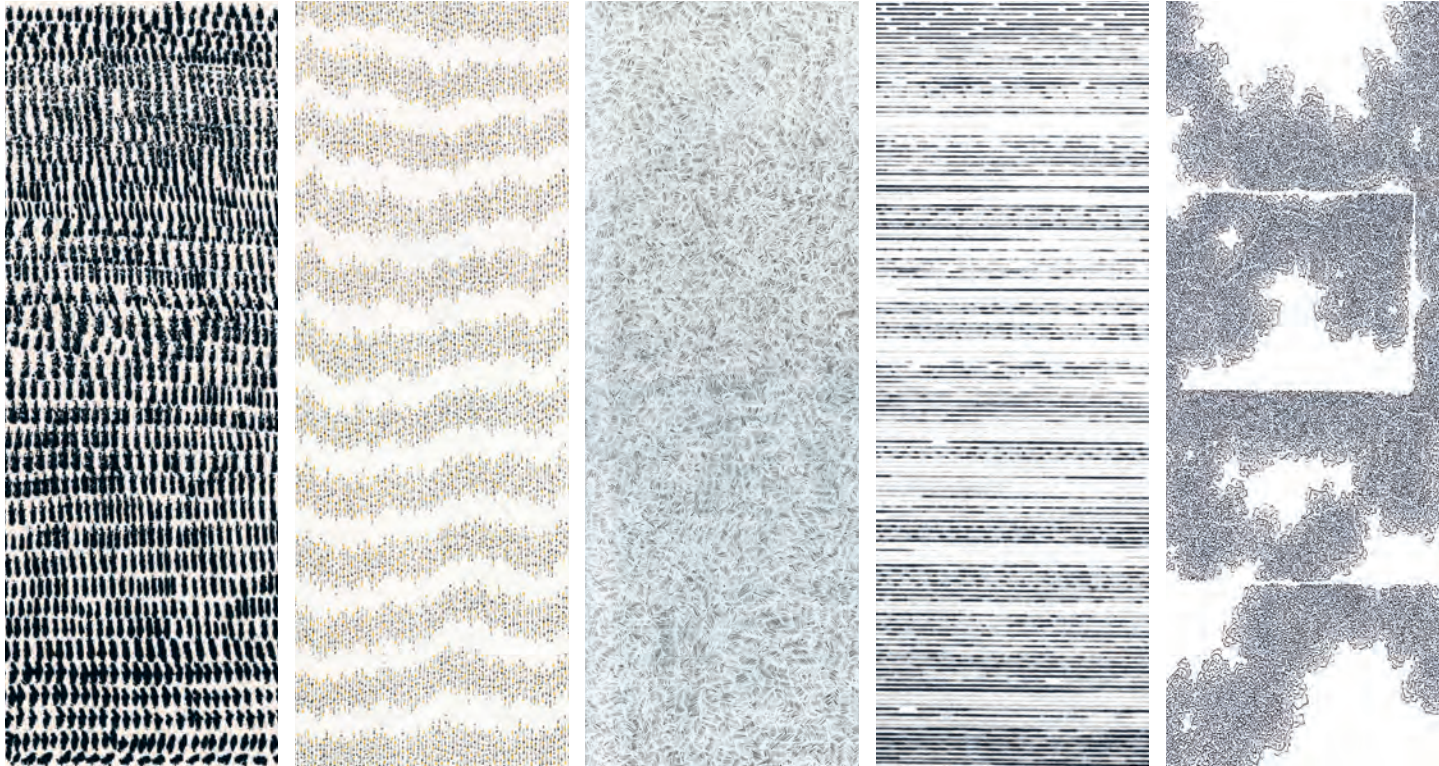


The silent adventure of intervallic spaces

Kiran KATARA, André LAMBOTTE, Albert PALMA,
Jacques POURCHER, Frank VIGNERON



ODRADEK

The silent adventure of intervallic spaces

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Jacques POURCHER, Frank VIGNERON

ODRADEK

*Now, what matters is not what I paint,
but what I don't paint.*

Simon Hantai

The idea for the project of this exhibition came to me while discovering, some time ago, the drawings of Frank Vigneron exhibited at Espace ODRADEK. The title of the exhibition is a phrase by Rainer Maria Rilke: The silent adventure of intervallic spaces. As I understand it, it means that the play of "white" spaces (or very clear shadings) are breathings, silences, "voids" which, even if the coloured or darker surfaces they accompany are more important, remain paramount.

André Lambotte

*Painting is like playing the game of Go.
One tries to arrange 'available spaces' on the chessboard.
The more there are, the more one is sure to win the game.
In a painting, those available spaces are the voids...*

Huang Pin-Hung

In parallel with his personal creation, André Lambotte is spearheading projects of dialogues between artists as well as encounters between different disciplines. Instigator of our project and of thematic exhibitions, he inspires us to weave new links between painting and music, poetry and drawing. In this way, the partitions that were assumed to be watertight disappear.

With our deepest gratitude

ODRADEK

The Silent Adventure of Intervallic Spaces

Simone Schuiten

NO-THING TO SEE

This catalogue presents the five artists who accepted our invitation to make the void appear and visible to us. We are thereby immediately confronted with a paradox, "there is nothing to see" except alignments, pages of drawings, sequential lines, repetitive notation or a dance of small jambs, leading us out of the known and the intelligible.

Kiran Katara, André Lambotte, Albert Palma, Jacques Pourcher and Frank Vigneron defy the classical stakes of representation to lead us into a practice of intervallic spaces. We are no longer maintained within the railings of the distinction subject-object, of the binary cleavage nature-culture, or of the separation void-full.

All five have, for a long time already, abandoned the limits of the principle of identity and differentiation. They guide us, by their know-how of drawing, onto a nonlinear path where contradictions become or re-become possible. The overlapping of signs, graphs or other points, as well as their multiplication, prevent our mind from wanting to read and decipher.

The appeal is to be found elsewhere, below the structures of reasonable representations, in the decompartmentalization of our ways of perceiving. These are put into play, chal-

lenged by the singular language of each artist. Half drawing, half writing, their work develops in a way at once emotional, spiritual and corporal, whereby, instead of words, we see the appearance of a musical, rhythmic, poetic and pictorial composition where life is celebrated with all its vital force.

It is in these conditions that we can establish an authentic dialogue between the art of the line of our artists and the Chinese aesthetics which are nourished by their founding principle: the void.

This can help us to develop the paradox with which we are dealing here. The single brush stroke, dear to Shitao ¹, incites us to immerse ourselves in an aesthetic where our relationship to the world is made of infinite metamorphoses, of games of appearances and disappearances and especially of active participation in the foundation of all things: the void.

Whether it is in the traces of Kiran Katara, the graphics of André Lambotte, the modulations of Jacques Pourcher, the multitude of the strokes of Albert Palma or the jambs of Frank Vigneron, the single stroke of brush always constitutes the founding principle. It intervenes as a key of participative comprehension of man and the world.

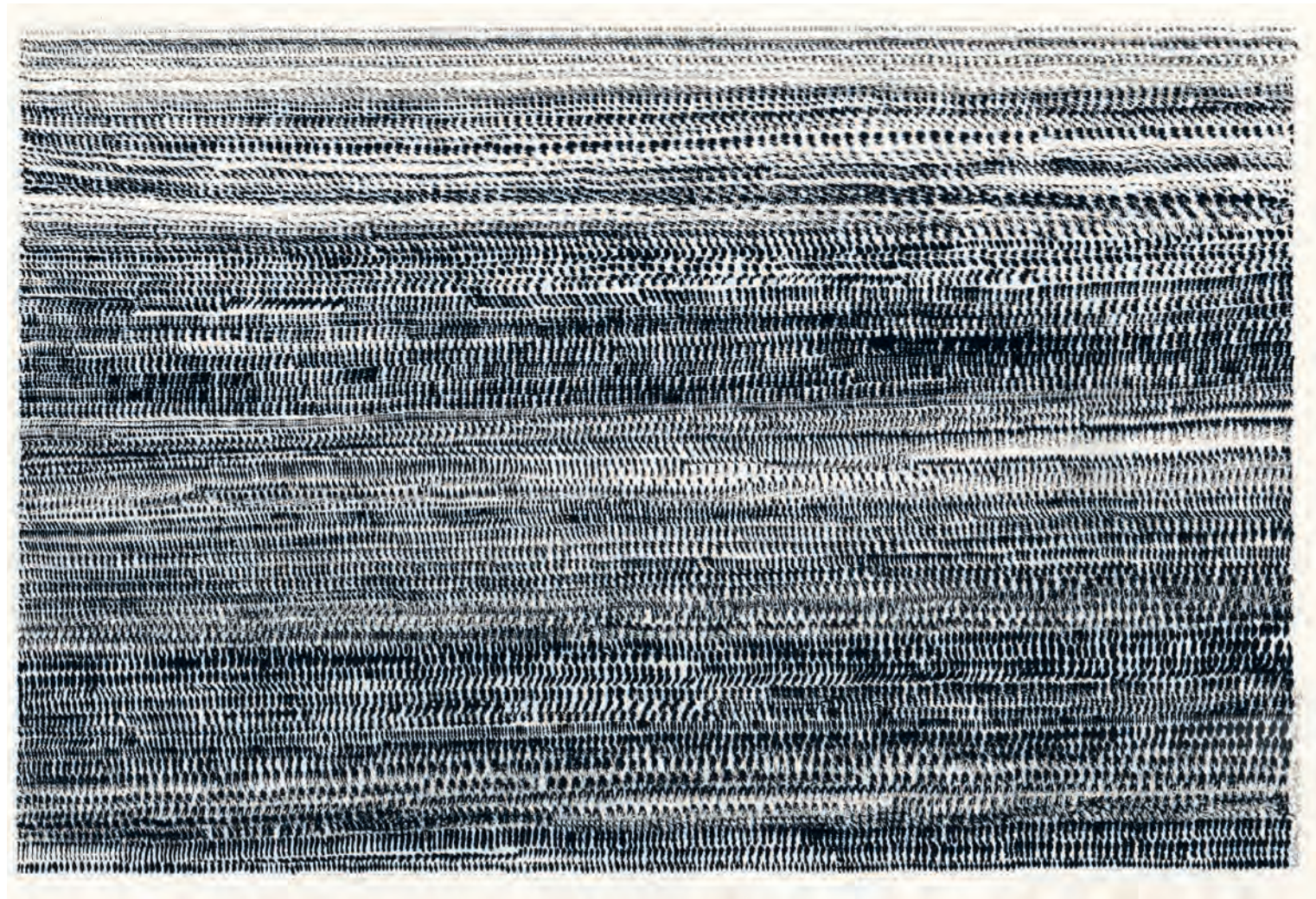
¹ Shitao appelé également "citrouille amère" est un moine peintre, calligraphe et poète chinois du début de la dynastie Qing.

First, there is the extreme simplicity that every artist finds in the choice of paper, providing a dialogue with the texture of the paper. Only then comes ink, gouache or coloured pencils and a lot of time. Finally, concentration akin to meditation, that is to say a state of mind freed from all futile constraints.

This is what allows the artist's wrist to become empty or to be guided by emptiness. The hand in suspension lives in the intervallic space, it runs through both the paper and the space that contains it. It moves in symbiosis with the concentrated mind of the artist which gives it its freedom, and the paper which offers its receptivity. Disconnected from any ordinary daily activity, the hand deploys its vital energy through the breath that connects it to the world and animates everything.

The result is an incessant assembly of signs that are in fact all one, the unique compositional stroke. This stroke invites the spectator to be concerned with the dialogue that the signs maintain between them as well as with their root, this undifferentiated foundation from which the traces are activated in full vitality and mutation.

The single stroke abolishes the distinction body-spirit, reconciles the one and the multiple, is carried out in the vacuum, thus in nothing in particular. And yet this nothingness is the motor of all things which allows us to find a common denominator between Chinese and Western aesthetics. Better still, what we like to call "no-thing" turns out to be our deepest roots in the world.



Kiran KATARÁ, *untitled*, 2015
Ink on old paper.
Extract 27 x 40 cm

Kiran KATARÁ

The inspiration for the series of the presently exposed drawings oscillates between East and West — reflecting my own dual origin (Indian and Belgian). It is a questioning that has the very gesture of writing as its starting point. Its breathings and its silences. These are compositions and arrangements of lines that cross over the boundaries of drawing, writing and poetry.

"Writing is transformed to give way to drawing, which itself becomes an arrangement of imprints. The transformation that takes place silently gives birth to a poetics of the trace".¹

While being interested in the sign, in the way it comes to life, I also question the text as a texture, in all its depth. This is a pretext for creation, poetic desire "without words". It gives me matter to think and speak.

Empty.

Few.

Trace.

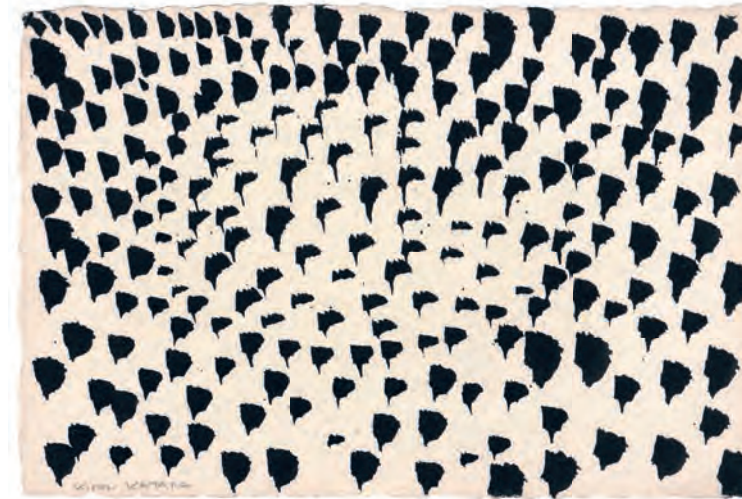
Space.

Rhythm.

Suspension.

Concentration.

Transformation...



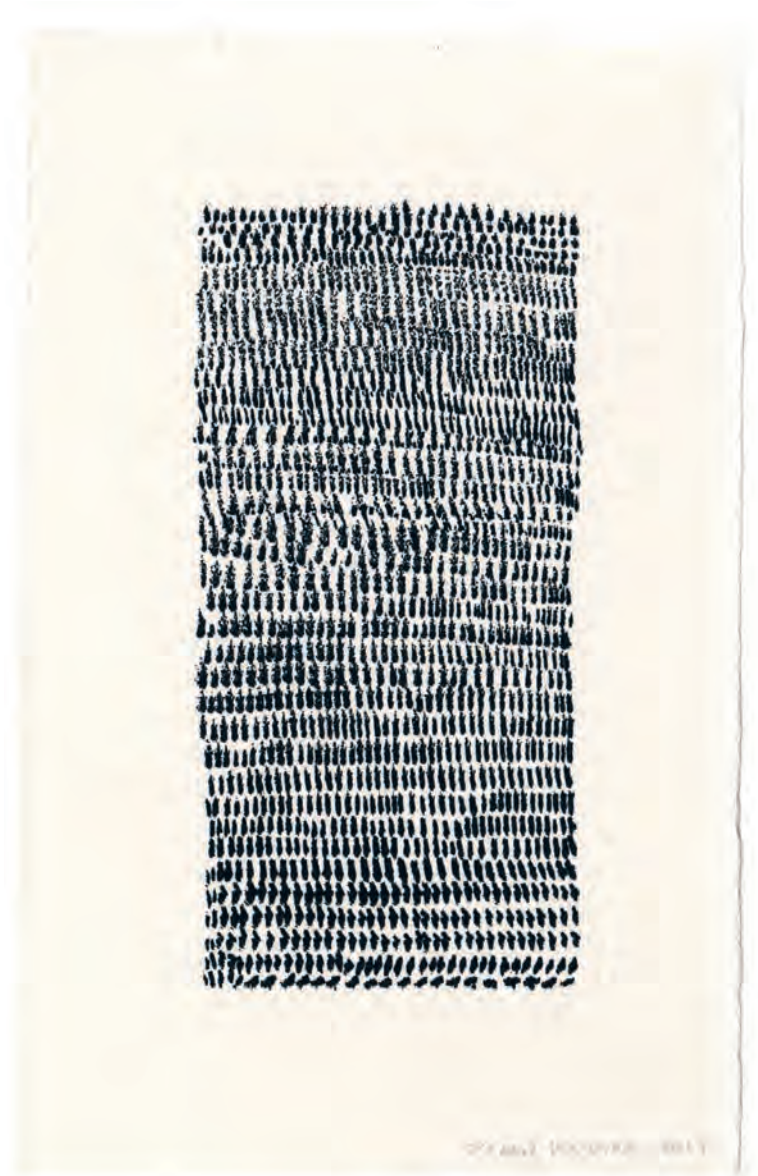
Kiran KATARÁ, *untitled*, 2013
Ink on old card
12 x 18 cm

¹ Simone Schuiten

My inspiration is not China, although I am attentive to what is being thought there. And yet, the way my work colludes with what is produced in that strange and at the same time so familiar 'elsewhere' is very intriguing. My meeting with the Parisian sinologist Léon VANDERMEERSCH gave me some insights on this subject. In his view, the written word still has more to reveal than mere orality or ordinary readability.

"From its origins, Chinese calligraphy has been the result of the revitalization of the brush stroke of ideographic writing. The calligrapher's brush, especially in the cursive style of "grass writing" (caoshu), poetically remotivates character traits that were demotivated by their linguistic attachment. Thus, a calligrapher proceeds in the graphic order in the same way as the singer proceeds in the vocal order: modulations of the calligraphic line are analogous to vocalizations sung on a syllable.²"

² Leon Vandermeersch, excerpt from a letter written for the catalogue of Kiran Katara's exhibition 'Inks' at Odradek 2015.



Kiran KATARA, *untitled*, 2017
Ink on old paper
19 x 12,5 cm

In my latest works, the signs correspond to an energy, we witness their liberating flight. The importance given to the support remains: the paper that often has had a long time of waiting before receiving a drawing, made with strength and lightness. Then a clearer reference to the birds appears.

"Kiran Katara's birds give us a sign, Kiran Katara's signs give us a bird."³

However, this rapprochement remains ambiguous; One to four traits lead us into a sometimes vegetal, sometimes human universe. We observe elevation and fall, reversing, emerging, multiple readings that change with the wind. The drawing, the movement, is interspersed and then reassembled and creates coincidences or slight shifts; It is the gaze that in this case is responsible for establishing connections, multiplicities. There is flight and pulsation.

According to Catherine Deknuydt, poet and specialist of René Char, with whom I had long exchanges about my 'murmuration' drawings: "The dialogue between signs and intervals is deeply questioned. And never has the term "interval" deserved its prefix "inter-" so well ... This "in between..." sufficiently shows that it cannot exist without the proximity of several elements, more or less connected. More than any other space, the interval has a double quality that allows it to be both disjunctive and connective: if it creates a gap that separates, it also creates a link that interconnects. In this subtle balance between opposites made apparent, the interval ensures the visibility of all the contradictory characteristics of matter and space - itself becomes the space in which opposites are related. It acts as a tensor between signs.

If the dynamic richness of my recent work owes much to the multiplicity of senses – both for direction and for significance - it also invites us to consider the senses as perception. Visual perception, of course, but also, surprisingly, auditory perception.

These drawings in front of which one is tempted to perceive the very slight murmur of the air that could be provoked by the movements of wings of the numerous tapered and darting figures. Signs we identify quite spontaneously with birds, but which could also be leaves - as in some drawings where each figure is continued by a thin line that looks like a stem; When falling, the leaves do they not also make a very slight noise that resembles a sigh?

The visual quiver that results from the vibration of the intervals is then finely underlined by an impression of sound quivering."

³ Laurence Vielle, excerpt from a poem written at the occasion of Kiran Katara's exhibition « Murmuration » at ODRADEK 2022.



Kiran KATARA, *untitled*, 2022
Ink on old paper
15,5 x 21 cm

My drawing, by its traces and silences invites text, song, dance⁴, musicality.

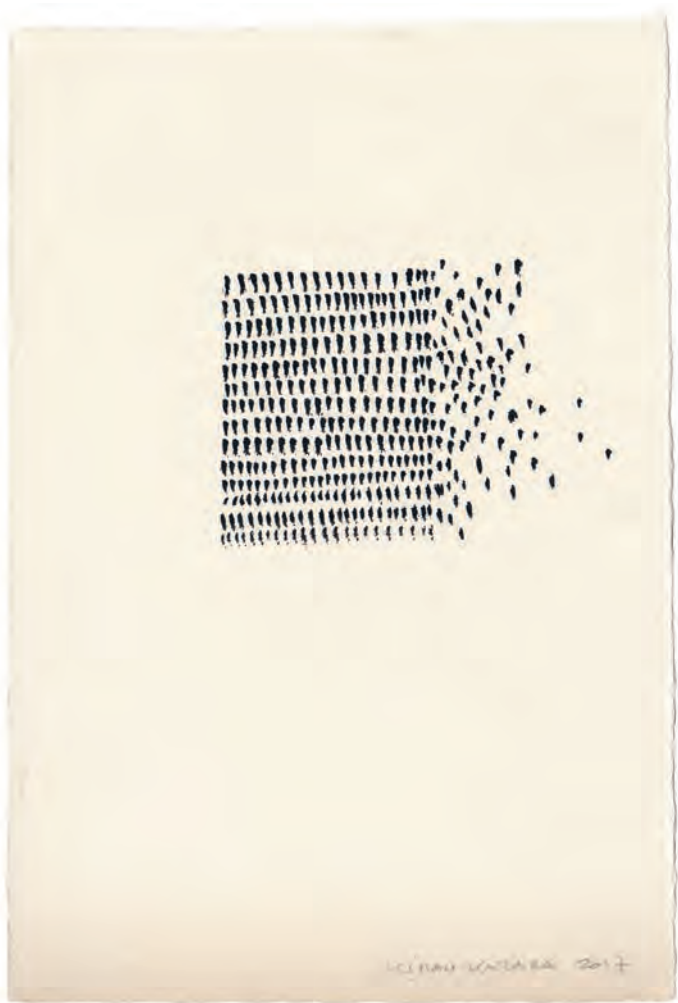
Without silences, there is no rhythm and it is this deep breath between the beats that gives birth to the music and the bursts of traces. "The painter's brush rhythms just as much as the drummer's baton, the dancer's foot as much as the musician's hand."⁵ And speaking of percussion: "What is a blow? Nothing. Or so little. One point. A point that suggests this, the very fact that we live between the blows. Between the steps. Between words, lines, colours, volumes."⁶

Kiran Katara

⁴ Michèle Noiret, danse improvisation on a poem by Laurence Vielle, accompanied by Vincent Granger at the occasion of the Kiran Katara's exhibition « Murmuration » ODRADEK 2022.

⁵ Schirren, Le rythme primordial et souverain, Edition contredanse 2011.

⁶ Ibid.



Kiran KATARA, *untitled*, 2017
Ink on old paper
18 x 12 cm

KIRAN KATARA : BIOGRAPHY

Kiran Katara, born in Brussels in 1972 to an Indian father and a Belgian mother, is architect and artist. She teaches architecture and drawing at the Faculty of Architecture 'La Cambre – Horta' of the ULB.

In 1995 she completed her studies in architecture at ISA St Luc in Brussels and made her first experiences in Ahmedabad with Anant Raje, collaborator of Louis Kahn in India. This is where her desire to go on an artistic journey was born. While starting her practice as an architect, Kiran also resumed drawing studies. She studied at the Dutch-speaking Academy of Anderlecht and began her own drawing research in 1997 in the studio of Guy Leclercq, for whom she has great esteem. From him, she learned the ancient techniques of painting and they both share the love of the matte black colour.

Without denying the influence of her architectural background, she started creating works of drawing-painting, constructed around the horizontal line with a musical inspiration. First in charcoal, then in printing ink, oil and Chinese ink. She attaches great importance to the preparation and choice of the supporting material. She likes to work with little and to exalt this almost nothing, transform it. At the time she revolted against all digitalization, seeking to establish arrangements inspired by intuitive mathematical balances. Without pre-composition, she posed, blew or gummed charcoal on a linen canvas meticulously dressed with white.

Every drawing she has made since is a slow continuation of this work. The geometric line has softened. The canvas more filled in. Only a few blanks remain, becoming focal points derived from the support; a few voids left apparent. The line has gradually become a collection of dots, a form of linear writing running from left to right. With the help of her traces, Kiran likes to think, a game of thoughts. She is currently preparing a thesis on 'poetry without words'. In 2015 she starts categorizing her drawings in families. Then, from this organic whole, she works on variations.

The dots become fields; space enters the sheet. Kiran introduces dynamic elements in her highly rhythmic series. The dots seem to bend under a breath and then straighten up like a metaphor for her life.

Gradually, the drawings move from predominantly black to predominantly white. The white of the paper rises to the surface. Kiran finds old paper and, in her minimal approach, chooses to transform it. She takes advantage of the flaws and pitting in the paper to get rid of a certain composition.

Later on, the point of attachment moved to become the centre. The points migrate, they move. Then the central point disappears and only its energy remains. Kiran's drawings become diagrams. Large territories, without scale, without orientation, almost without reference to the known. Annotations appear, but are illegible. They seem to illuminate the traces and become their shadow on the sheet, in the literal sense. Rules? Yes, but full of exceptions.

The traces become thicker, and a drawing can now be discerned... Kiran Katara pretends to classify them, annotate them. But is it a classification, when the signs seem to escape, to fly away? A great "murmuration" is being prepared.

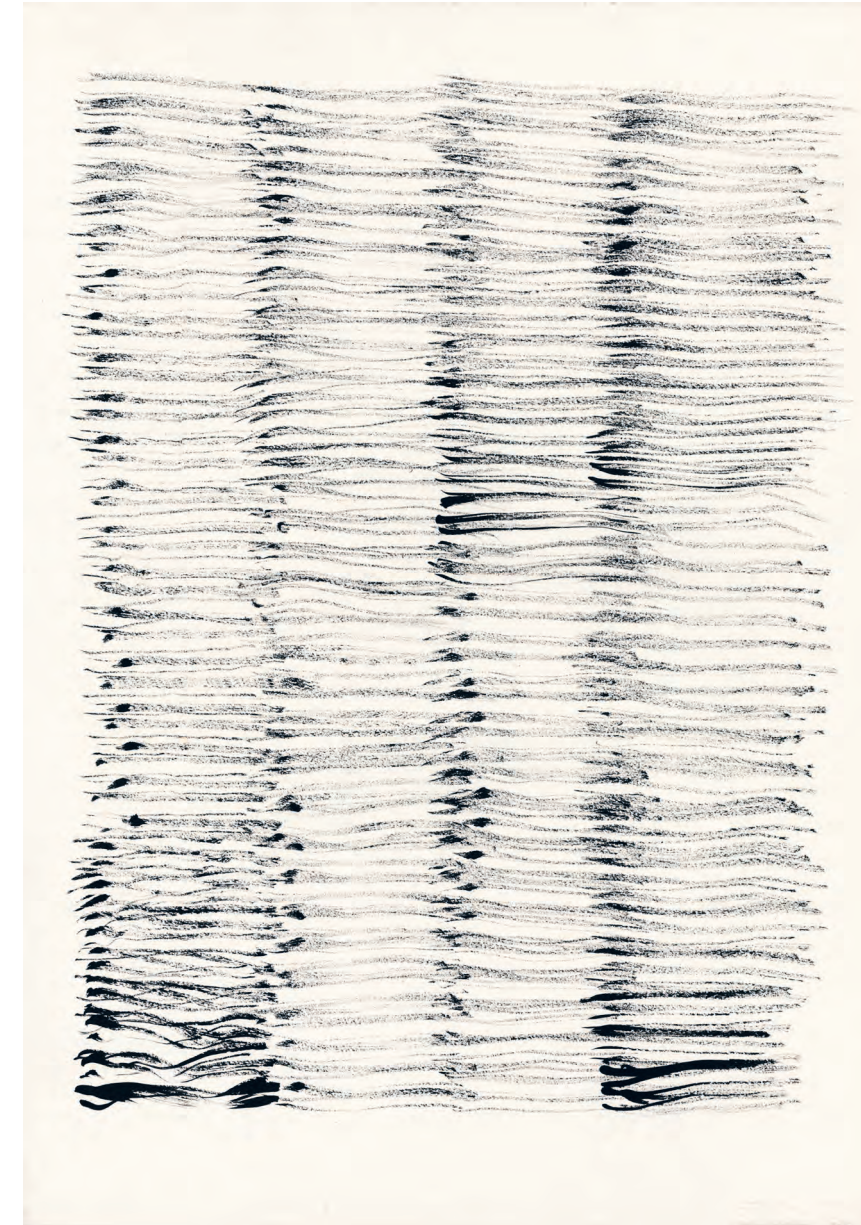
Kiran Katara has been exhibiting regularly in Flanders and Brussels since 1997.

In 2003, she was awarded the First Prize for Painting by the Flemish Community of Saint-Gilles (Brussels).

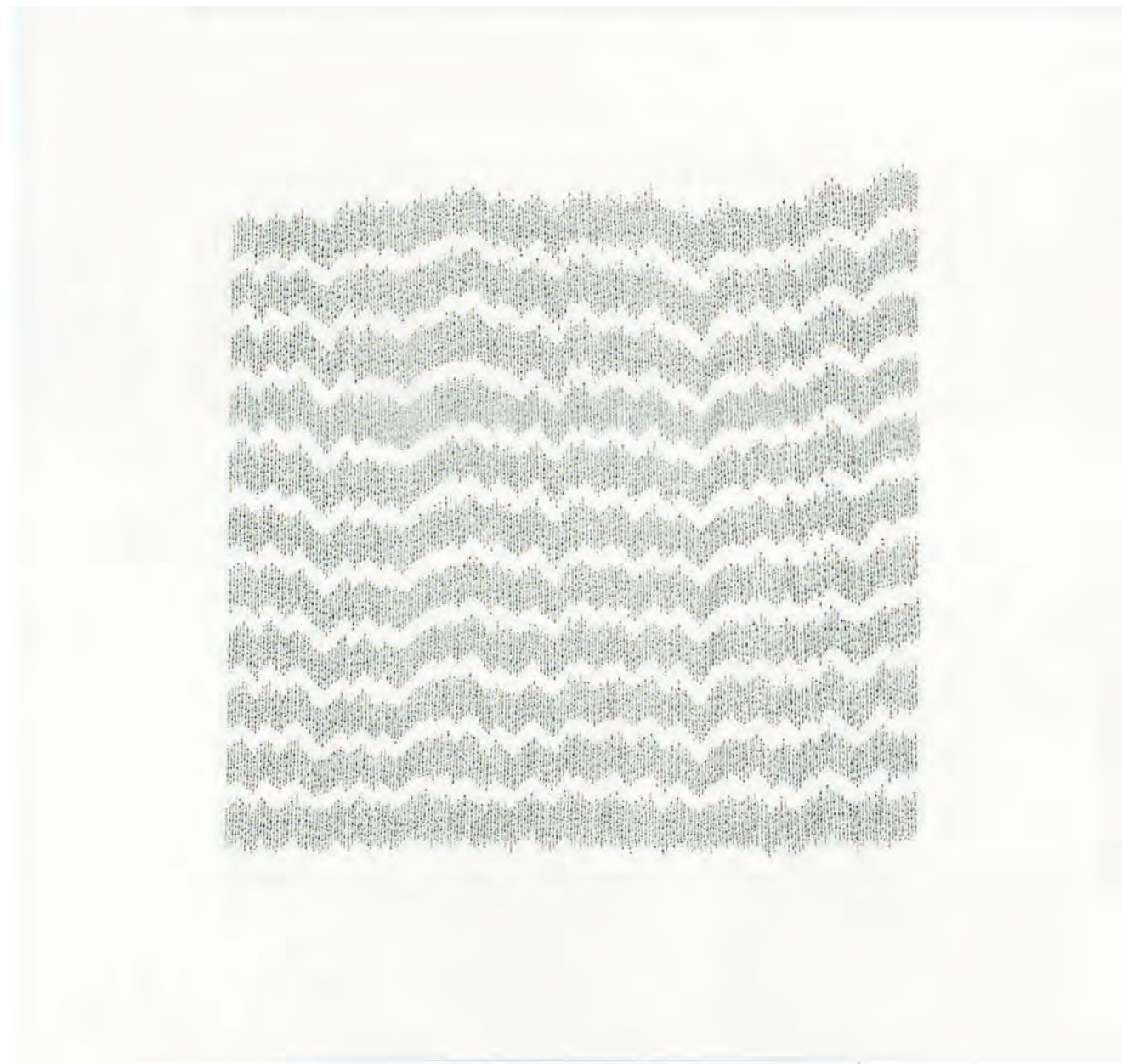
She has curated numerous exhibitions, notably for ODRADEK. Together with Simone Schuiten, she founded the non-profit organization ODRADEK Résidence in 2022. The ASBL is looking for artists committed to exploring writing as a form of drawing, spatial poetry or abstract graphics.

Several collective and individual exhibitions.

Catalogue : : Kiran Katara *Encyclopédie*, with texts by Simone Schuiten, Kiran Katara, Cécile Vandernoot, Colette Aussedat, Giordano Tironi. ODRADEK in 2019



Kiran KATARA, *untitled*, 2017
Ink on old paper
75 x 52 cm



André LAMBOTTE, *Espaces rêvés D*, 2022,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper.
48,8 x 48,8 cm.

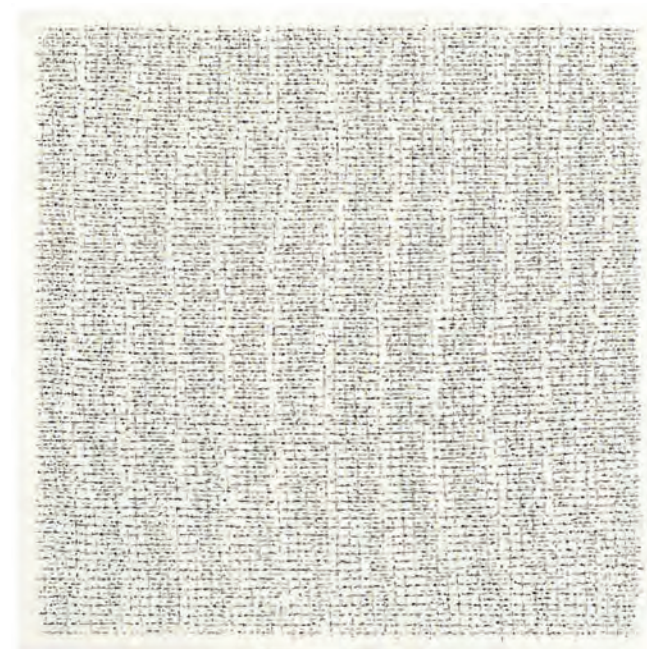
André LAMBOTTE

MOTIONLESS VIBRATIONS

A house built of local stone; a small garden planted with a large fir tree. André Lambotte lives and works in Nassogne, a village in the Ardennes. It's here, far from the cities and close to the fields, that he ploughs the paper with his colour pencils and harvests the surprising fruits of his patient labour.

His studio is located in the heart of his house. A relaxed, peaceful, contemplative atmosphere. White walls and white paper. On a table, hundreds of pencils, sorted by colour, gathered in small bundles. A large, leaning drawing table at which he usually works standing up. He draws there every day, for hours on end. He stays alone in the studio, not wanting to be disturbed. He loves this solitude, this silence. What does he experience at that moment? Where does his mind wander? What's certain is that he's concentrated, entirely "taken" by his work. For each pencil stroke is definitive, drawn in harmony with the others. He never uses an eraser, never repents.

His work takes up an endless amount of his time. Obstinate, he sometimes takes three months to complete a drawing. Going against the grain of our age, the age of the "disposable" and of computers, the age of fleeting, ephemeral images, he draws tenuous lines with his bare hands. A contemporary artist because of the way he brings his sensibility into play, revealing his intimacy without saying a word, he is also a close relative of the craftsman of the Middle Ages, the one who chiselled a piece of Mosan silverware, painted a miniature or illuminated a manuscript. His work suspends time. His all-over drawings have no horizon line, no earth, no sky, no day, no night, no beginning, no end. Beware: plunging into this intimate infinity can make you dizzy.



André LAMBOTTE, *Ajours b*, 2020.
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper.
18 x 18 cm.

Look at his drawings, which could just as easily be called paintings, manuscripts or even scores. From a distance, they look like writings, but come closer and you'll discover a profusion of thousands of lines, as if you were observing a starry sky. His art is "anti-monumental", recreating the universe in a microcosm.

Anyone who casts a casual glance at one of his drawings will have no clue what he's looking at. He might say to himself: "Here's a square of fabric". But his works are meant to be looked at patiently and very closely. Let's think of Lambotte reading Miró's words: "I think the only people who count are the living ones, those who put their blood and soul into the smallest line or the smallest dot. Hokusai said he wanted the smallest dot in his drawings to vibrate."¹

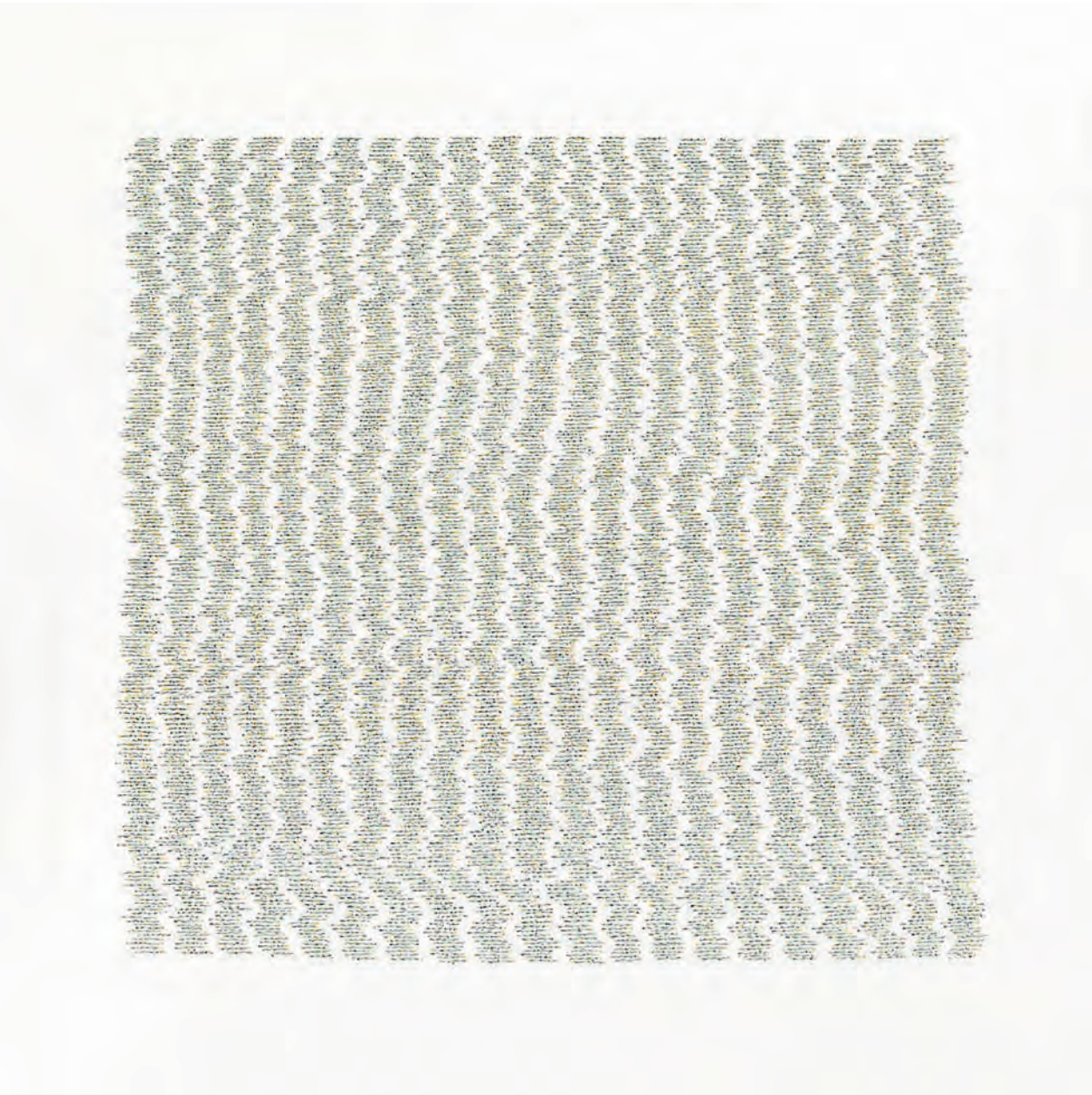
The artist dedicates his time to his painting. To "taste" it, suspend time yourself, if only for a few seconds. A Sauternes wine is not to be savoured in the same way as a glass of water.

"My drawings are not suited for instantaneity, which is why it's so difficult to photograph them," he says. On photographs, their immobile vibrations fade. On the internet, most images are of poor quality and cannot be enlarged. It's a real shame.

¹ Conversation with Joan Miró by Francesc Trabal, « La publicitat », Barcelona, 14th of July 1928.



André LAMBOTTE, A 816, 2022,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper.
21 x 21 cm.



André LAMBOTTE, A 836, 2023,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper.
48,8 x 48,8 cm.

His painting does not convey a hidden or coded language. It is not a new alphabet or an unfamiliar language. It does not deliver an intellectual message. It does not give "lectures". But that doesn't mean it's silent. It speaks to our imagination, communicating with us like the waves of the ocean or the leaves of a tree rustling in autumn. To reach it, let's try, as Dotremont suggests, "to think like trees and write like leaves" ².

He goes to the essence. He has abandoned even Chinese ink, using only white paper and coloured pencils. With these simple and most ordinary materials, the same children use at school, he makes the page sing. He joins Alechinsky in asserting that "it is through economy of means that the strongest results are obtained."³ He has eliminated representation and anthropomorphism. He seeks pure art, free of anecdote or fashion. By repeating strokes, he writes symphonies that give rhythm to the passing of time. Created without drugs, without Michaux's mescaline, his drawings exude a hypnotic aura.

He has imposed a voluntary constraint upon himself: he draws in horizontal lines, from top to bottom and from left to right, on the model of alphabetical or musical writing. He has chosen to enclose his painting within the framework of a lined canvas. The only exception to this rule: he allows himself to rotate the sheet to obtain vertical lines as well.

While Dotremont enriches his poetry with a plastic dimension by creating his logograms, Lambotte proceeds in the opposite direction: he chooses to inscribe his work within the canvas of writing. Dotremont paints writing, while Lambotte writes painting.

He draws hundreds, thousands of strokes. His work is repetitive in appearance, yet each sign is unique. There's nothing mechanical about it: his work is a reflection of nature.

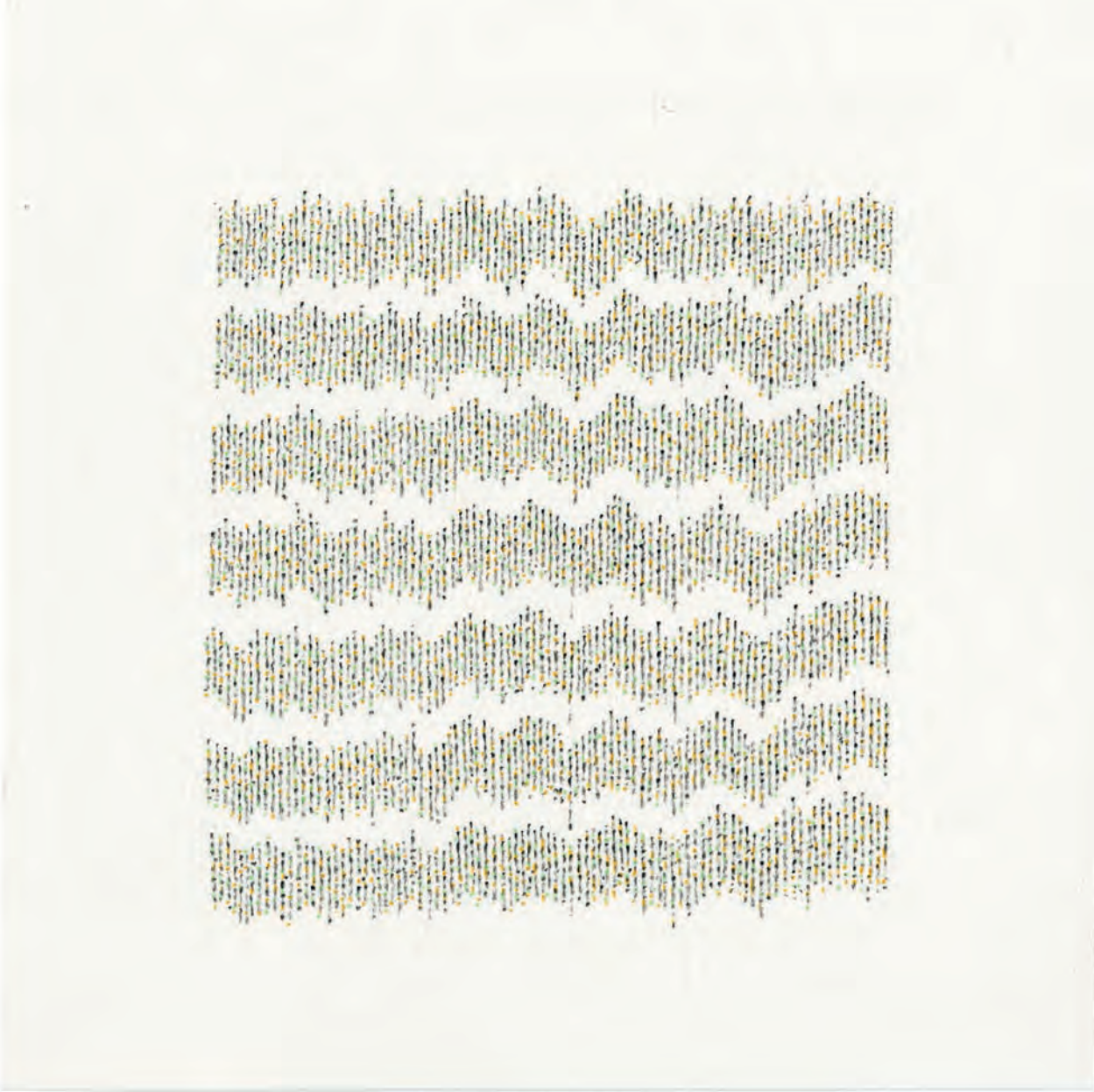
"In a fig tree," writes Matisse, "no two leaves are the same; they are all different in form, yet everyone cries out: fig tree".⁴ The pencil strokes do not entirely cover the paper. Blanks and voids are an integral part of the work, providing balance and respiration. They are as essential to the work as are silences to a musical composition.

He is a walker who always follows the same path, the same landscape, always discovering new points of view. Tensions emanate from his painting; it is a place of oppositions between order and freedom, repetition and invention, line and colour. Notice how creativity flourishes in such a rigorous and tenacious climate.

Look at these meadows of writing and you'll see life, wind-swept grasses, a ballet of bees, a jumble of ants. Up close, you'll see rhythmic, embroidered, barbed signs. The signs cling to the writing line like a tightrope walker to his rope. But any attempt at interpretation is futile. The artist has freed himself from narrative, both verbal and figurative. All that remains is the gesture of his hand. Where does it come from? What does it mean? No one knows. Such is the mystery of creation.

Pieter De Reuse

² Christian Dotremont, Œuvres poétique complètes, Mercure de France, Paris, 1998, p. 461.
³ Quoted by Dominique Legrand, in Le Soir, Brussels, March 4th 2010.
⁴ Henri Matisse, Jazz, Editions Verve, Paris, 1947, p. 59.



André LAMBOTTE, A 812, 2022,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper.
21 x 21 cm.



André LAMBOTTE, *Ajours A*, 2020,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper.
48,8 x 48,8 cm.

ANDRÉ LAMBOTTE : BIOGRAPHY

André Lambotte was born in Namur (Belgium) in 1943. He lives and works in the Ardennes.

Initially drawn to music (he was a jazz musician), he later devoted himself to the visual arts, while remaining a passionate music lover.

"In 1972 ", Josefa Knaepen writes "he embarked on the singular adventure of an art based on sign, rhythm, structure, repetition and duration" , and began what he called Anthropographies, a kind of automatic writing with vaguely anthropomorphic signs traced very spontaneously in Chinese ink in superimposed registers like a page of writing.

It was during this period that was in frequent contact with Christian Dotremont, and abandoned oil painting for Chinese ink, canvas for paper and, very often, colour for black and white.

Gradually, his Anthropographies became denser, shedding their already relative figurativeness and metamorphosing into abstract graphs that emphasized structure, rhythm and texture.

In 1986, without abandoning ink and paper, André Lambotte gradually returned to colour, using (coloured) pencil strokes that he superimposed in numerous layers "to illuminate from below the (ink) drawing to come ".

Between 1987 and 1996, mastery of this "mixed technique" led to the creation of major large-format series such as the highly structured Terzetto, Continuo and Ostinato, and the more airy Partita and Pizzicato.

From 1996, on the other hand, a long series of short, yet very dense forms, the Fuscelli, were produced, while between 1999 and 2002, Travail de l'herbe (Work on grass) consisted of seventeen variations dedicated to seventeen writers whose texts or fragments of texts, chosen from the artist's library, had a direct or indirect relationship with the "thick layers of time" covered by this theme.

In 2005, a milestone was reached in André Lambotte's work, mainly through two series Promenades à la Falaise Rouge (Walks to Red Cliff), in homage to the Chinese Song scholar Su Dongpo, and Arrière-saison. These pieces stand out from their predecessors, not only because of the use of colour plays a key role, but above

all through the - perhaps temporary - renunciation of the more or less implicit reference to the writing line that had been virtually unchanged since 1972. André Lambotte, notes Claude Lorent, "offers himself a new freedom, a now infinite field of exploration".

This quivering treatment of the coloured surface, stubbornly exploring the tenuous edges of space and time, becomes even more pronounced with the highly musical Textures suite, initiated in 2007, whose polyrhythms, graphic and chromatic micro-intervals contain a rare lyricism that doesn't immediately reveals its full flavour, but discreetly invites everyone to perceive its essence.

Today, André Lambotte, notably in the cycles Stries, La part des anges, Mudaï, Between the lines, Les variations Kikuchi, Ajours and Espaces rêvés is even more concerned with questioning the notion of temporality through multiple variations that translate, in a very subtle yet increasingly radical way, an expression that is both minimalist and maximalist.

Since 1971, André Lambotte has exhibited regularly in numerous galleries, museums and contemporary art centers (Brussels, Cologne, Montreal, New York, Paris, Vienna...).

He was awarded the Prix de la Jeune Peinture Belge in 1975 and 1979.

Elected Member of the Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique in 1996.

His works can be found in various public and private collections (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, Switzerland, USA).

¹ Josefa Knaepen, in catalogue for itinerant exhibition Confrontations, Lannoo, 1983.

² Ibid.

³ Claude Lorent, *L'énigme de l'univers (The Enigma of the Universe)* in La Libre Culture, October 3rd 2007.



André LAMBOTTE, A 833, 2023,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper,
10,5 x 14,5 cm.

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André Lambotte, *Le travail de l'herbe*, préface de Claude Lorent, Gerpinnes, Tandem, 2003.

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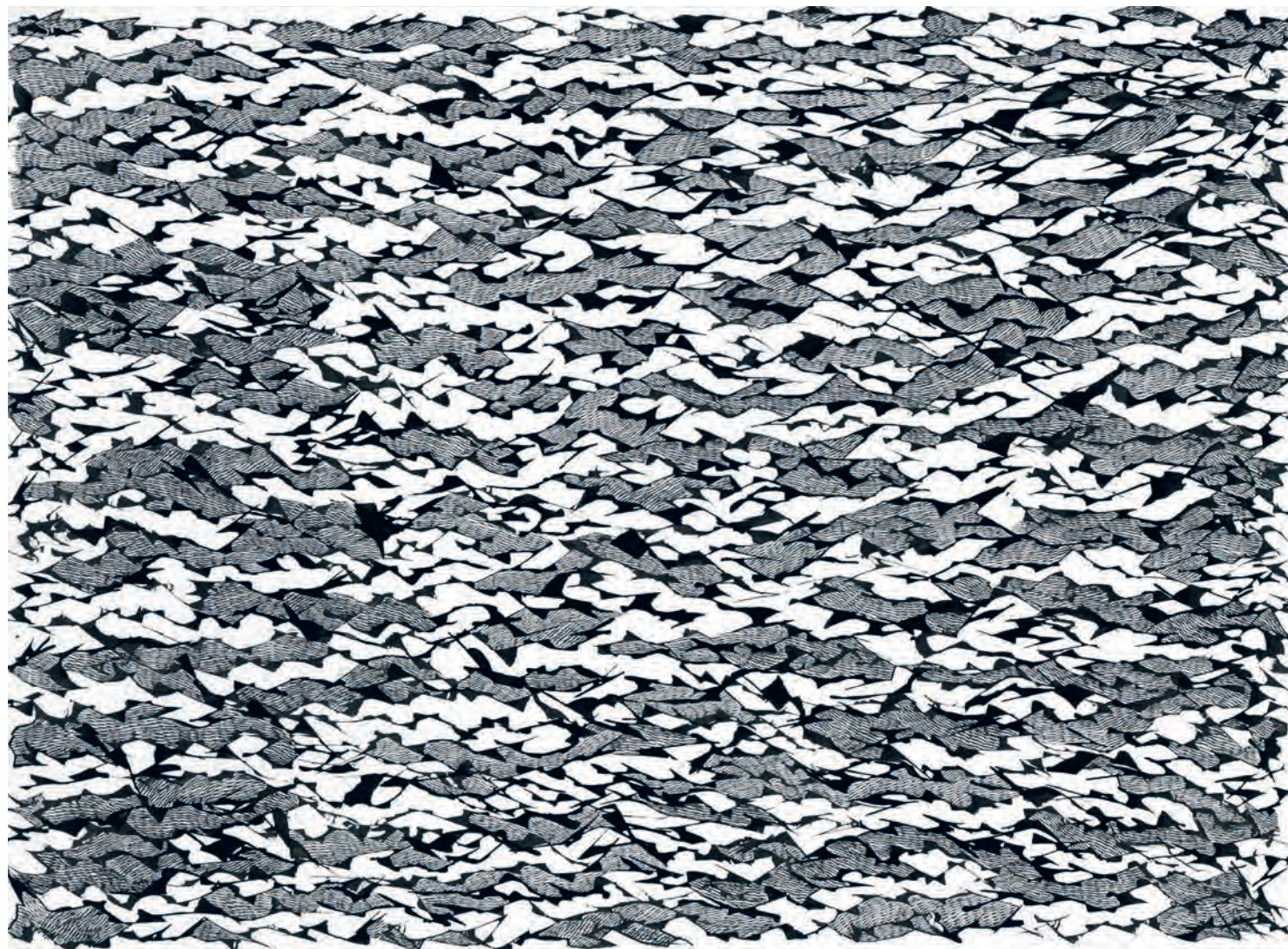
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Catalogue de l'exposition *Ostinato – Dessin / Musique / Interactions*, Namur, Maison de la Culture, 2013. Textes e. a. d'André Lambotte, Jean-Yves Bosseur...



André LAMBOTTE, *Espaces rêvés C*, 2021,
colour pencils on Arches vellum paper,
48,8 x 48,8 cm.



Albert PALMA, *Untitled*, 2014,
Knife, pen, Chinese ink on vellum,
57 x 76 cm.

Albert PALMA



Albert PALMA, *Le paillason est sur la clef*, détail, 2022
Brush, pen and inks on cardboard.
40 x 50 cm

Albert Palma's work has already aroused the passionate interest of many writers, philosophers and artists, including Henry Bauchau, Pascal Quignard, Moebius and Jean-Luc Nancy.

His singular images, most of them created in pen and ink, draw from the sources of modern art - from Paul Klee to Arte Povera - from the calligraphic tradition, and from the Asian ethics of the right gesture obeying the principle of "wu wei" - that "non-action" without which, paradoxically, nothing is accomplished.

For this work is rooted in a life marked by initiation. Before becoming an artist, Albert Palma was a martial arts master, a vocation that followed a tragic and absurd accident. In 1975, while hanging out among the Parisian bohemian crowd, this literature-crazed autodidact burned his lungs while trying to breathe fire. He was 27 years old. French doctors condemned him, but a friend suggested he join her in Tokyo, where a new and peaceful martial art, Shintaidô, could perhaps help him. And so it proved: the practice of Shintaidô, invented in the late 1960s by the greatest karateka of his generation, Aoki Hiroyuki, regenerated and saved him. It also introduced him to "an art that opens the door to all other arts", explains the "Antonin Artaud of the Far East" as writer Bernard Martino calls him in his book *Les chants de l'invisible* (Songs of the invisible).

Asian soteriologies, whether from India, China or Japan, have one thing in common: It's the conscious body, with its dense axis and the mysteries of the breath, that opens the mind to concentration, to imagination and to vision.

The mastery of postural rigor involves learning rhythm and geometry, acquiring the virtue of patience and the gift of fulgurance.

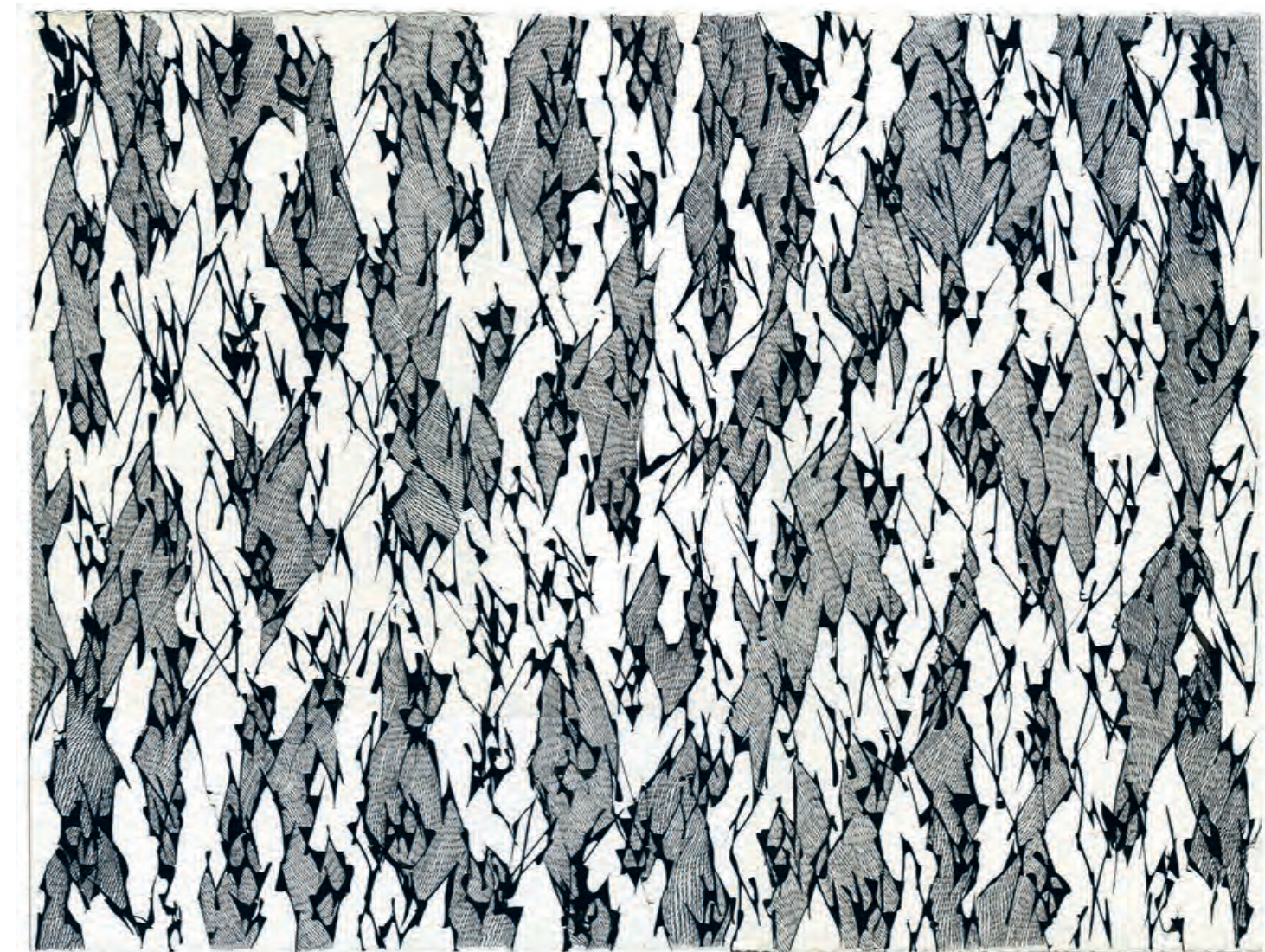
What's at stake here is the choreography of gesture. It's the architecture of the gaze. The result is the release of an inner vibration which is then embodied on paper. The writer and art critic Frédérique Villemur is right to note that: "Rather than representing, Albert Palma is presenting, humbly depositing that which in time involves his whole being. As for Henry Bauchau, he writes in the preface to "Peuple de la Main" (People of the Hand) that if Palma's art aims for a form, "it is by way of a craftsman's firmness, which allows unpredictable inspiration to unfold freely in the accessible and meditative language of the people of the hand, the people of the spirit, far from the formatted world that is being prepared for us today."

Albert Palma can sometimes remain bent over a board for up to 72 hours at a time, a task requiring some 100,000 strokes. There are no computers or compasses. No lunch breaks or naps. "All you have to do is look closely, realize that it's all been done by hand, and you're suddenly thrown into a world you've never seen before", writes cartoonist Moebius. "There's something related to the law of art and its exceptional, high-performance character..."

It's just a pen, a brush, ink and paper, but the quest for the infinitely small meets that of the infinitely large. It's all dots, traces and strokes, but a patient breath carries them along in concert. A dance of the hand unveils original landscapes, elements of the world, with interpretations that are constantly renewed. As Jean-Luc Nancy writes: "if mountains, seas, leaves or branches, lightning or skins, fabrics appear here, it is only because they stem from your memories, your impressions, your musings. His hand only shapes space and the expanse that lies beneath it".

In this way, myriads of "infinitesimal presences" arise, awakening an energy that is indissolubly physical and moral, and rigorously conducted. Albert Palma's works, both figurative and abstract, function like new mandalas. The fruit of a demanding encounter between East and West. More precisely: a detour via the Asian Tao, which in turn opens the door to an exciting revival of the European artistic adventure.

Philippe Nassif



Albert PALMA, *Untitled*, 2014.
Knife, pen, Chinese ink on vellum.
57 x 76 cm.



Albert PALMA, *Untitled*, 2014,
Knife, pen, Chinese ink on vellum,
57 x 76 cm.

ALBERT PALMA : BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1947 in Algeria, Albert Palma lives and works in Paris.

At the age of 20, he worked as a woodcutter whilst studying Literature and Art History in Sweden. In the early 70's, he was a promising young actor, but his career was cut short after his lungs were burned in a serious accident. Then, encouraged by friends, he went to Japan where he was initiated into the art of swordsmanship. His discovery of Japanese culture and the Far East sparked a radical change in his life. He spent ten years in Tokyo where he became a Master of martial arts.

At the beginning of the 90's, he returned to Paris where he taught martial arts and developed his conception of "way of the Arts". He started drawing in 2003 and was quickly recognized as an important and original French artist.

In 2013, he was awarded the Henry Bauchau Prize, presented by the Royal Academy of Belgium. Albert Palma's work is well known today and has been shown numerous times in exhibitions across Europe. His pictures feature in many museums, such as the royal Museum of Mariemont, the Louvain-La-Neuve Museum and Guéret's Museum, and in private collections in Europe, the USA and China. Several exhibitions of his work are planned over the next two years, in Paris, Santiago-Chile, New York and Beijing.

QUELQUES REPÈRES BIBLIOGRAPHIQUES :

Albert Palma, La Voie du Shintaïdo, Albin Michel, 1992

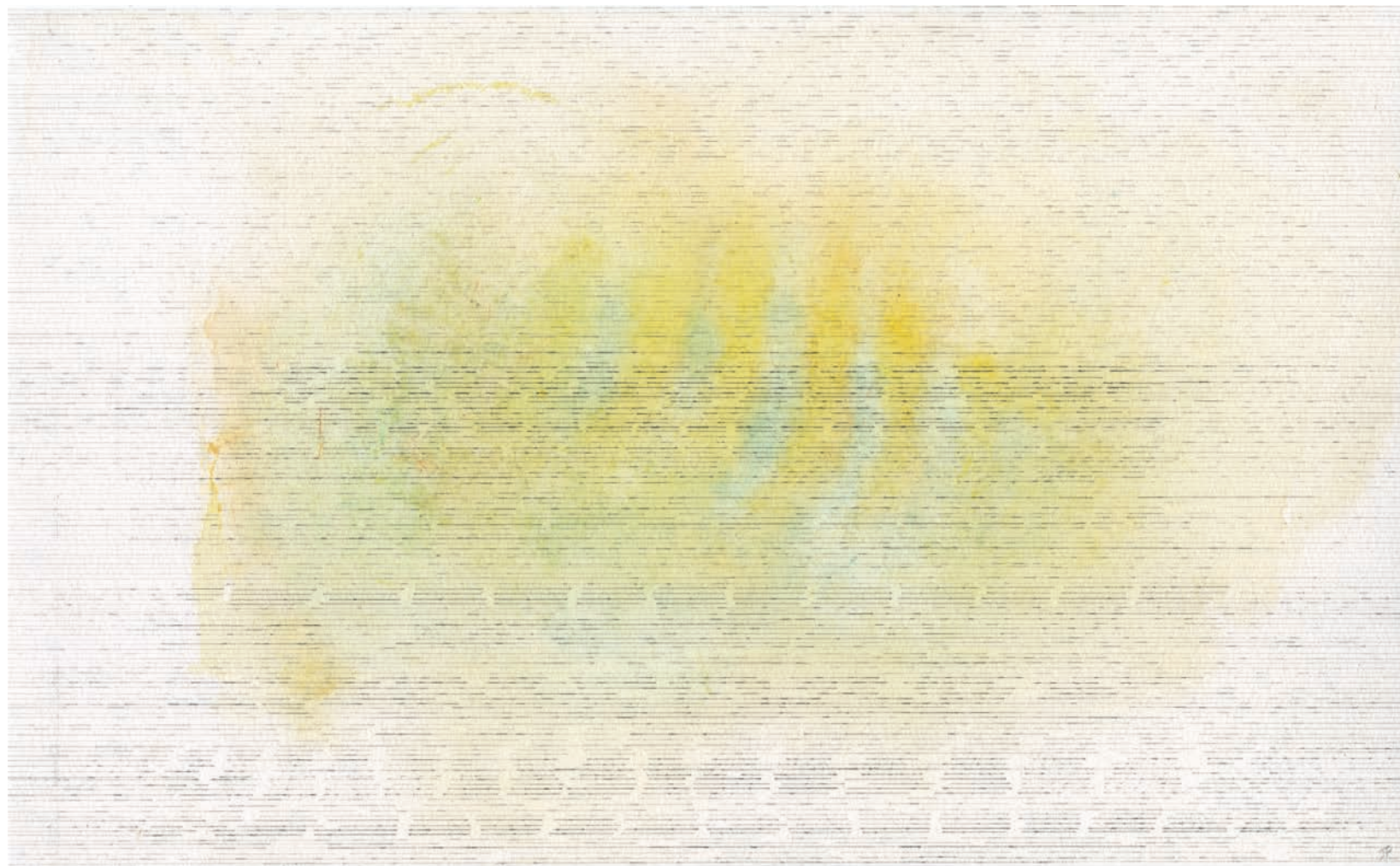
Albert Palma, L'Esprit du geste, Albin Michel, 1999

Albert Palma, Geïdo, La Voie des Arts, Albin Michel, 2001

Albert Palma, Le Peuple de la main – Henry Bauchau sur ma route (Journal 2001-2006) Jean-Paul Bayol, 2007

Frédérique Villemur (sous la direction de), *Albert Palma -- Geste et Khôra*, EBL, 2012

Jean-Luc Nancy, *Quand tout arrive de nulle part – sur l'œuvre d'Albert Palma*, Manius, 2015



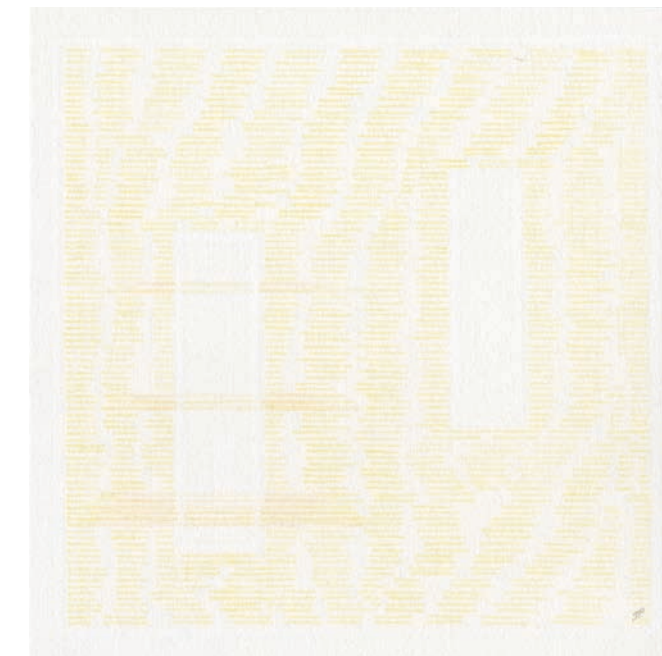
Jaques POURCHER, *Litanea, à Léo Kupper*, 2023
Black pencil and gouache on paper.
27,8 x 17 cm

Jacques POURCHER

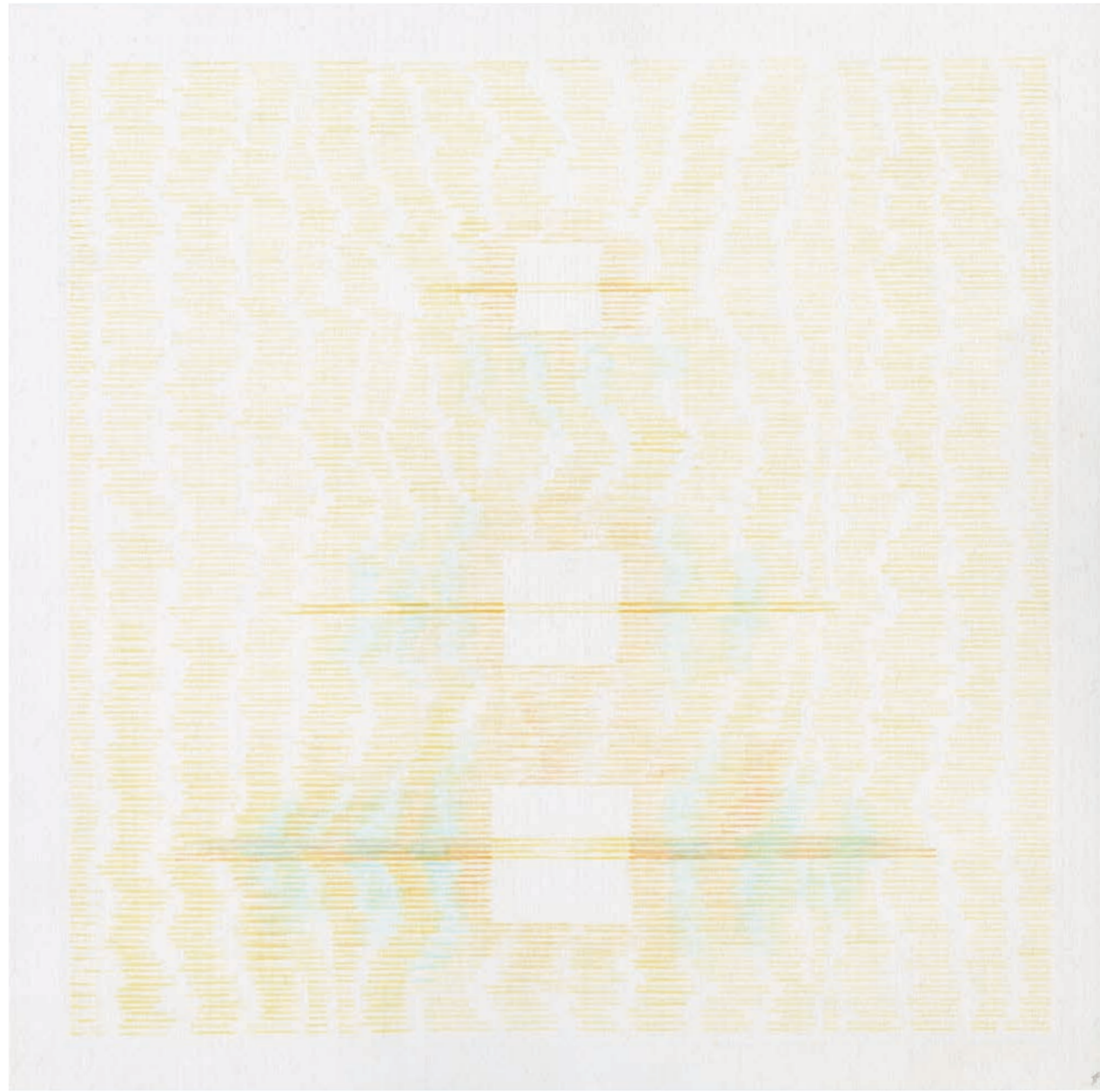
THE SILENCES OF JACQUES POURCHER

For several decades now, Jacques Pourcher has immersed himself, in a very subjective way, in a concept of time based on concentration and meditation. He thereby pays particular attention to the world of music, but without seeking to establish any system of term-to-term analogies between the visual and the sonic. Rather, music is a catalyser for his creative invention, leading him to sharpen his focus on questions of temporality and vibration. In this way, he is able to use his own unique means to forge paths between worlds that resonate with both the sonic and visual realms; a spiritual dimension that is both intimate and intense emanates from his works that creates an authentic link between phenomena of perception reaching an essential form of symbiosis. Of course, a number of points of convergence can be discerned between his various "series", giving his work a profound overall coherence, but his approach and strategies are subtly modulated each time, depending on whether he is confronting the varied worlds of Ligeti, Feldman, Cage, Scelsi, Grisey or Radigue. Nevertheless, he "interprets" them in his own way, highlighting certain strong features that can be explored plastically.

He has studied Morton Feldman's work on several occasions, in particular because of his concept of time, silence and the notion of pattern, which Feldman explores to designate a motif subject to principles of repetition and very subtle modulations. This process is similar to that of weaving, and can be found in ancient Turkish carpets, which the American composer was particularly fond of. In the case of the Coptic Light series, the drawings "poetically" represent fragments of the Coptic fabrics that Feldman saw at the Louvre Museum; the



Jaques POURCHER, Series : *Transitoires*, 2023
Gouache on paper.
16 x16 cm



Jaques POURCHER, *Série : Triadic Squares*, 2022
Gouache on paper
26,5 x 26,5 cm

register of colour variations specific to this series enables attention to be focused on the most imperceptible intervals of colour and light, thus creating a climate that reveals itself in profound harmony with the music that so intensely stimulated him.

In his recent series, J. Pourcher has moved his creative approach in the direction of a quest that increasingly reveals itself to be on the border of the elusive, on the very edge of the sensible. The use of white intervals in his drawings seems to give a decisive place to silence, to the unspoken. In the Triadic Squares series, the whites sometimes take the form of squares devoid of any trace, intervallic spaces from which emerge, on either side, waves of different dynamic progressions that appear like imaginary spectrograms.

J. Pourcher's work unquestionably has qualities that invite the viewer to take his time, and may well lead him to a form of contemplation - a term that does not, of course, refer to any particular spiritual discipline. As with most of his favourite composers in the field of music, J. Pourcher's work draws the viewer's attention to the tiniest variations in colour, texture and material, at least insofar as the viewer is willing and able to attempt such an experience. This kind of restraint, of "whiteness" now characterizes a major part of his graphic work, where we find emblematic geometric figures such as the circle, the square and the rectangle.

In certain series, he uses infinitely delicate overprints of very fine vegetal paper from Nepal, Japan, Korea, Thailand... His works often feature assemblages of horizontal strata with cut-outs, like the different voices of a musical score, each of which seems to imply multiple depth fields, thanks to the various overlaps to which the paper surfaces are subjected, sometimes reduced to small rectangular modules. One could speak of "micropolyphony", to adopt a term dear to Ligeti, with regard to these multiplied staves, criss-crossed by enigmatic figures, which appear to undergo progressive

processes of erasure and disappearance. We also discover the presence, at times underlying or implied, of grids that recall the role of measures in musical notation.

J. Pourcher's graphic works appear as miniatures that need to be approached very closely, require a sharp observation, a bit like Marcel Duchamp's *Grand Verre*, "to be looked at with one eye closely for almost an hour". In this regard, we could also quote Fernand Léger: "Faced with these new works, transparent, objective, precise, I think of Satie, Mondrian, Duchamp, Brancusi, Arp - these undisputed masters of the inexpressive and silent beauty". And it is in such a line of artists, for whom the reflection on music and temporality plays a role of primary importance, that Jacques Pourcher seems to be fully inscribed.

Jean-Yves Bosseur

JACQUES POURCHER : BIOGRAPHY

(Chamalières (France), 1950, lives and works in Clermont-Ferrand)

Born into a family that gave an important place to art, Jacques Pourcher taught himself painting. His numerous visits to exhibitions and museums as well as the study of reproductions of paintings have familiarized him with artistic practices.

Interested in the interactions between painting, music and philosophy, Jacques Pourcher paid tribute to Franz Schubert, Gustav Mahler and Claude Debussy.

In 1970, at the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, he attended concerts by American composers (including John Cage). This music touched him deeply and gave his work a new impulse that led him towards minimal art, a form he still appreciates and practices today.

Other composers also enter into his work: Jean-Yves Bosseur, Morton Feldman, Gérard Grisey, György Ligeti, Luigi Nono, Éliane Radigue, Giacinto Scelsi and of course John Cage.

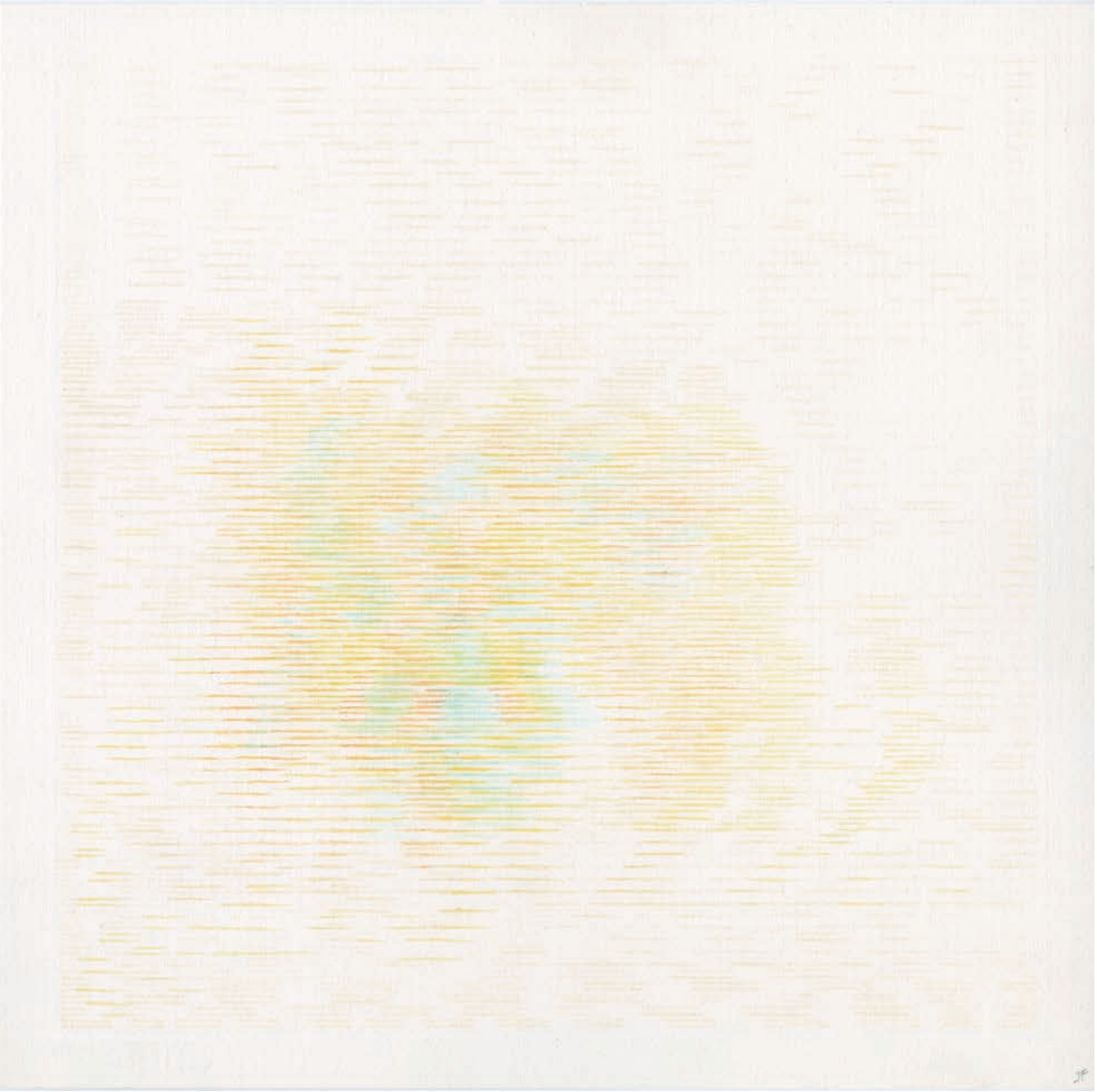
From 1980, he introduced traditional papers from the Far East (Nepal, Japan, Korea, China) into his work. He assembles them into subtle collages that play with the diversity of textures. Often structured in horizontal bands, his compositions seek to capture and vary the points of attachment of light. His colour palette is restricted to a variation of light tones (white, beige, ochre) depending on the papers used.

Jacques Pourcher also worked on an artist's book: James Joyce. He illustrated and calligraphy various texts by the writer (2006, Zurich).

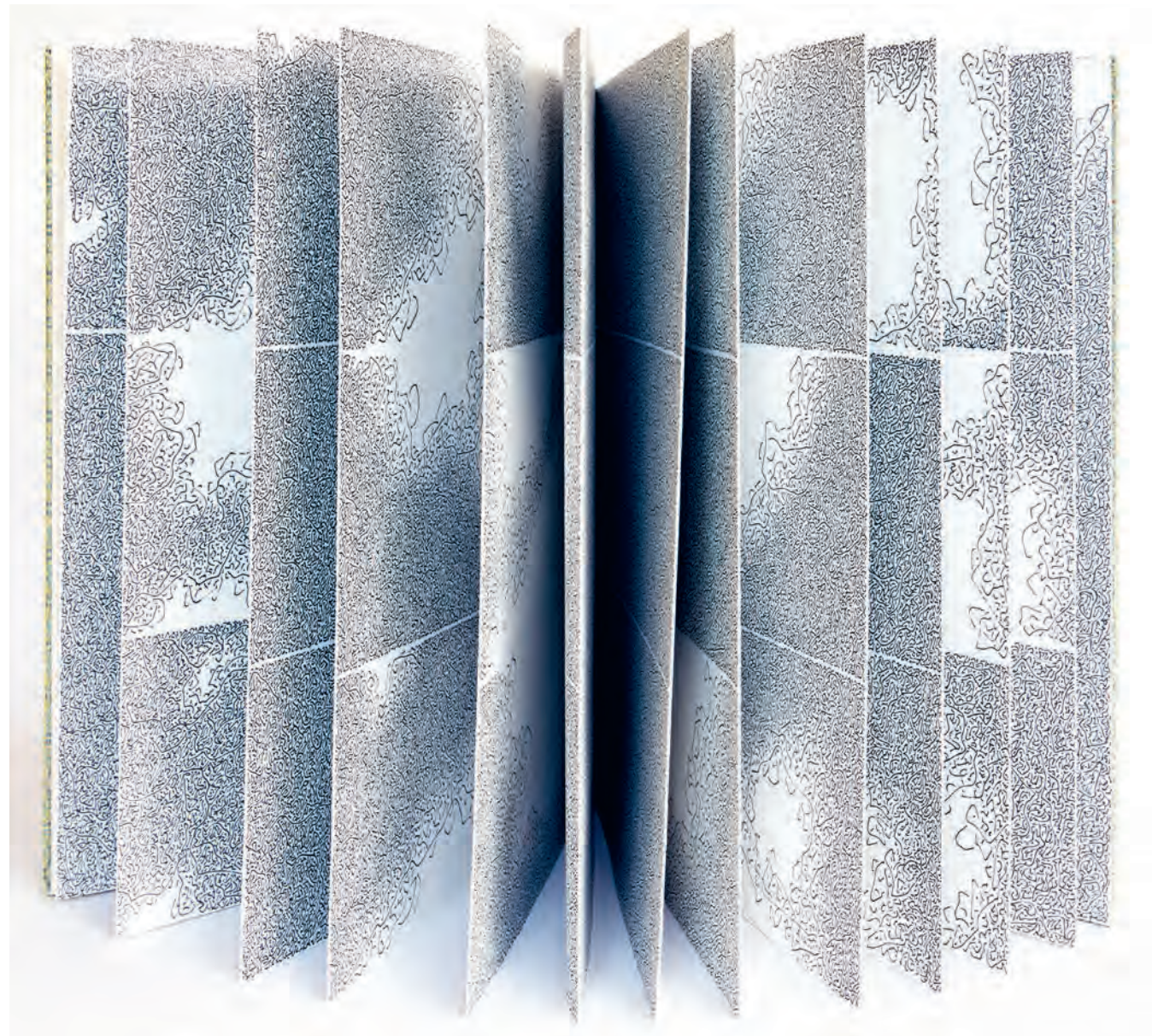
He has exhibited in Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland, USA... His works are in several private and public collections, including the Cabinet d'art graphique of the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) of Auvergne and the Art Museum of Western Virginia (USA).

In 2016, a monograph is dedicated to him: Jacques Pourcher, painter among composers by Lenka Stranska (Éditions Delatour). She writes: Using a know-how of his invention, Pourcher fragments the surface of the support into microparticles which, at the macroscopic scale of our vision, represent the sound vibrations captured at a given moment. The intensity of the luminous colorations, all subtle, is modulated in response to the delicate musical nuances to the limit of silence - or invisibility - like a quest to reach infinity by seeking to grasp the imperceptible.

Jacques Pourcher's bibliography also includes texts by art critics, including Jean-Yves Bosseur, Philippe Piguet and Lydia Harambourg.

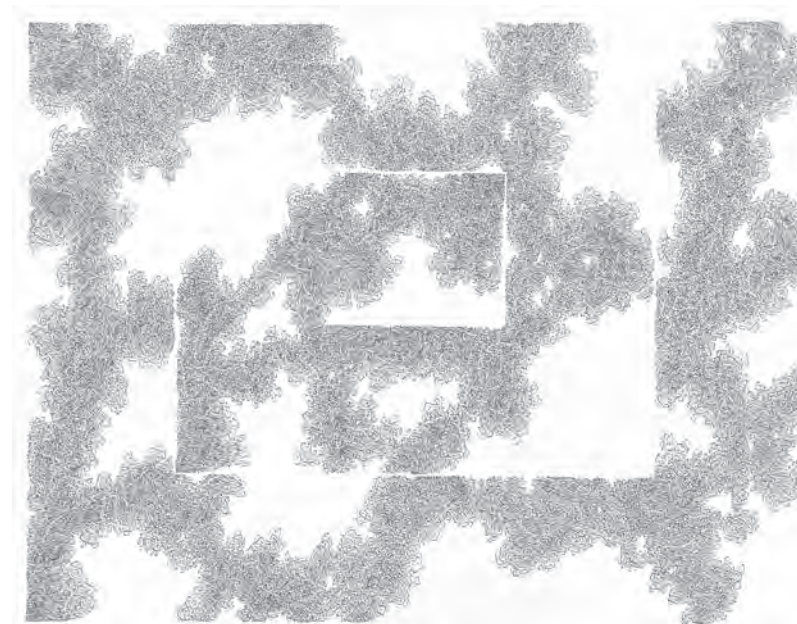


Jaques POURCHER, *Series : Coptic Light* , 2022
Gouache sur papier
26,5 x 26,5



Frank VIGNERON, *Le Songe Creux*, 2018
Encre sur papier
35cm x 540 cm

Frank VIGNERON

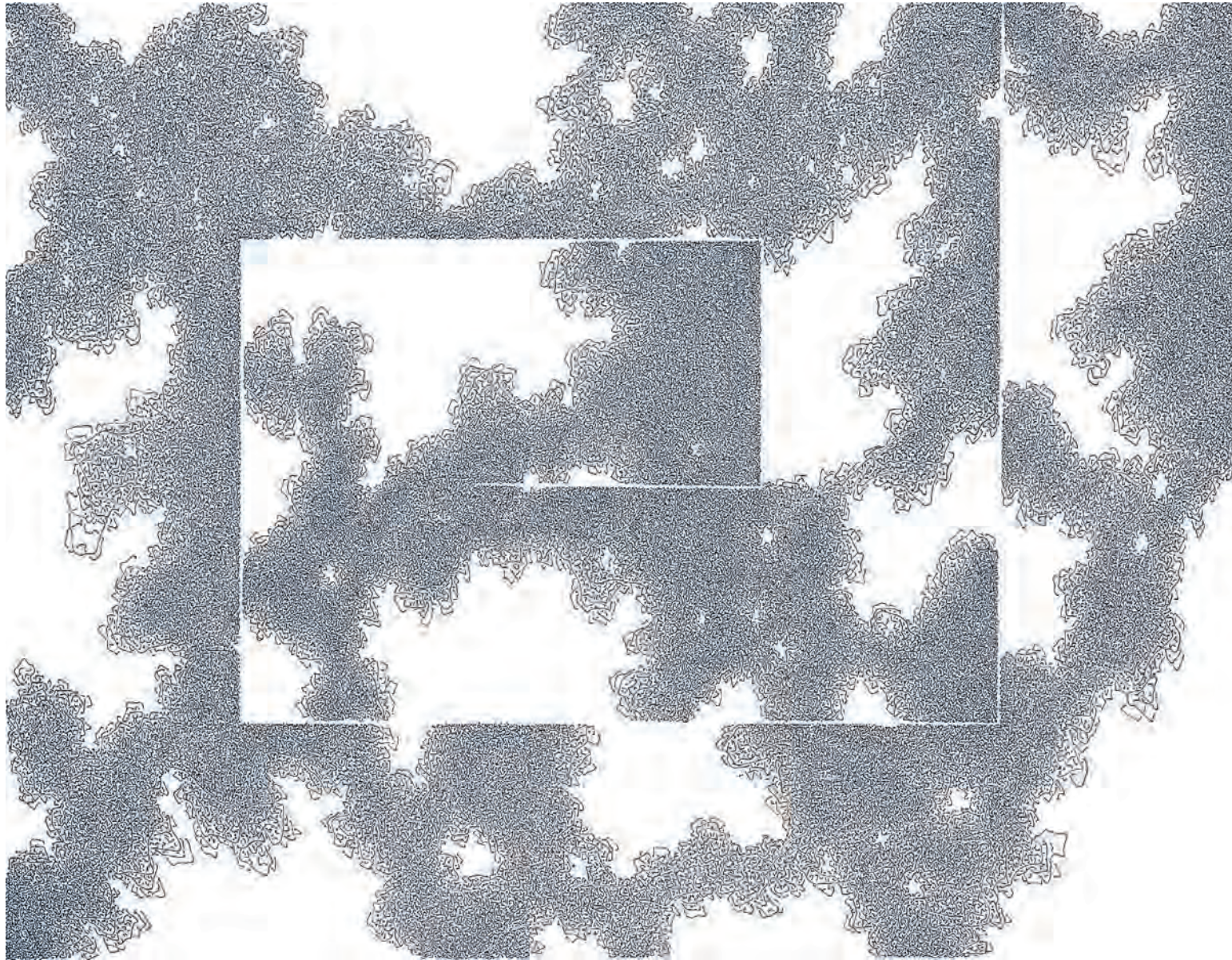


Frank VIGNERON, *Le Songe Creux*, 2015
Encre sur papier
70 x 90 cm

LE SONGE CREUX – DISAPPEARANCE AS A PROJECT

Le Songe Creux (which is an expression meaning 'a daydreamer,' but can literally be translated as 'The Hollow Dream') as a project is rooted in a desire for self-effacement and the final disappearance of the artwork itself within its own complexity, the accumulations of lines very often leading to a complete 'all-over' painting where these lines tend to become invisible and eventually flatten the image into a state of quasi disappearance. This attitude transpires in *Le Songe Creux* as a certain blandness that is, in fact, actively pursued. Because of these drawings' compactness and paleness, most viewers are not immediately attracted to them, but the delay thus imposed on the actual viewing experience often works in favour of the artworks.

Le Songe Creux was not conceived within the framework of Platonist idealism, and there is nothing 'behind' the painting as in the Minimalist tradition. In that sense, it is important to emphasize how much my academic research in the painting theory of the Chinese literati has informed my art practice (supported, obviously, by the works of François Cheng and François Jullien). It is especially the understanding of the concept of 'void' (*kong* 空 or *xu* 虛), a concept formulated in the philosophy called 'neo-Confucian,' that has underpinned the making of these drawings. To understand better how the 'void' takes on an ontological role in Chinese painting, we have to turn to landscape painting, the highest genre practiced by the Chinese literati. The word 'landscape' in Chinese painting is rendered by the binomial 'mountain-water' (*shanshui* 山水), stating very clearly that Chinese landscape paintings are constructed with these two elements while trying to organize



Frank VIGNERON, *Le Songe Creux*, 2015
Encre sur papier
70 x 90 cm

them within a monistic conception of the universe. When we look at landscapes made by literati painters, especially those made in monochrome ink, we can see that the relation between the mountain and the water, thanks to the void the artist instils between the two, removes any difference between subject and object. The void, most of the time depicted as fog, links them up, and, at the same time, removes any differentiation: a cloud is as much a rock by its shape as it is water by its composition and thus blurs their respective limits, mixing mountain and water into an undifferentiated whole.

For many neo-Confucian art theorists in pre-Republican China, the practice of landscape painting was a way to enter a nature that was also contained within themselves. For them, it was only after having mastered the basic techniques of the 'brush-ink' (*bimo* 筆墨) that one could follow the sudden 'triggering' of creative desire (*ji* 機). This moment lead then to 'transformations' (*bian* 變), i.e. both the personal inventions of the artist and their constant adapting to the events of the creative act. One of these theorists insisted on the fact that these acts took place 'between the intentional and the non-intentional' (*youyi wuyi zhijian* 有意無意之間). These 'transformations' were themselves created within the 'heart cavity' (*xinkan* 心坎, which means a person's conscience in Chinese and has nothing to do with the sentimentality attached to the concept of 'heart' in most Western languages) in relation with the 'power of metamorphosis' of

nature (*zaohua* 造化). To simplify, it can be said that nature finds itself in the mind of the artists who are themselves contained by nature, they are thus able to contain and be contained at the same time by the whole universe.

Even though Chinese literati painters were also preoccupied with the quest for personal styles, they only saw them as the logical results of these 'transformations,' unavoidable and therefore clearly desirable. The undifferentiation of subject and object in landscape painting lead literati painters to make themselves absent from their own paintings, in order to let the universe manifest itself unencumbered. Even the word for 'nature' in Chinese is expressed by the characters *daziran* (大自然) which means literally 'great spontaneity,' thus clarifying that 'nature' realises itself fully in a constant and self-generated way. Faithfulness to this process of self-generation is only possible through an effort at self-effacement made by the painter. In the entire body of literati painting theory, one can find the repeated idea that artists need to make a sustained effort of reflection and meditation to accomplish this process and that only artists with a strong personality can do so. This is also true of the people viewing the paintings: they will be capable of perceiving nature expressing itself in these paintings only by effacing themselves in the process of perception. It is in the void/hollows of *Le Songe Creux* that we will efface each other.

Frank Vigneron

FRANK VIGNERON : BIOGRAPHY

Hong Kong (China), 1965, lives and works in Hong Kong.

Born in a traveling French family (his father worked for an international shipping company), Frank Vigneron was born in Hong Kong and grew up in Vietnam, Belgium and then France before returning to Hong Kong in 1990.

He has always practiced drawing as a self-taught artist without taking art classes, preferring to study art history and China studies. After obtaining an MPhil at INALCO in Paris (with François Cheng as his supervisor), he has taught French as a foreign language at Alliance Française de Hong Kong without interrupting his artistic practice. After obtaining his first PhD in Far Eastern Studies at Paris VII Denis Diderot, on an 18th-century Chinese painter and theorist, he began exhibiting his works in Hong Kong, China and, from time to time, Europe.

In 2004, he started teaching art history at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in the Department of Fine Arts of which he is now the chairperson, while continuing his studies. He obtained a Doctorate of Fine Arts at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in Australia and a PhD in Comparative Literature at Paris IV Sorbonne (a comparative study of art theory in China and Europe in the 18th century). While writing extensively on the local contemporary art scene of Hong Kong and its developments, he has never ceased to publish on the art theory of China, taking a close look at a reflexion that has always informed his own art practice.

Since the beginning of his artistic work, taken the collective title of Le Songe Creux (a project that was initiated in Paris in the 1980s), he has conceived it as a writing process since he traces these lines with a pen on a table. Even though the evocation of a monk copying has always been present in his mind, it is in the Chinese world that more fruitful comparisons with his work can be found. The long hours spent tracing these intertwined lines are as much tied to the notion of Kungfu (*gongfu* 功), which was, before meaning the Chinese martial arts, simply meant the time spent perfecting a skill, whichever it is) as the materialisation of notions borrowed from the Chinese theory of art. It is the concepts of 'empty' and 'full' that animate the relations of forms manifested in the drawings of Frank Vigneron. Other notions from that theory of art are also operating in his work and have been analysed in publications such as articles in academic journals or art publications self-published by the artist.

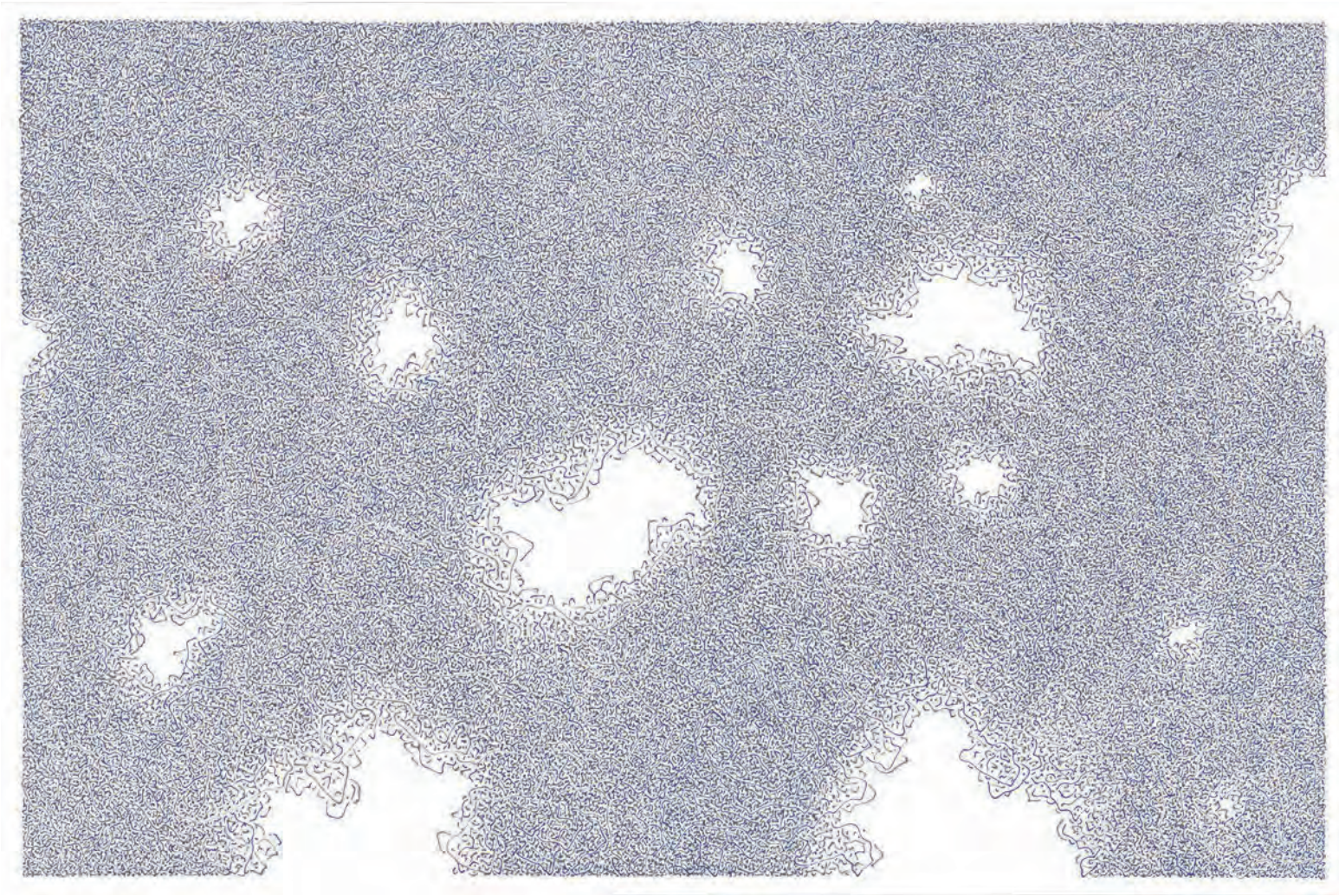
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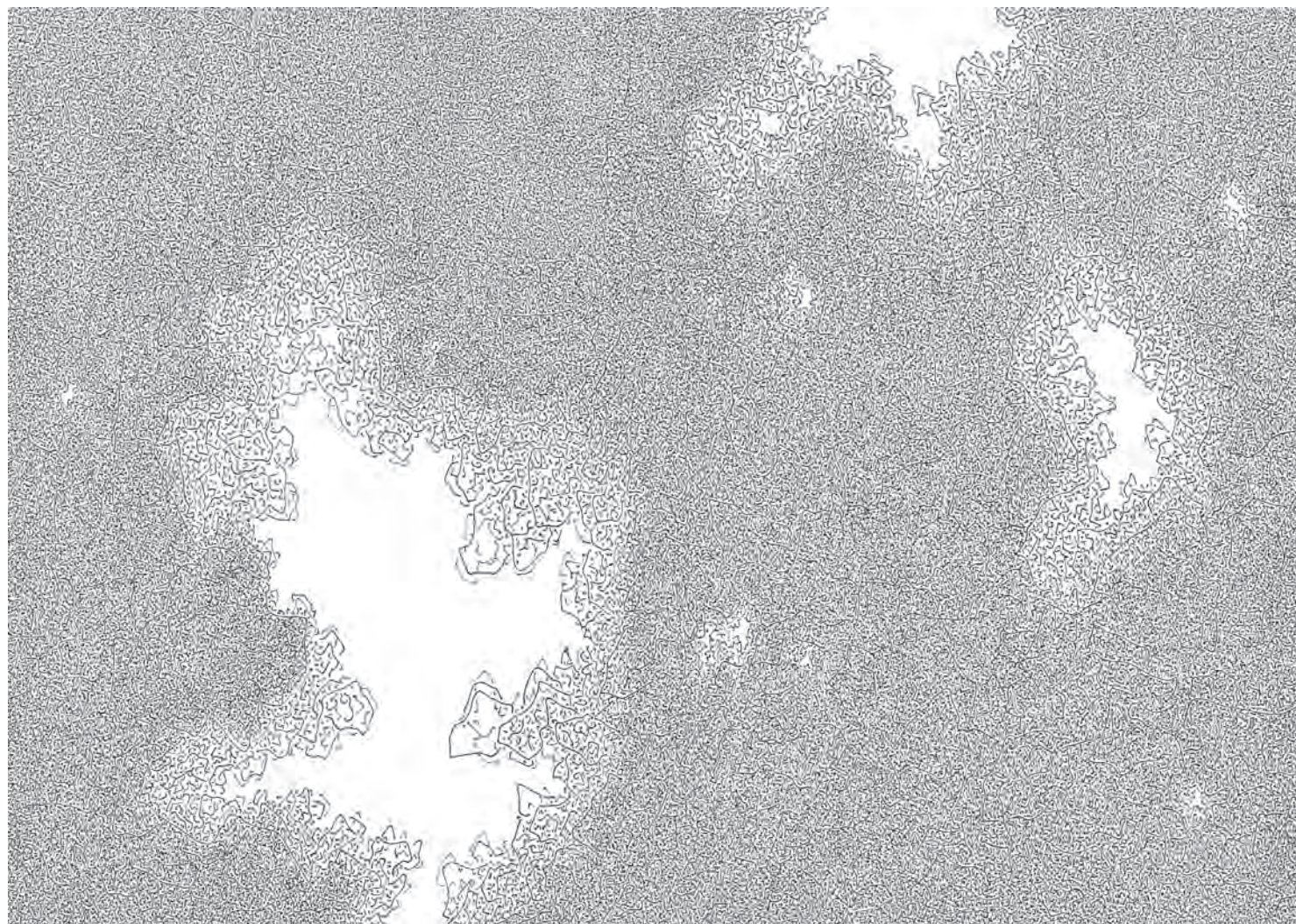
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Frank VIGNERON, *Le Songe Creux*, 2015
Encre sur papier
60 x 40 cm



Frank VIGNERON, *Le Songe Creux - Ligne noire*
Encre sur papier
22,5 x 16 cm

The authors of the texts

Simone Schuiten was born in Brussels in 1952. She lives and works in Brussels. Coming from a family of architects and designers, Simone Schuiten has been since her childhood under the influence of the visual arts.

She graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and the Higher Institute of Philosophy of the Catholic University of Louvain.

1976, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters; Bachelor's degree in linguistics, bachelor's degree in philosophy.

1977, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters; aggregation.

From 1976-1978 she was assistant to Professor Albert Doutreloup at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Anthropology.

She did fieldwork in India as part of a doctoral thesis.

Since 1978 she teaches at ESA Institut Saint-Luc Brussels as professor of philosophy and literature (anthropology).

Her main research focuses on interculturality. Her major course is entitled "Thinking and practicing interculturality".

In 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, she organizes trips to China for ESA Saint-Luc students.

She gives lectures and workshops on interculturality at Universities in Beijing and at CAFA, at the Nanjing Department of Fine Arts, Shanghai University, Shanghai Fine Arts and Shanghai Normal University, at Fine Arts Guangzhou, at the Raffles Institute in Shanghai and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Department of Fine Arts.

In 2014 she founded the residence and exhibition space ODRADEK at 35 rue Américaine in Saint-Gilles.

In 2022, she joined the management committee of IBHEC, Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises.

ON ANDRÉ LAMBOTTE.

Pieter De Reuse was born in Leuven in 1957. Psychiatrist, writer.

Medical studies and specialization in psychiatry at the Catholic University of Louvain.

From 1982 onwards, he practices drawing and engraving, frequents the academies of Fine Arts of Brussels and Watermael-Boitfort.

He has published interviews with artists (such as the one of Paul Delvaux in 1982) as well as texts on art and poetry.

Collaborating with the painter Bern Wéry, he started an exploration of the *Painters of Writing*, the *Artists of the Sign*, the *Writers of Silence* ... resulting in numerous conferences, articles etc...

He has collaborated several times with the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium.

He has published as author *Christian Dotremont - traces de Logogus* (Brussels, CFC-Editions, 2013) and as co-author *Suzy Embo foto's 1953-1980* (Brussels, CFC-Editions, 2017

ON ALBERT PALMA.

Philippe Nassif, was born in Beirut in 1971, died in 2022. Journalist, philosopher, writer.

Graduated from the Institut d'études politiques de Paris.

He then joined the newspaper *Technikart* to develop the path of pop culture. Responsible for the section "Essays" he chronicles contemporary authors (Slavoj Žižek, Peter Sloterdijk, Bernard Stiegler...). He then became an editorial advisor to *Philosophie Magazine*.

He gave lectures on the theme of the 'vitality of emptiness' in Taoist thought. He developed a thought based on a political commitment linked to artistic and psycho-analytic experiences.

He is the author of *Bienvenue dans un monde inutile, Les aventures de Jean No* (Denoël, 2002), with Mehdi Belhaj Kacem *Pop philosophie, entretiens* (Denoël, 2005, Perrin 2008), *La lutte initiale : Quitter l'empire du nihilism* (Denoël, 2011), *Ultimes, ce que les grands ont dit juste avant de mourir* (Allary Editions, 2015), *Changer le monde... at least a little* (Allary Editions, 2022).

ON JACQUES POURCHER.

Jean-Yves Bosseur, was born in Paris in 1947. Composer, musicologist, writer.

Studied composition at the Rheinische Musikschule in Cologne (Germany) with Henri Pousseur and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

Doctorate of State (aesthetic philosophy) at the University of Paris I.

He has taught at the University of Paris I and the Bordeaux Conservatory. He was director of research at the CNRS and producer at Radio-France.

In 2014, he was elected associate member of the Royal Academy of Belgium.

CDs: *Mémoires d'oubli, Satie's Dream, Portrait de Geneviève Asse, Empreintes nocturnes, Stream* (Mandala / Harmonia Mundi), Works for guitars and voice (Mandala / Harmonia Mundi), *Hong Kong Variations* (Agon, Auvidis), *Mass* (Mandala / Harmonia Mundi), *Concert* (Sapphire), *Octet* (Safir)...

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