



GOWEN
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

LINEAR ECHO

By
Claude
Cortinovis

Press Release |
July 3 - 17 | 2025

LINEAR ECHO

Claude Cortinovis

July 3 - 17, 2025

Opening Thursday July 3, from 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

at Rue Jean-Calvin 4

In the presence of the artist

Artist talk with Claude Cortinovis July 10, 2025 from 5 p.m.



Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN. © Claude Cortinovis

Claude Cortinovis, *Landscape CM #1*, 24.11.2023, Stamping inks on colored pencils on handmade grid paper, 200 x 200 cm.

Opening at its second gallery space located at Rue Jean-Calvin 4, GOWEN is excited to present **Linear Echo**, a solo exhibition by **Claude Cortinovis** (b. 1967, Geneva) which brings together a group of works from the artist's various series exploring repetition, resonance and the poetic tracing of lines.

On view for the first time is a new series of works started in 2024 which develops a subject initially explored in the artist's monumental work *Landscape CM #1*, 2023, an imposing homage to the nymphéas cycle of Claude Monet. The remarkable work, also presented, gives scope to a show that demonstrates Cortinovis's thoughtful pursuit of meticulous, resilient expression using his signature techniques of hand-drawn lines and squares on paper, or photographic paper which he suffuses with writing following pre-defined, mathematical and temporal patterns. With this in mind, examples of the artist's methodical drawings, notably from his ongoing series *Au plus près de ma ligne* originally begun in 1993 and executed as single works on paper since 2017 complete the presentation.



"Claude Monet was one of the first artists to develop the idea of working in series, addressing the same themes, reworking an image, demonstrating a certain resilience to achieve something, particularly after a time of grief, as we see in his nymphéas series".
- Claude Cortinovis

The new works, from a series entitled *Avant la nuit* feature waterlilies overlaid with duplicated sentences in acrylic ink and recall drawing. In what has emerged as a distinctive element throughout his work, Cortinovis applies handwritten words onto photographic or printed surfaces. A single sentence, "*Avant la nuit, j'allume une lanterne et espère trouver ce que je cherche.*" is repeated, rhythmically and precisely across the image, the phrase itself, inspired by contemporary Chinese poetry.

Claude Cortinovis, *Avant la nuit #2*, 25.11.2024, White india ink on pigment print on cotton paper, 32.9 x 32.9 cm.

Conversely, composed in the artists' signature style of manually constructed grids of thousands of small squares filled with different colours using miniature stamps, *Landscape CM #1*, 2023 can be interpreted as a kind of photographic, digital work that is made by hand, like a "false photo", explains Cortinovis. Using only primary colour pigments to achieve finer shades through successive layers of ink and pencil enhancements, his works, like performances, are realized slowly, calmly, in a scientifically ordered manner, accompanied by hints of moments that the artist seeks in the refinement of the detail of the image, meticulously parceled out.

This duality in approach – of photography alternating with drawing – or the double meaning of sentences is omnipresent in the works of Cortinovis. The square format – neither portrait nor landscape – is expressly chosen by the artist. As Cortinovis explains "The square closes in the image. I can define the specific boundaries of the pictorial plane, it does not allow the viewer to imagine what could be present beyond the limits of the frame."

Temporality or the impermanence of time are captured by Cortinovis. In a reflection of notable events in the artist's life, such themes are approached in liaison with a representation of the world, rather than the human body, an idea which subtly flirts with abstraction. In these latest works, the absence of a clear horizon line in the background and the immersive nature of the waterlilies, symbolic in their connection to loss and sorrow, may be seen as a metaphor for unbounded, all-encompassing grief. In his own compositions, Cortinovis resurrects the horizontality, drawn anew as one sentence, line-by-line, in undeviating lettering across the pictorial image.

To fully observe the finesse and delicate nuances which define their surfaces, whether overlaid with words or with one single, continuous line or motif, Cortinovis's works merit real-life viewing. Through his ordered, precise art, like a space of refuge, he can transform a difficult moment in life to see something positive, meaningful, or beautiful.

Around seven works are included in the exhibition. To mark the presentation, an artist talk will be held on Thursday July 10, 2025 from 5 p.m.



Claude Cortinovic, *Au plus près de ma ligne blanche*, 16.09.2022, White aqueous ink, colored pencils on handmade grid paper, 100 x 70 cm.

CLAUDE CORTINOVIS

Claude Cortinovic (b.1967) in Geneva where he lives and works. Solo exhibitions: GOWEN, Geneva, (2025, 2018); La Cabinerie, Fribourg, CH (2019); Keitelman Gallery, Brussels, BE (2014, 2008, 2002); ONE contemporary art gallery, Verbier, CH (2011); Galerie Gisèle Linder, Basel, CH (2007); Galerie Mitterrand+Cramer, Geneva, CH (2004); Centre de la photographie, Geneva, CH (1997); Nouvelle Galerie, Grenoble, FR (1997); Palais de l'Athénée, Salle Crosnier, Geneva (1993). Group exhibitions: GOWEN, Geneva, CH (2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2018); FMAC, Geneva, CH (2024); Musée Jenisch, Vevey, CH (2021); Centre d'Art Contemporain d'Yverdon, Yverdon-les-Bains, CH (2020, 2017); Villa Empain - Boghossian Foundation, Brussels, BE (2011). Collections include: MoMA, NY and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; Société suisse de radiodiffusion et télévision, Bern, CH; UBS Art Collection, Geneva, CH; Fonds Cantonal d'Art Contemporain (FCAC), Geneva, CH; Fonds Municipal d'Art Contemporain (FMAC), Geneva, CH. Claude has been represented by GOWEN since 2016.



For more information visit:

Website: gowen.art

Instagram: [@gowencontemporary](https://www.instagram.com/gowencontemporary)