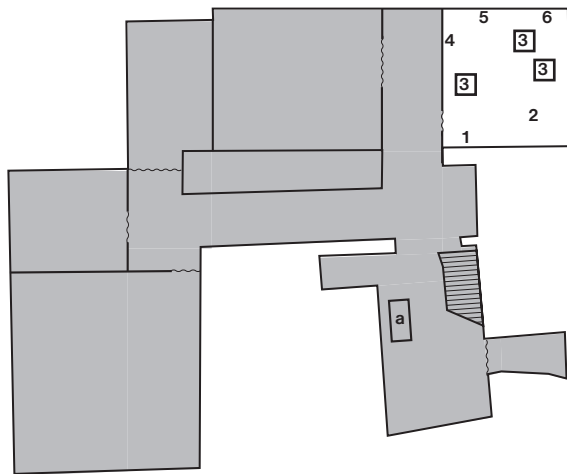


# Alan Bogana

Alan Bogana \*1979 (CH)

www.alanbogana.com



1. "to be in Alan Bogana's light" (2022)  
Yang Yeung

2. "Dead-Pixel Diaries" (2021-22)  
Installation : Aluminium, vinyl  
and adhesive felt, surveillance  
camera and website  
Variable dimensions  
Edition of 5+1 EA+1 CE



3. "Relics of Lights, Clouds and Raindrops (Hong Kong)" (2022)  
Print 3D serie, white varnish  
25 x 25 x 3cm; 18 x 18 x 2,5cm; 12 x 12 x 2,5cm  
Edition of 3+1 EA+1 CE

4. "Light through the tunnel brings tears and spikes,  
uncontrived" (2022)  
Lee Wing Ki

5. "Raindrops Symphony" (2022)  
Vidéo 4K, 15 min 14sec  
Edition of 3+1 EA+1 CE

6. "The Stack of Presence" (2022)  
Kyle Chung

a. reception desk, 3rd floor

The artist would like to thank the team of *1a space* (Juliana, Lok) from Hong Kong, (Kalen) Lee Wing Ki, Yang Yeung, Kyle Chung, Patrick Nedel, Pro Helvetia Shanghai and the CAN.

## TO BE IN ALAN BOGANA'S LIGHT

1

Formations in the sky – the way a friend describes clouds. Without them, dawn wouldn't have occurred to us as light. On any one day, light comes through as a nebulous. On a different day, it drapes by the clouds' arches. On a day with a clear blue sky, we take for granted that light is safe and sound as our companion for life.

That time by the name of morning - it is not clear when it begins, when it ends. Morning light – how fast it changes from a pale yellow, to a pink, and a burning orange, and then, everything else... This is how it is in the summer where I live. From there, from here where I write, I began connecting with Alan Bogana. His morning, my early evening. The light outside must have changed a million times as we remained in our screen-bound mode of existence. He told me in one meeting about Claude Monet's altered vision. Monet was in a different light.

Light inspires Alan – not direct, sharp rays, but light that makes shades and shadows. He is interested in various aspects of light, how human bodies react to it, its reflection, refraction, be it from nature or artificial. He is interested in representing light.

In our conversations, we spoke of Jacques Derrida's *Memoirs of the Blind* and Jun'ichirō Tanizaki's *In Praise of Shadows*. Bees and fireflies came through, too. I told Alan my fascination with the ghostly landscapes in some of his past works like CASE 03D-P1—Diamond Mountain Drift (2013). The bonfires he sees in Geneva on Swiss National Day, the fireworks we sometimes have in Hong Kong, all these, we shared. In hindsight, I think we exchanged sensibilities which his art inspires, some of which I have become more aware of in my life.

Say, the summer rain in relation to light.

Windows on public buses in Hong Kong are generously open to sceneries they pass. At night, one sees through the window the farthest layer of light – public housing estates up to forty storeys high. Households are grids in a spectrum of yellow and white – fluorescent, LEDs...unlikely to be burning candles, though small candle-shaped bulbs giving a red light keep deities on shrines divine. On the streets, flush light on the ceiling of elevated walkways keeps the paths clear. Traffic lights, sirens of emergency vehicles, an occasional lantern-and-torch-decorated bicycle...all reflected on asphalt dampened by rain. So too do canals become canvases of light.

To be on the upper floor of a double-decker bus when it pours is a true summer delight. In such a pour, rain dropping on the window panes can only glide frantically backwards. Facades of light on high-rises—mostly advertisements or propaganda of sorts—became patches of water colour spilt from action painting, dissipating the force of coercive visual regimes.

I live in a place called Plover Cove in the North Eastern part of Hong Kong. It is no less urbanized, but there is less disturbance of the kinds of light I just described. Still, on a calm night when the air is stale after intermittent days of heavy and light rain, I see the reflection of residential and industrial buildings on the surface of the sea – vertical strokes brushing down in orange and yellow, flickering.

In our first meeting, Alan read a passage from J.D. Bernal's *The World, the Flesh & the Devil* (1929). I am particularly drawn to these lines:

“Finally, consciousness itself may end or vanish in a humanity that has become completely etherealized, losing the close-knit organism, becoming masses of atoms in space communicating by radiation, and ultimately perhaps resolving itself entirely into light. That may be an end or a beginning, but from here it is out of sight.”

I connect this with what I see in Alan's portfolio. His practice straddles the atom and the universe. He touches and lets himself be touched by the strength and the waning of light. There is no drama in the tension he discerns. It is with hospitality that he embraces that which shows the impoverishment of words.

Alan has seen light being enslaved to serve spectacles. He responds by giving it its due, returning it to its multiplicity and mutability. He resists turning light into objects. This is only possible, I propose, because of his sensitivity of the world as nature has it.

“[S]tars whatever their astronomical significance, are perceived not as objects but as points of light, and sunsets as the momentary glow of the sky as the sun vanishes beneath the horizon. Nor are clouds objects. Each is rather an incoherent vaporous tumescence that swells and is carried along in the currents of the medium.”  
(Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*, 2011: 117)

A power of perception that marks the artist.

2

I say all of the above with qualms. What do I know, after having met Alan for no more than ten hours in clock time? I have never visited him in person in his studio. I have never experienced his work in situ. I share the unease Alan told me he has, about making claims on how life might be like in Hong Kong, what light in all of its shape might mean. He has never visited Hong Kong. I told him in brevity that it didn't occur to me he was trying to represent “Hong Kong”. I would like to expand on what I meant, in the form of two responses – one short, one long.

The short one goes like this. There is a speechless character in Hayao Miyazaki's animation film *Spirited Away* (2001) – a street lamp that hops along as Chihiro journeys into a far-off place to find the right person to undo a curse. The street lamp does nothing but hops with its light on. It has its own rhythm – the companionship it perceives Chihiro to need. The light lends itself a little to her anterior, so she could focus. It is around her, but is it not also within her, this light co-extensive of her vision of the world to come? I think of Alan interpreting life through light, to reach its other horizon. By this I don't mean darkness but rather, silence.

As for the longer response, a detour, I hope it shows why I am grateful for having Alan welcome and receive this feeble voice by the name of “Hong Kong”—how it is now from the limited position I see—from oceans apart. Here goes.

The work of mourning has a limit. Those who have left and planning to leave have different reasons to. Some are forced to. Others are able to because they have the means to. I am puzzled by media messages about “brain drain” – the loss of talents that had happened around 1984 when the Joint Declaration for the future of Hong Kong between London and Beijing was concluded without the voices of the people of Hong Kong, and around 1997 as the sovereignty of Hong Kong changed, and again, now. When I think of those taking an image of Hong Kong and myself being a fellow HongKonger with them on their way out, I wonder for how long this image might last – this image carrying memories of the past, lived differently compared to the lives lived by those

staying, despite. When would this image become a souvenir and a token of nostalgia? When the “emigrant” becomes a status, lines are drawn between who and what state of affairs, better tell “the” Hong Kong story. But which Hong Kong? Is there only one story to tell? Is there such as thing as the end of a story? What do these lines do when they keep being reproduced?

If two million people had been on the streets, and 100,000 of them had reportedly left, there are still 1.9 million staying. Diasporic communities evolve just as resident communities do. For some, to stay is to be in permanent exile in a home now estranged. If exile is a state of mind and a state of one self in relation to the world, those who have left and those who stay might well be sharing common grounds. One difference, though, might be that the latter keeps trying to transform unfreedom into not only liveable, but flourishing and dignified lives. Is freedom secure anywhere, at all times? I think this is a question more complex than the law can answer. I cannot accept the mourning of a loss of the idea of Hong Kong as something that had been, because it is still alive, and many are keeping it alive, here and elsewhere. The question is how. This is an unending question if the purpose of being-with remains intact.

It is in this sentimentality that I grateful for being able to connect with an artist who does not stop doubting what entitlements he has to say anything about Hong Kong. He is not looking for something familiar with complacency. He is not measuring his object of interest with a readymade ruler. He refuses to hastily name what he sees and insists on transforming them into a shareable horizon. He is alert to the limits of his position, how partial and fragmented it is. He is not here to correct, but to understand. He doesn't give up on keeping imagination akin to reason.

I propose we can and must narrativize about others as full, whole beings by keeping up certain conditions: we can commit ourselves to the openness of narratives, the intensity of the what John Dewey calls the artistic-aesthetic experience that is made and preserved by both the artist and those touched by art, and the vision of long-term and continuous engagement.

When Maxine Greene says artists are always “in quest of wider landscapes, wider visions of what makes sense, what ought to be,” she cites the following poem by Mark Strand, which qualifies how insisting on “what ought to be” does not have to be coercive. It is rather a yearning.

*Keep Things Whole*

In a field  
I am the absence  
of field.  
This is  
always the case.  
Wherever I am  
I am what is missing.  
When I walk  
I part the air  
and always  
the air moves in  
to fill the spaces  
where my body's been.

We all have reasons  
for moving.  
I move  
to keep things whole.

I am not sure if there is a boundary to the whole, and whether there is such a thing. But where we had been was quite a dwelling.

Yang Yeung, June 14, 2022

THE STACK OF PRESENCE

There is the presence of me as I write this text, right here at home at the dining table, on which the second last flower of my orchid plant has just fallen. It's about time. My mum gave it to me for Chinese New Year.

There is the presence of Alan in the online artist residency, for which Alan and I had our first conversation five days before I potted the orchid. He's based in Geneva, and I'm based in Hong Kong. Any distance implies a connection. In this case, it was a Zoom connection.

There is the presence of *A Symphony of Lights*, one of the top 10 Hong Kong attractions recommended by the Hong Kong Tourism Board. I had not seen the show in its entirety until Alan and I talked about it in the residency. I thought the laser show was rather trivial.

There is the presence of the webcam, through which Alan experienced *A Symphony of Lights* live on a daily basis. The perspective of the webcam had streamlined Alan's perception towards the laser light show. Perhaps this vision through data can better observe the changes the city is going through.

There is the presence of light. The materiality of light in Alan's work *Relics of Lights, Clouds and Raindrops (Hong Kong)* is reinterpreted and represented in forms different from its source. From visible light radiation, pixelated webcam footage, computer generated 3D models, to volumetric 3D prints. In these new dimensions, what is the signal? And what is the noise?

There is the presence of the exhibition: a show due to Hong Kong's persistent COVID-related travel restrictions I won't have a chance to see, within which Alan has made a work with reference to a laser show he hasn't seen for the same reason.

There is the presence of you, reading this text right here in the exhibition space. I can only imagine the materiality of this piece of paper you're holding based on the virtual paper I'm looking at right now on Microsoft Word. Across space and time, I am present with you, as intimately as Alan was with me, through the exhibition, the work, and the light.

Kyle Chung  
June 12, 2022

#### LIGHT THROUGH THE TUNNEL BRINGS TEARS AND SPIKES, UNCONTRIVED

*Why have I never watched A Symphony of Lights?* The light monument across Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong was officially launched in 2004. It was the year after the outbreak of the SARS epidemic in the city. Citizens in Hong Kong are well aware of the light monument and its function. Yet, we never pay enough attention to the performance. It is always within sight but out of mind. In a city where light pollution is ubiquitous, I'd rather look for stars in the sky and a moment of peace and quiet. Light emitted is highly visible yet intangible, both monumental and anti-monumental. These conceptual contradictions further my thinking that seeing light signifies both distance and proximity. This sounds serendipitous in 2022 between Hong Kong and Geneva.

*Why did I watch A Symphony of Lights?* It is an impulse – not knowing ignites curiosity. We are here in Hong Kong working with Alan Bogana, who is based in Geneva, for a remote and virtual artist residency. We look for light, a particular kind of penetration into the evening sky. Startlingly, and in a true a priori manner, the closer the lights they locate, the less we can see; the farther the lights, the more we see. What can Alan see 9,517 kilometers away in real time through a webcam? A landscape? A spectacle? Or a vision to awaken our visual inertia to see Hong Kong while in Hong Kong?

Alan Bogana has never seen *A Symphony of Lights* or visited Hong Kong because of the pandemic. Intriguingly, he has been with the light monument in Hong Kong for the past six months in the most intimate manner. At 2 pm every day (Central European Time), he looks at the light performance at 8 pm (Hong Kong Time) through a webcam. The panoramic view through the webcam cannot be experienced in real life *in situ*. The mediated visual experience directs him to focus sharply on a visual representation of the experience (bear in mind that in the webcam capture, there is no sound, no heat, no rain, no chaos of a city. . . nothing but a panorama that operates like a surveillance camera; also, imagine what Alan would have endured from such deadpan seeing).

The academic discourse on the advocacy of screen culture and its meditative power over the past decade has become outdated because of the global pandemic and needs to be rewritten, perhaps by a body of artwork in front of you.

The new works presented in this exhibition encapsulate the quietness that results from Alan's virtual residency. The video titled *Raindrops Symphony* is

a condition-specific work employing weather as a lens through which to see light in Hong Kong in the most poetic way. Three 3D printings generated by a volumetric representation of light, titled *Relics of Lights, Clouds and Raindrops (Hong Kong)*, are results of the study of lights of A Symphony of Lights during the virtual residency. These miniatures could be read as landscapes, almost forensic, or *karesansui* (Japanese zen/sand garden) of their visual appeal.

The new works of oppositional forces, styles, and aesthetics entangle a seeing that reminds me of being a Hong Kong citizen and how I saw, see, and will see my city. I could not help reminisce moments when my city was torn apart and when I needed a new vision to overcome my inertia of being at home for too long and perhaps projecting what the city, and every city on earth, would soon become.

The transformative power of Alan Bogana's new works authorizes the light at the end of the tunnel of hope that is uncontrived, unconventional, and uplifting.

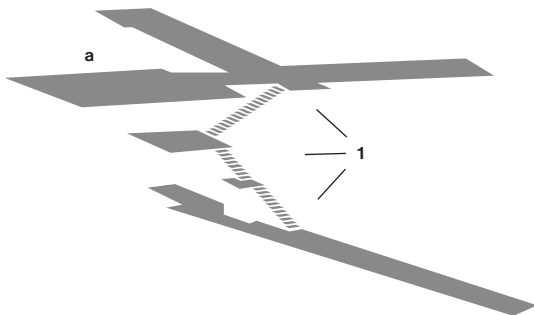
Lee Wing Ki, June 25, 2022

# Barbezat-Villetard

Matthieu Barbezat \*1981 (CH)  
Camille Villetard \*1987 (FR)

barbezat-villetard.com

To take over the passageways and corridors of Parallels, the CAN team called on the Barbezat-Villetard duo. Their intervention, *L'Humeur*, is conceived as a counterweight to the rest of the exhibition. It begins at the entrance door and extends along the stairs, the corridors and into the reception area. It combines itself with the characteristics of the building, responds to the architecture, blurring its own boundaries. It functions as a climate airlock where light, air pressure and humidity become integral components of the work and are influenced by the public's visits. Visible throughout the year 2022, it envelops the entire exhibition in a fleeting sensory veil.



- 1. *L'Humeur*, 2022  
L.E.D. lights, misting system, ventilator (Orion), motion sensor, Arduino®, computer, chairs.
- a. reception desk, 3rd floor

## LONESOME NAVIGATOR

Here I am. As a hundred times before. And yet, there is something weird. Is it the reddish tint? The dark glowing texture of the tubular ceiling? Or the smell? That's it. Diffuse. It carries the pungency of greasy scents rising from the depths. It is sickeningly sweet like the almost visible perfumed trail of an earlier passenger, which must have permeated the porous walls and stagnated in this cramped corridor.

Other presences reveal themselves slowly. I anticipate the steps coming behind, like wingbeats of low flying swallows, I see the rosy halo of the one ahead on the seat. I feel them like the gentle flow of a tropical breeze. As I move on, my slight mood-altering headache intensifies. Low pressure. Would the atmospheric agents play against me today? Saturated air. I inhale. A slight nausea surprises me. I spit out. The floor is slippery. Is it raining outside? A few beads trickle on my forehead. It sticks to my skin, the smell, the sensation, like a gluey mist that would infiltrates through my orifices to then spread and grow through my cells.

I lose my bearings. As if to better let myself be carried away by this score already started, that I constantly, unwillingly replay. It seems that all the existing visuals and sensory patterns are continuously reshuffled, my surroundings reframed. I extrapolate and let myself be transported by this soft manipulation. My diaphragm tightens. My pulse accelerates. *Allegro*. I rise.

## SILHOUETTE

1565, Florence. Was Vasari really thinking of protecting the fragile nasal cavities of the Dukes and Duchesses from the foul, meaty miasma coming from the Ponte Vecchio when he conceived his corridor? Elevated, it boldly allowed the members of the Medici family to rise to the upper level while passing unnoticed from one Palace to another. A shortcut, a privileged path, a secret way, in and out. A corridor. In this element of domestic architecture one walks through, one rushes, from A to B; one does not stay still in a *corridor*. No wonder that it carries the name of "the one who runs".

2022, Neuchâtel. The alley I'm facing now is 14m long. How long would it take me to cover this distance with 86 pulsations per minute? How many steps would I need to catch up with this silhouette, that I vaguely distinguish at the other end of the hallway? I can hardly identify it as a human figure but I hear a breath, slightly panting, mingling with the dripping of the pipes and my own cadence, as if to form a common acoustic matter. *Andante*. The figure moves forward with allure, a swiftness without hesitation, as it seems to slip through the obstacles in its way. It is about to climb. I can't see its face but it guides me. I recall the obscure walkers in Alan Clarke's *Elephant* (1989), plunging the observer in a sort of never ending opening credits. I follow the oracle.

The roaming silhouette acts as a vector of speculated futures, of the darkest fantasies, of myriad conjectures. The gallery, vehicle for romanticized ventures and dreadful scenarios, is a place for expectations and reveals the attractive irrational and even delirious promises of our imagination. What's happening at the end of the way? On the next level? On the other side of the gate?

#### SIDEREAL PRESENCE

Rue des Moulins 37. I remember an oculus that I had spotted before. It seemed to observe me as much as I observed it. As I glimpsed through and gazed into the exhibition space my vision was obstructed for a short moment by the dazzling icy sun rays. Thus, the narrow entry looked like a darkly lit underground path. I could barely determine the hue. "On en reste bleu, on voit rouge, on est vert", they said.

I stepped in. The entrance hall opened on the vast distribution space of the CAN formed by a large communication routes network acting like the telescopic arms of the architecture. Reaching out, drawing in, connecting different realities, levels and states. They invited me to stay.

So I sat there, and the corridor became a hospitality area that allowed me to rest, in expectancy. Reflecting on the endless combinations of the waiting room's amberlike modular structure, I realized that this corridic display was slowly shifting into a free-floating location that possessed a somewhat destabilizing, transitory quality. A vessel being nothing but a long maze-like airlock made of lanes and lobbies, gates and thresholds; it nevertheless had its own rules, an identity, and a weightlessness to be shared with its still-undetected inhabitants.

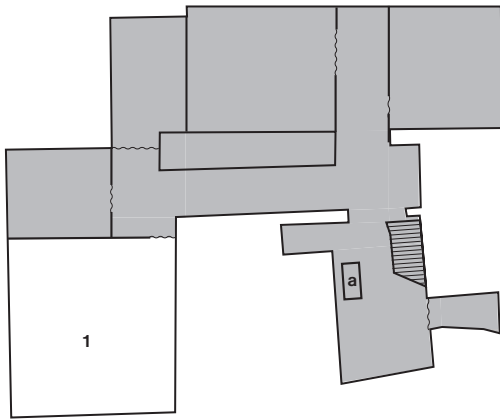
Resting, waiting, cogitating. *Lento*. A haze thickened, becoming a bluish veil of auroral obscurity. I sat unaware that the changeover had already started. Recall Dr. Clair in J. G. Ballard's *Crystal World* (1966) so mesmerized by the sinister beauty of the invasive quartzes that she surrenders physically to their spread. Like her, I lingered with pleasure in an addictive liminal state of semi-consciousness. I had not realized as I entered the sas, where referential and parallel universes meet, that I would be walking into a transition phase. The twitching of the neon lights woke me from my torpor and I saw it, the vibrating punctum, staring at me and gently pulling me out.

Marie Dupasquier

# Francesco Finizio

Francesco Finizio \*1967 (IT/USA/FR)

<https://ddabretagne.org/fr/artistes/francesco-finizio/oeuvres>



1. *Back in Five*, 2022  
Various materials

a. reception desk, 3rd floor

A daring new business venture seems stalled dead in its tracks.

Yet another social event for hip singles? Who's to say...

The clerk has apparently just stepped out and should return shortly, long enough in any case for other entrepreneurial maggots to take root with their own pop-up stores. But even they've gone missing!

All that's left are the machines executing their moves in the rink, playpen, holding tank...and a few humans to watch.

Will their owners return or have they been abandoned. The blissful indifference makes it anyone's guess. I'm off to the lake to ponder the ducks.

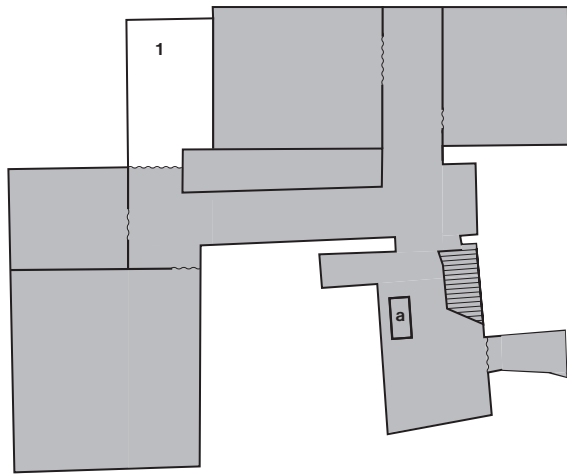
Francesco Finizio



# Lola Gonzàlez

Lola Gonzàlez \*1988 (FR)

[lola-gonzalez.com](http://lola-gonzalez.com)



- 1. *Tonnerres*, 2022  
color video, HD, stereo, 14'26"
- a. reception desk, 3rd floor

*"One day,*

*WE,*

*Are reflected*

*In a posthumous world."*<sup>1</sup>

The house has been shattered. Cut apart. Uninhabitable, now it hiccups, dismembered and disarticulated. What remains of its walls twists toward the memory of dreaded windstorms and insatiable cold rain. It was a tranquil house. Away from it all. A solitary recluse. Sensible. Spacious, proudly facing the Atlantic Ocean horizon. Elegant, surrounded by the sunny forests and undergrowth of the secret and silent countryside. Bourgeois, encircled by well-ordered classical gardens. It was a quiet house, sheltering, welcoming the enigmatic, hesitating human choir. Singular and collective. Enclosed and vigilant. Watchful and waiting for the winter to come, an undefined battle against a vague enemy. A close-knit choir, like a family, a group, friends, a clan, a sect, a community among uncertain communities. Inventor of rebellions dreamed and acted out, stammering resistances and useless suicides. The world – which deprived the choir of a liveable horizon and prevents the emergence of an extended we – was outside.

Not far from the Alpine crystalline rock slopes of the Vallée des Merveilles in the Mercantour mountains, the house was accustomed to standing upright, reigning over part of the landscape. And the landscape had accepted it so well that even without asking or making any compromises the building had become part of it, incorporated into the shadow of the forests of chestnut and ash trees, of larches and stone pines, moulded into the morainic rock cleaved by the capricious torrents of the Vésubie and Roya rivers, a seasonal fabric of low and high waters. The house dialogued with the landscape. Unseparated. Connected. A human touch. For generations. The idea of a certain everyday eternity in suspension. The individual and solitary idea of the landscape's sublime beauty. The contemporary idea of a transactional landscape in exchange for satisfying the artificial needs of a profitable tourist trade. The insane idea of an eternal, joyous now.

Then there was a suddenly, a change both in the course of human events and the weather. The suddenness of death. The melodic and perplexing flow of things just stopped. "That day, the unbearable became a reality," a woman says. We can pinpoint and visualize the exact date: October 2, 2020. The house could not escape history. Could not escape the atmospheric narrative, as implacable as it is unpredictable. Even if it enveloped imaginary insurrections and utopian impulses, invented languages. Even if it protected the anxious and dialectical cries of a common individuality ready to begin all

1. "Le siècle tombe", Marjorie Micucci, *Lost journey cantos 2*, The Contemporary Erratum Press, 2020, p. 217. Poem on view during the group show *Marcelle Alix ouverte*, galerie Marcelle Alix, Paris, October 30-December 21, 2019.

over again or just begin. The European Western world is always astonished by what happens to it. It's astonished that anything can happen; astonished by the persistence of a stubborn, deeply-rooted and highly active reality whose existence can bear witness to the sterile new order. Astonished by its violent resistance. Disruption is not an option. This new world has no understanding of death, that sudden eclipse, it throws death into the babbling flow of passing images and decries, with false innocence, the tragedy of history's repetition. That world that laughs, insensitive or blind to the "terrible tidings,"<sup>2</sup> or, better said, responsible for it, has forgotten the very "dark ages"<sup>3</sup> when the poets rekindled their urgent and imperative words, so ambivalent and yet so clear, so sweetly said and yet so terrifying. This new world detests ambiguity and enigma. But poets and artists keep speaking, they repeat and weave and sew, propose, record and show. They come back from reality and the way things are. They reinvent language and come up with images – powerful, exploded, frozen, mute, delicate, gaping, open to the senses and higher than life.

Today the house is a hollowed-out ruin, afflicted with a sudden vertigo, vomiting shreds of its deepest political convictions into the muddy current that was for so long a nourishing and fertile river, but "a long time doesn't mean always"<sup>4</sup> as the elusive poet warns us. The house made of wood and grey stone is on the verge of collapse, of disappearing from the metamorphosed landscape now ridding itself of the traces of human activity and construction. The landscape has succumbed to an extratropical low pressure cyclone rolling in from the Atlantic ocean, a "weather bomb" given the non-gendered name Alex; it has absorbed the mad confrontation of the elements, wind and swollen rain caught up in an apparently inexhaustible circular dance, an explosive rush that disfigures the stunned bodies, knowing that nothing can last, that the Earth is alive, throbbing, trembling, burning, flooding, shaking and collapsing, that it is an equilibrium of fragile diversities and a maelstrom of all kinds of matter, of currents that clash or reconcile, of straining physical forces. The Earth reacts and does not want to die. It knows that it is being observed, closely watched, its slightest deviations and jolts measured, along with its slightest underground energies. It knows it has entered a young century that is already running out of breath and life, threatened and reduced. It dreams of resistance.

The Earth was surprised that fall morning in 2020. The valleys of the Roya and the Vésubie may have experienced an earthquake of Richterian proportions. The tectonic fault line is also restless. Temperance is a liberal illusion. A false Western dream. And we are blind to that. We're asleep in the face of that. Will the broken house remain in the bodies of the human choir now wandering through deserted valleys. Will it remain in the choir's blind eyes. The catastrophe is here. What will become of the choir that saw it? Will it speak of the landscape metamorphosed since the catastrophe? Beginning with the catastrophe? Will it be different after this catastrophe it has experienced? Will it act and move in the same way?

*I am. We are.*

*That is enough. Now we have to start. Life has been put in our hands. For itself it became empty already long ago. It pitches senselessly back and forth, but we stand firm, and so we want to become its initiative and its ends.*<sup>5</sup>

After the catastrophe... The bodies of the choir separate from the landscape. The battered bodies have tried one last time to keep what was once the cold tenderness of a rock, the summer caress of a clear stream. The choir looks at the house it has left. It sees itself as twigs left behind by the catastrophe. And it leaves the landscape. Now in a state of disordered alert. Lost, the choir tries to reassemble its narrative. But it's deaf. But it's mute. But it itself is cut off. The choir flees the posthumous world. Long closed off in its house, familiar only with itself, closed off by its own self-imposed, vain clandestinity, it is orphaned from its only horizon of expectations, the countryside which it no longer knows how to inhabit. Expelled and under suspicion, the choir

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2. Bertolt Brecht, "To posterity", translated by H. R. Hays, Grove Press, 1947.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Bertolt Brecht, "The Blind Man", translated by Anthony Tatlow, Methuen, 1973.

5. Ernst Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, translated by Anthony A. Nassar, Stanford University Press, 2000. Written April 1915-May 1917.

goes back to the Mediterranean city, wounded by another of the world's madness on July 14, 2016<sup>6</sup>. What can the choir do now? Can it bear witness as heir to the event, and can it tell the story? Will it be able to speak again and share a memory and a present? In ancient Greek the word *choros* means dance. Suddenly, for a moment, the choir reconciles with its forgotten beginnings, dissolves into the immensity of a collective dance, the meeting of one generation with another, the equality of a "choral community"<sup>7</sup> whose multiple bodies come alive with shared energy, dissimilar histories, troubled or satisfied emotions. The initial choir, the model, has disappeared into a movement that "expresses nothing but movement itself, movement for movement's sake, free of any goal to reach and any sentiment determined to express itself,"<sup>8</sup> cancelling any "hierarchy of bodies, movements and temporalities."<sup>9</sup> The possibility of a communality to ward off catastrophe, to "make a go at it"<sup>10</sup> remains available. Everything absurd has been imbibed.

In the valley, the storm is lying in wait. The thunder is an unpredictable death-knell, still calling out. Thus, the artist strips naked the dichotomies, evasions and ambivalence of our times, keeping watch<sup>11</sup>.

Marjorie Micucci

Translation by Leo Stephen Torgoff

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6. Author's note: In the evening July 14, 2016, a 19-ton truck was deliberately driven into the sea-side Promenade des Anglais in Nice, running down spectators who had come to watch the fireworks celebrating France's national holiday. This terrorist attack claimed by ISIS killed 89 people and left 458 wounded.

7. Jacques Rancière, « Le moment de la danse », *Les Temps modernes. Art, temps, politique*, Paris, La Fabrique éditions, 2018, p. 88.

8. *Op. cit.*, p. 92.

9. *Op. cit.*, p. 95.

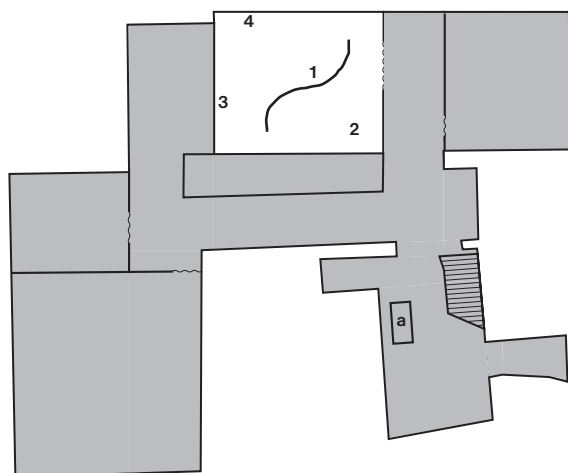
10. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Essayer voir*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 2014.

11. François Hartog, *La Chambre de veille*, Paris, Flammarion, 2013.

# Nina Rieben

## *miss you, written with a finger on a wrist*

Nina Rieben \*1992 (CH)  
ninarieben.ch



1. *Loose attempts of sorrow*  
2022  
fabric, metal
2. *Sehnsucht nach gestern  
ist Angst vor der Zeit*  
2022  
sneakers, various materials
3. *Not yet titled*  
2022  
photograph on screen
4. *Zigarette für morgen*  
2022  
cigarette, stickers, tin, stones
- a. accueil, 3e étage

Avec le soutien de la Ville de Berne et de l'office de la culture du  
Canton de Berne

With the spatial installation *miss you, written with a finger on a wrist*, Nina Rieben raises questions about which reality we trust and how we construct it in the interstices of matter and mind, abstraction and experience, feeling and knowledge. What the reality of the work is remains indeterminate or is the result of our imagination, our memory, our presumption. Her 'imagery' bring together traces of text, material and image which as fragments operate with condensations, turns, reversals and reflexes, revealing the voids between things and realities, between presence and absence, without pointing to them.

The dark veil of *Loose attempts of sorrow* dangles along CAN's ceiling construction, drawing the eye to sign-like shapes that have been almost neglectfully attached to the transparent fabric. Like loose fragments, they float in space, seeking clues on the walls and windows that lie behind them. These fleeting gestures seem like symbols or cryptic characters to be deciphered, but at the same time, they elude our understanding as soon as we think we have found a meaning in them. Language becomes form, or appears as an idea of the existence of language, which is, however, not accessible. The signs come from the artist's growing vocabulary, which may remind us of an alphabet. Yet these are not clearly categorisable figures, but signals that do not evoke binding interpretations, that are rather sounds, meanings, tags or movements of thought.

Another trace shines through the curtain, echoing the signs on the fabric on the wall. In *Not yet titled*, a black surface flickers on a flat screen, from which a line of light appears in a kind of framing. Upon a closer look, the rectangle reveals itself to be a window opening that opens up a view into a room. The artist encountered the situation during a walk through Marseille at night. Looking along the darkened facade of an apartment building, the brightly lit window attracted her attention. In it a fleeting apparition is depicted, which seems as if it would traverse the space and disappear again into the darkness as a poetic trace. However, the line is cropped by the opening, so that the gaze cannot follow the light source to the end, but is interrupted. This creates a game with perception, because the expectation of being able to follow the line to the end and arrive at a logical resolution of the phenomenon is disrupted. There is something mysterious about the image and it almost seems as if the artist is taking a picture of what does not exist. Instead of being the representation of a real scene, it could just as easily be an invention for which the line has been digitally mounted into the image. But instead of manipulating the photograph, Rieben treats the camera like a ritual instrument, giving this intangible, fugitive trace a physical presence by means of photography. She takes advantage of the medium's inherent ability to capture ephemera and takes her fictions at face value. The intermingling of a potential fiction with reality, in combination with the unfinished aesthetics and the voids to which Rieben orients herself with her artistic production of works, gives rise to a blurriness and throws our perception into turmoil.

In *Sehnsucht nach gestern, ist Angst vor der Zeit*, a pair of bright white Nike sneakers lie almost casually on the floor of the exhibition space, as if someone had taken them off and left them there. Upon approaching, two applied

threads catch the eye, disturbing the view because they seem like fallen lint that doesn't belong there and needs to be removed. But the black and white ends of the thread converge on the side of the rubber sole, are attached with a clip and are captured in their randomness. Inside the footwear are a variety of findings, such as folded scraps of paper with texts that can only be made out fragmentarily, hair, pieces of jewelry, or illustrations that shine through the transparent rubber. One might wonder how these things got into the sole of the shoe and, in the case of an old, holey sneaker, imagine how loose remnants of the road surface or chewing gum papers got caught in the cavities while walking. The chewing gum and glitter sticker stuck to the outside of the sole also seem odd, because they could not possibly have got onto the brand new shoe, but were obviously applied. Rieben unites opposites here: On the one hand, the object is a symbol of locomotion and an industrial, standardised design product with an aesthetic and forward-looking claim; on the other hand, shoes bear traces of paths travelled and refer to what has happened, the personal, the sentimental, the backward-looking. If at first glance the sneakers seems like a customised product, it differs in that the artist modifies the mass consumer good, inscribes traces of memory on it and thereby investigating how personal desires or rituals become inscribed in everyday objects or places. The object merges the generic with the personal, placing it in an ambivalent state.

The title *Zigarette für morgen* points as a parable to the characteristics of the ephemeral commodity. Cigarettes are temporal markers and serve to rhythmise social or biographical processes. As rituals, they create transitions, which at the same moment, form a conclusion and a new start and intertwine the past with the future. The cigarette is a recurring motif in Nina Rieben's work, with an interest in action sequences and the ephemeral character of the object that exists in order to disappear being the focus of her observation. *Zigarette für morgen*, as the title implies, is about the One Cigarette, reserved for a moment with a special emotional meaning: the lucky cigarette. Rieben modified the object with jewellery and pewter applications, as well as a text fragment, whose full message remains hidden from us, like we already found it in the rubber sole of the sneakers. Adhesive rhinestones adorn the paper that wraps the tobacco and small pendants dangle from threads, like on a beggar's bracelet. They are made of lucky pewter, which is traditionally used for a New Year's Eve tradition in which shapes are cast collectively that are both lucky charms and a form of interpretation for the coming year. The choice of this material manoeuvres the artist herself into the performance of the ritual act. Through the manipulation, the cigarette is materially upgraded and transformed into a piece of jewellery. The ideas that are bound to the image of the 'lucky cigarette' are embodied in the object. Here, its meaning is additionally charged by the ornamentation which upgrades the object to such an extent that its function of being smoked at a key moment is lost. There is an exaggeration of the means, which leads to the patheticisation of the object. The object lets our perception tilt, as the cigarette becomes a memento and refers to past events or a single moment.

Stefanie Gschwend

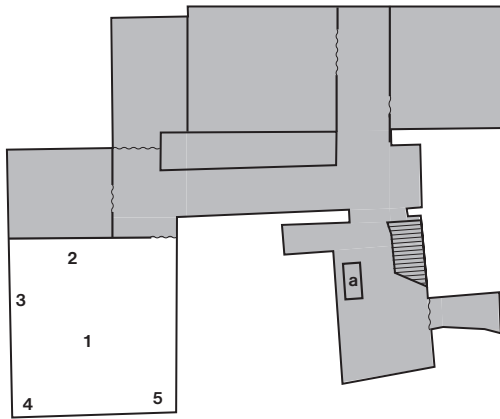
# Nolan Oswald Dennis

Nolan Oswald Dennis \*1988 (ZM)

nolanoswalddennis.com

(models)

from a black planetarium



1. *model for a gasp (bound)*, 2022
2. *model for a resurface archive*, 2022
3. *model for a black earth study desk*, 2022
4. *model for a dialectic (illuminated)*, 2022
5. *model for Torres-García (illuminated)*, 2022
- a. reception desk, 3rd floor

## [misc. facts]

- > *the land* is another name for *the planet*
- > *the planet* is a misnaming of a *community of relations* as a single object
- > a *community* is an approximation *interactions* (and commitment)
- > *interaction* is another way to say *continuous transformation*
- > a *world* is a *community of changes* *changing*
- > the historical image of the world is a *colonial instrument* against change
- > if there is one image then there is *no image*
- > *no image* another name for a *void*
- > a *void* is also all *potential images*
- > a *black planetarium* converts *potentialities* into *possibilities*
- > a *world* is only a *world* through *other worlds*
- > or *none*

## [addendum]

We can summarise the colonial world as what happens when a planet is treated as property. Black liberation is the struggle against being-as-property (slavery, colonisation, commodification), a black planetarium is the community of relations in eco-systematic service of a (k)new possibility - what we could call a world in which many worlds are possible<sup>1</sup>.

(models) from a black planetarium presents a collection of world image-objects which explore a black representational grammar for the planet. These image-objects ask: what tools<sup>2</sup> do we use to imagine the world, and why? How could these inherited images be reengineered to imagine another world, or this world, differently? The image-objects in the exhibition act as models, multi-dimensional representations of possible images of the world, taken from an imaginary institution called a black planetarium. This para-fictional institution approaches the planet as a collective body always located

1. see: *Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and De-Colonial Freedom*. Walter Mignolo. *Theory, Culture & Society* 26, no. 7/8. 2009

2. see: *The Master's Tools will never Dismantle the Master's House*. Audre Lorde. 1979

somewhere beyond the horizon of recognition. The images and models we create of the world are therefore only methods of organising relations to that shared body. These relations can be organised through logics of ownership, productivity, exploitation, or logics of community, transformation, possibility and so on, the options are vast and consequential.

The terrestrial globe is the image-object of the colonial organisation of a world as a static object. An image-object of an idealised enclosed singularity, world viewed from the outside and characterised by fixed borders and non-relational ecologies of being - where property relations stand in for planetary relations. The decolonial tradition is the struggle against the immobilisation of world, a struggle toward a world which is always transforming, and transformable.

The work in this exhibition systematically applies a set of conceptual transformations to the terrestrial globe. Searching for a grammar for other worlds, this exhibition models a series of otherworldly planets that breath, that glow, transparent planets, black planets that can transform themselves as easily as we change clothes. Simultaneously wilful and meditative this series of models asks how we might wreck, scavenge, retool, reassemble this colonial instrument and put it to decolonial work: how the globe might become scyborg<sup>3</sup> might become ensemble<sup>4</sup>.

*(models) from a black planetarium* act as demonstrative dedications to a world which is always more than we recognise, and to those who are misrecognised alongside it.

Nolan Oswald Dennis

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3. "Scyborg - composed of s + cyborg - is a queer turn of word that I offer to you to name the structural agency of persons who have picked up colonial technologies and reassembled them to decolonial purposes... Scyborg is system-interference and system-witchcraft, the ghost in the machine." (xiv, introduction to *a third university is possible*. la paperson. University of Minnesota Press. 2017)

4. "ensemble (swarm, field, plenum)... in accordance with the refusal of the unique figure, we need a difference engine, recalibrated... We say blackness and the imagination are none. How soft that softest darkness bends the light. consent not to be a single being is meant to bask in that light, available, like a monument you see through." (xiii, preface to *The Universal Machine*. Fred Moten. Duke University Press. 2018)