

ARINA ANTONOVA × SHEKEL & ANUBIS AGENCY

21.03.2026 — 29.04.2026



all object photographs by Santino Lamorte

curated by Azad Asifovich

GALERIE DIX9 Hélène Lacharmoise

ARINA ANTONOVA × SHEKEL & ANUBIS AGENCY

21.03. Public Opening with Brunch 11 - 21 h

11.04. Brunch 11 - 13 h

29.04. Finissage with Brunch 11 - 21 h



Ritual-based sculpture project by Arina Antonova

Curatorial text by Azad Asifovich

The project Shekel & Anubis Agency draws inspiration from Neil Gaiman's American Gods, specifically from the fictional funeral home run by Mr. Jacquel (Anubis) and Mr. Ibis. In her new body of work, Arina Antonova reimagines contemporary funerary urns, reliquaries, and mourning vessels, not as sterile, industrially produced items, but as tactile, emotional, and customizable forms of radical care and transition.

The series comprises six sculptural urns and a central fountain titled Fountain of Lamentation. These urns are not merely containers for ashes; they are bodies themselves interactive, decorable, and sensorial vessels meant to accompany the living in their grief rituals and the dead in their symbolic passage. One urn is conceived as a couple's urn, allowing a shared resting place and the fountain becomes a space for reflection, solace, and public remembrance.

Antonova's practice centers on ceramics as a deeply corporeal medium. Here, she imagines a future where mourning practices are no longer dictated by capitalist, bureaucratic, or sanitized protocols. Instead, she opens a space for ritual invention, encouraging communities to reclaim death as a space of agency, tenderness, and even play. The artist proposes an aesthetic rupture from the neutral, impersonal design of current funerary culture: each of her forms carries emotive symbolism, references to food, flora, seashells, and everyday textures of care.

In a society where death is increasingly taboo and euthanasia remains heavily restricted or inaccessible in many countries, Antonova raises a provocative question: What if we could choose our own final resting form? What if our mourning objects were shaped by love and humor rather than administration?

The Shekel & Anubis Agency introduces a fictional but potent structure for post-mortem self-determination, proposing that care for the dead is inseparable from care for the living. Her glazed ceramic emojis evoking feelings ranging from joy to sorrow, allow for a digital-age vocabulary of grief. These sculptural "emotions" can be attached to the urns or left at the fountain, offering a way to communicate with the departed or with one's own mourning.

Far from proposing a return to tradition, Antonova invites us to invent gestures rooted in intimacy, quiet defiance, and the acceptance of death not as an end, but as a shift in presence. She does not seek to vanquish death, but to dwell beside it, to give it form, and to allow beauty to emerge from its shadow.

Projet sculptural fondé sur le rituel par Arina Antonova

Texte curatorial de Azad Asifovich

Le projet Shekel & Anubis Agency s'inspire du roman *American Gods* de Neil Gaiman, plus précisément du funérarium fictif tenu par Mr. Jacquel (Anubis) et Mr. Ibis. Dans cette nouvelle série d'œuvres, Arina Antonova réimagine les urnes funéraires contemporaines, les reliquaires et les récipients de deuil non plus comme des objets stériles produits industriellement, mais comme des formes tactiles, émotionnelles et personnalisables de soin radical et de transition. La série comprend six urnes sculpturales et une fontaine centrale intitulée *Fountain of Lamentation*. Ces urnes ne sont pas simplement des contenants pour les cendres : ce sont des corps à part entière, interactifs, décorables et sensoriels ; destinés à accompagner les vivants dans leurs rituels de deuil et les morts dans leur passage symbolique. L'une des urnes est conçue pour un couple, permettant un lieu de repos partagé, et la fontaine devient un espace de réflexion, de réconfort et de mémoire publique.

La pratique d'Antonova repose sur la céramique en tant que médium profondément corporel. Ici, elle imagine un futur où les pratiques de deuil ne sont plus dictées par des protocoles capitalistes, bureaucratiques ou aseptisés. Elle ouvre plutôt un espace d'invention rituelle, encourageant les communautés à réinvestir la mort comme un territoire d'autonomie, de tendresse et même de jeu. L'artiste propose une rupture esthétique avec le design neutre et impersonnel de la culture funéraire actuelle : chacune de ses formes porte une symbolique émotionnelle, des références à la nourriture, à la flore, aux coquillages et aux textures quotidiennes du soin.

Dans une société où la mort est de plus en plus taboue et où l'euthanasie reste fortement restreinte ou inaccessible dans de nombreux pays, Antonova pose une question provocatrice : Et si nous pouvions choisir notre propre forme de repos final ? Et si nos objets de deuil étaient façonnés par l'amour et l'humour plutôt que par l'administration ?

Shekel & Anubis Agency introduit une structure fictive mais puissante d'autodétermination post-mortem, proposant que le soin des morts est indissociable du soin des vivants. Ses émojis en céramique émaillée, évoquant des sentiments allant de la joie à la tristesse permettent un vocabulaire du deuil adapté à l'ère numérique. Ces « émotions » sculpturales peuvent être attachées aux urnes ou déposées près de la fontaine, offrant une manière de communiquer avec les disparus ou avec son propre processus de deuil.

Loin de prôner un retour aux traditions, Antonova nous invite à inventer des gestes ancrés dans l'intimité, la douce résistance et l'acceptation de la mort non comme une fin, mais comme un déplacement de présence. Elle ne cherche pas à vaincre la mort, mais à vivre à ses côtés, à lui donner forme, et à permettre à la beauté d'émerger de son ombre.



Sea Urchin Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
35 x 20 x 20 cm





Peony Urn, 2026
stoneware, glaze
45 x 30 x 30 cm



Sea Shell Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
35 x 20 x 20 cm





Shiny Rocks Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
45 x 30 x 30 cm





Oyster Urn, 2026
stoneware, glaze, luster
45 x 30 x 30 cm

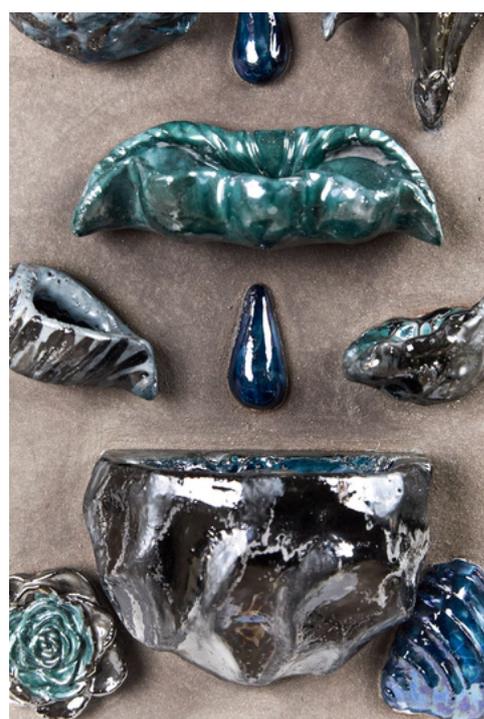




Emotion Pearls & Emoji Charms Set, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
pearls each D - 6 cm
charms each aprox. 2 x 3 x 6 cm



Fountain of Lamentation, 2025
stoneware, luster, synthetic hair
65 x 35 x 25 cm





Heracléum Double Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
52 x 30 x 20 cm





Camelia Wall Portal, 2025
stoneware, metallic glaze, luster
13 x 25 x 20 cm





Black Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
45 x 30 x 30 cm

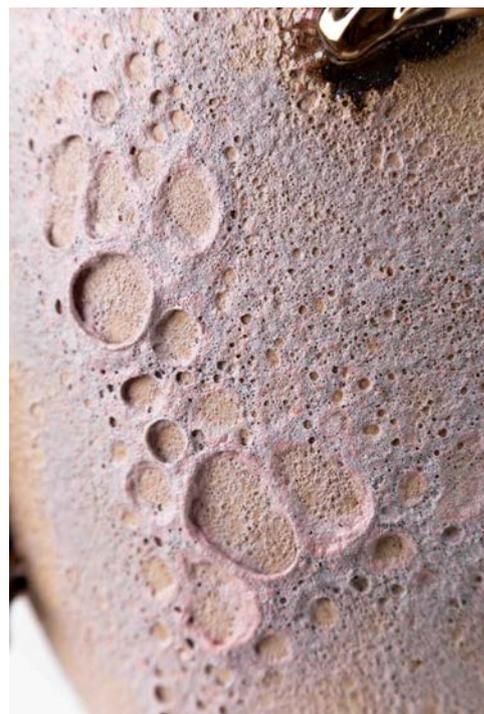




Venus Shell Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
45 x 30 x 30 cm



Chrysantheme Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
45 x 30 x 30 cm





Sea Shell Wall Portal, 2026
stoneware, glaze, luster
10 x 33 x 26 cm





Pink Lava Urn, 2025
stoneware, glaze, luster
45 x 30 x 30 cm





Textured Rock Wall Portal, 2026
stoneware, glaze
33 x 23 x 15 cm

Ritual-based sculpture project by Arina Antonova

Curatorial text by Azad Asifovich

For the display, the urns are not placed on neutral plinths but elevated on a pyramid made of nine computer blocks, forming an architecture that is at once archaic and speculative. The structure recalls tumuli, ziggurats, or early pyramids as much as contemporary data altars. The funerary urns appear there as preserved bodies, while the computer units operate as vessels for what remains of the soul in the form of traces, archives, and digital memory. Nine computers echo the approximate number of machines that pass through a human life, nine mental reliquaries. The ensemble oscillates between gravestone and server, between burial site and storage. It stages a separation between mortal remains and informational afterlife, opening the possibility of symbolic reactivation through use, reenactment, and access. The box contains the body, the box contains the mind, multiplied toward infinity. The scenography allows funerary ritual and technological cosmology to coexist within the same gesture of elevation.



Image by Olga Yurasova

Shaping absence

Text by Dr. Lisa Hockemeyer

Death and mourning run like a red thread through the history of art and civilization. They have taken shape in countless forms: in religious and secular images such as *memento mori*, in reliquaries, tombs, and funerary architecture, and in personal objects such as mourning jewellery.

Yet among these, the urn, although integrated into the domestic sphere in many cultures and therefore a deeply personal object, has received remarkably little attention in art history, and even less in contemporary art.¹ Compared to other forms of commemoration, it appears the Cinderella of remembrance, often reduced to its function as a vessel for human remains. Its image in art history is frequently decorative or allegorical, associated with balusters, trompe l'oeil ornament, the romanticized language of Neoclassicism, or even the patterns of twentieth century textiles. In its tangible, functional form, however, the urn has often remained restrained, marked by minimal, often classical, or allegorical signs of death and mourning, or left entirely bare.

Across these traditions, death, even in its most glorified or embellished form, is ultimately confined to a fixed place, both physically and symbolically, while the mourner remains a witness rather than an active presence.

Arina Antonova's work enters this space by reimagining the urn as an object that generates emotion and relation rather than presenting a static monument. Her urns are made as much for the deceased as for those who remain. They create a space of connection, both physical and metaphorical, inviting touch, pause, and reflection. Mourning becomes not a state to endure, but a lived experience moving through body, mind, and heart.

Antonova's urns are belly-shaped sculptures, they continue her exploration of the vase, a form of profound significance to Antonova, who regards the vessel as the archetypal object of care. Since the beginning of time, it has held the substances of life such as food and water, serving as a symbolic bearer of nourishment and protection. In developing this body of work, Antonova turns to what she describes as the politics of form.² The vessel, in her understanding, is never neutral. Historically shaped through women's labour of care, it has held sustenance and medicine, accompanied the dead in burial rituals, and borne witness to acts of tending and remembrance. These associations, she holds, persist today, as the emotional and practical responsibilities of caring for the elderly, organizing funerals, and sustaining memory continue to rest largely in women's hands.³

Care, understood as a symbiosis between human beings and life, lies at the heart of Antonova's work with form and matter. To her, clay is more than a medium; it is a living substance drawn from the earth, shaped by pressure, moisture, and time. Responsive to the slightest touch, it records gesture before hardening, preserving the movement of the hand as a lasting imprint. In this way, care is not simply represented but embedded within the material itself. Through the slow processes of forming and firing, touch becomes enduring, and memory settles into matter, carried in the surface as the quiet persistence of life.

Life is evoked most powerfully through references to nature. Through her masterful handling of material, colour, glaze, and decoration, Antonova opens layered and diverse meanings. Her practice resonates, unexpectedly, with the legacy of Bernard Palissy (1510 – 1590), whose vision extended beyond functional ceramics toward elaborate works in which snakes, plants, and animals were not allegories but celebrations of the living world in its material specificity.⁴

Organically formed, Antonova's urns mimic the irregularities and textures of natural bodies and surfaces, conveying a sense of growth and vitality. Rooted in close observation of natural worlds, her vessels resemble micro ecosystems. They recall geological formations and draw from marine or botanical realms alike. Adorned with flowers, rocks, shells, and other organic forms, they evoke nature not as ornament but as a sensory and symbolic terrain. Nature becomes a custodian of memory, standing in for the places where one might wish to be laid to rest, transformed through glaze, colour, and texture into a tactile topography of remembrance.

Pink Lava Urn and *Shiny Rocks Urn*, for example, recall porous pumice or polished obsidian, one soft and cratered, the other sharp and reflective. Pebbles and smaller stones emerge from their surfaces turning the vessels into geological territories. *Sea Shell Urn*, *Sea Urchin Urn* and *Venus Shell Urn* draw from marine life, while *Chrysantheme Urn* and the double urn *Heracléum* belong to the realm of soil and growth. Crackled glazes and rough textures suggest dried earth and reef limestone, and are set against colourful sea urchins, anemone rims and ornate flower buds, some of them potentially poisonous. Might they be read as contemporary *memento mori* of the natural world?

The urns dissolve the boundary between aesthetic object and ritual function. Attention shifts from the depiction of the other toward the self as subject, and further toward participation, suggesting that care for the living is as essential to the ritual of mourning as care for the deceased. They draw from nature, cultural memory, and the symbolism of the digital age, including emojis, while offering space for personal tokens that may express and bridge individual and generational experience. Lustred objects in soft shapes of hearts, mouths, pebbles and spherical emojis expressing joy, contemplation, or sorrow accompany the urns, inviting touch and silent communication.

In this way, Antonova's work echoes the quiet intimacy of a shrine. Like her *Fountain of Lamentation* which recalls the historic *Fountain of Tears* (1764) and its poetic transformation in Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin's (1799-1837) *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, a work that embodies grief, lost love and eternal mourning, these forms create space for memory and personal gesture.⁵ Mourning becomes tactile and participatory. The living are invited to arrange, to linger and to remain for as long as remembrance unfolds.

Antonova encourages those who stay to shape their mourning, understanding closure not as erasure but as transformation. Like the Heracleum, whose beauty conceals a latent toxicity, pain becomes integral to completion, physically sealing the container. Closure, then, is less an ending than a culmination.

¹ One notable exception is the ongoing research initiative DeathLab, a public event series that employs artist-designed urns to examine evolving values in funerary culture through material expression. See also: Winkel, M., Siedhoff, M., and Wintzer, J., (2024), 'Shifting values at the cemetery – the artistic interventions of DeathLab', *Geogr. Helv.*, 79, 51-59, <https://gh.copernicus.org/articles/79/51/2024/> (accessed Feb.6th 2026).

² Private correspondence with the artist, 10 Feb. 2026.

³ Ibid.

⁴ See also: Kayser, P., (2006) 'The Intellectual and the Artisan: Wenzel Jamnitzer and Bernard Palissy Uncover the Secrets of Nature', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, 7(2), pp. 45-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14434318.2006.11432774>, (accessed Feb.7th 2026).

⁵ For the history of the *Fountain of Tears* and how it inspired Pushkin's *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* see also: Amir, S., *Fountain of Tears*, (2019), *The Friday Times*, <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/09-Feb-2019/fountain-of-tears>, (accessed Feb.11th 2026).



Photo by Dmitry Kostyukov

BIO

Arina Antonova (born 1980 in Sevastopol) is an artist based between Spain and Switzerland. Her practice centers on sculpture and installation, using clay as her primary material. Through her work, she explores the body, particularly the female body, as something lived, remembered, and shaped by power, control, and the rituals of everyday life.

Culinary and craft traditions play a central role in her practice, forming a link between personal memory and broader cultural histories, an approach shaped by her experience of migration. Antonova's sculptures often become wearable or body-related objects, inviting intimate connection and physical interaction. For her, sculpture is not merely an object but a body in space, carrying its own presence, history, and impact.

Arina Antonova studied art history and archaeology in Saint Petersburg and Hamburg. After moving to Spain, she discovered clay, the material that has become the foundation of her work over the past ten years. In 2016, Antonova opened her studio in Palma de Mallorca. Her work has been presented in institutional exhibitions and biennials across Europe, as well as in galleries in Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland, and, more recently, the United States.

In 2022, she received the second prize in the Traditional Ceramics category at La Rambla, Spain, followed by a nomination for the Martinsons Award in Daugavpils, Latvia, in 2023. In 2024, Antonova participated as a panel member at the Royal Danish Academy for the Knowledge Sharing Sessions: Crafting Change — Enhancing Innovation and Sustainability in European Ceramics.

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BIOGRAPHIE

Arina Antonova (née en 1980 à Sébastopol) est une artiste basée entre l'Espagne et la Suisse. Sa pratique se concentre sur la sculpture et l'installation, en utilisant l'argile comme matériau principal. À travers son travail, elle explore le corps, en particulier le corps féminin comme quelque chose de vécu, de mémorisé et façonné par le pouvoir, le contrôle et les rituels du quotidien. Les traditions culinaires et artisanales occupent une place centrale dans sa pratique, formant un lien entre la mémoire personnelle et des histoires culturelles plus larges, une approche façonnée par son expérience de l'émigration. Les sculptures d'Antonova deviennent souvent des objets portables ou liés au corps, invitant à une connexion intime et à une interaction physique. Pour elle, la sculpture n'est pas seulement un objet, c'est un corps dans l'espace, doté de sa présence, de son histoire et de son impact.

Arina Antonova a étudié l'histoire de l'art et l'archéologie à Saint-Petersbourg et à Hambourg. Après avoir déménagé en Espagne, elle découvre l'argile, le matériau qui deviendra le fondement de son travail au cours des dix dernières années. En 2016, Arina Antonova ouvre son atelier à Palma de Majorque. Son travail a été présenté lors d'expositions institutionnelles et de biennales à travers l'Europe, ainsi que dans des galeries en Espagne, en France, en Italie, en Suisse et, plus récemment, aux États-Unis. En 2022, elle remporte le deuxième prix dans la Modalité de céramique traditionnelle à La Rambla, en Espagne, suivi d'une nomination pour le Martinsons Award à Daugavpils, en Lettonie, en 2023. En 2024, Antonova participe en tant que membre d'un panel à la Royal Danish Academy pour les Knowledge Sharing Sessions : Crafting Change - Enhancing Innovation and Sustainability in European Ceramics.

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EXPOSITIONS SÉLECTIONNÉES

2026

À la belle vue de l'abattoir, BeCraft, Mons, BE
Ceramic Brussels, Osnova Gallery, Brussels, BE

2025

One to One, Galerie Dix9, Paris, FR
HEART-H, CCA Kunsthalle 1, Andratx, ES

2024

SLOW, a66gallery, Santanyí, ES
Materia Libre, Natalia Bento Gallery, Alaró, ES
Variable Instructions, Space 776 Gallery, New York, US
European Ceramic Context Triennale, Hjorts Fabrik, Bornholm, DK
Call to Action, AAA Studio, Palma de Mallorca, ES

2023

Captured Stillness, Le Nouveau Vallon, Genève, CH
Exposition internationale Martinsons Award, Mark Rothko Art Centre, Daugavpils, LV
Clay Canvas, Espace l'Aurore, Lausanne, CH

2022

Ceramiche Bestiale, VIII Concorso Ceramico Internazionale, Museo dell'Arte Ceramica, Appignano, IT
Bling-Bling? International Ceramic Competition, Musée de Carouge, Genève, CH
Enbarro, Museo de la Cerámica, La Rambla, Córdoba, ES

2021

1000 Vases, Superstudio Più, Milan Design Week, IT
FATart Fair, Kammgarn, Schaffhausen, CH

2020

1000 Vases, Galerie Joseph, Paris, FR

RÉSIDENCES

2022 / 2023

Bruckner Foundation, Ville de Carouge, Genève, CH

2019

Fondation Pilar et Joan Miró, Palma de Mallorca, ES

PRIX

2023

Nominated for the Martinsons Award, Daugavpils, LV

2022

Second prize winner in the Modality of Traditional Ceramics, La Rambla, Córdoba, ES

CURATOR

Azad Asifovich is a curator and art talker with a background in political science, culturology and curatorial studies based between Paris and Antwerp. He is interested in relationships between artistic practice, contexts and its representation. Many of his projects question gray zones, gender, devotion, gesture, art world and revisiting (non)western historical references through the boundaries of visitor experience and common knowledge such as anime, tv series and linguistic habits.

Azad Asifovich est un curateur et un animateur d'art avec un parcours en science politique et études curatoriales, basé actuellement à Paris et Anvers. Il s'intéresse aux relations entre la pratique artistique, les contextes et leur représentation. Plusieurs de ses projets interrogent les zones grises, le genre, le monde de l'art et la révision des références historiques (non) occidentales à travers les frontières de l'expérience du visiteur et des connaissances communes telles que les animés, les séries télévisées et les habitus linguistiques.

[@azadasifovitch](#)



Photo by Dmitry Kostyukov

GALERIE DIX9 Hélène Lacharmoise

PRESENTATION

Located in the Marais, Paris, Galerie Dix9 was founded at the end of 2007. Directed by Hélène Lacharmoise — trained in Political Science at Sciences Po Paris and specialized in contemporary art and cinema at the École du Louvre and La Sorbonne — the gallery has developed a distinctly rigorous and conceptually driven program.

Galerie Dix9 is committed to the sustained representation of emerging international artists who remain underrepresented in France, often accompanying them through their first institutional-level solo exhibitions. In parallel, the gallery engages with established artists whose work has yet to be represented within the French context, positioning itself as a bridge between local and international discourse. The gallery's curatorial approach privileges the coherence between artistic intent and material articulation, with a particular focus on practices that operate across disciplinary boundaries. Rather than medium specificity, Galerie Dix9 is drawn to artists who navigate between forms, narratives, and systems of meaning.

The works represented by the gallery depart from the real as a conceptual field — sometimes through fidelity to observation, at other times through its displacement. They engage with processes of transition and metamorphosis, tracing the persistence of the past within an unstable present. Oscillating between illusion and objectivity, memory and erasure, reality and fiction, these practices interrogate the construction of time — intimate, social, and political — alongside the conditions through which identity and image emerge, circulate, and are perceived. Galerie Dix9 maintains a partnership with Bail-Art, the leading art-leasing organization for corporate and professional clients in France.

19 rue des Filles du Calvaire
Tuesday – Friday 2pm – 7pm
Saturday 11am – 7pm
and by appointment

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GALERIE DIX9 Hélène Lacharmoise

PRÉSENTATION

Située dans le Marais à Paris, la Galerie Dix9 a ouvert ses portes fin 2007.

Hélène Lacharmoise, diplômée en Sciences Politiques (IEP Paris), s'est spécialisée en art contemporain et cinéma lors de ses études à l'Ecole du Louvre et à La Sorbonne.

La Galerie Dix9 vise à représenter durablement de jeunes artistes de tout pays, peu ou pas connus sur la scène française tout en cherchant à les promouvoir à l'international. Elle leur consacre souvent leur première exposition personnelle. Elle s'intéresse également à des artistes plus établis mais non représentés en France.

Poursuivant une ligne de programmation très personnelle, la galerie privilégie le discours de l'artiste et sa pertinence avec le médium utilisé et s'intéresse notamment aux artistes jouant de la transversalité entre les arts.

Leur propos part du réel, qui peut être traité de façon réaliste ou non. Ils travaillent sur le passage et la mutation, à la recherche du passé dans un monde en devenir, entre illusion et objectivité, mémoire et oubli, réalité et fiction. Il y est question de durée et de temps, qu'il soit intime, social ou politique. Il y est aussi question d'identité et d'image, leur condition d'apparition et de perception. La galerie a un partenariat avec Bail-Art, leader du leasing d'oeuvres d'art en France pour les entreprises et professions libérales.

19 rue des Filles du Calvaire
mardi - vendredi 14h - 19h
samedi 11h - 19h et sur RV

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