

THOMAS PAQUET

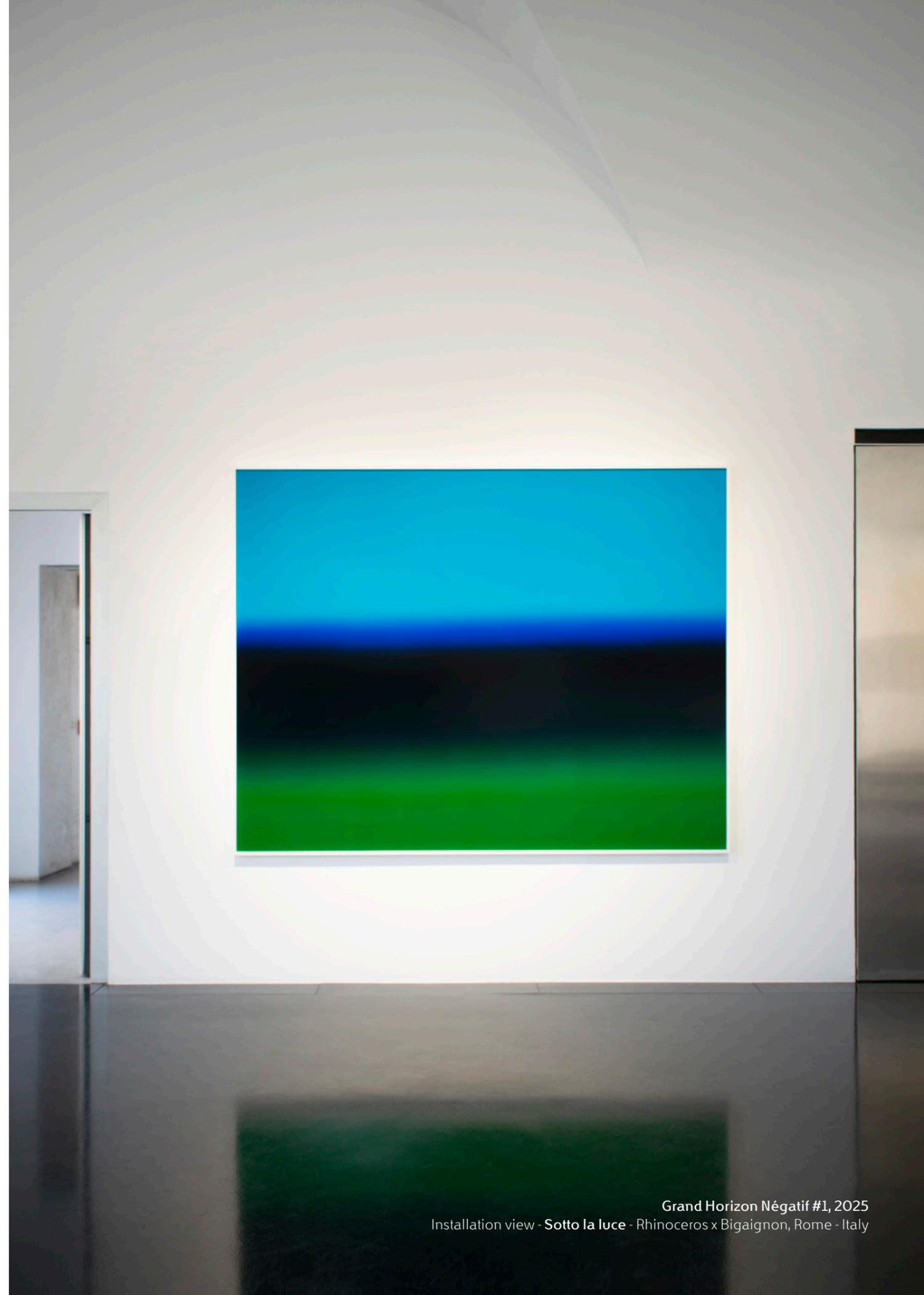
APPROACH

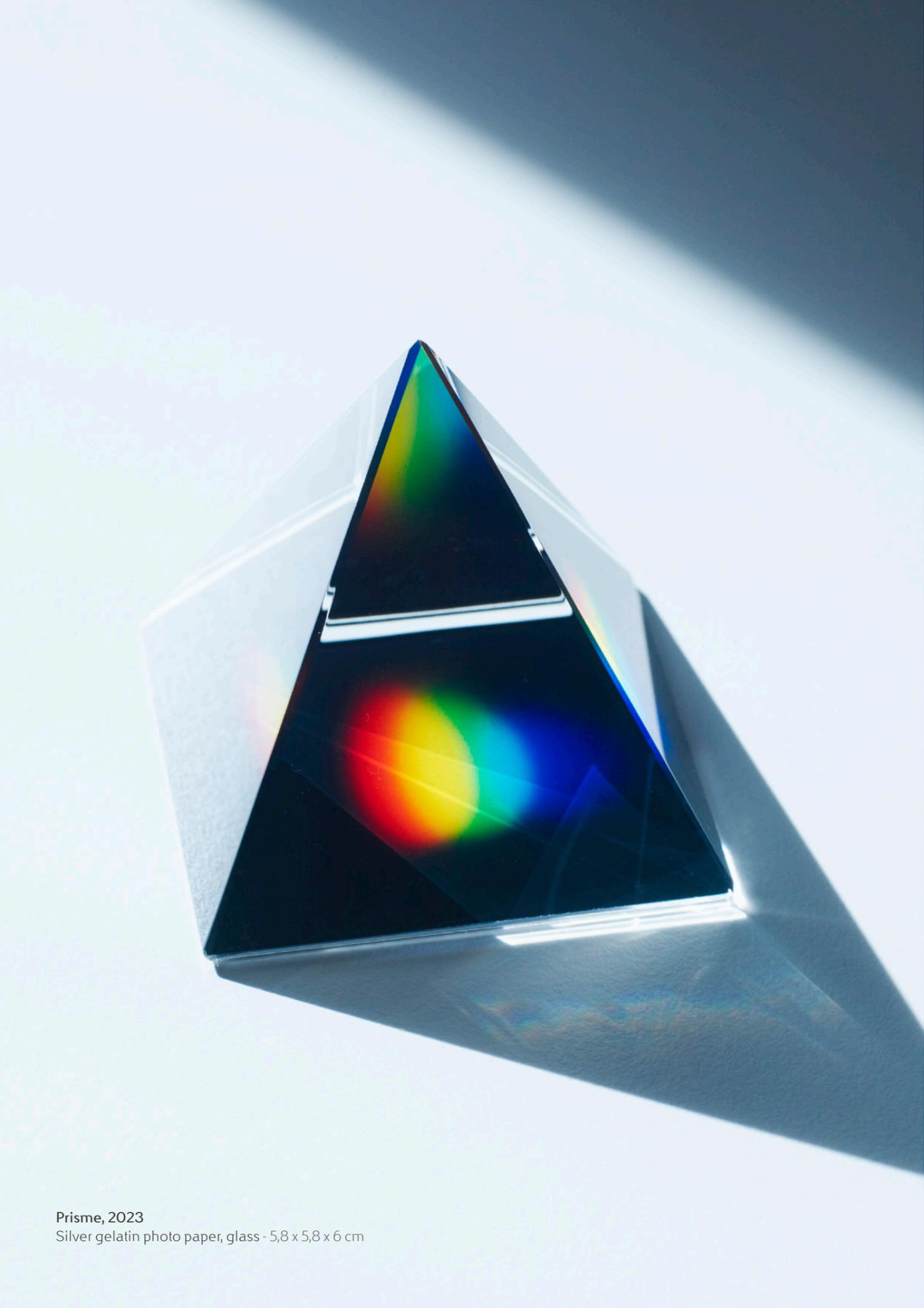
French-Canadian artist born in 1979, I question the nature of time, the structure of its uninterrupted flow and the dynamics of its movement. My work revolves around the fundamental characteristics of photography, light, space and time, in attempt to create and propose viewers a sensitive experience of the world.

My approach to photography is direct, practical. Experimentation is often central to my research and for each of his projects, a specific procedure is implemented, whether optical, physical or chemical. If silver gelatin films are often at the heart of his creative process, I also use alternative techniques such as instant films, wet collodion, cyanotypes and other 19th century techniques.

The works produced reveal a truly contemporary dimension while exploring the possibilities and limits of the photographic document from within. They are an invitation to go beyond our representation of reality, blurring the boundaries between science and poetry, materiality and abstraction, objectivity and subjectivity.

Represented by *Bigaignon* since 2017, my work has been featured in several solo and group exhibitions in galleries and has also been presented at various art fairs and exhibitions such as *Paris Photo*, *Art Paris*, *Art Brussels*, and *Approche*. In 2023, I was a resident at the *Cité Internationale des Arts* as the winner of the *Picto Lab / Expérimenter l'image* prize. That same year, my work was presented at the *Biennale de l'Image Tangible* and as part of the *Épreuves de la matière* exhibition at the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*. In 2024, I participated in several group exhibitions in France. In 2025, my work was exhibited at the *Centre d'art Bonisson* in Rognes, and the *Fondazione Valentino Garavani e Giancarlo Giammetti* in Rome commissioned me to create a major work for its inaugural exhibition. In 2026 several projects will be presented in France, notably in Brittany as part of *L'Art dans les chapelles*.





Prisme, 2023
Silver gelatin photo paper, glass - 5,8 x 5,8 x 6 cm

CURRICULUM VITÆ

Solo exhibitions

- 2025 . Oh lumière ! - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . La flamme d'une chandelle - Rencontres Photographiques - Lorient, France
- 2023 . De la chambre noire - Salon Approche - Paris, France
- . L'horizon des connaissances - Cité Internationale des Arts - Paris, France
- . Rien n'échappe à la lumière - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2021 . A rêver comme je rêve - We are / Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Et pendant ce temps le soleil tourne - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2019 . Salon Approche / Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Horizons - Centre culturel Le Moulin de la filature - Le Blanc, France
- . Fragments - Festival L'image Satellite - Vence, France
- 2018 . Fragments - Bigaignon - Paris, France

Group shows-selection

- 2025 . Rosso - Fondazione Valentino Garavani e Giancarlo Giammetti - Rome, Italie
- . Mondes en commun - Musée Albert Kahn - Boulognes-Billancourt, France
- . Ligne(s) de Mire - Bonisson Art Center - Rognes, France
- 2024 . Paris Photo - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Art Brussels - Bigaignon - Bruxelles, Belgique
- . Art Paris - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . La couleur est la lumière - Le point du jour - Cherbourg, France
- . Les formes du temps - Topographie de l'art - Paris, France
- . Filhos do Neiva - Rencontres photographiques de Neves - Neves, Portugal
- 2023 . Epreuves de la matière - BNF - Paris, France
- . Biennale de l'Image Tangible - Galerie Charlot - Paris, France
- . Private Choice - Paris, France
- . (In)Material - Paris, France
- . Marais DigitArt - Paris, France
- . La dialectique de l'ombre - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Art Paris - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2022 . Chair de temps - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Éclipse - Charles Zana - Paris, France
- . D3sign Capsule - Musée des Archives Nationales - Paris, France
- . Interlude bleu - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . NFT, one of a kinds - Museum of Art - Tel Aviv, Israel
- . Perspectives radicales - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2021 . Paris Photo - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Circus - Galerie le 56 - Nantes, France
- 2020 . United - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2019 . Horizons - Salon Approche / Bigaignon - Paris, France
- . Temps présent - Angles sur l'Anglin, France

Fairs

- 2025 . Paris Photo - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2024 . Paris Photo - Bigaignon - Paris, France
 - . Art Brussels - Bigaignon - Bruxelles, Belgique
 - . Art Paris - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2023 . Salon Approche / Prix Picto Lab / Bigaignon - Paris, France
 - . Art Paris - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2021 . Paris Photo - Bigaignon - Paris, France
- 2019 . Salon Approche / Bigaignon - Paris, France

Awards

- 2023 . Lauréat de la résidence PICTO LAB / EXPÉRIMENTER L'IMAGE
 - . Sélectionné Biennale de l'Image Tangible
- 2022 . Finaliste du prix BMW Art Makers
- 2021 . Finaliste du prix Swiss Life à 4 mains
 - . Finaliste du prix du tirage Florence et Damien Bachelot - CIPGP
 - . Short List du prix photo du festival international de photographie
- 2020 . Short List de la Résidence de la Fondation des Treilles

Artist residency

- 2023 . Cité Internationale des Arts - Paris, France

Collections

Fondation Valentino Garavani & Giancarlo Giammetti
Musée français de la photographie
Collection Galiana-Wiart
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Books

- 2024 . L'ombre des heures, texte de Michel Poivert
- 2019 . Horizons

Publications

- 2024 . *Les Formes du Temps*, catalogue d'exposition - La topographie de l'art
- 2023 . *Epreuves de la matière* - BNF/ The (M) éditions
- 2022 . *Contre-culture dans la photographie contemporaine*, Michel Poivert - éditions Textuel
 - . *Cyanotypes, appropriations contemporaines* - éditions Artfolage

Press

- 2025 . L'Oeil de la photographie, *Poetics of shadow*, par Carole Schmitz
- 2025 . Fisheye magazine, *Imposer une économie de gerte*, par Fabrice Laroche
- 2022 . Magazine Process #31, *Thomas Paquet récolter la lumière du temps*, par Benoît Pelletier
- 2021 . Artpress, *Et pendant ce temps le soleil tourne*, par Maud de la Forterie

Talk

- 2024 . Journée d'étude « Culture analogique» INHA - 24 octobre 2024
 - . Dialogue avec Nathalie Boulouch - Le point du jour - Cherbourg, France - 8 juin 2024
 - . Art Brussels, Bruxelles - 27 avril 2024
 - . Table-ronde « Les formes du temps » La Topographie de l'art - 16 mars 2024
- 2023 . Table-ronde « Pour une nouvelle écologie des images » BNF - 17 octobre 2023

Podcast

- 2022 . Vision - Episode 19
- 2021 . Perspective - Episode 13

Art gallery

Bigaignon - Paris, France

Contact

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Grands Horizons Panoramiques
Luminograms on silver gelatin photo paper
Installation view - **Orizzonti Rosso** - PM23, Fondation Valentino Garavani & Giancarlo Giammetti, Rome - Italy

The Infinite Twilight

This photographic installation constitutes a total artwork—an immersive vision that surpasses mere technical execution. It transcends the image itself, conveying a distilled, pure perception culminating in an optical symphony reminiscent of the end of History.

This monumental colour print—unprecedented in the modern history of photochemical processes—transforms the chromatic surface of photosensitive paper into a physical, almost living, substance. It becomes presence itself, stretched across a horizon. The work was created using what are likely the last two remaining rolls of large-format Kodak paper in existence. It cannot be replicated; its production conditions were singular and unrepeatable. Consequently, it stands as both a relic and a revelation—simultaneously an inaugural gesture and a final testament. The piece encapsulates the full essence of a technological era’s final breath. It’s a “neo-analog” creation—one that circles back to the essence of the photographic process, indifferent to the forward march of innovation. Its value lies in its defiance of time, asserting the possibility of return.

For years, Thomas Paquet has been exploring the forms and materials of the horizon—not by capturing reality, but by experimenting with the very chemistry of light-sensitive materials. His work lives entirely within «the photographic» as a world unto itself, composed of light, colour, substance, and imagination. For this piece, he developed a custom system involving LED ribbons programmed to emit light in a precise rhythm—yielding colour gradations beyond the capabilities of digital tools. Like a modern-day alchemist, Paquet collaborated with expert technicians in both digital and analogue fields. At Le Fresnoy’s darkroom, he accessed one of the last remaining colour processors capable of handling this format. With printer Diamantino Quintas, he executed a delicate choreography in total darkness: threading extensive strips of paper through the machine in sync with programmed light projections developed by computer scientist Benjamin Sonntag.

This wasn't high-tech production—it was a custom, fab-lab style operation tailored to meet an extraordinary challenge: creating analogue colour prints over 10 meters long. These prints needed reinforcement yet had to remain pliable enough to conform the curved architecture of the Fondazione Valentino Garavani e Giancarlo Giammetti’s oval room. The final step—surface lamination using Diasec—was entrusted to Atelier Image Collée, one of Paris’s finest workshops, guided by the vision of gallerist Thierry Bigaignon. In many respects, the entire process serves as a paradigm of exceptional analogue creation.

From painting to dyeing, red was humanity’s first mastered pigment—the genesis of colour, and the hue of revolution in its truest sense: there turning to its beginning. Twilight mirrors such a moment—both the end of day and the promise of dawn. Photography now finds itself in this twilight, where contemporary works reclaim the poetry of obsolete techniques. Thomas Paquet’s magnum opus resembles a philosopher’s stone—shimmering with mystery and inviting contemplation.

One inevitably recalls the oval room of the Musée de l’Orangerie, where Monet’s final Water Lilies embrace the viewer like a timeless gesture. Similarly, in Paquet’s ‘Horizon rouge’, the viewer traces the arc of a visual cycle that transcends beginnings and endings. It is an eternal twilight—red rendered immortal, a velvet expanse for the eyes. The work feels akin to a monumental wall transformed from a flying carpet—a metamorphosis that stirs echoes of the Pompeian frescoes in the Villa of the Mysteries, and of the legendary Valentino gowns that earned him the title “Emperor of Red.”

Michel Poivert

Text written for the exhibition « **Rosso** » spring 2025, **Fondazione Valentino Garavani e Giancarlo Giammetti** - Rome, Italie



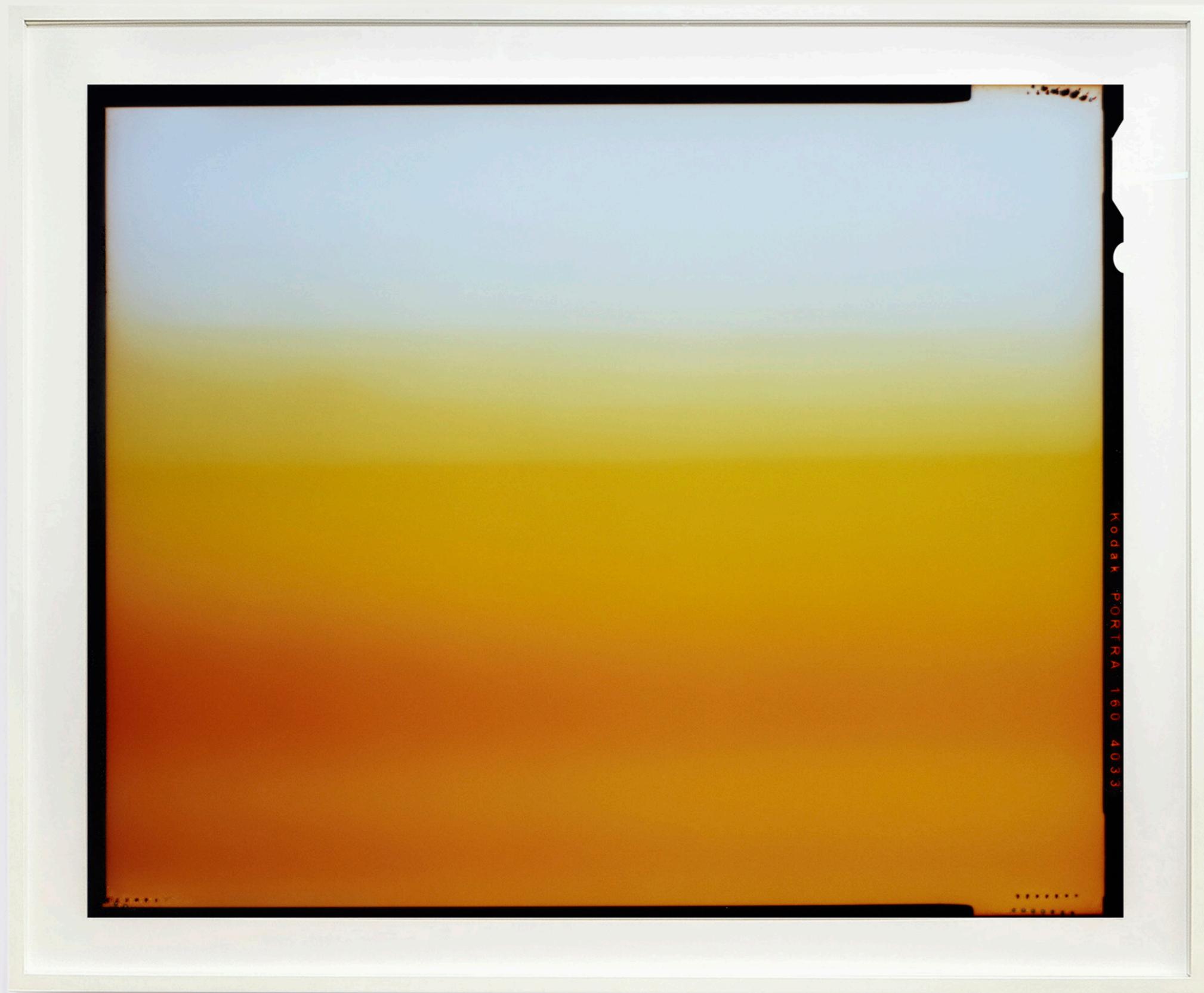
Grands Horizons Panoramiques

Luminograms on silver gelatin photo paper

Installation view - **Orizzonti Rosso** - PM23, Fondation Valentino Garavani & Giancarlo Giammetti, Rome - Italy



Installation view - **La flamme d'une chandelle** - Centre d'art Le Lieu de la Photographie, Lorient - France



Horizon #9
silver gelatin photo paper
Installation view - **Horizons** - Bigaignon, Paris - France



Grands Dégradés
Luminograms on silver gelatin photo paper
Installation view - **Oh Lumière** - Bigaignon, Paris - France



Installation view - **Oh Lumière** - Bigaignon, Paris - France



Prismes
silver gelatin photo paper, glass
Installation view - **Oh Lumière** - Bigaignon, Paris - France

Oh Light !

Thomas Paquet's "Oh Light!" heralds a vision of luminosity with an exclamation point echoing Virginia Woolf's likewise punctuated gasp more than a century ago: "Oh to be a painter!" Facing canvases at the National Portrait Gallery, Woolf's shudder of artistic comprehension, coupled with an envious recognition of a medium's power, permeates Paquet's project here. With an almost childlike joy, Paquet playfully deconstructs photographic techniques, returns to its essential elements, in order to celebrate a single component: "The most important element is light."

Immersing viewers in prismatic color, foregrounding the rich texture of his supports, Paquet's photographic production approaches the painterly. En plein air, or, for this exhibition, in the traditional darkroom, Paquet crafts each unique work directly as a positive image. Forgoing the negative through a measured protocol, Paquet revels in the hand made, the possibility of the tools of his trade, embracing accident and the humanity of mistakes. Assembled here for the first time, his complete De la Chambre noire series frames, into bright rectangles, circles and triangles, the varying effects of distance and materials on color and saturation. These works translate light. Building blocks, if you will, for the humble act of paying attention.

In a letter to a fellow painter, Paul Cézanne once advised: "treat nature by means of the cylinder, the sphere, the cone ... nature for us men is more depth than surface, whence the need to introduce into our light vibrations, represented by the reds and yellows, a sufficient amount of blueness to give the feel of air." The modern painter's perception of landscapes as simple three-dimensional forms shifting inside real space foreshadowed Cubism and abstraction as well as the pulsing spaces of modern photography and the moving image. In his translation of the landscape of light through elementary forms, Paquet recalls Cézanne's vision. The brilliant aureoles of Paquet's Vignettage works, for example, radiate from his fluid gesture of shining light round prepared cylinders. "Writing with light," he says. Using the space of the studio to project a vision of the universe, Paquet's large Gradient works shimmer like the sky above Cézanne's Mount Saint Victoire. "I am fascinated by what brings us closer to the cosmos," Paquet tells me, "to the stars."

Lillian Davies

Text written for the exhibition « Oh Light! » 3 April - 31 May 2025, Bigaignon - Paris





silver gelatin photo paper, glass
Installation view - **Oh Lumière** - Bigaignon, Paris - France



Installation view - Salon Approche - Paris - France

Inverted Eclipses

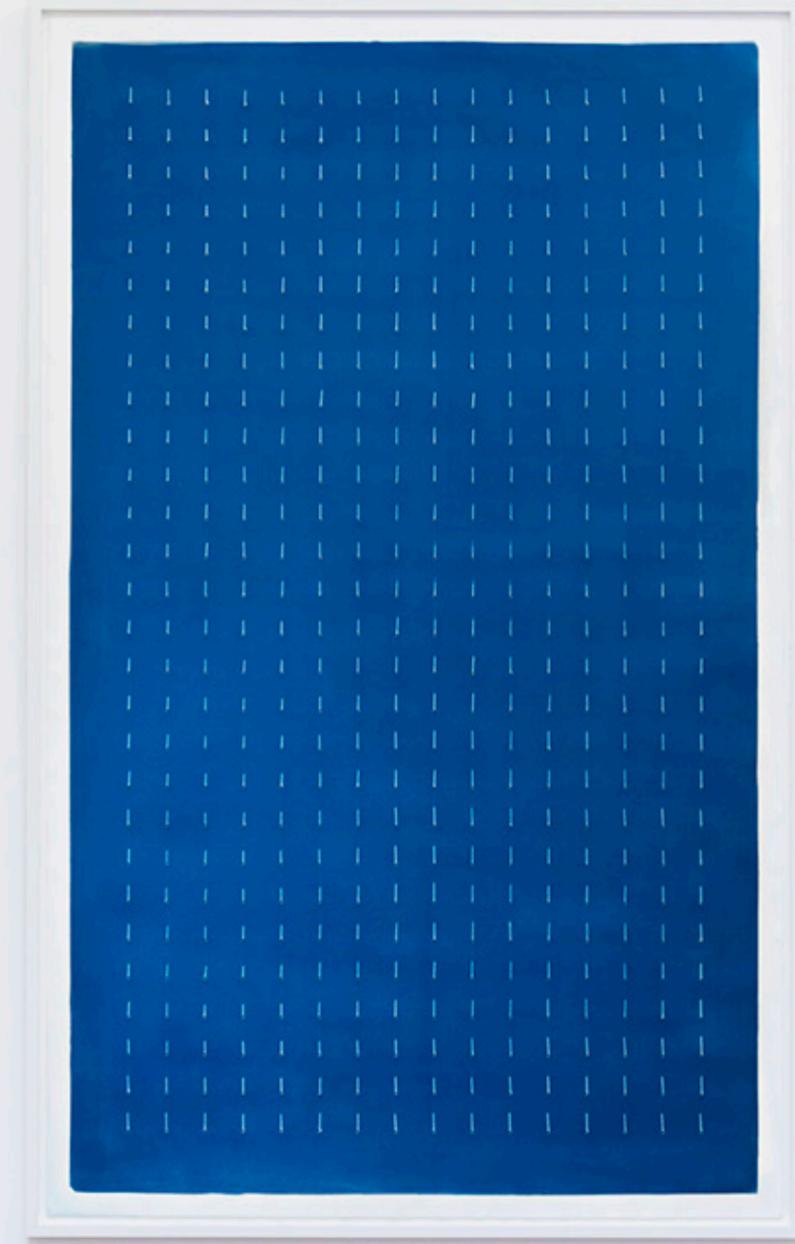
The device dates back nearly three thousand years, the shadow cast by the gnomon is used to determine the course of the sun across the celestial vault, allowing crucial information such as the orientation of the planet to be deduced. Its reliability is matched only by its apparent simplicity, thanks to a rudimentary design (a rod casting its shadow onto a surface, sometimes directly onto the ground); simple as it is, the technique is still used today, with astronauts taking a gnomon with them to determine the position of the sun on an extraterrestrial surface.

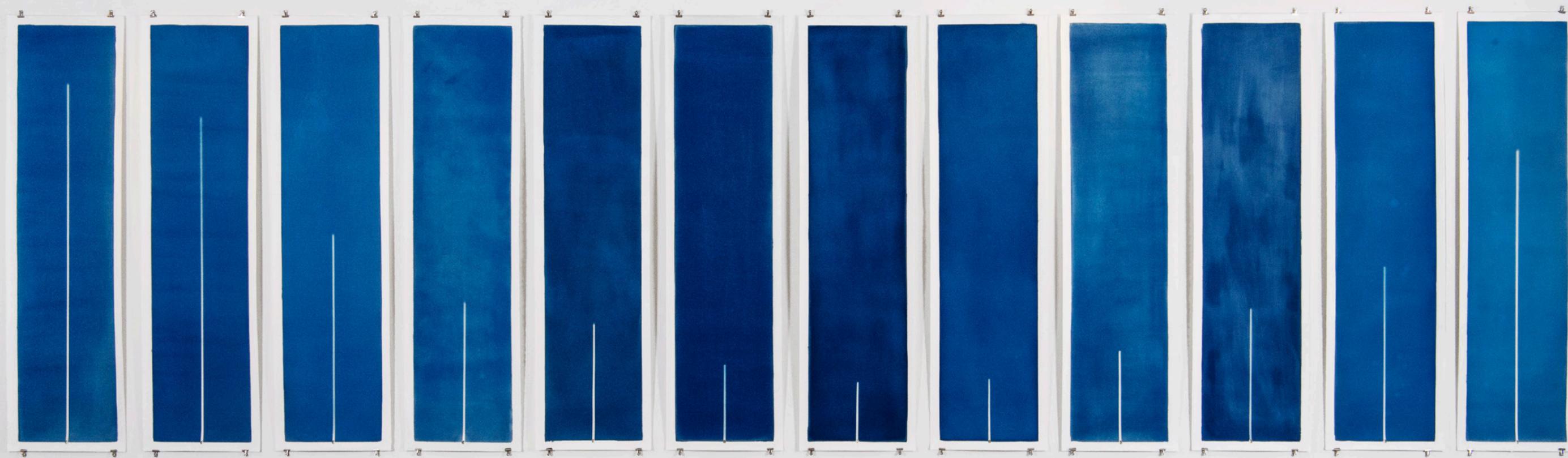
A true allegory of the permanence of knowledge and the relativity of the notion of progress, the gnomon is also one of the agents of luminous projection. The stylus may not convey the mystery of the cave, but it is in its own way a camera (lucida) that makes it possible to adjust into space, by projection, a physical reality ungraspable through direct observation.

Thomas Paquet's poetic intuition combines two ingenious imaginaries, that of luminous projection and that of the imprint, the very principles at the foundation of photography: to fix the image projecting itself inside the camera obscura. But he gives a version of it that can be qualified as minimalist. These are photograms recorded on photosensitised surfaces, therefore less images than traces without any optical correction, shadows turned into light, which we could describe as inverted eclipses. The repetitive, unsystematic emergence of a repertoire of gleams may remind us of the lively work *Mur de Feu* (1961) by Yves Klein, in which rows of ignited gas burners assembled in a canvas create as many stars of blue flames. Only here the colour blue is the sensitising solution of the cyanotype, and the gleam its subtraction from the fire. A «wall of cold flames» could characterise Thomas Paquet's sequences, tracing the fire back to its origin. These hollow lines of light mirror the quest for the spectral standard of our earthly existences, illuminated by astral waves

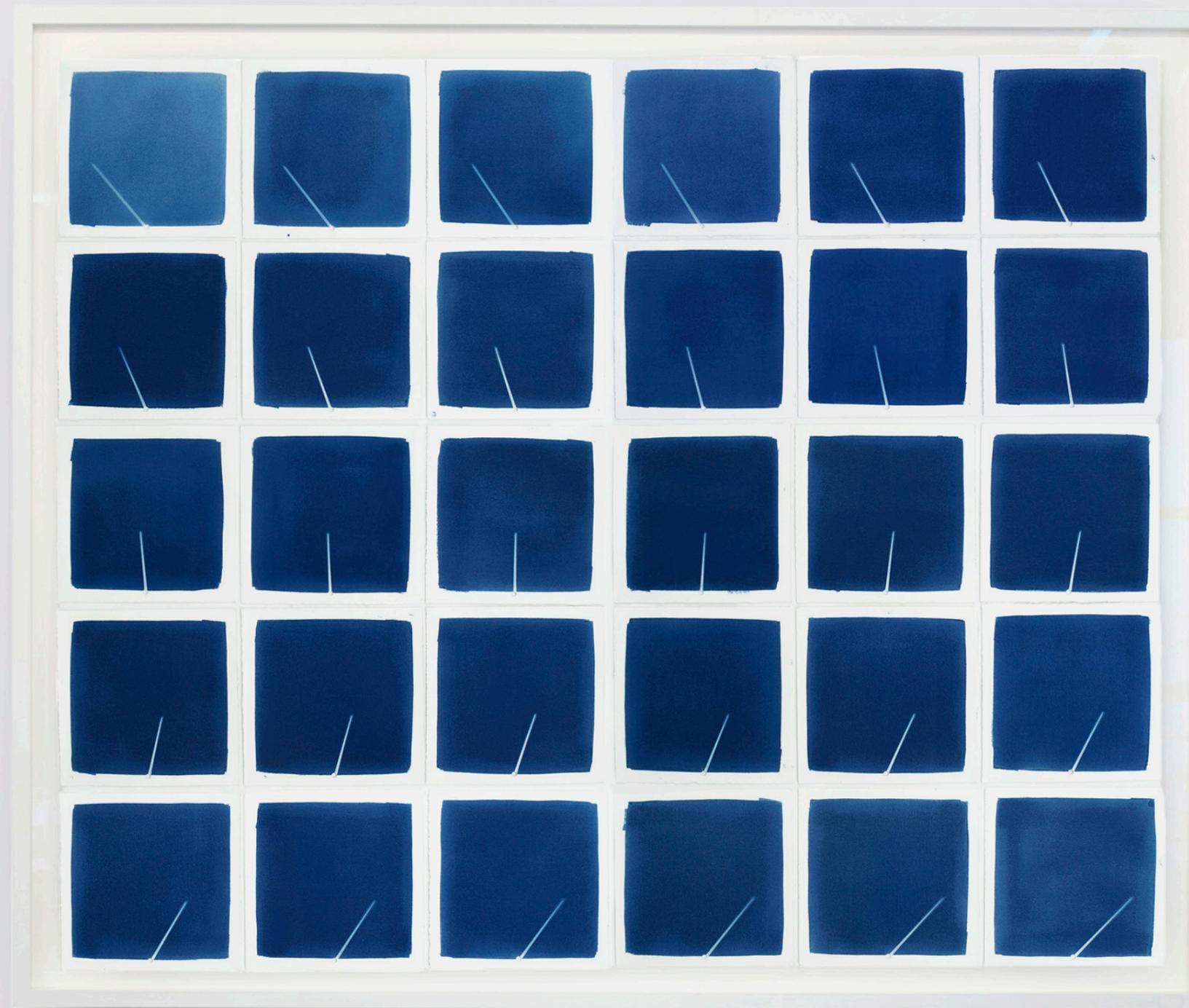
Michel Poivert

Text written for the book *L'ombre des heures* published in March 2024





Midi Solaire, série L'ombre des heures
12 cyanotypes
Installation view - Ligne de Mire - Bonisson Art Center, Rognes - France



20 septembre 2018, série L'ombre des heures
Cyanotypes on cotton paper - 120 x 100 cm



Installation view - Rien n'échappe à la lumière - Bigaignon, Paris - France



Cadrams, 2021
Installation view - *Sotto la luce* - Rhinoceros x Bigaignon, Rome - Italy



The Observatory

At time T, in a specific location, thanks to a series of astronomical calculations, the computer program determines the position of the moon and sun with 2 coordinates. These coordinates are then plotted on a chromatic circle, assigning a color to each star. These two colors, depending on where the work is viewed and the time of day, are used to create a linear gradation displayed on a circular screen.

The Observatory was born of the desire to plunge the viewer into a meditative state, to place him or her back in the long time of the perpetual dance of the moon and sun. One of the particularities of this work is its infinite nature: the program updates the positions of our stars in real time. The color gradation will evolve very slowly, allowing the viewer to see the phases of the moon as the seasons change.





Empreinte(s)
silver gelatin on glass - 24x30 cm



Eclipse, 2018
silver gelatin photo paper



Intuition
Ambrotype, 24x30cm



Intuition bleu
Ambrotype, 24x30cm
Installatin view - **Salon Approche** - Paris - France

Thomas Paquet : « Poetics of shadow »

In an age overwhelmed by instant imagery, Thomas Paquet embraces slowness, experimentation, and doubt. The French-Canadian photographic artist, deliberately works against the grain of the visual industry's fast-paced production logic. No cutting-edge digital gear or post-processing tricks here—photography, in his hands, becomes a space of physical, chemical, and optical exploration. He invents his own tools, works with cyanotypes, pinhole cameras, or wet collodion, revives darkroom techniques, and plays with the unpredictable nature of early photographic processes. Each image is the result of time—sometimes long, sometimes erratic—where exposure can last hours or even days.

But beyond this learned technicality lies a true poetics of light and silence. Paquet's works capture phenomena invisible to the naked eye, give form to intangible flows, to the rhythms of the cosmos, to the trace of a breath or a shadow. His work is not about recording but about revealing, revealing impermanence, fragility, and the inexpressible.

In his series *L'Ombre des heures* ("The Shadow of Hours"), he uses a gnomon to trace the changing sunlight on light-sensitive paper, composing abstract scores of passing time. In *De la chambre noire* ("From the Darkroom"), shown at the *Approche Salon*, he questions the very instruments of vision, reconnecting with the materiality of the image and the magic of the photographic gesture. His approach borders on the phenomenological: each piece becomes an attempt to re-enchant our perception of the world.

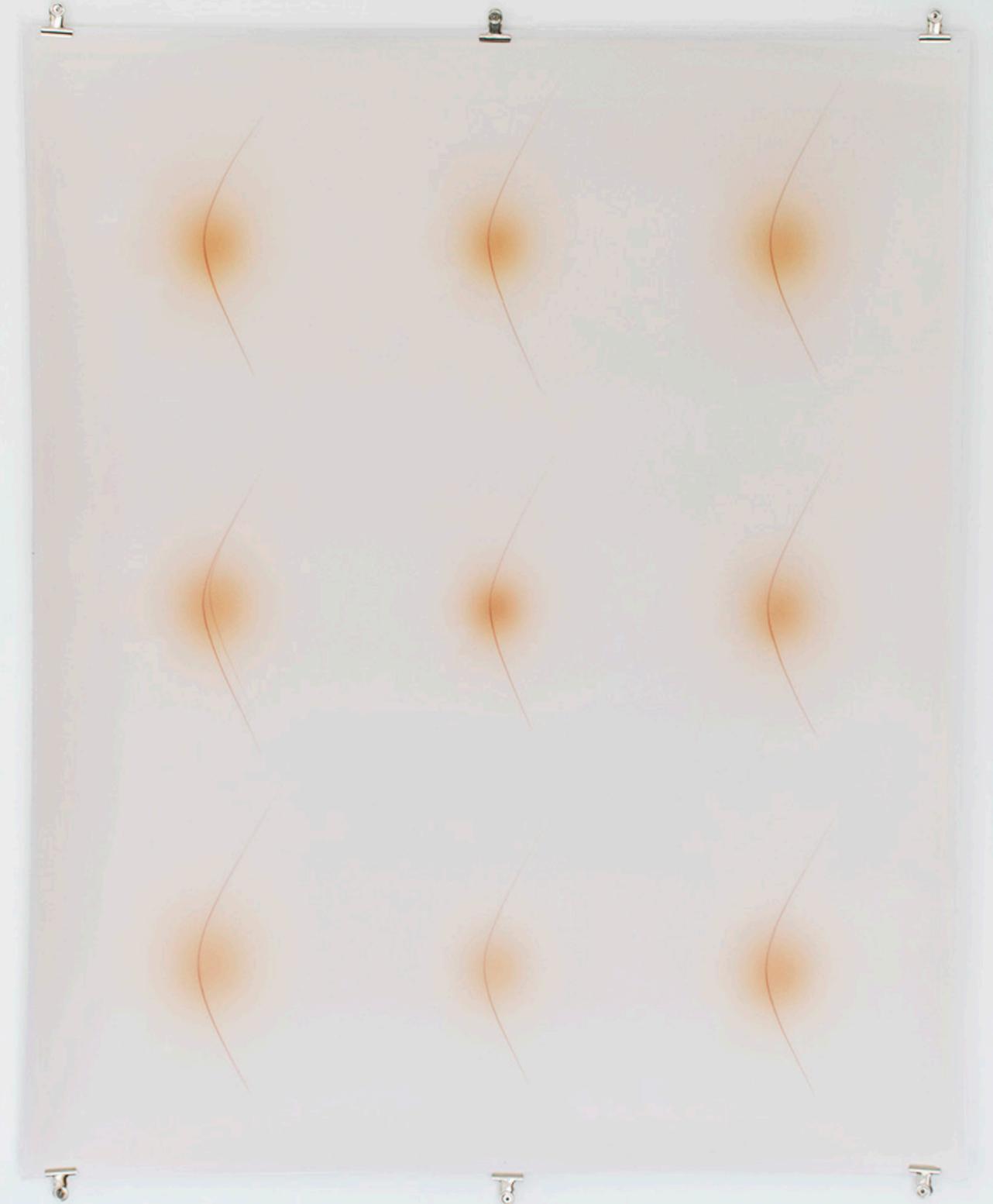
At a time when photography is often reduced to a fast-moving stream of visual consumption, Thomas Paquet invites us to pause, to contemplate, to feel. His approach—radical, meditative, and deeply artisanal—opens up a space of pure emotion where science and poetry meet.

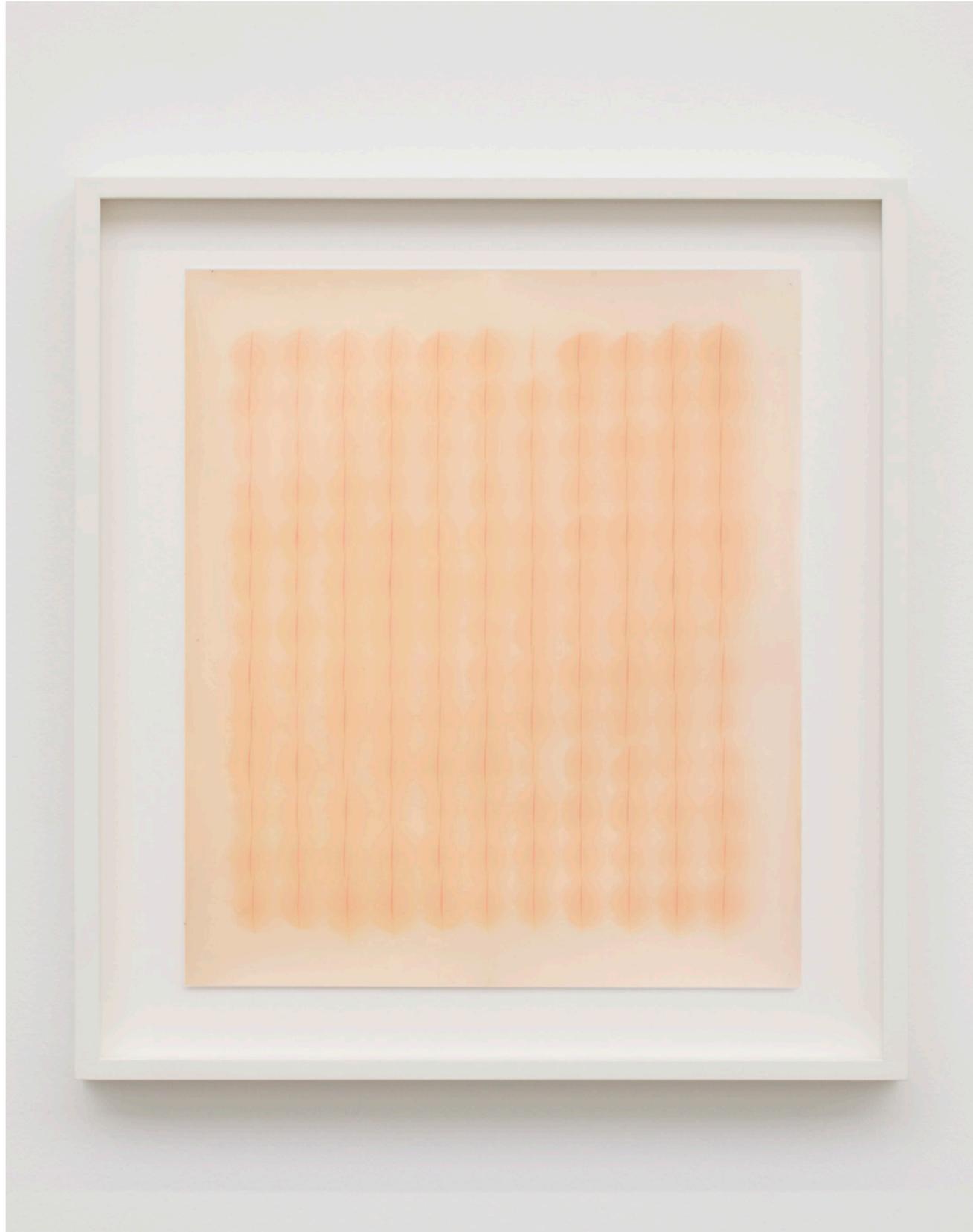
A conversation with an artist who crafts his own visions and who, far from freezing reality, allows it to emerge.

Carole Schmitz

Text and interview written for the **Questionnaire** column in **L'oeil de la photographie** - June 2025

Et pendant ce temps le soleil tourne S-22, 2022
Luminogram on silver gelatin photo paper - 90 x 110 cm

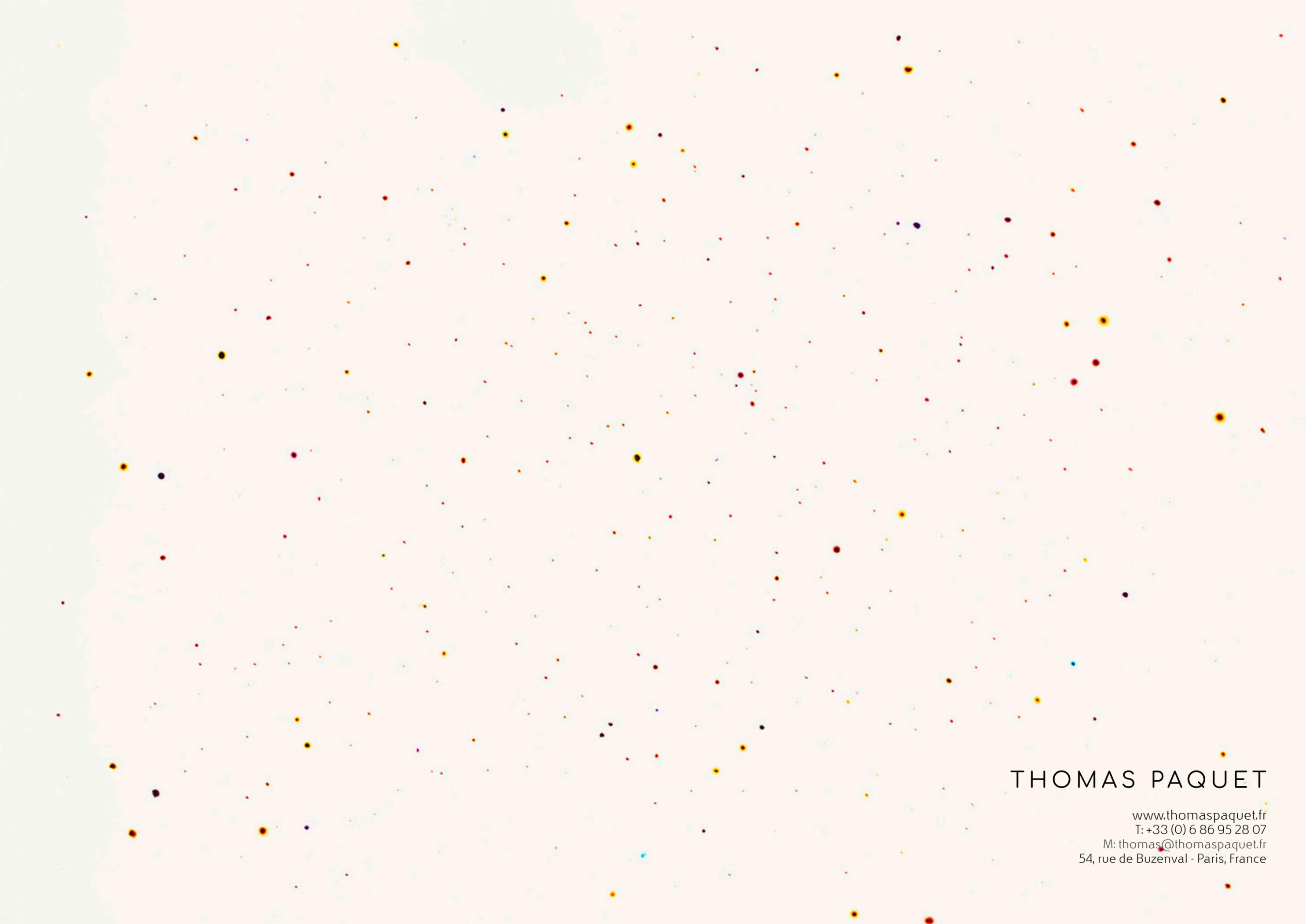




Et pendant ce temps le soleil tourne S-13-1-21, 2021
Luminogram on silver gelatin photo paper - 50 x 60 cm



Et pendant ce temps le soleil tourne S-22, 2022
Luminogram on silver gelatin photo paper - 30 x 40 cm



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