

“The Time Is Out of Joint”

Something slips, dislocates, comes undone. We speak of disjunction, derailment, a broken line. “The time is out of joint”: unhinged, it opens gaps and fissures through which something emerges, an image, a presence, a structure. A specter looking back at us.

The starting point for Théodore Parizet’s new paintings is a series of archival photographs of early twentieth-century cinemas, including the Prinzess Theatre, a German cinema built in 1911 and destroyed during the Second World War. These images show empty auditoriums. Rows of seats draw the eye toward a white, overexposed, almost blinding screen, whose light spills through the space and sharpens its contours. Although these photographs now survive online only in very low resolution, they retain a certain presence, a kind of aura similar to that which Walter Benjamin identified in the earliest nineteenth-century photographs, where the duration required by the exposure seemed literally to make the object “enter” the image, allowing something of its duration to persist.

Several pictorial concerns converge in these archival images: a perspective reinforced by contrast and by the receding lines of the rows of seats, a certain geometry in the arrangement of forms, the screen, the architectural details, and that strange presence recalled by emptiness itself. Stripped of its function, the auditorium ends up revealing its structure; the device becomes visible, not without a certain violence.

In the history of painting, the optical device played a central role in the theorisation of perspective. By locating the centre of the world at the back of the eye, this rationalisation of representation produced a recentering: the monocular eye became the focal point of both image and meaning, the point from which everything is articulated. It becomes, in a sense, the Subject. Lines appear; they structure the visible, reconcile and stabilise experience, reconstruct the world from a geometric centre that makes it inhabitable, a point from which everything can be brought into harmony. This harmony of space also implies a harmony of time, in which the present coherently follows from what came before and makes it possible to anticipate what comes next. Everything articulates itself, everything falls into order: the image appears.

Théodore’s work is concerned less with dismantling this device than with testing its tensions, its grammar, its structure; with approaching painting through painting itself, without refusing its relation to the image, to time, to History, or rather: with asking how all these relations might be held, or made perceptible, within the pictorial field. To find an internal geometry proper to painting, to restrict oneself to a range of primary, acidic colours, to study their interactions and tensions, and to leave them deliberately open, chipped, unresolved, like zones of passage held in precarious equilibrium, through which something of the outside world might still enter.

It is perhaps precisely here that time comes out of joint, not because it breaks into isolated fragments, but because it ceases to unfold according to the reassuring order of succession and instead condenses within a single field, where incompatible temporalities coexist: the time of the place, the time of its recording, the time of its disappearance, and the time of the painting that takes it up again and submits it to its own duration. Time overlaps, shifts, remains slightly misaligned, and perhaps within that gap resides what is no longer entirely present: something like a specter, but also an image of painting itself, a device capable of holding together what, elsewhere, would remain disjointed.



1- *Corrections*, 2026
oil on canvas
159 × 160 cm

4- *Lisa II*, 2026
oil on canvas
30 × 21 cm

6- *Chambre Photographique*,
2026
oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm

2- *Plaza Theater*, 2026
oil on canvas
150 x 200cm

5- *Oculus*, 2026
oil on canvas
100 x 70 cm

6- *Prinzess Theater*, 2026
oil on canvas
150 x 203,5 cm

3- *Lisa I*, 2026
oil on canvas
30 × 21 cm

