality.



Temporary Neuf-Trois Tattoos: 93 Copies, Given to Visitors at the Entrance of the Exhibition, 2024.



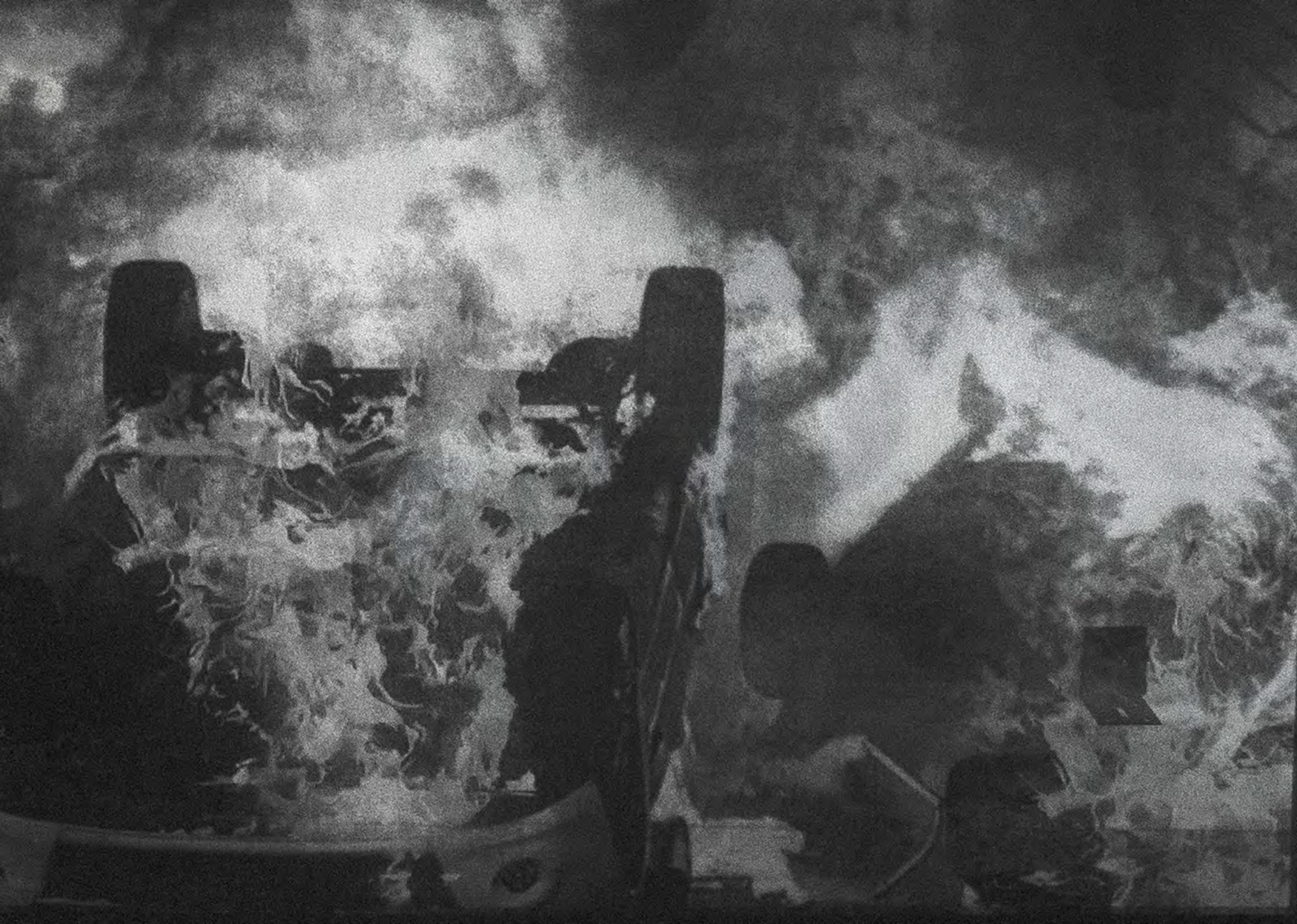
Exhibition view *La logique des lieux*, La Fondation Fiminco, 2024.



*Neuf-Trois*, 2024  
Screenprint on Construction Glass, 85x85.3 cm.



*Neuf-Trois*, 2024  
Screenprint on Construction Glass, 85x85.3 cm (each piece).





*The Most Broken Game Ever Made, 2024*  
Screenprint on Construction Glass, , 150x45,3 cm.





Exhibition view *La logique des lieux*, La Fondation Fimincio, 2024  
Installation of *Slave To Trends*: Video, Sound, Hoodie, Mirror Print, Cables.



*Slave To Trends* / France, USA / 2024 / 5:30 min  
[Watch the video](#)



Neuf-Trois, 2024  
Installation of *Slave To Trends*: Screenprint on Hoodie, Screenprint on Construction Glass.



*Neuf-Trois, 2024,*  
Cyanotype Print, Screenprint, 120x80 cm.



*Neuf-Trois, 2024,*  
Screenprint on Sportswear.



*Neuf-Trois*, 2024,  
3D print, 18x10x10 cm.



*Neuf-Trois, 2024,*  
Painting Created with Lithographic Ink, Screenprint, 60x45 cm.

## LES BAS PAYS

*Les Bas Pays* is the third installment in a series of films exploring the suburbs of the “Neuf Trois” (Seine-Saint-Denis). The film takes us to the Bas Pays neighborhood in Romainville, a place marked by a complex social history and urban transformation.

Once a land for workers and the underprivileged, the Bas Pays were so named by residents of the higher city, who viewed this neighborhood with disdain. Today, this territory is home to a mysterious and forbidden forest. Once a gypsum quarry and later an industrial dump, this area has seen nature reclaim its space despite a toxic soil, creating a landscape as dangerous as it is captivating.

The film is divided into two distinct parts. The first part, documentary in nature, delves into the history and reality of the Forêt des Bas Pays, revealing how this forest has grown on soil contaminated by industrial waste, including pharmaceuticals. Through striking images and local testimonies, the film uncovers the buried secrets of this forbidden place, where nature and danger coexist.

In the second part, the film shifts to fiction to address themes of cultural appropriation and gentrification. The Forêt des Bas Pays then becomes the backdrop for a reflection on the social transformation of the neighborhood. Once despised and marginalized, this area now attracts a new, creative, and affluent population, creating tensions between the historical identity of the place and the pressures of urban change. This speculative fiction features characters grappling with the contradictions of this transformation, questioning the future of the neighborhood.

With *Les Bas Pays*, this third installment continues to explore the complex dynamics of the suburbs of Neuf Trois, blending history, memory, and contemporary challenges of urban development. The film offers a reflection on the interaction between humans, nature, and social transformations in a neighborhood undergoing significant change.



Les Bas Pays / France / 2024 / 44 min

[Watch Excerpt 1](#)

[Watch Excerpt 2](#)



*Les Bas Pays*, 2024,  
Photosensitive Emulsion on Marble, 40x25x3 cm.

## AUBERVILLERS

*Aubervilliers* is the second installment in a series of films dedicated to the peripheral territories of Neuf Trois (Seine-Saint-Denis). This film was created in close collaboration with the young people from the hors-les-murs program of OMJA (Organisation en Mouvement des Jeunes d'Aubervilliers), who participated actively not only as actors but also as co-authors.

In *Aubervilliers*, the camera intertwines with the visions of the young Aubervillariens, creating a dynamic dialogue between the external gaze and the intimate experience of the inhabitants. This project not only represents these youths but invites them to become narrators and creators, thus shaping a collective and authentic work. Through a documentary approach, the film explores the abandoned and under-construction spaces of the city, questioning its past marked by industrial and working-class history, and its uncertain future amid urban transformations.

The film captures the present vibrantly through the energy of the young protagonists, embodying that suspended moment of “right now, immediately.”

Here, the present is not tinged with nostalgia but with an urgent vitality, where yesterday's and tomorrow's concerns fade before the intensity of the lived moment. This energy becomes the film's guiding thread, reflecting a city in motion, driven by youth that refuses to be confined by stereotypes or the past.

Justine Daquin



*Aubervilliers* / France / 2023 / 20 min

[Watch Excerpt 1](#)

[Watch Excerpt 2](#)



*Aubervilliers, 2023*  
Photosensitive Emulsion on Marble, 30 x 18 x 7 cm.



Aubervilliers in exhibition *La Box une première histoire (1990-2024)*, La BOX, 2024.

## ŒIL POUR ŒIL

For the vitrine, Pooya Abbasian proposes an installation composed of a video of 10 hours duration, offering the point of view of the window of his father's store in Tehran on the street and a carpet conceived from images of the Turkish encrypted channel Ciné5. These images are both the result of research and archiving work and a dream that the artist had from a memory of teenagehood.

Between mental reconstruction and fantasies emerging from encrypted images, this carpet appears to him as a useless attempt to silence the images.

Text excerpt from the website of Frac Île-de-France, Le Plateau.

[Link](#) to watch the video clips



← frac  
île-de-france  
↙

le plateau  
paris

la vitrine



Exhibition view at Frac Île-de-France, La Vitrine, Paris, France.



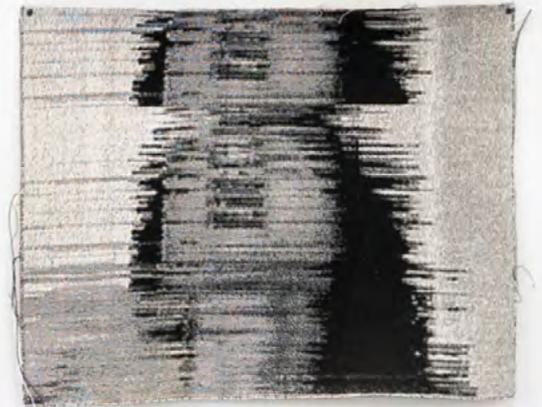


View of the Studio at Poush During the Open Studio, 2023.  
Tissage, 220 x 350 x 15 cm.



Exhibition view at La Marbrerie, Montreuil, France.





Exhibition view from open studios at Poush, 2022.

## **POOYA ABBASIAN xx GRAND8**

At the end of the residency at La générale, Pooya Abbasian and Grand8 propose a performative form composed of installation of several levels of transparent tarpaulins, video projection and live electronic music.

Result of this research/collaboration proposes 1H of immersion in the heart of the unconscious, of our desires and our impulses of death.

Each performance is unique. The music is improvised on an infinite and ageless narrative. Analogical synthesizers, Drum Machines, Trumpet and Fans tend to agree in the chaos. The scenic device adapts to the temporality of the moment. The question remains open.

[Link](#) to view the performance.



Installation/Performance with Grand8 for the end of the residency at Generale Nordest, 2022  
Several levels of transparent tarps, video projection, AI (artificial intelligence) and live electronic music.

## FRACTION/BREAK-IN OF THE IMAGE

Text by Morad Montazami

The Lumen series by Pooya Abbasian offers a particularly original visual experience and technique. It requires meticulous attention, perhaps a moment of visual pause. Immediately these images question us through their spectral presence, at the limit of the visible, as a consequence of their fabrication process, their genesis. They result in fact from a video projection made on photosensitive paper, itself scanned, before the evaporation of the image-trace left by the projection, in order to make an image-imprint of it, which the artist finally fixes by printing it on a plexiglass support - the final support being in turn conducive to a series of reflections, dissensions and visual dilations.

So from the power of the initial video projection, to the sensitivity of the paper that captures its trace, passing through the printing technique on plexiglass, each of these factors adds a potential track to capture the image and at the same time blurs our real possibilities of finding a path towards it. The image as point of origin or point of departure mutate to become a sort of moving

sand or magnetic fields, whose fragile crystallization “exposed” here can take on a new value: that of an image that is both material and immaterial and which is nevertheless stated before us like a sculpture (not fixed to the wall) or a body in space, at the limit, totally decontextualized from the technical ecosystem that saw it born.

The latter can be linked as much to Man Ray’s rayographs as to Duchamp’s Grand Verre, or even to Stan Brakhage’s cinema, while questioning the current conditions of visibility and image storage, within the big data economy. Pooya Abbasian opposes his images - sublime residues, rejections or even counter-data - to the hegemonic structure of what is visible online. This “accursed share” of the digital image, soon to be promoted to the rank of art, in the same way as the Lumen do in front of us, is expressed through unfathomable and unidentifiable images for the production system in which they are yet produced - it is the part of controlled or repeated chance that the artist leaves to the machines he uses such as video projector, scanner, printer etc. We almost forget that a documentary image of the explosion of an oil

tanker or a crater of drought in Iran was at the origin of the emanation or the visual smoke which escapes in front of us; like the laughing gas that is now escaping from the Arctic as a result of global warming.

Ultimately, it seems that the image develops through fragmentation - for an image inscribed in space, a thousand other images can literally be born - and break-in - through dependence and emancipation, even diversion operated upon a visual economy that dominates our modes of perception and our cognitive patterns. In times characterised by a constant visual and multimedia stimulation, it seems that this work addresses precisely our hyper-fragmented memory. Pooya Abbasian's Lumen operate at a point of entanglement, in tension between intimate and personal memories and the memory of "found" or "captured" images (online, in the media, around us ...).



"Lumen" series in the collection of the CNAP (national center of contemporary art)  
180 x 270 x 1,2 cm (each 180 x 90 cm)

- *Lumen, Sanchi* 2020
- *Lumen, Subsidence* 2020
- *Lumen, To launch a satellite into orbit* 2020

## *TO LAUNCH A SATELLITE INTO ORBIT*

'To launch a satellite into orbit' is a lumen print of a screenshot of a photo taken from an online news website. The print has been scanned in high resolution before fading out. The final result is printed with an anti-reflect diasec technic. This series results from my obsessive habit of checking the news from Iran, my home country. As I haven't gone back since moving to France in 2011, this is somehow one of the only links that remain between me and the country where I grew up.

On 15 January 2019 Iran launched a satellite that failed to reach orbit, after the US warned against the launch earlier this month. The final result of the image stays negative. Receiving the information through online media, I captured the image and transferred it on photography paper and transferred it on large format print without manipulating it.

*To launch satellite into orbit*  
Print on plexiglass, 300x215 cm, 2019



## SANCHI

On January 6, 2018, Sanchi oil tanker crashed with a cargo ship in the East China Sea and caught fire. Sanchi drifted for eight days, causing extensive pollution. As it burnt, part of the tanker exploded on January 10. After further explosions, Sanchi sank on January 14, 2018. The entire crew of 32 died, with one body recovered from the sea and two from an on-board lifeboat.

When I saw this image, I was both fascinated and horrified by the beauty of it although it pictured a huge, sad environmental catastrophe. This paradoxical feeling stayed with me, and made this image unforgettable. Reading the news constantly, everyday, I recently read that the family of some of the people who passed away in this event received mysterious phone calls telling them that their relatives were alive, asking for help to come back home... like ghosts they seem to haunt me and their families.

*SANCHI*

Print on plexiglass, 300x215 cm, 2019



## SUBSIDENCE

In this work, the visible hole is the result of prolonged drought in southern Iran, where it formed. This geological term refers to a natural depression created by karst processes, with depths ranging from 1 to 600 meters. The image highlights the raw power of nature, reminding us of the fragility of the land in the face of such upheavals, and embodies how the earth can shift and collapse beneath our feet, leaving indelible scars in the landscape.

Lumen print of a screenshot of a photo from an online media site. The print was scanned in high resolution before its disappearance, with the final result printed directly on plexiglass.

*Subsidence*, 2019  
Print on plexiglass, 300 x 215 cm.



*Subsidence*  
Print on plexiglass, structure on metal, 200x140x50 cm, 2019







Exhibition view  
Galerie Zeto, Paris, France, 2021



*The answer,*  
Print on plexiglass, 200x140 cm, 2019

Lumen print from digital photo of an abandoned palazzo in Naples. The print was scanned in high resolution before fading out, and the final result is printed with diasec technic. It is also part of the project "Re-Transmission of a Memory".

I was interested in the reflection on the glass and through the printing technique because I like the fact that one can look at the place pictured in the photograph and their reflection at the same time. By manipulating the viewer's point of view I try to create a kind of confusion between memory of a place, the possibility of it being a fiction, and one's own physical presence in front of the work.

*Untitled,*  
Print on plexiglass, 150x120 cm, 2019





### What She Knew

People did not know what she knew, that she was not really a woman but a man, often a fat man, but more often, probably, an old man. The fact that she was an old man made it hard for her to be a young woman. It was hard for her to talk to a young man, for instance, though the young man was clearly interested in her. She had to ask herself, Why is this young man flirting with this old man?



Vidéo/Lumen print from « wild strawberries » of Ingmar Bergman



Exhibition view, *UnRepresented*, 2024, Paris, France.

## THE WHITE WILLY PETE

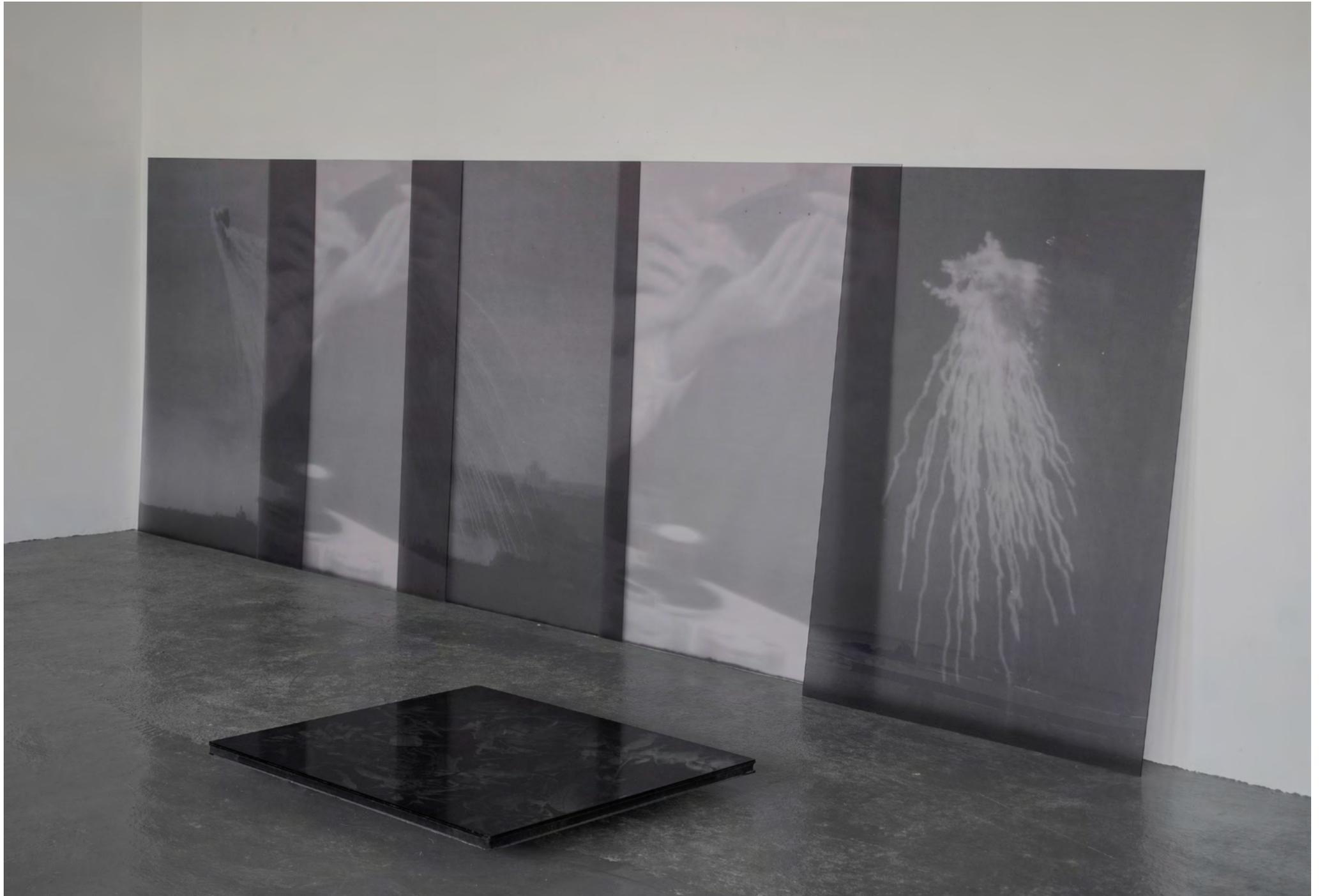
'The White Willy Pete!' is an exploration of the paradoxes that animate the images of our time, confronting aesthetic fascination with unspeakable horror, the possibility of leaving a trace, and the ambiguity of its materialization.

In the eponymous series, images of white phosphorus munition explosions sourced from the internet are printed on expired photographic paper, without fixation. The final print is a reprint on plexiglass of the scan of these disappearing images. They reveal a hidden tragedy behind their captivating appearance, questioning our complex relationship with violence and destruction.

Excerpt from text by Noémie Bernard



*The White Willy Pete, 2024*  
Print on plexiglass, 200 x 140 cm.

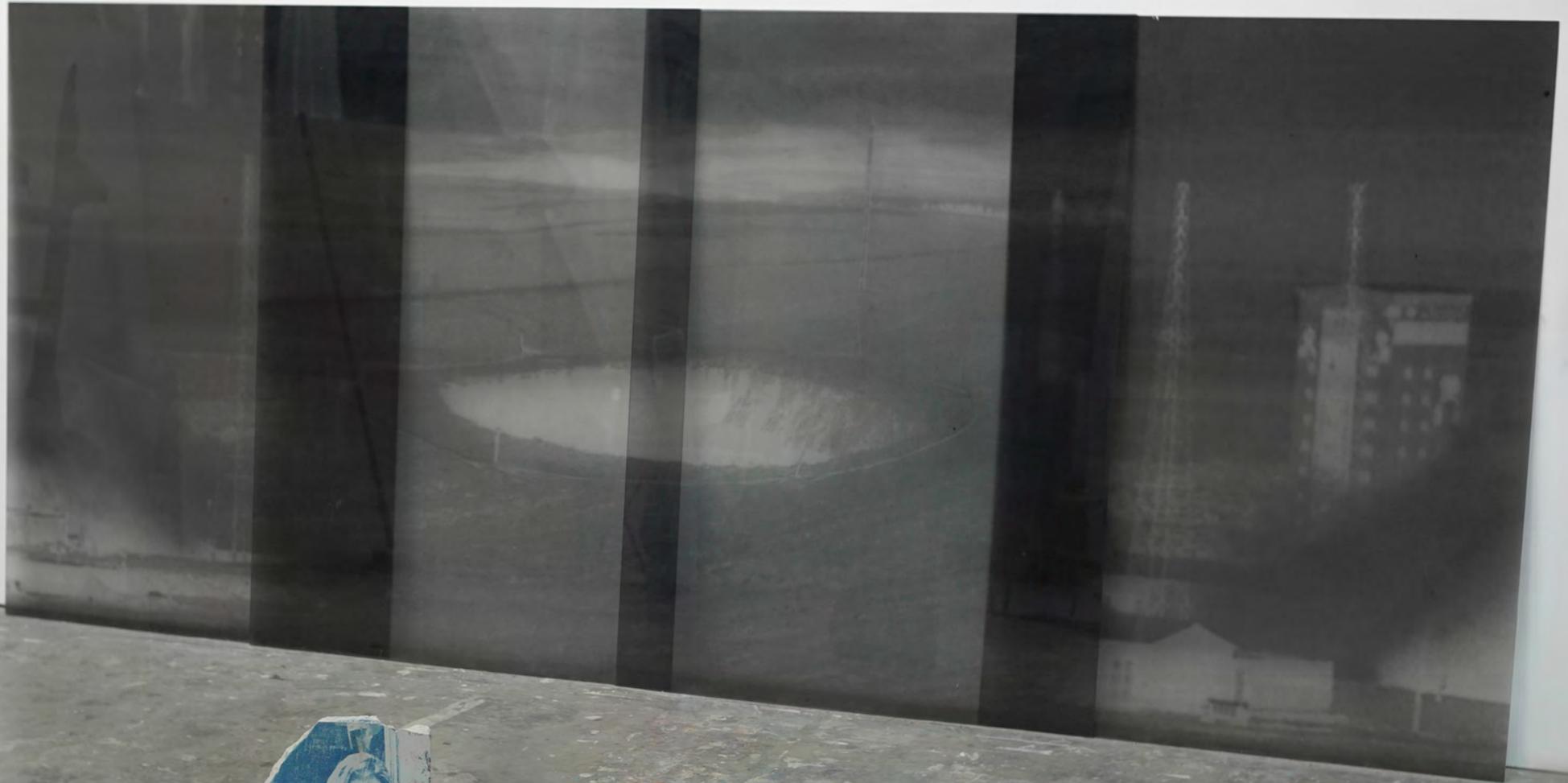


Studio view at la Fondation Fimenco, 2024.



Un livre en vente dans to

enfant  
bres,



Exhibition view,  
Le Radeau Des Cimes, Villa Belleville, Feb 2020



## LE RADEAU DES CIMES

Pooya Abbasian is drawn to images that present themselves to him. Coming from the world of cinema, he collects both documentary images and photos simply captured with his camera during his wanderings on his hard drive. The first step in accepting these recorded visuals for what they are—compositions—allows him to nullify the paradoxical relationship that exists between image and reality. Inspired by the cyanotype technique, an alternative printing process, he uses photographic negatives to project an image he defines as banal onto a surface, whether ceramic or construction plasterboard. Ultimately, it seems that the image is produced in fractions—for one image inscribed in space, a thousand others can literally be born from it—and by intrusion—through dependence and emancipation, or even the diversion of a visual economy that dominates our modes of perception and cognitive schemes.

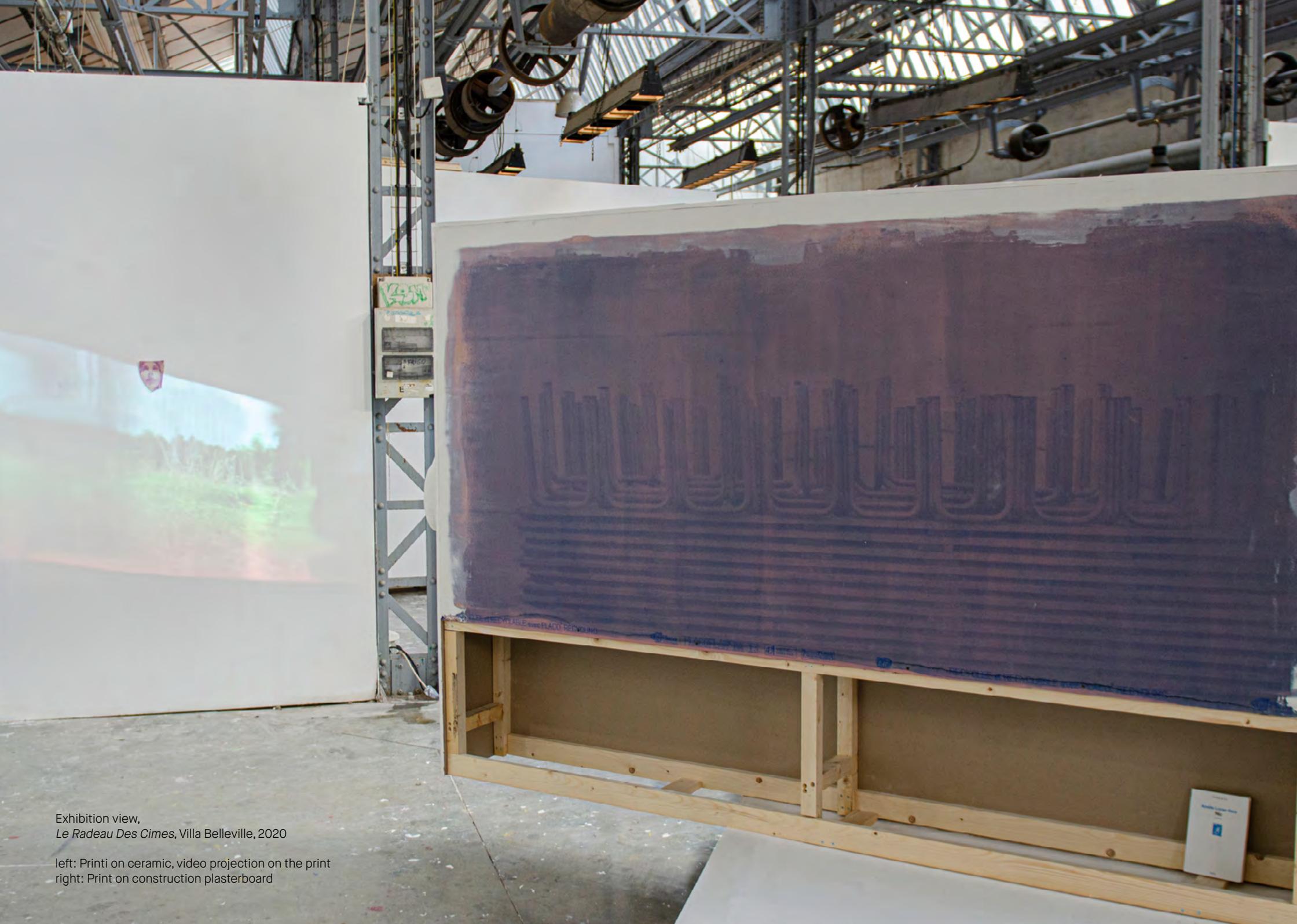
For over thirty years, biologist Francis Hallé has been navigating true green oceans. From the canopy of primary forests, he observes, discovers, draws, and analyzes plants, trees, vegetation, and the relationships that animate them. Setting down on the roof of the forest gives him privileged and unprecedented access to its entire biodiversity, which is recognized as the richest in the world. The “Canopy Raft” is the name

given to his scientific expeditions, and it is also the title of the book that retraces this incredible adventure.

Thus, the idea is to borrow a particular type of organism from the plant world, autotrophic and photosynthetic, in order to conceive the exhibition as a true bouquet of epiphytic artists. These plants, like a community in residence, evolve on a principle of cooperation. Their main characteristic is that they thrive by collaborating with the tree or structure that hosts them. Thinking of a residency at Villa Belleville as an ecosystem then reveals the subtleties, differences, and complementarities of each. The exhibition space thus reflects a fertile ground, conducive to creation in perpetual mutation.

Beyond this specific living and working environment, in the idea of shared studios where practices and personalities meet, it is necessary to signify within the exhibition space the confrontations and frictions, the exchanges and porosities that exist between the works, resulting in a shared enrichment.

Dimitri Levasseur



Exhibition view,  
*Le Radeau Des Cimes*, Villa Belleville, 2020

left: Printi on ceramic, video projection on the print  
right: Print on construction plasterboard



*Untitled*, 2020  
Video projection, ceramic print, 20x15x0.5 cm.



View of the installation in the studio during the exhibition *Le Radeau Des Cimes*,  
Villa Belleville, 2020



*Razi*, 2021  
photosensitive emulsion on paper, white fabric, 15 x 20 cm



Untitled, 2021  
photosensitive emulsion on paper, white fabric, 15 x 20 cm



Installation view from the exhibition *UnRepresented*, 2024, Paris, France.



Flower time-laps vidéo print(cyanotype) for Maison Margiela, variable dimension, 2023.



*Untitled, 2019*  
*Cyanotype print on construction board 25 x 16 cm*



*(Re)Transmission of Memory* (work in progress)  
Print on three layers of plexiglass, 20x17 cm, 2020



*Untitled 2019,  
Cyanotype print, acrylic on board, 28 x 20 cm*





This work is a photograph shot with a smartphone, and printed on glass. The picture vaguely represents a landscape, a landscape that is broken, divided in the middle by a digital breach and an actual cut. It has in fact been taken on the move, from the window of a train, and that is why it is hard to understand what is going on on the image. We recognize reflections on the glass that are incorporated in the photograph, and elements of nature. This work is the product of a moment, depicting visually what I imagine by a disjunction between time and space. One goes faster than the other, carried away in the whirl of life.

Text excerpt by Clementine Proby for exhibition project *Broken Time-Space*.

*Untitled* (work in progress)  
Print on two layers of plexiglass, 150x120 cm, 2019



*(Re)Transmission of Memory*  
Print on a piece of found wall, 55x40x7 cm, 2019



One of the first works I realised for my new project “(Re) Transmission of Memory”. The installation includes a print on fabric made thanks to 3 days of exposure to a video projector, and some plaster objects I found on the site where I took the photo. In this work, I intend to explore the idea of transmission. Transmission between place and my perception of it, and through the mediums I use. I discovered this abandoned place haunted by its past, appropriated these unidentified, moulded plaster objects that look like fossils, and tried to capture it with my camera. Then taking the image from the lens of my camera, I undertook the digital process of the projector; to, finally, this transparent fabric. I used this fabric for its precarious look, like a fragile trace of the place, somehow in-between memory and fantasy.

*(Re)Transmission of Memory*  
print on fabric, found objects, 150x100x30 cm, 2019



*(Re)Transmission of Memory* (project work in progress)  
Print on a piece of found wall, 80x80x5 cm, 2018

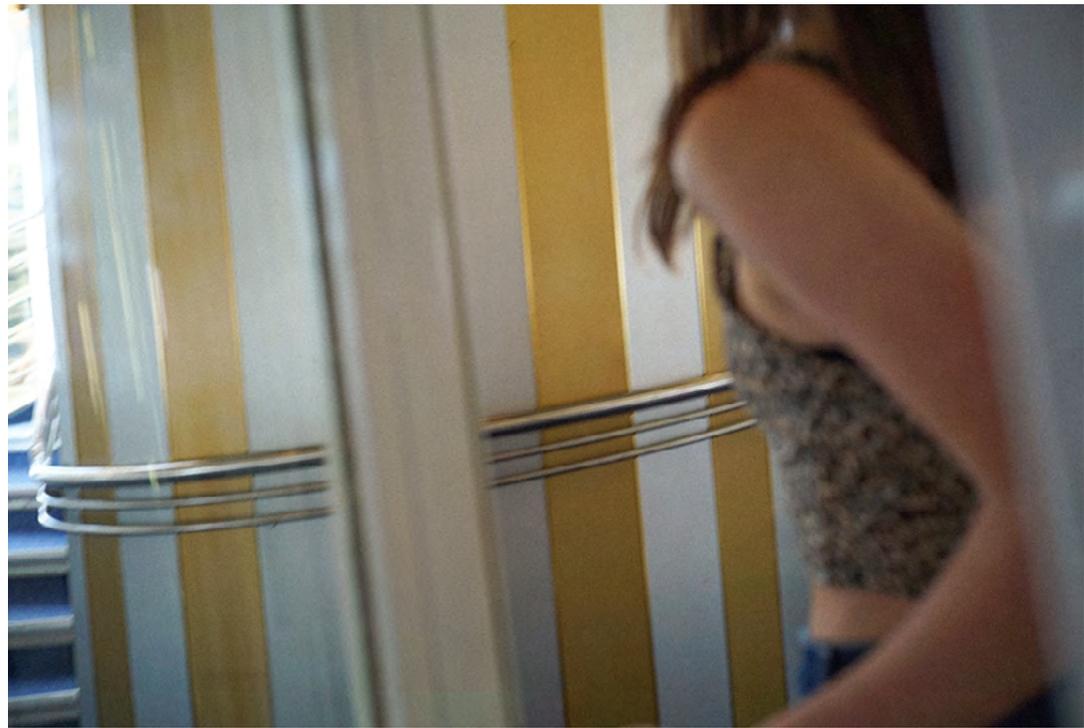
## **UNDER THE SKY, SOMEONE IS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING UNKNOWN**

is a series resulting from random photography, without looking through the camera (starting in 2018). The camera becomes somewhat autonomous: it acts as a “third eye” that captures a direction, a moment, and a composition that I would never grasp on my own. My role then is simply to select from among thousands of shots without any modification. This is part of a reflection I have conducted on the notion of free will and an attempt to bypass imposed determinism.

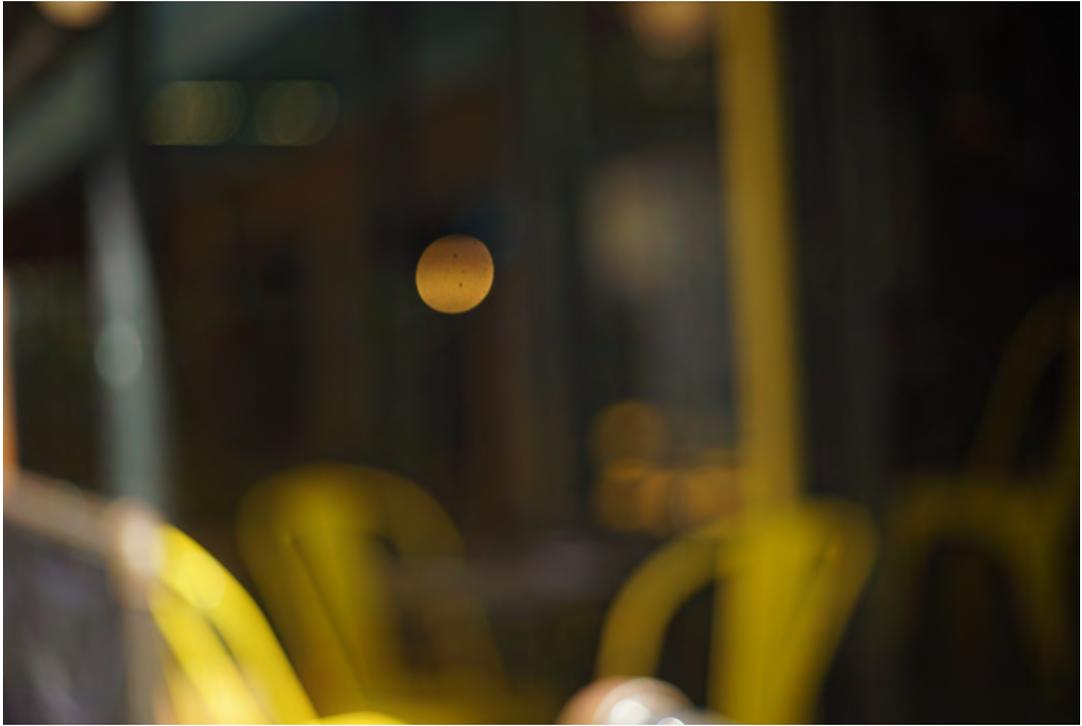
The final photograph leads to the Japanese concept of Ma or negative space, as a gap in subjective perception. Ma is a Japanese term that means “interval,” “space,” “duration,” or “distance.” This term is used as an aesthetic concept, referring to the subjective variations of emptiness (silence, space, duration, etc.) that connects two objects, two separate phenomena.

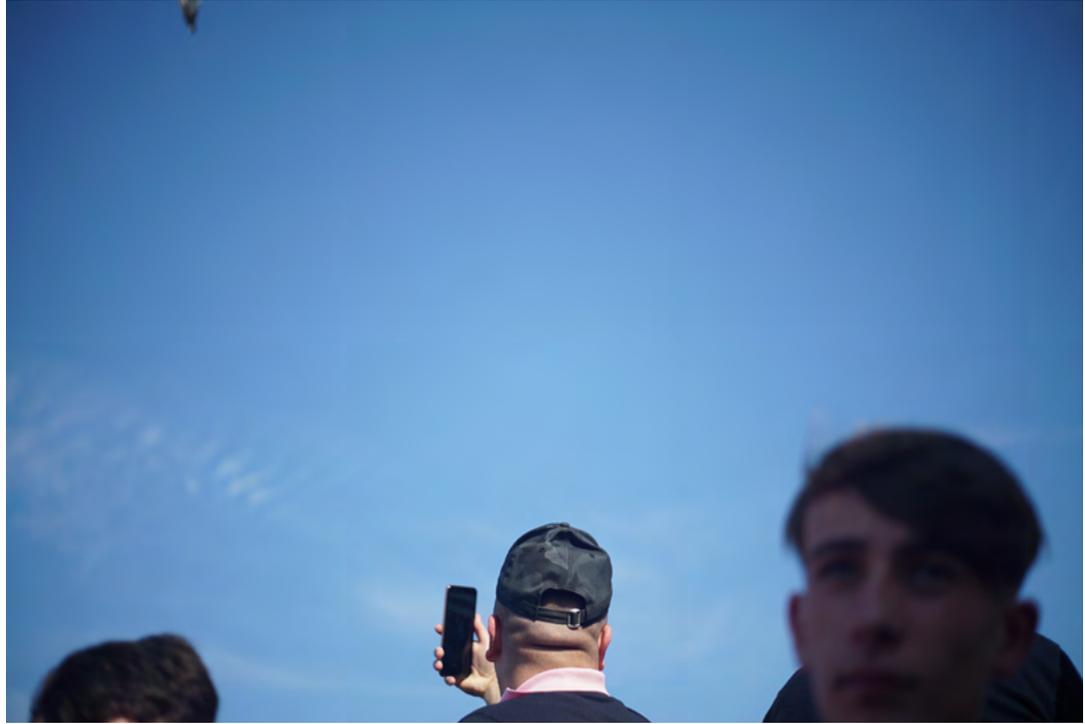


View of the exhibition during the open studio at La Box residency (ENSA)

















## DISCREETLY LIVING BEHIND YOUR FACE

Texte by Clémentine Proby

The exhibition *Discreetly living behind your face* results from a project undertaken by Pooya Abbasian for more than 5 years and concluded during his residency at Galerie des petits carreaux in Brittany, France. His approach, both sensible and plastic, opens up a reflexion on social norms and the search for an identity through alterity.

Inspired by the cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky and José Luis Guerín, his work challenges photography and plays with the grid driving images' creation and diffusion. Using a singular process – analogue pictures printed thanks to a video-projector, he intends to find his way beyond technical binaries. Both a eulogy of the contemporary pixel and a reclaiming of the old cyanotype method, he intends to preserve the digital trace on analogue prints. Maybe more of a painter than a photographer, Pooya Abbasian celebrates the poetry of the poor image, a blurriness that makes room for imagination. Original prints, pictures found on the internet and film shots make up a very personal iconography, freed from genre imperatives.

Possible narratives, fantasized stories; the exhibition keeps the mystery going. Taken on the sly, from the back, and playing with environmental constraints, the pictures are the impressions of a benevolent voyeur. The poetry is to be found in his obsession for keeping his models' identity secret: he is not interested in the verdict given by face features but rather by the harmony of neck's lines. Seeing without really knowing creates the sense of great tenderness that emanates from his work. Pooya Abbasian's approach is voluntarily out of focus. It is a search for indeterminacy. What face? But also: what identity? These questions feed negatively the visitor's own fantasy.

The face is the window on consciousness. For Emmanuel Levinas, the ethical imperative arises through it: it is the outbreak of the Other to my subjectivity, as well as the ban of violence. Judith Butler expanded the definition to the back, through which the face is abstractly represented. In this way, *Discreetly living behind your face* hesitates between carnal figuration and soul abstraction, it is an attempt to express the unexplainable, the enigma of alterity and the construction of our gaze. A powerful cyan blue depicts the poetry of a relation both solitary and deeply informed by the Other. A story of missed encounters.

[1] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totalité et infini*, 1961.

[2] Judith Butler, *Precarious life : The power of mourning and violence*, 2004.



*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print on cardboard, 78,5x60 cm



Video of the installation I made for my exhibition at Galerie52 for the project “Discreetly Living Behind Your Face”. It was made in collaboration with sound artists Aly Ostovar & Andrea Kofinas, who created a 45 min sound piece, and an installation made of my photographs and tarps floating.

Following this idea of exposing the poor and blurred image, I used very light plastic tarps that moved naturally as visitors walked around the installation. In this way, the visitors were part of this spatial poem made of soft sounds and fading, changing images.

[Link](#) to watch the video

Vidéo (1min 52sec) de l'exposition *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*  
Galerie 52, Folkwang-uni, Essen, Allemagne

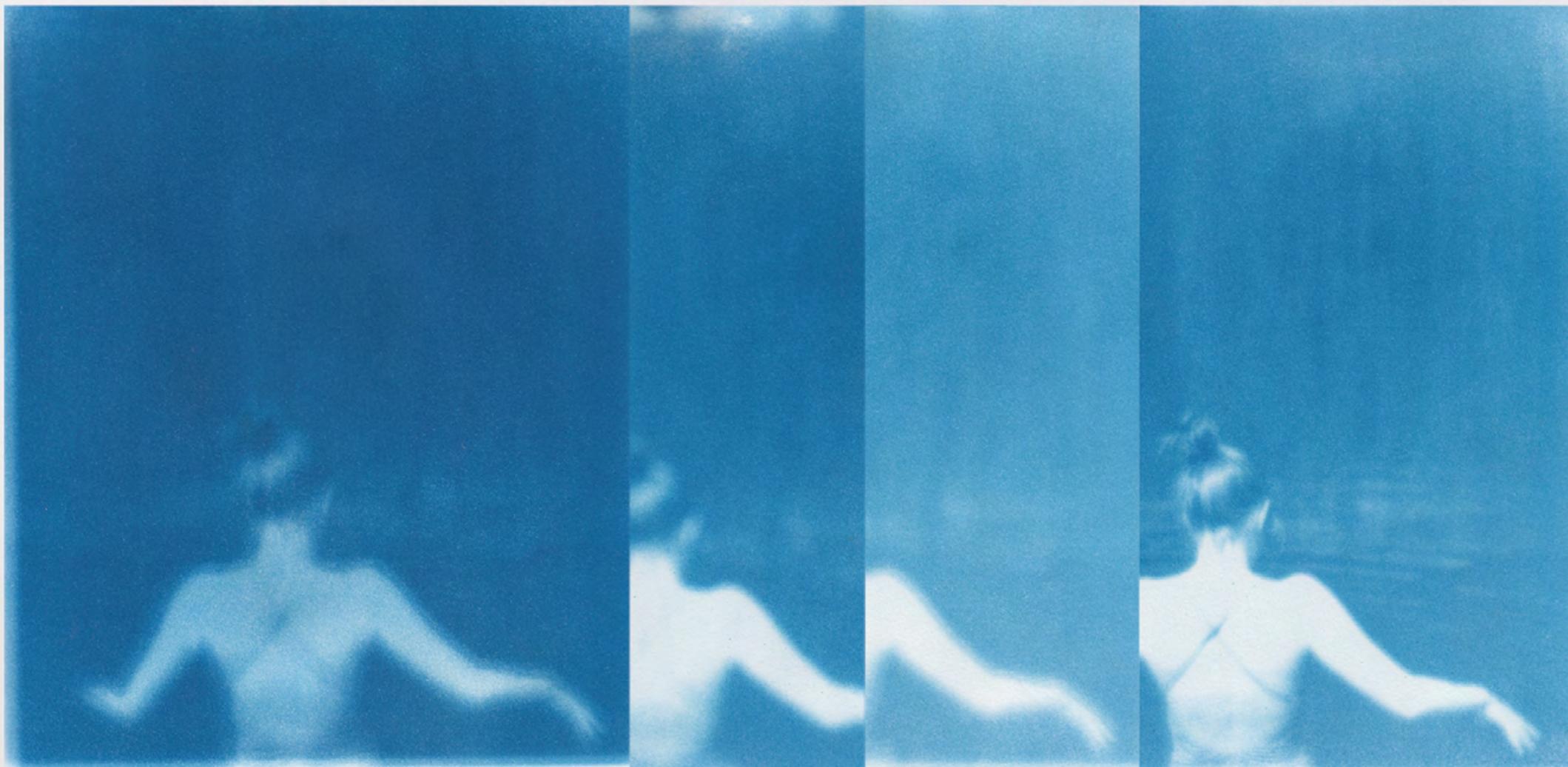


Untitled , 2018  
Cyanotype prints on boards, 250x120x30 cm



*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print, transparent paper, 100x100 cm





*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print, 100x20,5 cm



*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print, 60×20,5 cm



Exhibition view *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*  
Galerie 52, Folkwang-uni, Essen, Germany.



*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print, 60×20,5 cm



Exhibition view *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*,  
Galerie des petits carreaux, Saint-Briac, France, April 2018.



*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print, 33×26 cm



Detail of print realized with video projector.



*Untitled*, 2018  
Cyanotype print, 28x50 cm



Exhibition view *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*,  
Galerie des petits carreaux, Saint-Briac, France, April 2018.



Exhibition view *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*  
Galerie des petits carreaux, Saint-Briac, France.



Exhibition view *Discreetly Living Behind Your Face*  
Galerie 52, Folkwang-uni, Essen, Germany.

### 3 SECONDES OF FILM, 12 HOURS OF LIGHT

Cyanotype print of 3 seconds of a film looped on negative (The Mirror by Andrei Tarkovsky) resulting from 12 hours of exposure to video projector.

Before I made a series of "video printing" from The Mirror, I was obsessively taking photos from women's back in public places for 5 years, when one friend told me that my photos looked like they were taken from a Tarkovsky movie. Strangely, I always loved his movies but didn't realise their influence on my work, but then it became clear. I embraced this unconscious accident and started to print some moments from this movie (around 3 seconds each work).



*3 secondes of film x 12 hours of light : (The Mirror, Andrei Tarkovski) beta version*  
Cyanotype print on 5mm cardboard, 120×80 cm, 2018.



*3 secondes of film x 6 hours of light : (The Mirror, Andrei Tarkovski) alpha version*  
Cyanotype print, each print size: 36x28 cm, 2018.

