

Gaspar Willmann



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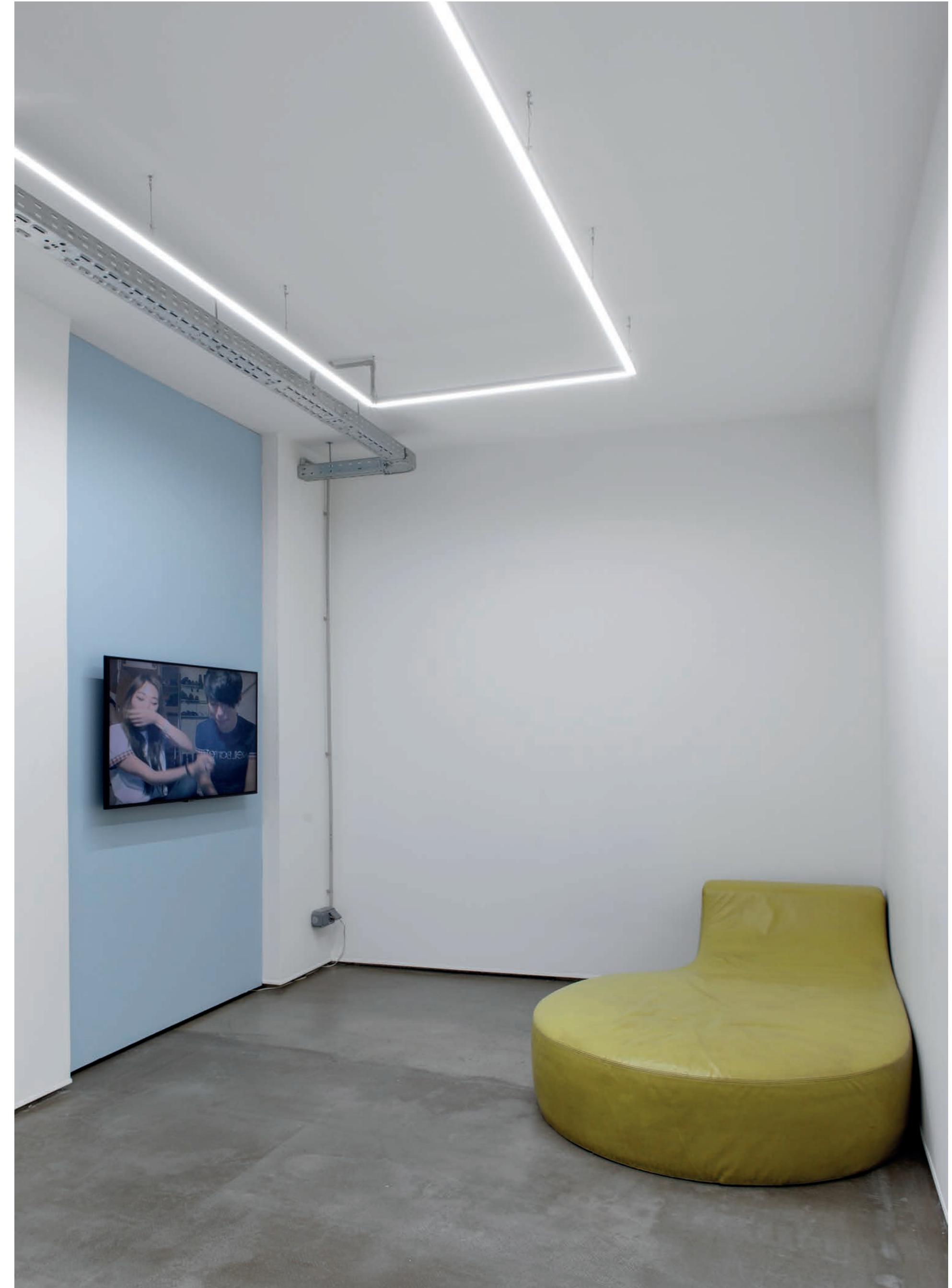
a) : *What life means to me*, 7 x 5cm, aluminum door handle, oil on linen (2024)

Page, 2, page 3, b) : exhibition view, *My ligature room in a glass house*, Exo Exo, Paris (2024)



a

b



Painters for a new millennium

When Gaspar Willmann, at these times that are his and ours, re-explores the question of reproduced and found images, their mediation and their circulation, he does so as a critical heir to the post-internet era whose corpse was left for dead after the 2016 Berlin Biennale.

Times have changed, suffering bodies resemble the digital utopia that wanted to dissolve them, and eyes have been opened to the structural inequalities validated by algorithmic rationality. While Willmann, who graduated from Lyon's fine-arts school last year, may pose as the heir to Seth Price and Artie Vierkant, it is impossible for him to celebrate them : the latter's « object images » which served as a manifesto for post-internet art in 2010, constantly moving back and forth between sculpture and its modified exhibition view (The Image Object Post-Internet published on several internet sites), are depressing because they open up the infinite abyss of nothingness right under our feet.

Early in his studies, Willmann undertook a painting project which failed to satisfy him : what was the point of such painstaking effort to reproduce something that already exists and which mostly leads only to self-gratifying circulation on social media ? He opted instead for found footage, before deciding it was also too smooth and empty. Until suddenly he hit on the perfect tactic of having them parasite off each other to break the surface, stain the smooth and bring out all the affect.

Today Willmann works in both painting and video simultaneously. His paintings have used the same protocol for two years now : first he creates a montage in Photoshop combining two registers of images, some he's taken, others found at random in image databases. Using the brush tool, he retouches the montage, mixing the colours, and blurring the edges like watercolour. After that, he prints onto canvas and again retouches, this time on oil. A still life of edibles and plastic packaging emerges, often set against a sunset backdrop that is heavenly or crepuscular depending on your point of view, evoking a memory that is already evanescent, standardized and pre-captured by the memory of other images and other compositions that influence our pursuit of the « right » image.

With the « JUMAP » series (*Juste une mise au point sur les plus belles images de ma vie*), emotion comes easily, immediately, causing a sensation of « stupidity » : numb stupefaction mixed with an exuberant sublime, the type of affect of alienated modernity described by Sianne Ngai in her book *Ugly Feelings* (2005). In his videos, Willmann also catches the recent « emotional turn » in the social sciences as found in the work of Ngai, Sara Ahmed or Brian Massumi, hunting down the minor or altered emotions between frustration and impotence that are born from the image consumer's constant over-stimulation, the bedrock of emotional capitalism.

Ingrid Luquet-Gad





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JUMAP (dépouilles), 188 x 110 cm / UV ink and oil on linen (2024)

www.jumap.com

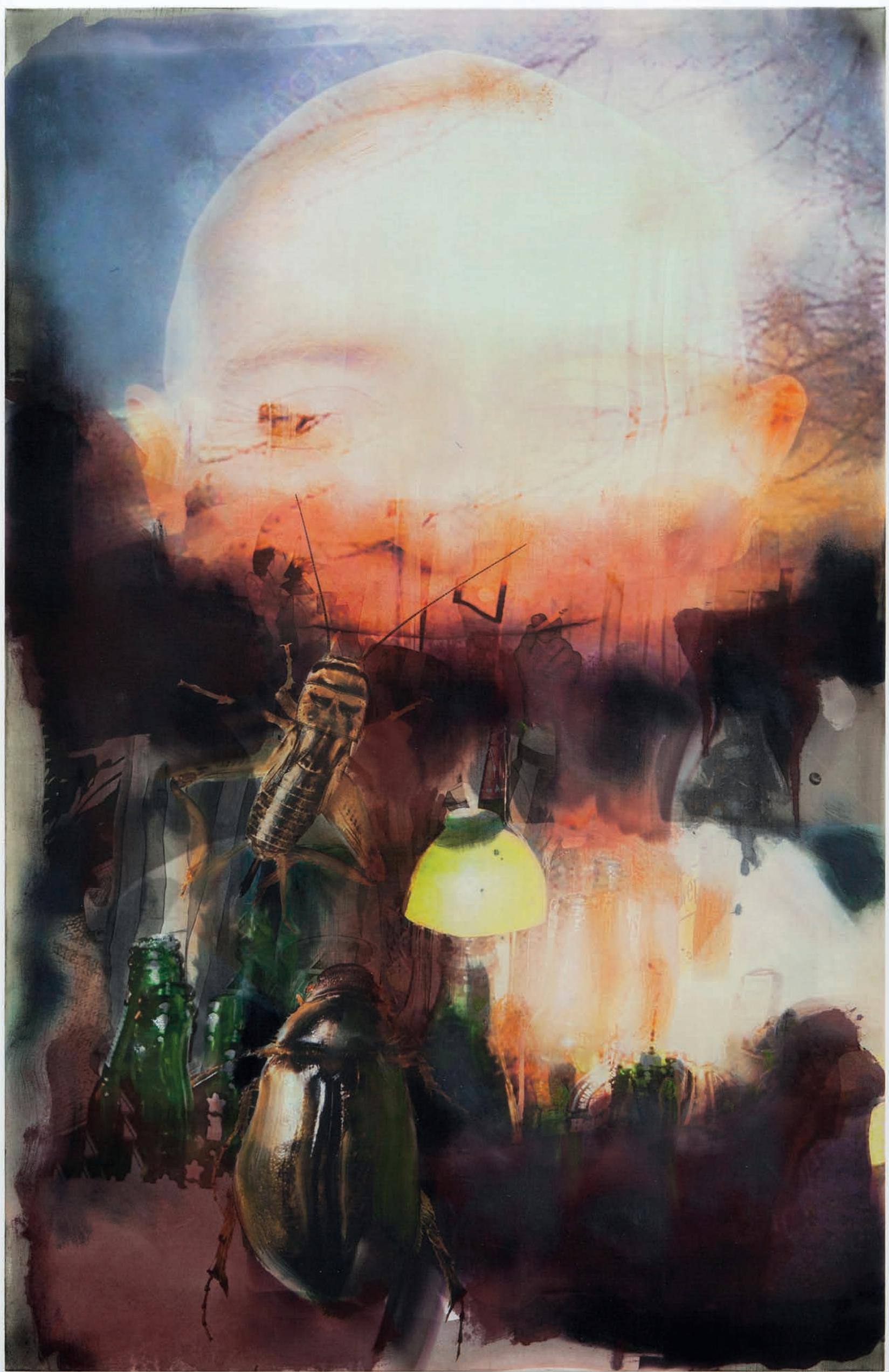


a



a) : JUMAP (*top 40 sadnesss*), 124 x 80 cm /
ink and oil on linen (2024)

b



b) : JUMAP (*vous êtes la peste et nous
sommes l'antidote*), 124 x 80 cm / ink and oil
on linen (2024)



Le pixel mort, exhibition view at Frac des Pays de la Loire, Nantes (2023)

Installation with four distinct canvases,
painted tree and a looping video (wood,
linen, cotton, oil, acrylic and various prints)

I

O



b



c



a) *Le pixel mort (Lily)*, screenshot / video loop 07'36"

b) *Le pixel mort (Lily)*, screenshot / video loop 07'36"

c) *Le pixel mort*, exhibition view at Frac des Pays de la Loire, Nantes (2023)

IDAGF

Je ne sais pas ce qui a pu changer depuis hier, mais je me réveille différent, d'une humeur transformée, tellement bien, tellement mal, comme si mes émotions avaient muté durant la nuit, excitées par un rêve ou malmenées par l'insouciance, mes yeux collent et ma bouche est sèche, et avant d'avoir eu le courage d'avaler une gorgée d'eau, avant même d'avoir pris le risque d'une première clope, je me jette sur mon téléphone encore que ma vision soit troublée, officiellement pour vérifier l'heure, en vérité pour réguler mon état au rythme des choses, je laisse la front cam me reconnaître avec difficulté puis plonge dans le bain des histoires du monde, je me rassure à la seconde où je me rappelle que ce ne sont que les histoires de mon monde, les artifices se succèdent, ça ressemble au choix au désir ou au dépit, j'ai l'impression que mes neurones épousent doucement la logique d'un algorithme imparable, qu'elles en acceptent l'ergonomie et en récitent le code par cœur à l'instant où je susurre un hello world, l'anesthésie fonctionne à merveille, c'est parfait, je me sens si bien, je me sens si mal, IDGAF, je réponds aux textos, je supprime les spams et je checke les news, c'est en ordre, il ose twerker sur une plage mexicaine après avoir appelé à la révolte, iel déclame ses sentiments sans avoir pris la peine de me les partager, je crois qu'on s'adresse à moi en voyant des dog whistlings partout avant de réfréner mes pulsions paranoïaques, c'est ok, Marie ne fait que de belles choses, Masa ne dit que des bêtises, la drogue et les images s'enchaînent pourvu qu'elles soient de synthèse, un poème déprimé d'Ossian préfigure une pétition virale, IDGAF, je me souviens que Gaspar m'a appris l'existence du terme hyposcenium pour définir l'espace situé sous la scène des théâtres antiques et je crois y voir une interprétation mythologique du multiverse, je poursuis le doomscrolling en hésitant à me faire passer pour Satoshi Nakamoto ou à t'avouer que je suis amoureux, j'ai envie de commencer une partie de billard en ligne mais IDGAF, je me rappelle des théories de Yarbus et du I, etcetera mais IDGAF, je me laisse bercer par des filtres bleus, des filtres chiens, des filtres chiants, IDGAF, ça a fait la fête jusqu'à pas d'heure et ça s'insurge face à des conflits passagers, on échange des références pas banales puis on m'invite chez Exo Exo, j'ai déjà vu ce truc-là, je vous reconnais, ça y est, je me sens si bien, je me sens si mal, IDGAF, je me souviens que les glitches peuvent être provoqués et je me prends à rêver d'un attentat miniature, je trolle chaque publication et répète à tout va que, oui, vraiment, c'est bon, IDGAF, le vent qui frappe ma fenêtre ne m'a jamais paru aussi virtuel, je suis loin sous la surface, loin de la matière, peu importe, l'air ne manque pas et le soleil n'a plus d'importance, le réel est une application.

a

b



II

a) *IDGAF*, Théo Casciani (exhibition text, 2022)

b) *JUMAP* (*closing your eyes isn't going to change anything*) 122 x 188 x 3,5cm / ink and oil on linen (2023)

a) : *Polychlorure escapism*, 11x20 cm / ink
and oil on linen, PVC air vent (2022)

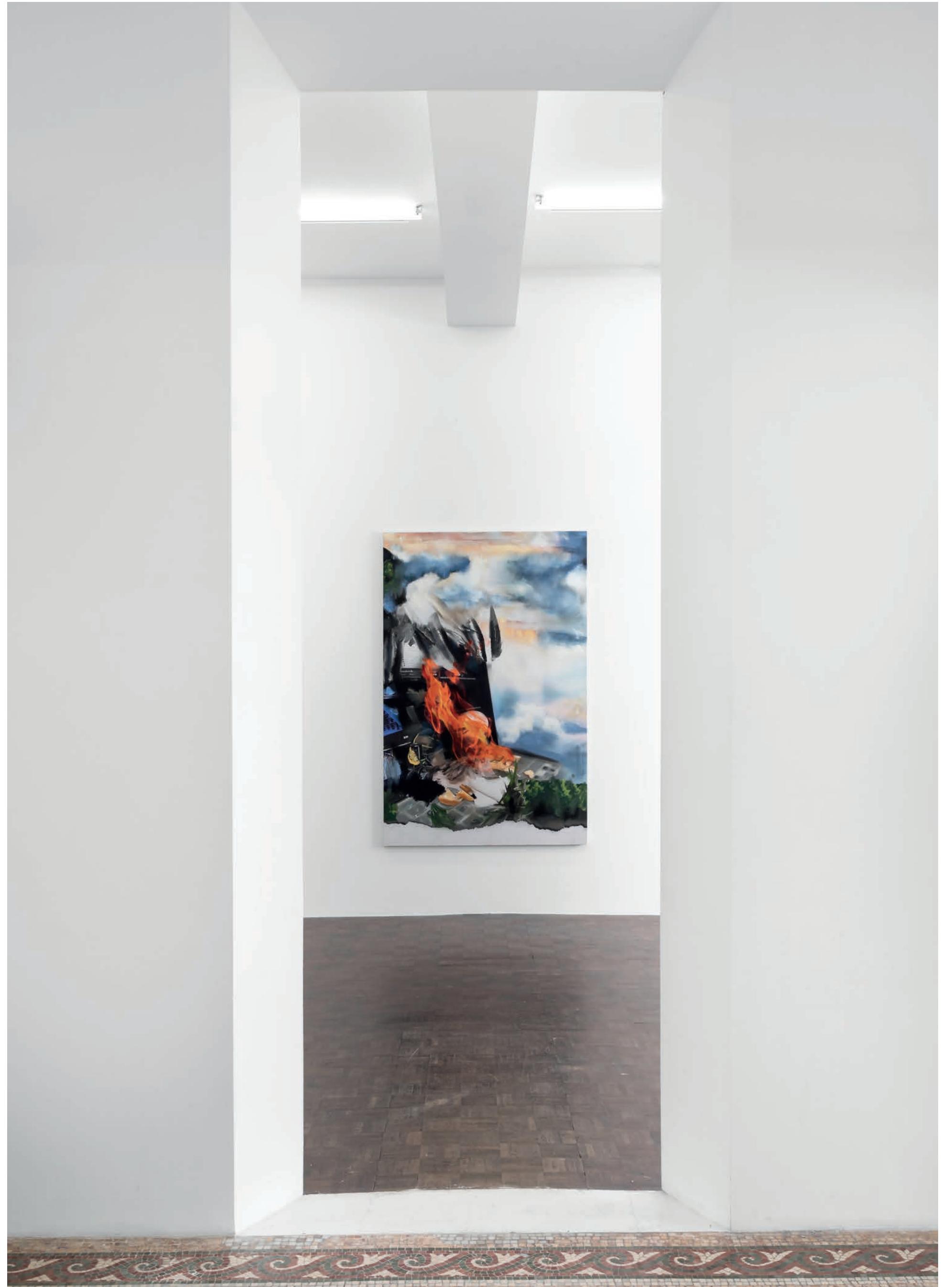
b) : exhibition view, *A sedimentation of the
mind*, Meessen De Clercq, Bruxelles (2023)

I2

a



b





Exhibition view, *A sedimentation of the mind*, Meessen De Clercq, Bruxelles (2023)



Brother from another mother

[...] the question of vulnerability is also in Gaspar Willmann's fiction. His work on the image is inscribed in a wish of never fixating it. 'My desire to build or fix an image often start by digest flux. Most of the time, the information is just the title of an article I will not read. It's a just an empty shell of truth keeping things open. I saw these news telling that people started to recognize themselves, friends or family on tobacco warning labels. So I started to work on this baby with a cigarette who reminds me a lot of one of my favourite painting called Melancholy, by Francesco Hayez.' The artist uses AI to complete the image and enlarge the frame of this story that already sounds like a tale. The image is printed, then painted and painted again, researching the good moment of the composition, the perfect equation. It is a romantic quest in Gaspar's work. It testifies of a fusional relation with the image and a desire of slowing down a world of mass production.

Gaspar Willmann use digital technology, data and AI to create spaces that generate fictions. These fictions delve into our emotions, habits, perspectives and what the use of data can contain of human, absurd, dangerous, poetic and also profoundly political. A fallible technology that creates an out of field and out of control space, that writes funny stories and finally submit to the affects in order to leave them some space is what interest the artists here.

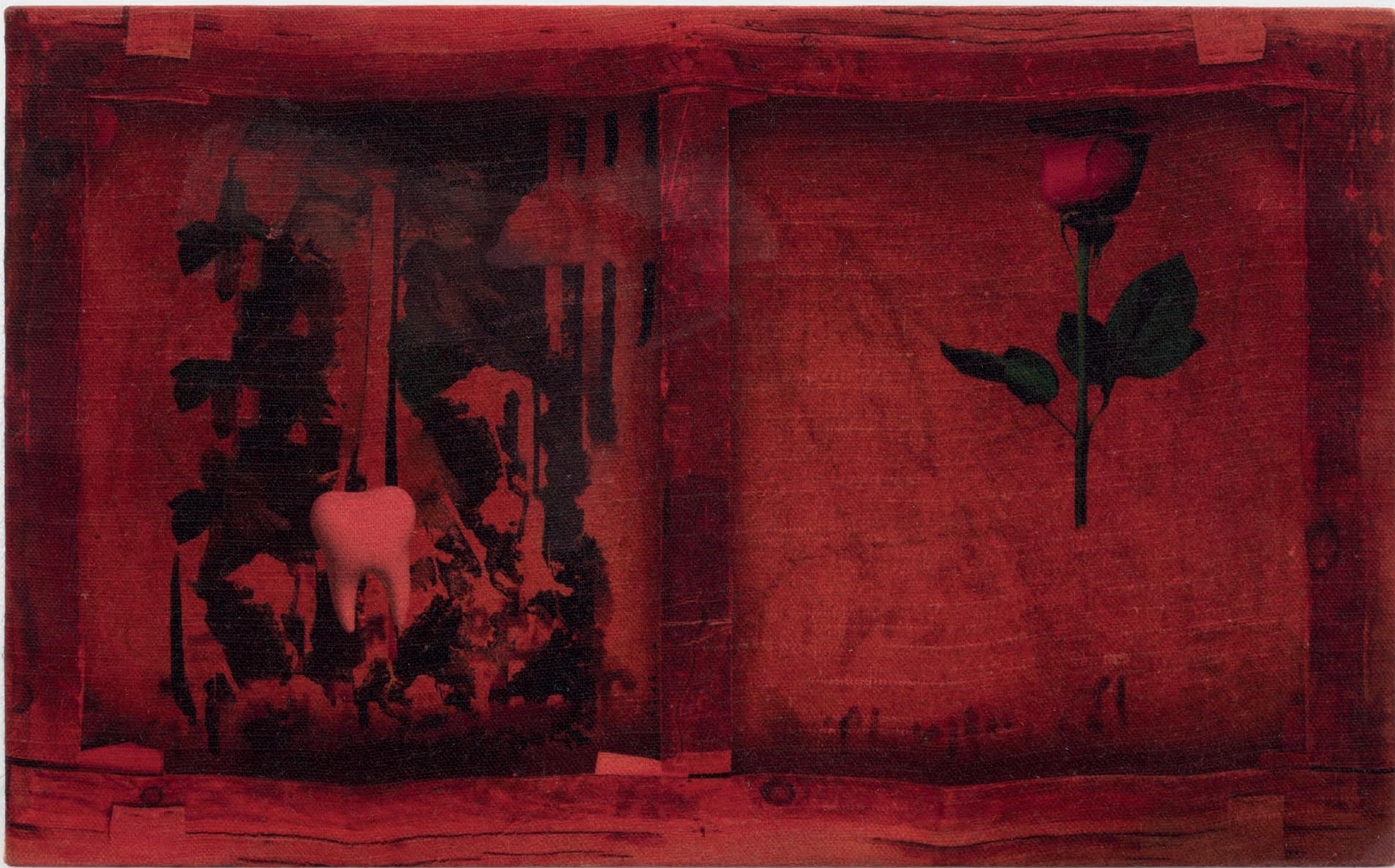
What technology holds of transparent, fluid, variable, and blurry.

It reminds me of the Cyborg Manifesto by Donna Haraway and the myth of the hybrid cyborg as a rejection of the rigidity of the borders separating the human from the machine. We come back to the cult stories. Her book is a critique of occidental binary categorisations. She concludes as such : 'I prefer to be a cyborg than a goddess'. Against a unique code that would perfectly translate any signification. For the reign of narration, romanticism, and science-fiction.

Elisa Rigoulet

a) *Brother from Another mother*, exhibiton view at Wanda, Warsaw (2024)
page 13 : exhibition view, Fondation Fiminco, Romainville (2022)





2024



Late night fap in the open space, 53x40 x15 cm, found drawer, stuff, hobby model kit, ink and oil on linen (2024)

THE ENORMOUS SPACE

ting with my back to the freezer, which I have moved out of the kitchen into the pantry. But already the walls of this once tiny room constitute a universe of their own. The ceiling is so distant that clouds might form below it.

I have eaten nothing for the past week, but I no longer dare to leave the pantry and rarely venture more than a step from my position. I could easily lose my way crossing the kitchen and never be able to return to the only security and companionship that I know.

There is only one further retreat. So much space has receded from me that I must be close to the irreducible core where reality lies. This morning I gave in briefly to the sudden fear that all this has been taking place within my own head. By shutting out the world my mind may have drifted into a realm without yardsticks or sense of scale. For so many years I have longed for an empty world, and may unwittingly have constructed it within this house. Time and space have rushed in to fill the vacuum that I created. It even occurred to me to end the experiment, and I stood up and tried to reach the front door, a journey that seemed as doomed as Scott's return from the South Pole. Needless to say, I was forced to give up the attempt long before crossing the threshold of the hall.

Behind me Brenda lies comfortably, her face only a few inches from my own. But now she too is beginning to move away from me. Covered by a jewelled frost, she rests quietly in the compartment of the freezer, a queen waiting one day to be reborn from her cryogenic sleep.

The perspective lines flow from me, enlarging the interior of the compartment. Soon I will lie beside her, in a palace of ice that will crystallise around us, finding at last the still centre of the world which came to claim me.

(1989)

195

a

b



I8

a) *My desk is a sentimental guillotine*, 32 x 49 x 20 cm, found drawer, stuff, hobby model kit, ink and oil on linen (2024)

b) *The Enormous Space*, J.G. Ballard , 1989

a



a) *not the sharpest knife in the drawer (but i'm a spoon)*, 72 x 45 x 10 cm, found drawer, stuff, hobby model kit, ink and oil on linen (2024)

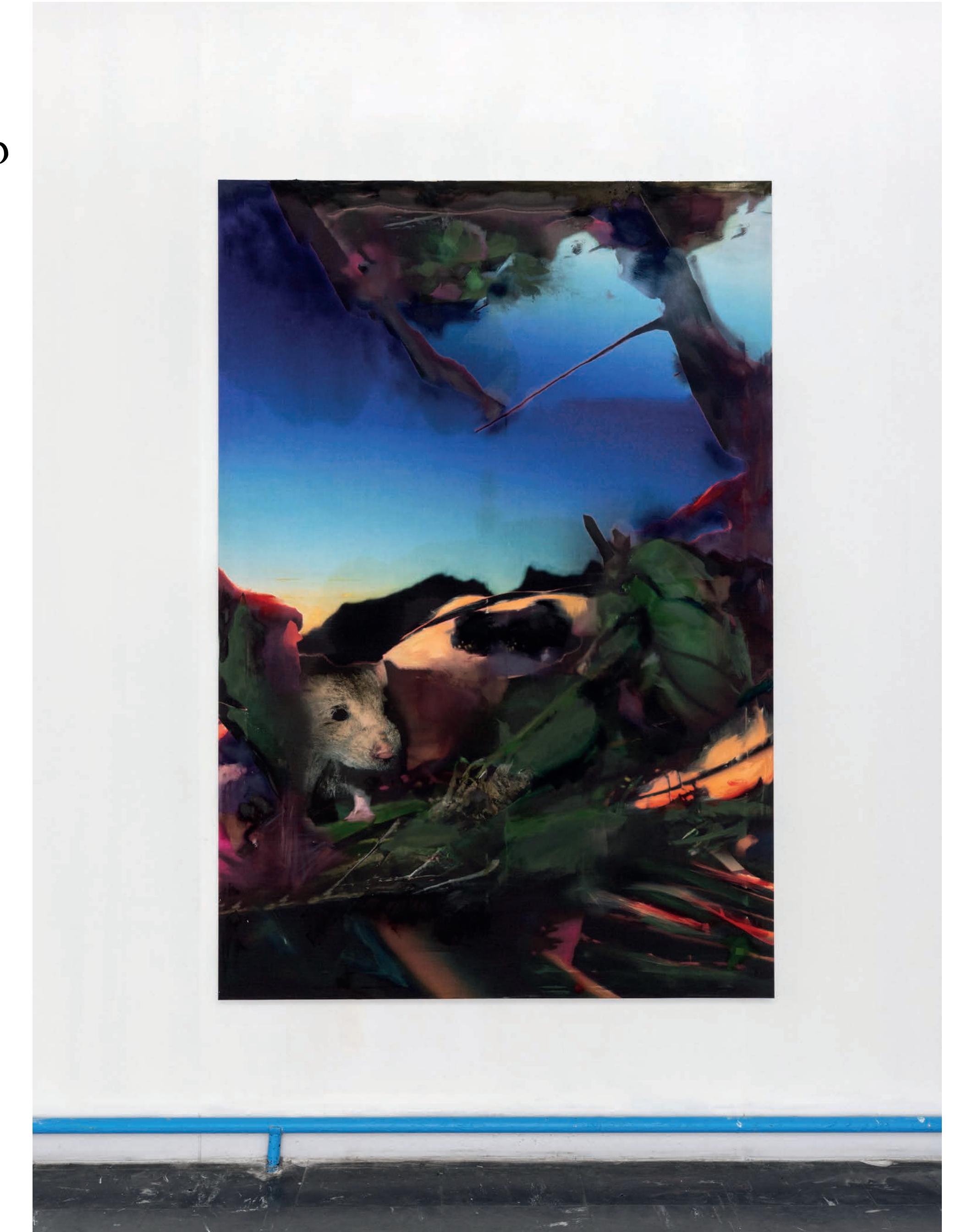
b) *google workaholic quotes hyposcenium meaning*, 53 x 35 x 15 cm, found drawer, stuff, hobby model kit, ink and oil on linen (2024)

b



a) *Portfolio*, Mouvement, Orianne Hidalgo-Laurier (2021)

b) *Rats, artist at work*, 188 x 122cm, ink and oil on linen (2023)



[...] In his most recent video with the evocative title « De trop voir, mes yeux se sont fermés » Gaspar Willmann explores the subject of eye tracking, or the real pursuit that modern oculometry represents, which pushes the technologies that track eye movement even further, to the point of predicting our future glances. Beyond demonstrating the now well-known links between surveillance and imagery, gaze and consumption, oppressive workspaces and ergonomics, Gaspar strives to show how these new «ways of seeing»—to quote John Berger—culminate in a sort of «non-vision,» where we no longer even look at what we see too much.

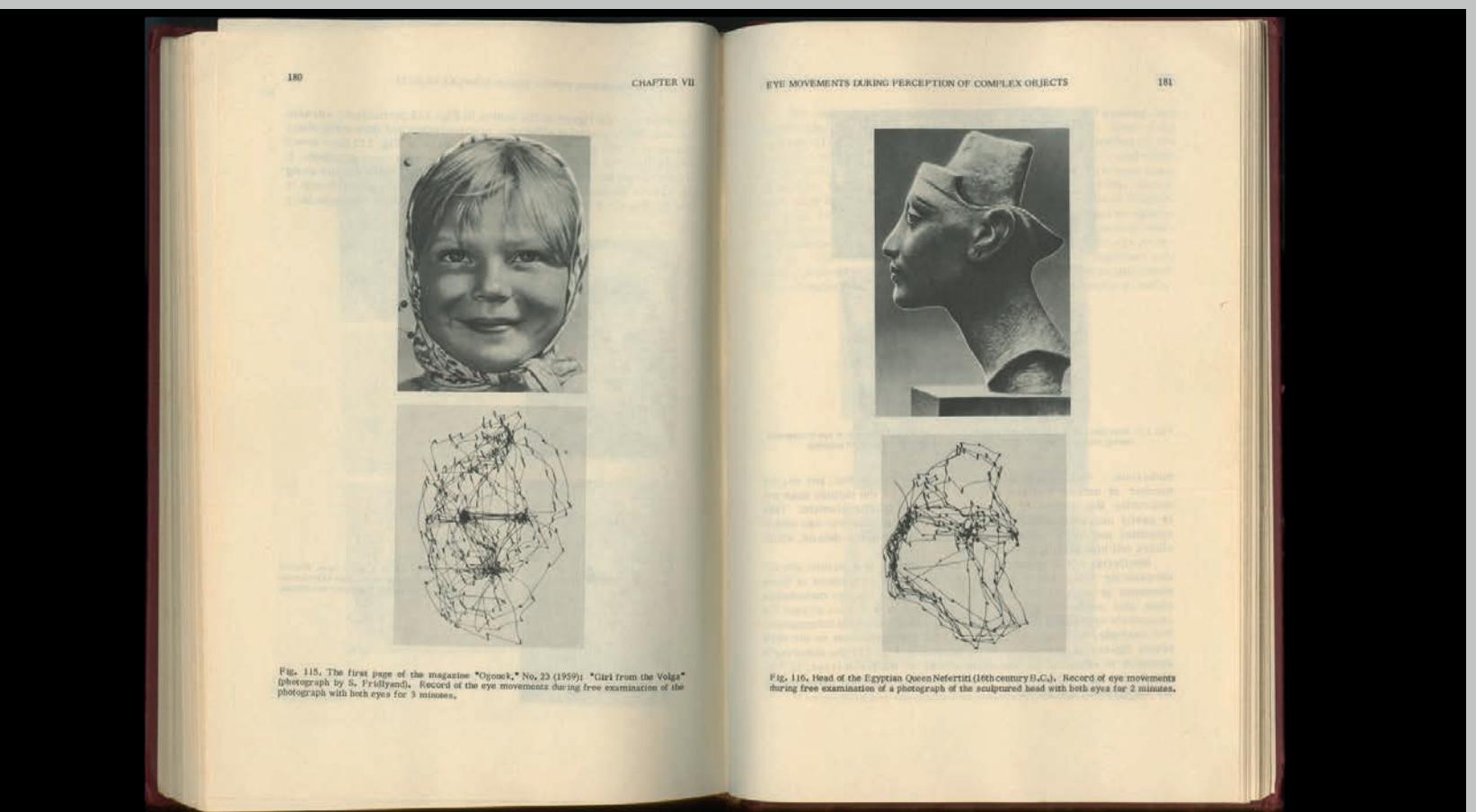
It is precisely this paradox that is striking in Gaspar's practice: a practice that constantly engages with the false—images, vision, and the mutations of work—and plays with it. However, Gaspar's work has no other pretensions than to continually reveal its artifices while multiplying references drawn from various fields, constructing a shifted, innovative, and harmonious poetics and aesthetics. For Gaspar, it is not just about developing a political discourse as a theme or form, but rather rethinking his own methods, favoring a slowdown and a reflection on the ethics of his work, particularly in the way he works with the actors who lend their voices and images to his films.

Line Ajan

→ <https://vimeo.com/793905345> (EN, stfr. password : DTV)



right : DTVMYSSF or *De trop voir, mes yeux se sont fermés*, video 13'03" (2022)
top : exhibition view, *Dans des yeux clos, il n'entre pas de mouche*, ExoExo, Paris (2022)









Exhibition view, *Fresh Widower*,
La Friche la Belle de Mai, Marseille
(2021)

a) Vous êtes chez vous, HD video,
13'15" (2020-2024)

b) : Fresh Widower, HD video, 09'
40"with M.J Wolfe, PVC window,
LCD screen (2021)

a



b





Exhibition view, *Gaspar Willmann, Kelley Walker*, Tyler Wood Gallery, New-York (2022)

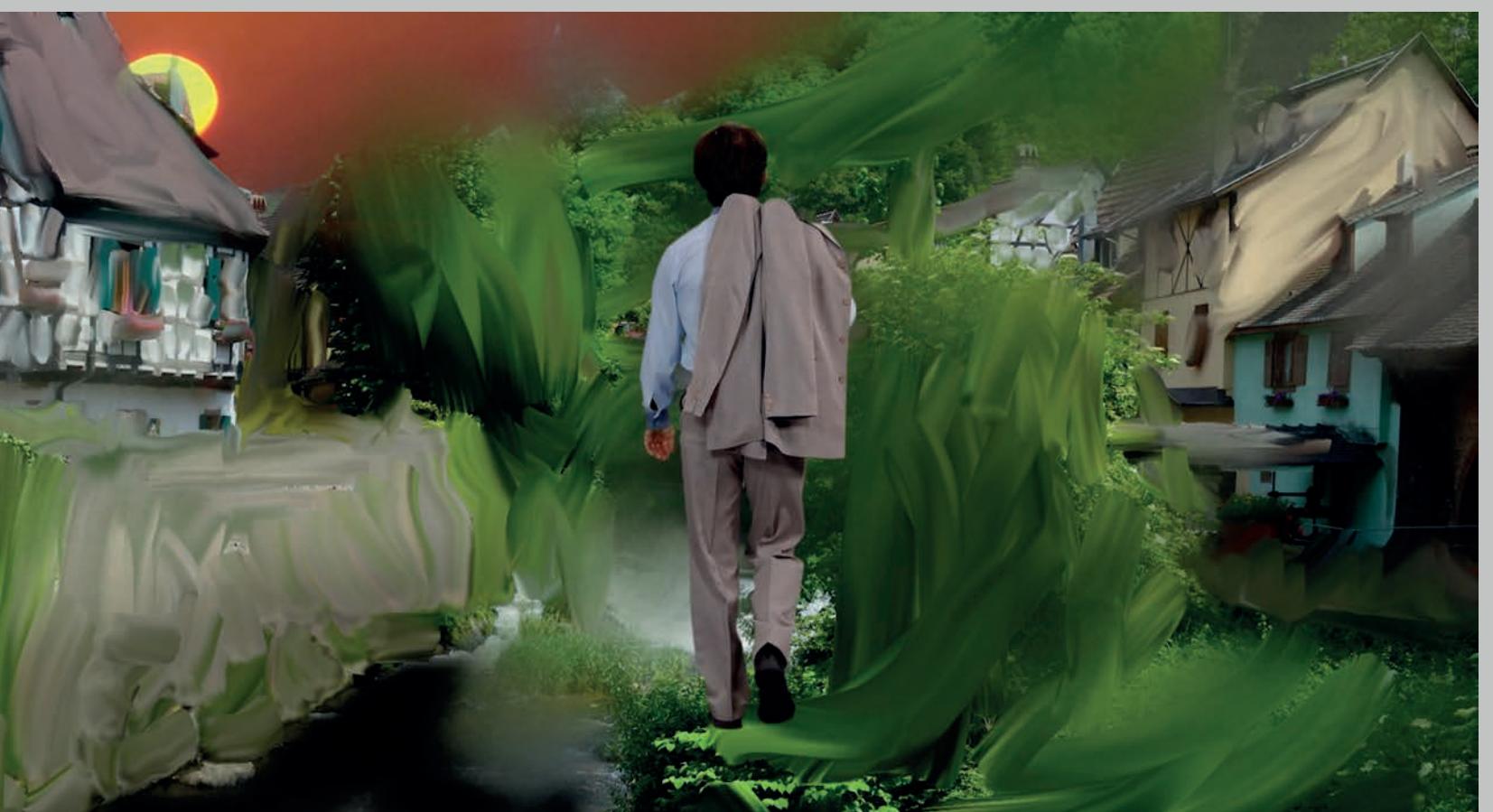
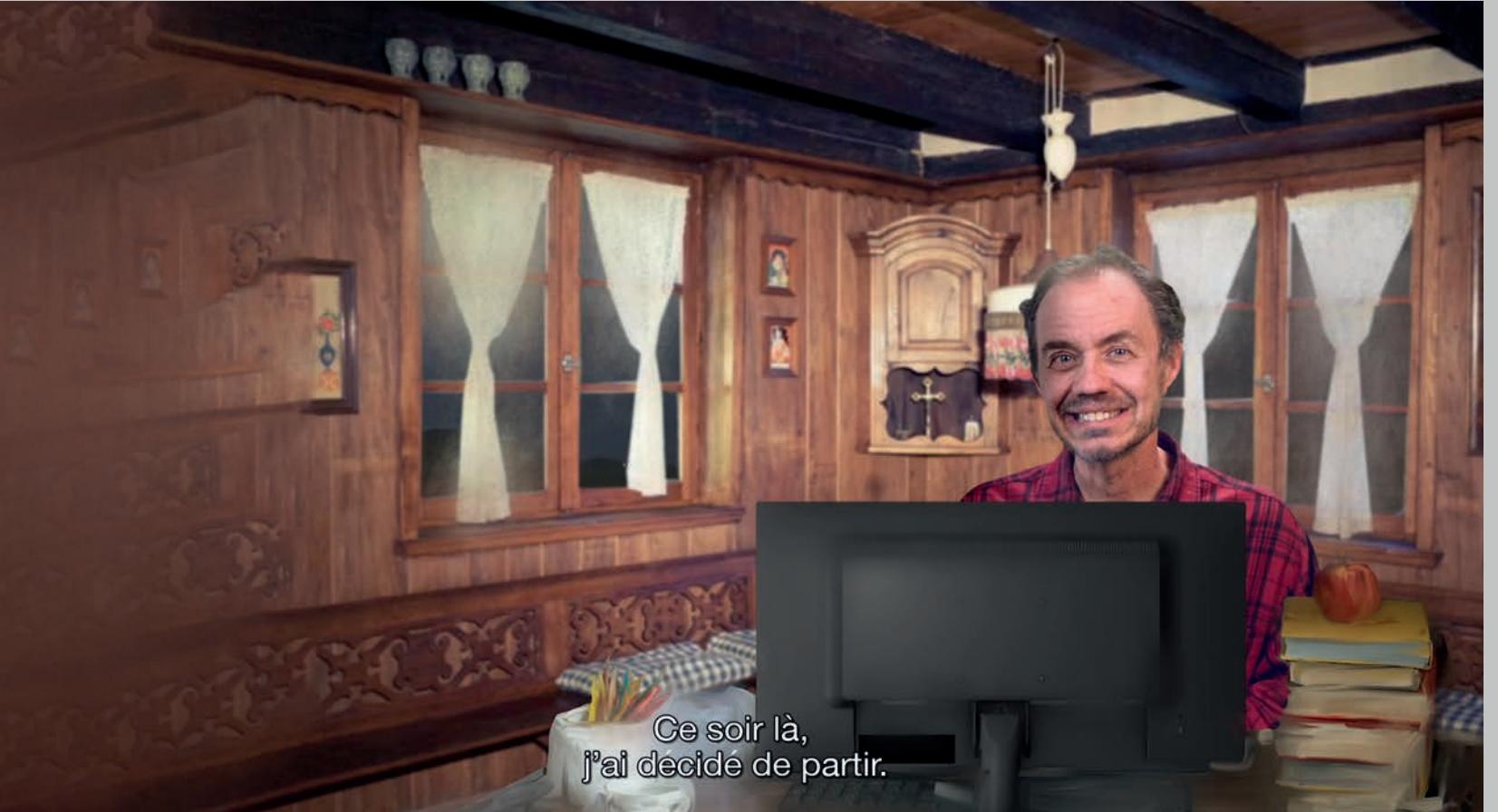
Slonfa Shenfa

11'49" (FR/EN, 2021)

Cliff, just forty years old, works at a series of small jobs as an online operator. Overwhelmed by the world he sees from his computer window, which moves without him, he decides to leave his Alsatian village and fantasizes about this escape: why not the United States?

This anachronistic story is freely inspired by a family history from the end of the 19th century, whose protagonists are interpreted by amateur actors found on Fiverr or Upwork. Thus, they replay their own economic and sentimental expectations through this role that is offered to them.

→ <https://vimeo.com/541635405/b489fadf9f> (EN/FR)





a) : JUMAP (*casse croute*) 35x40cm,
ink and oil on linen
(2024)

b) : JUMAP (*every work day*) 30x40cm,
ink and oil on linen
(2021)

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La petite mort

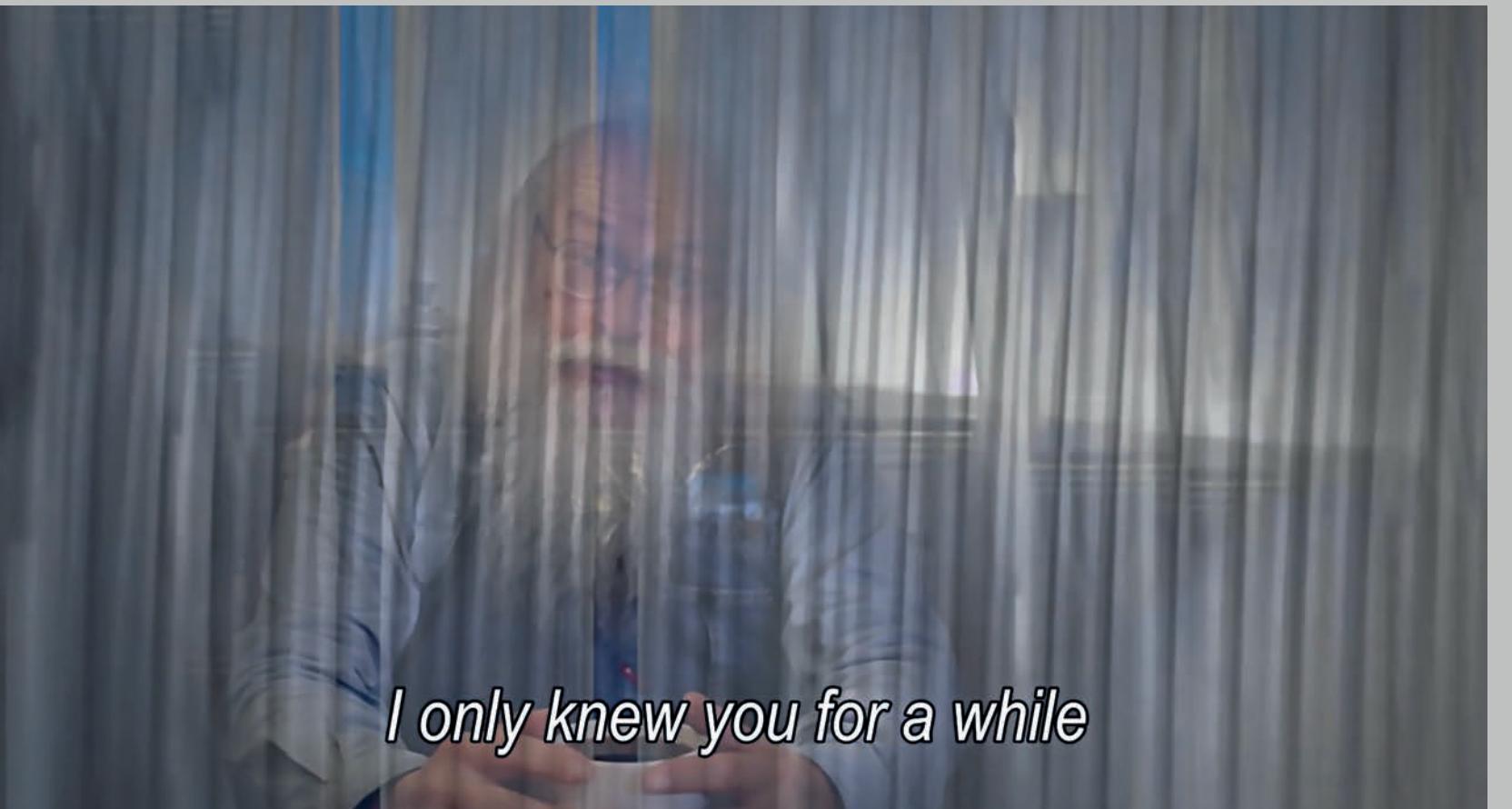
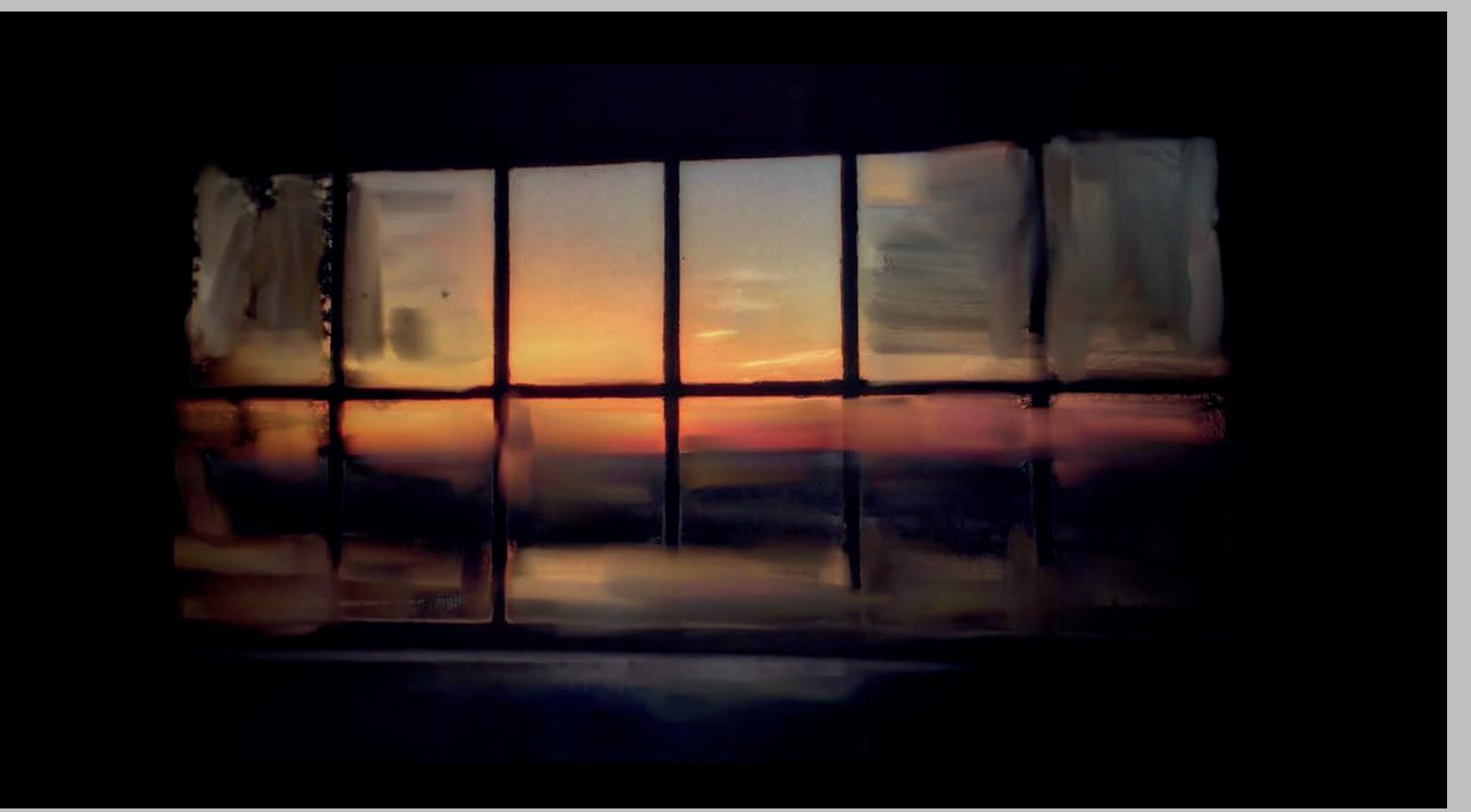
12'47" (FR/EN, 2020)

→ <https://vimeo.com/542220016?share=copy> (EN/FR)

« [...] Ses vidéos produisent des schémas narratifs ultra génériques à partir de banques d'images, de technologies et de plateformes d'échanges de services existantes. C'est pourtant la subjectivité qui intéresse l'artiste dans cette économie standardisée, le lien privilégié qu'il va créer avec ces acteurs, tout d'un coup d'ailleurs un peu moins acteurs. Finalement, ce qui s'achète ici c'est le moment de vérité dans cette longue logorrhée d'un récit de soi plus ou moins pathétique ou plus ou moins spectaculaire.

Sans doute on s'en fout de ce qui départit le vrai du faux. Qu'il faille souvent de la mise en scène pour rencontrer le réel. On s'en fout. Ce qui est intéressant ici c'est la place timide mais quasi sacrée de la subjectivité de l'individu, c'est le maquillage qui voudrait venir dissimuler l'humain mais qui le rend à l'inverse encore plus visible, encore plus beau.»

Élisa Rigoulet



The Unknown man

07'31" (FR/EN, 2019)

→ <https://vimeo.com/542206375?share=copy> (EN/FR)

« The unknown man » est bien réel, si bien qu'il raconte sa propre histoire. *Famedya54* qui s'incarne ici en James, est un acteur tiré du site internet *fiverr.com*, place de marché en ligne pour travailleurs indépendants. On peut lire au dessus de son profil « Camera shy? Use a professional spokesperson video to hype your brand » L'espace mental, décor, construit autour du protagoniste, sa maison-bureau, est une fresque médiatique, où les éléments peints ou liquéfiés entre eux enveloppent son occupant. Pas de pinceaux ni de réels ciseaux ici : une collection d'images de *airbnb*, de faits divers et autres *found footage* sont assemblés numériquement entre eux et constituent le sucre de la vidéo, où le montage reste roi.

