

Waiting for Jim

Alan Charlton, Claude Cortinavis, Davide La Rocca, Don McCullin, James Nachtwey, Aurélie Pétreil, Ma Sibo.

April 28, 2022 - June 4, 2022

The group exhibition brings together seven artists of different generations and nationalities. Photography is often present in their artistic practice, both as a medium in itself and as a technical tool that intervenes in a phase of creation and in the development of formal language.

Waiting for Jim explores the relationship between art and time, an explicit or implicit theme in the work of all the artists presented in the show. For Aurélie Pétreil, the notion of time relates to the time of the transformation process of the image during which it is transplanted, taking shape and volume in the physical world. Claude Cortinavis addresses time as that of the gesture repeated endlessly, the trace and proof of a human existence before its disappearance. For Davide La Rocca, time is expressed through his slow paintings and emotions, aroused, relived and experienced through the appropriation of scenes from cinematic masterpieces. The time of an instant – that of the photo captured in the moment – of James Nachtwey and Don McCullin, expands to become testimony to events that have taken place. Beyond this, it is elevated to an iconic, universal and eternal image. Time for Alan Charlton is rhythm, variation, norm and change. It is the persistence of a concept, or of an idea that lasts a lifetime. Finally, time appears suspended in the light-flooded paintings of Ma Sibo.

Around twenty works, demonstrating the most varied techniques, interact with and confront one another in the spaces of the gallery. From each angle, large eyes run through the exhibition, their gaze beckoning to the viewer. The eye associates both the perspective of the photographer who captures the image in the lens and the visionary view of the artist, or even that of the gallerist who shares their own eye with the public.

This exhibition includes works on loan from private collections.



Aurélie Pétrél, Alan Charlton

The works of **Aurélie Pétrél** examine the image, its status, its (re)presentation and its production processes. From photographic shots, Pétrél develops her language in an approach that goes beyond photography and explores the field of sculpture by transferring the flatness of the shots to the creation of volume pieces or to architecture. She deconstructs, interrogates and revises the confines of techniques and means of expression. Through repeated sequences of mise en abîme, Aurélie Pétrél addresses the question of the persistence and transformation of the image. By exploring the margins, Pétrél offers us a path where the photographic material resonates, bringing a dialogue with a thousand voices. The artist has been included in the upcoming Lyon Biennial where she will present three major installations. Her work will also be on view at the Photo Ellysée museum in Lausanne in Autumn 2023.

Aurélie Pétrél was born in Lyon in 1980 and lives between Lyon, Romme (France), Paris and Geneva. Since 2012, she has been working with Vincent Roumagnac under the name Pétrél | Roumagnac (duo). A professor at HEAD-Geneva since 2012, she is also Head of the School's Photographic Pole and co-directs the Experimentation Laboratory of the Collège international de Photographie du Grand Paris (CIPGP) since 2018. Selected solo exhibitions include: La Halle des Bouchers, Contemporary Art Centre, Vienne, FR (2019); Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography, Toronto, CAN (2018); Photo Ellysée Museum: LabEllysée, Lausanne, CH (2018); Angers Museum of Fine Arts, FR (2018); artgenève, with Gowen Contemporary (2017); Paris Photo, with Gowen Contemporary, Paris, FR (2017); Musée de l'horlogerie et du décolletage, Cluses, FR (2017); CPIF and the Centre Georges Pompidou, Pontault-Combault, FR (2017); Gowen Contemporary, Geneva, CH (2013). Collections (selected): Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR; BNP Paribas Switzerland Foundation, Geneva, CH; Byblos Bank, Beirut, LBN; CNAP, Paris, FR.

Aurélie Pétrél will participate in the 2022 Biennale de Lyon. She has been represented by Gowen since 2010.

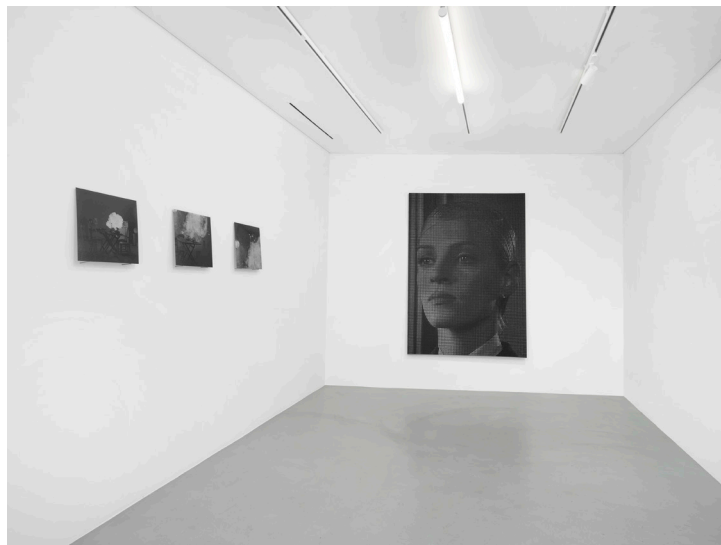
Alan Charlton (born 1948) is among the most outstanding British artists of recent decades and one of the most radical painters of his epoch. He describes himself as the man who creates grey paintings. Since 1967, when, at the end of his studies at the Royal Academy of Art, he exhibited a grey monochrome canvas - completely surprisingly and contrary to the teachings of the university - he has painted all of his pictures in variations of this colour or non-colour without exception, in dimensions that are always factors of 4.5 cm. Perception and spatial experience are central to his work. He settled on grey because he considered it to be the epitome of ordinary, but quickly realised the colour's permutable potential and expressiveness. He said: "I want my paintings to be abstract, direct, urban, basic, modest, pure, simple, silent, honest, absolute". Like other artists of his generation, such as Richard Long, Olivier Mosset, Imi Knoebel, Carl Andre and Richard Serra, he explored new possibilities for art without an academic foundation or institutional constraints. Even from today's perspective, Charlton's work still possesses its presence and poetic power.

Alan Charlton (b. 1948, Sheffield, UK) lives and works in London. His past exhibitions include solo shows at the Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Germany (2008); Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn und Taxis, Bregenz, Austria (2006); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2001); Carré d'Art - Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes, France (1997) and the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands (1982).

His work has been collected by prestigious public and private collections worldwide.

The Italian artist **Davide La Rocca** draws his inspiration from legendary films and transforms individual scenes from a single screenshot into a complex representation in painting. He engaged intensively with David Cronenberg's "eXistenZ", Andrew Niccol's "GATTACA" as well as the entire work of Stanley Kubrick. Davide La Rocca's distinctive patterns, reminiscent of pointillism and divisionism but also of digital photography, television and computer screens, result from a meticulous artistic technique. Original images are rasterized on a computer with the aid of a program and subsequently converted from colour images to ones with up to fifty-six shades of grey. The resulting dots are then transferred by hand on to the canvas in a long, elaborate process. When viewed from close up, the images appear to be abstract and it is only at a certain distance that the dots are perceived as a pictorial form, in a process that involves the eye and the brain. The strange atmospheres of La Rocca's paintings generate unexpected flows of meaning in the dialogue between represented subjects and emotions.

Davide La Rocca was born in Catania, Italy, in 1970. He lives and works between Catania and Milan. Selected solo exhibitions include: Galerie Voss, Düsseldorf, DE (2004, 2008, 2011, 2017). Selected group shows include: Museum Dr. Guislain, Ghent, B (2012); Neue Galerie Gladbeck, Gladbeck, DE (2012); ZKM Museum für Neue Kunst, Karlsruhe, DE (2009); Neue Galerie Graz am Landesmuseum Joanneum, DE (2008); ZKM, Karlsruhe, DE (2006); Biennale di Roma, Rome, I (2005); Galerie Voss, Düsseldorf, DE (2005); Museo dell'Arredo Contemporaneo, Ravenna, I (2001); Kunsthaus Tacheles, Berlin, DE (2001); Guang Dong Museum of Art, Ersha Island, Guangzhou, CN (1999); Galleria d'Arte Moderna of Udine, I (1999). Permanent collection: MAPP (Museo d'arte Paolo Pini).



Aurélié Pétrel, Davide La Rocca



Davide La Rocca, Claude Cortinovis



Claude Cortinovis

Like performances, the works of **Claude Cortinovis** are realized slowly and patiently. The gestures, whether tracing a line, writing a sentence or drawing with minuscule ink stamps, are repeated and the technique follows mathematical and temporal patterns pre-defined by the artist according to a constant discipline. After the conception of each work, the time and the modalities of its execution become the subject themselves. The details are inscribed as vestiges of an irreversible time and offer the artist a highly ordered and precise space of refuge. It is through the infinitely repeated gesture that Cortinovis explores the notion of human existence, its place and duration in the universe.

Claude Cortinovis was born in 1967 in Geneva where he lives and works. He graduated from the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Geneva in 1991, followed by further training in mixed media. His solo exhibitions include: La Cabinerie, Fribourg, CH (2019); Gowen Contemporary, Geneva, CH (2018); Keitelman Gallery, Brussels, BE (2002, 2008, 2014); ONE contemporary Art Gallery, Verbier, CH (2011); Galerie Mitterrand+Cramer, Geneva, CH (2007); Centre de la photographie, Geneva, CH (1997); Nouvelle Galerie, Grenoble, FR (1997); Palais de l'Athénée, Salle Crosnier, Geneva, CH (1993). Among his group exhibitions: Musée Jenisch, Vevey, CH (2021-2022); Centre d'art contemporain d'Yverdon-les-Bains (CACY); artgenève - *The Living Room: Modules*, curated by Samuel Gross, Geneva, CH (2020); Gowen Contemporary, Geneva, CH (2022, 2021, 2020, 2018); Château de Vullierens, organised by the Centre d'art Contemporain Yverdon-les-Bains (CACY), CH (2017); Villa Empain - Boghossian Foundation, Brussels, BE (2011); FLUXmUSEum, Pagosa Springs, Colorado, USA (2010); RNG Gallery, Omaha, Nebraska, USA (2010); Galerie Gisèle Linder, Basel, CH (2009); Hall-Palermo at the Kunsthalle Palazzo, Liestal, Basel, CH (2002); Espace Arlaud, Lausanne, CH (1999); Centre de la photographie, Bienne, CH (1999); Palais Wilson organised by the FCDV, Geneva, CH (1998); 5th international photography triennial in Tampere, Nyky aika, Tampere, FIN (1999).



James Nachtwey

James Nachtwey grew up in Massachusetts and graduated from Dartmouth College where he studied Art History and Political Science (1966-70). Images from the Vietnam War and the American Civil Rights movement had a powerful effect on him and were instrumental in his decision to become a photographer. In 1976, he began working as a newspaper photographer in New Mexico, and in 1980, moved to New York to begin a career as a freelance magazine photographer. His first foreign assignment was to cover the Troubles in Northern Ireland in 1981 during the IRA hunger strike. Since then, Nachtwey has devoted himself to documenting wars, conflicts and critical social issues. He has worked on extensive photographic essays in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza, Israel, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, South Africa, Russia, Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo, Romania, Brazil and the United States. Nachtwey has been a contract photographer with Time Magazine since 1984. He was associated with Black Star from 1980 to 1985 and was a member of Magnum from 1986 until 2001. In 2001, he became one of the founding members of the photo agency VII.

He has had solo exhibitions at the International Center of Photography in New York, the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, the Palazzo Esposizione in Rome, the Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego, Culturgest in Lisbon, El Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid, Fahey/Klein Gallery in Los Angeles, the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, the Canon Gallery and the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, the Karolinum in Prague and the Hasselblad Center in Sweden, among others. He has received numerous honours such as the *Common Wealth Award*, *Martin Luther King Award*, *Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award*, *Henry Luce Award*, *Robert Capa Gold Medal* (five times), the *World Press Photo Award* (twice), *Magazine Photographer of the Year* (seven times), the *International Center of Photography Infinity Award* (three times), the *Leica Award* (twice), the *Bayeux Award for War Correspondents* (twice), the *Alfred Eisenstaedt Award*, the *Canon Photo Essayist Award* and the *W. Eugene Smith Memorial Grant in Humanistic Photography*. He is a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and has an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the Massachusetts College of Arts.

James Nachtwey's work can be found in the collections of numerous public institutions including the Museum of Modern Art; Whitney Museum of American Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Corcoran Gallery of Art; Museum of Fine Arts Houston; Minneapolis Museum of Art; Centre Pompidou; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles and the Bibliothèque nationale de France.



Aurélie Pétrel, Sir Don McCullin

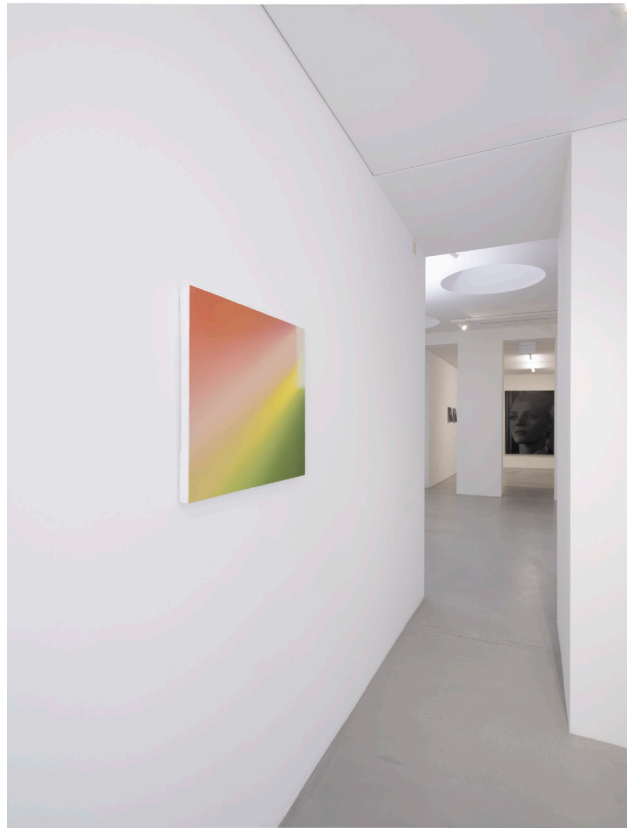
Sir Don McCullin CBE was born in 1935 in London. Today he is recognised as one of the world's greatest photographers.

Between 1966 and 1984, McCullin worked for The Sunday Times Magazine. At the time, The Sunday Times was at the cutting edge of investigative, critical journalism. During this period, McCullin's assignments included Biafra, the Belgian Congo, the Northern Irish 'Troubles', Bangladesh and the Lebanese civil war. It is his photographs of Vietnam and Cambodia that have become among the most famous and well-recognised. McCullin took huge risks in order to take his photographs. He was threatened with a knife at a Muslim checkpoint in Beirut for having a Falangist press pass, blinded by CS gas during a riot in Derry, and wounded by fragments of mortar shell in Cambodia.

In more recent years, McCullin has continued to travel internationally, photographing and printing new works from countries such as India, Syria and Africa, where he documented the AIDS crisis. His newer images include the British landscape, notably of Somerset, where he now lives with his wife.

In 2019 Tate Britain presented a major solo retrospective of his work which traveled to Tate Liverpool in 2020. McCullin has won numerous awards over the years, including two premier Awards from the World Press Photo and the 2006 Cornell Capa Award by the International Center for Photography in New York for his lifetime contribution to photography. In 1993, he was the first photojournalist to be made a Commander of the British Empire (CBE). He is the author of more than a dozen books and his work is held in numerous private and public collections around the world (*)

(*) Text based on Hamiltons Gallery website.



Ma Sibò, Aurélie Pétrel, Davide La Rocca

Ma Sibò's mysterious paintings, suspended between reality and imagination and composed by skillful colour schemes and bright voids, reveal an evanescent and poetic atmosphere that leads the viewer towards a contemplative and spiritual dimension. Elements from everyday life are theatrically transformed into lyrical visions, both in purity and silence, depicted in a vibrant light that can awaken a feeling of nostalgia. Through the appropriation of form and colour, the artist spiritualizes the perceptible reality and creates a strong connection between figuration and abstraction, between visible and invisible. Ma Sibò's recent researches on the artificial night light of urban and industrial landscapes observed in the polluted streets of downtown Beijing or in its suburbs resulted in an important body of work inhabited by an atmosphere of quasi-science fiction. Sometimes, isolated figurative subjects appear as symbols of a counter world, one of daylight belonging to a distant past. In the silence of the night, humanity is reduced to a shadow. Objects, evoked more by absence than by presence, bear witness to the change of a civilization moving towards an uncertain future.

Ma Sibò was born in 1979 in Tianjin and lives and works in Beijing, China. He attended the Oil Painting Department at the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts, China (2001), the High School of Art and Design in Toulon, France (2004) and the High School of Fine Arts in Nîmes, France (2006). Selected solo exhibitions include: Gowen Contemporary, Geneva, Switzerland (2020); de Sarthe Gallery, Hong Kong and Beijing, China (2018, 2016); Galerie Paris-Beijing, Paris, France (2015); Galerie Loft, Paris, France (2012, 2010). Among his selected group exhibitions: Beijing International Art Biennale, Beijing, China (upcoming 2022), Han Feng Art Space, China (2017); de Sarthe Gallery, Hong Kong and Beijing, China (2016, 2015); Galerie Paris-Beijing, Paris, France (2014); Galerie Loft, Paris, France (2014); Yan Club Arts Center, Beijing, China (2012, 2009); Tang Contemporary Art, Bangkok, Thailand (2011); Hélène Bailly, Paris, France (2011); Galerie Dumonteuil, Shanghai, China (2010); Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Nîmes, France (2006); Galerie d'Art-Mur Foster, Nîmes, France (2005); Galerie La Palette, Toulon, France (2004); National Museum of China (NAMOC), Beijing, China (2001).

Our thanks to Ms. Alexa Greene for her contribution to the texts of this presentation



Contact: T. +41(0)79 330 17 54 | info@gowencontemporary.com
Grand-Rue 23, 1204 Geneva