

dépendance

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ALEXANDRA METCALF
E=mcScared
23 April - 27 June, 2026

Press Release

"Speed is no longer a means but a destiny."
— Paul Virilio

dépendance is pleased to present *E=mcScared*, Alexandra Metcalf's first solo exhibition at the gallery. The exhibition takes up speed not as a thrill or a sign of progress, but as something stranger and more wearing: a pressure that gets into the body, bends attention, and makes time feel both compressed and unstable. Moving between the railway age and the always-on logic of the present, Metcalf looks at what happens when acceleration stops being an event and becomes an atmosphere.

The railway sits in the show as both historical reference and formal armature. In the nineteenth century, the train was one of modernity's great promises, but it also brought new forms of strain. Metcalf returns to the old diagnosis of "railway madness," a term used to describe dizziness, agitation, fainting, and nervous disturbance in passengers exposed to unprecedented speed. The phrase now sounds theatrical, but the symptoms remain familiar enough. It described a body struggling to keep pace with a world that had suddenly started moving faster than it knew how to read. Distances collapsed, landscapes blurred, and perception lost its footing.

That history feels less distant than it should. If the railway mechanised speed, digital life has made it intimate. The demand now is not simply to move faster, but to answer faster, think faster, work faster, recover faster, and to maintain the appearance of composure throughout. Burnout, anxiety, and psychic overload read as symptoms of a larger arrangement that treats exhaustion as collateral for efficiency.

Metcalf points to forms of labour that do not fit cleanly into the forward march of industrial productivity: care, maintenance, repetition, domestic work, the daily work of keeping things going. These rhythms are cyclical, often invisible, and historically feminised. They do not speed up neatly, though systems keep trying to make them do so. The result is friction, and sometimes collapse.

A series of paintings stage these ideas through scenes of passengers in train compartments set against ebru, the marbling technique in which pigment is floated on water before being transferred to fabric. The process sets fluidity and ornament against the harder logic of transit and enclosure. Elsewhere a fainting woman appears multiplied, fragmented, and slightly machinic. With repeated limbs and interrupted gestures, she seems less like a heroine in distress than a body stuck in a loop. The faint becomes less an ending than a system error. A spinning operating light extends this mood. Rather than illuminating anything clearly, it throws vision off balance, scattering motifs of stars, trees, and brain-like forms into a restless circuit. Part theatre, part clinic, part planetarium, it makes seeing feel unsteady.

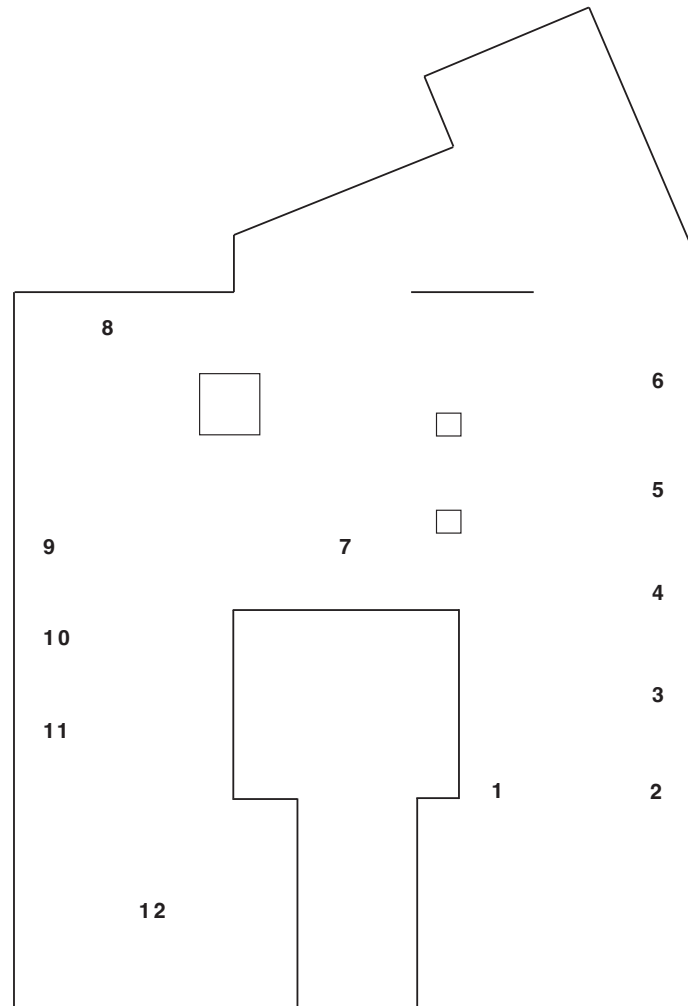
E=mcScared follows the line from movement to sensation to symptom. Train, light, and body become linked instruments in a larger drama of overstimulation. What emerges is not a refusal of modern life, but a more exacting sense of what speed extracts, and of the psychic and bodily residues it leaves in its wake.

Alexandra Metcalf (1992, UK) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. She graduated from the Chelsea College of Art and Design, London and Rhode Island School of Design, Providence. Her work has recently been exhibited at Sadie Coles, London; The Perimeter, London; Kunsthalle Zürich; FRAC Corsica, Corte; Champ Lacombe, Biarritz; 15 Orient Gallery, New York and Ginny on Frederick, London.

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|--|--|
| <p>1 <i>Loop Line</i>, 2026
iron, glass, motor, modified quartz movement
unique
44 x 57.5 x 14.5 cm
(DEP-AM-0015)</p> | <p>7 <i>Faith Mallis</i>, 2026
wood, plastic, metal, leather, chaise longue,
and electrical elements
173 (H) x 185 (L) x 90 (D) cm
(DEP-AM-0013)</p> |
| <p>2 <i>two jacksons (TRACK A)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on linen
151 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0007)</p> | <p>8 <i>Between Stops (TRACK B)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on canvas
200 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0008)</p> |
| <p>3 <i>Something Driven 4 (TRACK A)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on canvas
220 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0006)</p> | <p>9 <i>Moon Pop Nightmare (TRACK B)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on linen
151 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0011)</p> |
| <p>4 <i>NewNoirNow (TRACK A)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on canvas
120 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0005)</p> | <p>10 <i>Girl on Bin FORTUNES (TRACK B)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on canvas
180 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0010)</p> |
| <p>5 <i>RIP ROCK ACROSS (TRACK A)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on canvas
180 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0004)</p> | <p>11 <i>the-wire-is-thinking! silence! (TRACK B)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on linen
120 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0009)</p> |
| <p>6 <i>Rebellious Jukebox (TRACK A)</i>, 2026
oil and ebru on linen
160 x 135 cm
(DEP-AM-0003)</p> | <p>12 <i>programmed collapse with some
minor variations</i>, 2026
aluminum, steel, plastic, resin, stained glass,
motor, and light
160 x 105 x 125 cm
(DEP-AM-0014)</p> |