



CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
D'INTERET NATIONAL

PRESS RELEASE

ADRIEN VESCOVI SOLEIL BLANC

EXHIBITION

FROM 5.06 TO 19.09.2021

ADRIEN VESCOVI

"SOLEIL BLANC"

Exhibition from 5 June to 19 September 2021

Opening Friday 4 June 5-8 pm

On the occasion of its reopening, Le Grand Café is very pleased to present artist Adrien Vescovi first solo show in an art centre.

Adrien Vescovi displays vast arrangements of unstretched canvases, at the intersection of painting and textile construction, where the format of a picture meets the dimension of a landscape. There is a performative side to his work: the artist operates like an alchemist, and his processes revisit the tradition of dyeing, with its mysterious rituals and the case that it makes for slow maturation. The patient selection of the natural pigments, the infusion, decoction and reduction of their extracts: each of them is a step that allows him to elaborate a delicate palette of colours, pregnant with the time it takes for them to appear. The work echoes this, incorporating memory into its very density, for Adrien Vescovi stratifies his fields of colour on fabric supports that carry a multiplicity of stories: of the previous displays that they have been through and of their background origins in the linen drawer. The artist sets out his canvases in layered constructions on the ground or hangs them vertically, joining them with meticulous needlework or leaving them free and simply superimposed or juxtaposed.

For his exhibition in Saint-Nazaire, Adrien Vescovi takes over the entirety of Le Grand Café art centre's spaces with one ensemble composition crisscrossed with rhythmic and harmonic variations. A clue to the theme of this sweeping composition where everything interpenetrates comes with the exhibition title: *Soleil blanc* – White Sun – like this pale semi-circular shape that appears and disappears as different pictures come and go; like a wandering star, like being momentarily dazzled; like a memory of light that writes itself between the lines of these pages of cloth.

SLOW FORM

Adrien Vescovi doesn't allow time to hurry him along. For ten years, he has chosen to carry out this slow research with its profound ties to elementary

phenomena. The rain, the sun, the fire required to cook the pigment baths, are all partners in the work and anchor it in the act of waiting, in quietly decanting, and in an economy of means that reverses the consumerist conception of art. The artist's studio has therefore become essential in moulding these experimentations.

Originally from Haute-Savoie, for three years Adrien Vescovi worked in a studio at an altitude of 1600m; now based in Marseille, his relationship to landscape is still marked by the experience of the mountains and the white suns are perhaps a reminiscence of them, several years later. This point also demonstrates the stratification of memory that characterises the work as a whole.

The studio motif is continued implicitly on the first floor of Le Grand Café where the artist lays out an unsewn composition on the art centre parquet, as he would on the floor of his studio to cut or pin cloth. The installation is punctuated by glass jars containing the colours he worked with in his infusions, giving it a dual conceptual register of both the process and the finished form. This very calm space, slightly reminiscent of traditional Japanese art, evokes the eye of a hurricane: an intimate place to feel spared from the tempest.

LONG CYCLE

As the years have gone by, Adrien Vescovi has successively used pre-dyed fabric, then tried out synthetic dyes, and then natural dyes from plants he collected around him in the mountains. Living in Marseille now makes it easier for him to work with ochres from Roussillon, Vaucluse, Morocco and Italy, with other pigments completing the palette.

The fabric first passes through a bath of potassium alum mordant, to make the fibres more permeable to the dye. Next, the artist progresses by collection and reduction: different water residues mixed with

pigments and with whitening warm and cool, settle and mature, recharging all the while with new tints. This process of reduction and desaturation of colour, until it has a texture like mud, also expresses an economy of means and a particular concern for issues connected to the textile industry - one of the most heavily polluting sectors. Is this a way to question the ecology of his own production? This draining away of colour also bears the mark of time, in the way that we say, in French, that a pastel colour is 'past' (passé) or faded. At this point it seems important to note that Adrien Vescovi doesn't fix the colour of his fabric or his dyed thread, which evolves over time because of its sensitivity to daylight.

FORMER LIVES

Using the same recycling operation, all the textiles presented in the exhibition *Soleil blanc* have already been shown in earlier exhibitions in other forms. In the large room of the art centre, Adrien Vescovi shapes his immense vertical overlays onto the base of an initial sheet of Supima cotton, an American textile characterised by its fineness which he used in 2019 for a monumental installation at the Villa Noailles. Tinted with a base of infused ochres, the finish on the Supima is rather like the tie-dye popularised by hippies in the 1960s. In 2020, for an exhibition organised by Triangle – Astérides à la Friche Belle de Mai, the artist attached white sheets to the first layer, covering the Supima. Monogrammed or decorated with lace, these sheets have a past life: unseen hands have spent hours embroidering their initials (their identity?) on the thick cotton or linen material, which feels stiff and exhibits a richer range of colours than at first sight, from white to yellow to creamy beige. Although Adrien Vescovi's work brings up questions about memory, it doesn't deal in anecdotes. He isn't interested in family stories, he is just inspired and fuelled by the idea that these sheets have had a long past life and felt the weight of passing bodies.

For the installation presented at Saint-Nazaire, the household 'whites' have been dyed in a range of pastel shades that remind the artist of the colours of the façades of 1970s and 1980s residential buildings: pink and purple, orange and green. Rounded forms, cut out from white sheets, have been sewn onto these coloured sheets and the artist has added 'counter-suns' to them, counterparts of the first ones but this time in colour. These two steps have augmented the installation and made the layering more dense, as if the colour surges from the depths of myriad floating architectural textile leaves, across which travels the solar disc.

ALCHEMICAL NOTEBOOKS

The artist considers his recent large textile paintings to be like books. Their monumental format (5.35x2.80m) clearly makes them awkward to handle, but, although the pages of the books can't be turned, they are nevertheless there to be decrypted on each face, revealing hidden sides and mirror writings like the alchemical notebooks where Adrien Vescovi records his secret dye formulas. They are also recipe books, each colour corresponds to the geographical zone where the ochres are produced, and geometric forms connect the sheets, with a semi-circle appearing on one page and sliding onto another. Are they truncated or simplified letters? The exhibition can also be interpreted as a perpetual reconstruction of language, attempting to grasp the support of thinking and creating a reinvented, unfixed alphabet in physical space. These exploded books rest suspended on rods, suggesting another use, of hands slipping into the stratified thickness, of the movement of bodies making the fabric vibrate like sheets outside in the wind.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Soleil blanc is an exhibition of meditative and sensual movement freely adapted to the space of the art centre. Adrien Vescovi has paid attention to the particularities of its architecture, its pillars and its large window bays. He orchestrates a loose rhythm in each room without trying to structure the route in an overly controlled way. Adrien Vescovi's works establish a particular sense of time, inviting the visitor to move around the work and within the work, noticing its multiple perspectives. With this experience of being immersed in colour and memory the artist allows us to perceive life in all its forms (vegetable and mineral dyes, linen and cotton fibres, the human gesture), the organisation of forces (gravity, equilibrium, swaying) and the exercise of liberty, within fluid limits and flexible labyrinths filled with the murmur of open-ended stories and vistas onto the landscape.

Éva Prouteau, art critic

AVAILABLE IMAGES

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Adrien Vescovi, *Soleil Blanc IV to XI*, 2021
Sheets, natural dye, variable dimensions. Production Le Grand Café – contemporary art centre, Saint-Nazaire, France
Exhibition views *Soleil Blanc* at Le Grand Café – contemporary art centre, Saint-Nazaire, France, 2021
Photos Marc Damage

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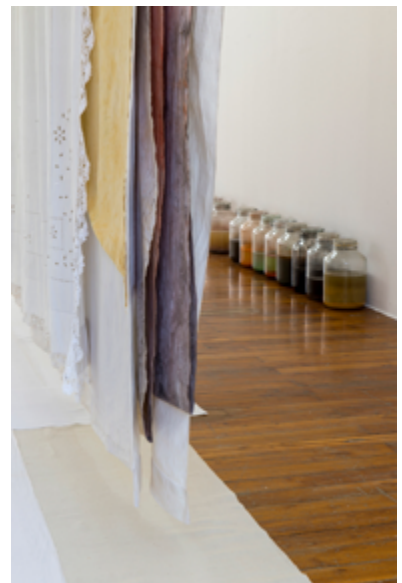
Top: Adrien Vescovi, *Soleil Blanc IV to XI*, 2021
Sheets, natural dye, variable dimensions. Production Le Grand Café – contemporary art centre, Saint-Nazaire, France
In the middle: Adrien Vescovi, *Alphabet* (2020) and *Alphabet B* (2020)
Sheets (cotton, linen), natural dye (ochres), sewing machine
Bottom: Adrien Vescovi : *Soleil Blanc* (2020) and *Sans titre* (2020)
Exhibition views *Soleil Blanc* at Le Grand Café – contemporary art centre, Saint-Nazaire, France, 2021
Photos Marc Damage

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Adrien Vescovi, *Soleil Blanc I to III, (sol), (bocaux)*, 2021
Sheets, natural dye, glass jars, variable dimensions. Production Le Grand Café – contemporary art centre, Saint-Nazaire, France.
Exhibition views *Soleil Blanc* at Le Grand Café – contemporary art centre, Saint-Nazaire, France, 2021
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Adrien Vescovi, *Soleil Blanc I to III, (sol), (bocaux)*, 2021
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ADRIEN VESCOVI

NEWS

Adrien Vescovi is selected for the 2020-2021 **Pernod Ricard Prize**. He will participate in the *Bonaventure* exhibition curated by Lilou Vidal, which will take place at the Fondation d'entreprise Pernod Ricard (Paris) from September 7, 2021.

<https://www.fondation-pernod-ricard.com/le-prix/edition-20-21>

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1981, lives and works in Marseille, France, graduated from the École supérieure d'art Annecy Alpes, France

Adrien Vescovi's works belong to the collections of the Centre National des Arts Plastiques, the Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain de Nice, the Musée d'Arts de Nantes, the Frac Provence Alpes Côtes d'Azur and the Fonds Communal d'Art Contemporain de la ville de Marseille.

Recent solo shows (selection)

2020: *Slow Down Abstraction*, Studio Fotokino, Marseille, FR

2019: *Mnemosyne*, Galerie des Ponchettes, Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Nice, FR
Mens momentanea, 7 Clous, Marseille, FR

2017: *For the memory of a live time*, ChezNeon, Lyon, FR
Galerie Ceysson-Bénétière, Saint-Étienne, FR
Résidence et exposition, Le Cyclop, Milly-la Forêt (Paris), FR

2016: Casa de Francia, Institut Français d'Amérique Latine, Mexico, Mexique

2015: *Amnesia*, Tripode, Rezé (Nantes), FR

Recent collective shows (selection)

2021: *Crystal Clear*, Pera Museum, Istanbul, Turkey
Bella Vista, Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain, Saint-Nazaire, FR



Adrien Vescovi by Oliver Douard

2020: *Sur pierres brûlantes*, Triangle France - Astérides / Ateliers de la Ville de Marseille, Friche La Belle de Mai, Marseille, FR
High Art Gallery, Paris

2019: *Par hasard*, Centre de la Vieille Charité & La friche Belle de Mai, Marseille, FR
Futur, ancien, fugitif, Palais de Tokyo, Paris
La Mesure du monde, MRAC, Sérignan, FR
Festival international de mode de Hyères, Villa Noaille, Hyères, FR
San Sebastiano da Po, Italy (residency)

2018: Biennial IntoNature, Frederiksoord, The Netherlands
Collection N9, Interior and the Collectors, Noirmoutier, FR
Maison Pelgrims, Brussels, Belgium

2017: Club Andalouse, Paris
La Station, Nice, FR
Villa Datri, L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue

2016: *IN & OUT*, Villa du Parc, Annemasse
Galerie Praz-Delavallade, Paris
Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark
Sequoia Dreams, La Galerie, Noisy-le-sec (Paris)

<https://adrienvescovi.com/>

EXHIBITION EVENTS

GUIDED TOURS

Every Saturday at 4:00 p.m.

Guided tour of the exhibition

Free entry, without reservation. Duration about 1 hour.

FRENCH SIGN LANGUAGE VISIT

Thursday June 24 at 5:30 p.m.

Free guided tour interpreted in Fr / LSF (French sign language) by IDEM Interpretation.

Open to all, by reservation. Duration about 1 hour.

FAMILY / EARLY CHILDHOOD VISITS

Saturdays June 26, July 24 and September 11 at 11:00 a.m.

For families with children aged 1 to 6

Free, by reservation. Duration about 1 hour

DJ SET "SOLEIL BLANC / LA ROOM SESSION"

Saturday June 19 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

On the occasion of the Fête de la Musique, the Nantes label La Room Records invests Le Grand Café for 2 hours of DJ Set in communion with the works of Adrien Vescovi, all provided by two Nantes artists Fanman and Porter City.

Free entry, without reservation. Duration 2h.

THE RADÔME WORKSHOPS

Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays in summer; Saturdays and Sundays in September, at 3.30 p.m. Artistic practice workshops for families with children from 6 years old.

At the Radome, roof of the submarine s

At 3:30 p.m. : Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from July 3 to August 29 as well as Saturdays and Sundays from September 4 to 19

Free, by reservation, duration approximately 1h30

RECEPTION CONDITIONS DEPENDING ON THE HEALTH SITUATION

Limited gauges, wearing a mask compulsory, hydroalcoholic gel available, physical distancing, etc.

Information and reservations:

Le Grand Café public center

T. +33 (0)2 51 76 67 01

publicsgrandcafe@mairie-saintnazaire.fr

The Grand Café welcomes groups, by reservation.



Visits of *Bella Vista* project at Le Grand Café - contemporary art centre in early 2021, with students in front of Adrien Vescovi's works. Photos by Le Grand Café.

PLEIN SOLEIL, L'ÉTÉ DES CENTRES D'ART

This exhibition is part of the event **Plein Soleil, l'été des centres d'art**, a project by d.c.a. / Association française de développement des centres d'art contemporain.

www.etedescentresd'art.com

PRACTICAL INFORMATION



CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN D'INTERET NATIONAL

Place des Quatre z'Horloges - 44600 Saint-Nazaire - France

+33 (0)2 44 73 44 00

grand_cafe@mairie-saintnazaire.fr

www.grandcafe-saintnazaire.fr/en

Opening days and times

From Tuesday to Sunday 2pm to 7 pm

From 6 July to 31 August: from Tuesday to Sunday 11am to 7 pm

Specific protocol for receiving the public according to the health situation

Free entrance

Venue

By bus

Bus stop Quatre z'horloges: line U2

Bus stop Rue de la Paix: line Hélyce

By train

From Paris-Montparnasse (TGV): 2h40

From Nantes (TGV ou TER): 30 to 50 minutes

Then Bus :

line U2 to St-Marc (Le Grand Pez) — bus stop Quatre z'horloges

line Hélyce to Université — bus stop rue de la Paix

By car

From Nantes by the 4 lane road: 45 minutes

From Rennes : 1h30

From Vannes : 1h

Parking nearby

Press contact

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#adrienvescovi #soleilblanc

#legrandcafesaintnazaire #exposition #artcontemporain #dcaresseau #PleinSoleil2021

Le Grand Café, contemporary art centre of national interest of the City of Saint-Nazaire, is supported by the French Ministry of Culture (DRAC Pays de la Loire), the Regional Council of Pays de la Loire and the Departmental Council of Loire-Atlantique.

Le Grand Café is certified "Centre d'art contemporain d'intérêt national" by the French Ministry of Culture.

It is a member of d.c.a / Association française de développement des centres d'art contemporain (French Association for the Development of Contemporary Art Centres) and the Pôle arts Visuels Pays de la Loire (Pays de la Loire Visual Arts Centre).

Partenaire média :



PLEIN SOLEIL
L'été des centres
d'art 2021

