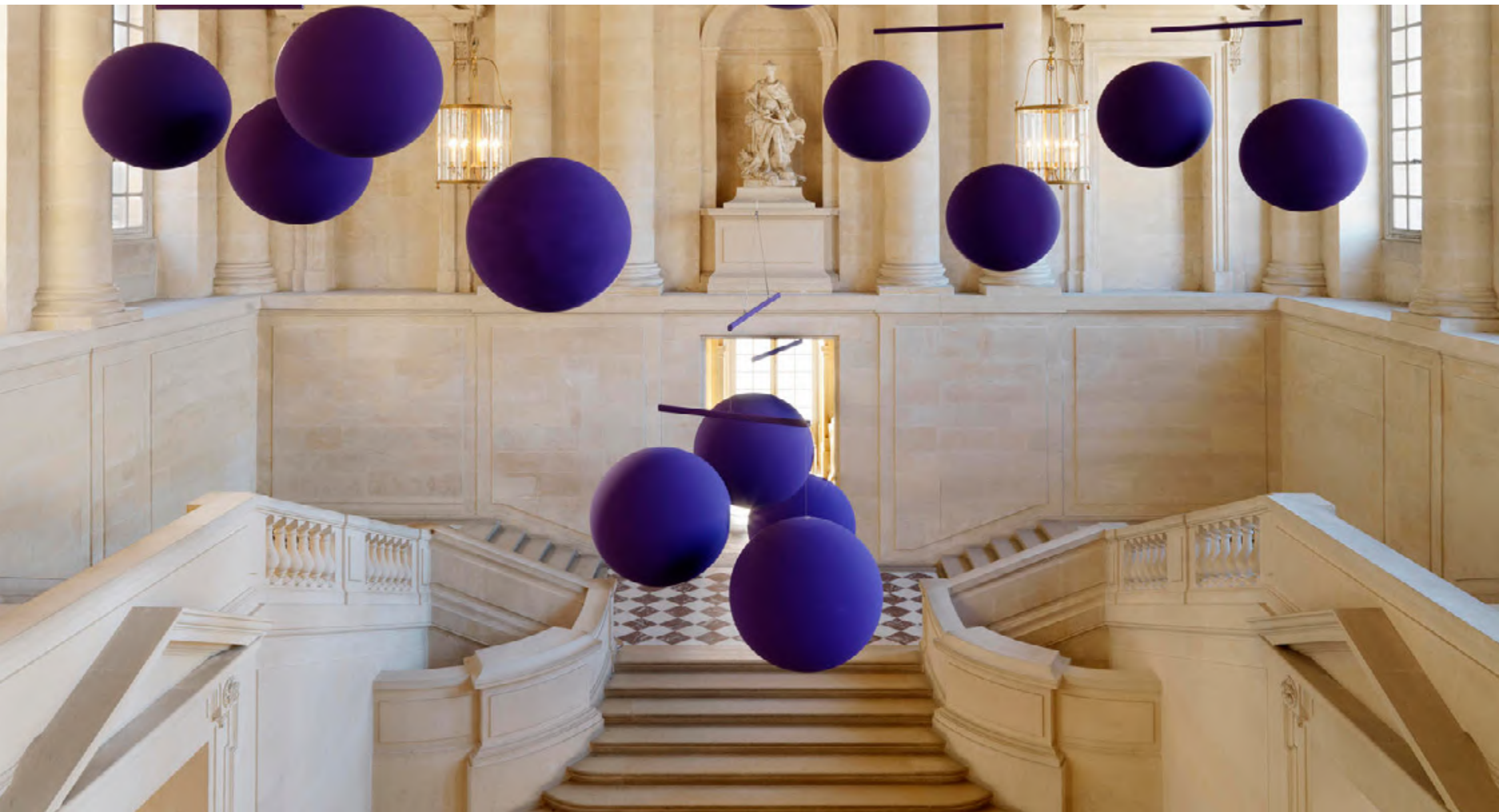


nara roesler

xavier veilhan



xavier veilhan

b. 1963, Paris, France, where he lives and works

Since the mid-1980s, Xavier Veilhan has created an acclaimed body of works—sculpture, painting, installation, performance, video and photography—defined by his interest in both the vocabulary of modernity (speed, motion, urban life, etc.) and classical statuary, reinterpreted from a contemporary vision. His work pays tribute to the inventions and inventors of our modern times, through a formal artistic language that mixes the codes of both industry and art. He mixes a great variety of techniques and material to produce tridimensional portraits and landscapes, bestiaries and architectures that swing between the familiar and the extraordinary.

For Xavier Veilhan, art is ‘a vision tool through which we must look in order to understand our past, present, and future’. Frequently investing in public space, his exhibitions and in-situ interventions in cities, gardens and houses question our perception by creating an evolving space in which the audience becomes an actor. Their aesthetics reveal a continuum of form, contour, fixity and dynamics, that invite the spectator to a new reading of the space and so creating a whole repertory of signs, the theatre of a society.

[click to see full cv](#)

capa Mobile (Versailles), 2009
fiber glass, molding in polyester,
stainless steel, polyurethane paint, motor
940 x 878 x 878 cm
Collection Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France
Photo © Florian Kleinfenn

selected solo exhibitions

- *Xavier Veilhan*, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2022)
- *Plus que pierre*, Collégiale Saint-Martin, Angers, France (2019)
- *Romy and the Dogs*, Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia (MAAT), Lisbon, Portugal (2019)
- *Nuit Studio Venezia*, Musée de la Musique, Cité de la Musique, Paris, France (2018)
- *Xavier Veilhan, Yuksek*, Caterina Barbieri & Carlo Maria, Le Comte, Jonathan Fitoussi – Cine-concert, Le Lieu Unique, Nantes, France (2018)
- *Reshaped Reality: 50 years of Hyperrealist Sculpture*, Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain (2016)
- *Cedar*, Andrehn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden (2015)

selected group exhibitions

- *Tout l'univers*, TNB Rennes, Rennes, France (2023)
- *Humain, animal: se reconnaître*, Musée de L'abbaye, Saint Claude, France (2022)
- *Kinetismus: 100 years of Art and Electricity*, Kunsthalle, Prague, Czech Republic (2022)
- *Rêve Électro*, Musée de la Musique, Cité de la Musique, Paris, France (2019)
- *Calling for a New Renaissance*, Joakim & Xavier Veilhan, Villa Aperta 8, Villa Medici (2018), Rome, Italy
- *Suspension—A History of Abstract Hanging Sculpture 1918–2018*, Olivier Malingue, London, United Kingdom; Palais d'Iéna, Paris, France (2018)
- *Botticelli Reimagined*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom (2016)
- 57th Venice Biennale, Italy (2017)

selected collections

- Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
- Fondation Ilju, Seoul, South Korea
- Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel
- New National Museum of Qatar, Doha, Qatar

4	sculptures
19	móviles e stables
30	rays
37	architectones e studio venezia
47	desenhos e monotipias
52	modelos e maquetes
54	filmes e performances

sculptures

Veilhan's sculptural work is deeply rooted in the tradition of portraiture. His subjects range from famous personalities such as music producers Brian Eno, Quincy Jones, and Rick Rubin, who were featured in the Producers series, to architects like Le Corbusier and Richard Neutra for the Architectones project. Furthermore, close acquaintances of the artist, such as intimate friends and studio assistants, are also depicted, lending an emotional dimension to his work. This emotional connection is heightened by Veilhan's strategy of titling each piece simply with the first name of the individual serving as the model. Examples include *Tony*, *Marc*, *Yi*, and *Romy*, all of whom have been sculpted by the artist.

Brian Eno, 2015
wood, wool, styrofoam
140 x 190 x 110 cm
55 x 74 x 43 in
Photo © Claire Dorn

→
The Audience, 2021
aluminum, stainless steel and paint
223 x 545 x 270 cm
87 x 214 x 106 in
Commissioned by
Olympic Foundation
for Culture and Heritage to
the Tokyo Olympics,
Japan, 2021
Photo © Yuichi Yamazaki





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The creation of these sculptures combines traditional methods and materials with modern technology. Veilhan scans the bodies of his subjects, manipulating the image before the final realization of the sculpture. While digital tools allow for an identical reproduction of the model, Veilhan often eschews such fidelity in favor of introducing elements of artificiality into the form. For instance, this may involve geometric stylization, as is the case with *Lyllie* (2016) and *Florian* (2016); glitches and distortions in *Marc* (2016); or pixelated effects in *Le Skateur* (2014). By doing so, the artist brings together distinct traditions and media. Art critic Ingrid Luquet-Gad has observed:

←

Jean-Marc, 2012
stainless steel and
polyurethane paint
400 x 141 x 108 cm
157x 55 x 42 in
permanent installation
1330 Avenue of the Americas,
New York, USA

Marc, 2015
ebony wood and
maçaranduba wood
figure: 40 x 13 x 9,5 cm
base: 140 x 30 x 20 cm
figure: 40 x 13 x 9,5 in
base: 55,1 x 11,8 x 7,9 in

→

The Skater, 2014
aluminium, polyurethane paint
510 x 825 x 567 cm
200.8 x 324.8 x 223.2 in
Photo © Amorepacific





Richard Rogers e Renzo Piano, 2013
stainless steel and polyurethane paint
523 x 130 x 130 cm
519 x 150 x 150 in
part of the collection of Centre
Georges Pompidou, Paris, France

“Since the late 1980s, Xavier Veilhan’s work has oscillated between formal classicism and high technology, confronting modernist heritage with the contemporary context. He seeks, through a register of forms, to maintain a delicate tension between abstraction and figuration; and, through a state of mind, the energy inherent to eras of technological transition. Across a wide variety of mediums, recurring themes like speed, movement, or technical progress are explored through a flexible formal syntax: mobiles, rays, lithographs, or sculptures crafted with 3D scanners.”

Molière [sculpture permanent], 2022
Versailles, France
Photo © Ville de Versailles, Perrick Daul, Veilhan, ADAGP Paris, 2022

→
Romy et les chiens, 2019
aluminum filled with polyurethane resin, wood, acrylic paint
variable dimensions
Photo © Bruno Lopes







←

The Carriage, 2009
steel, acrylic paint,
polyurethane varnish
280 x 1500 x 180 cm
110 x 590 x 70 cm
Collection Centre National des Arts
Plastiques, Paris, France
exhibition view
Veilhan Versailles, 2009
Palácio de Versailles,
Versailles, France

Lyllie, 2018
wood, MDF e carbon
123 x 60 x 39 cm
48 x 23 x 15 cm
Photo © Claire Dorn



The materials Veilhan uses in his sculptures are varied, including but not limited to aluminum, silver, carbon, mineral concrete, resin, beech, plywood, and others. He integrates these elements to create distinct spatial relationships that impact the viewer directly. In line with modernist traditions, the base of each sculpture is considered an integral part of the work, with its material, form, and size contributing to the overall appreciation of the piece. Veilhan also researches and employs materials characteristic of specific regions for his sculptures, as seen in his first solo exhibition *Horizonte Verde* (2015) at Nara Roesler in São Paulo, where he used Brazilian woods like maçaranduba, pequi, cumaru rosa, and aimbuia for the bases of his figures.



exhibition view
Horizonte Verde, 2015
Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil

→
exhibition view
Horizonte Verde, 2015
Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil





In *Plus que pierre* (2019), Veilhan's solo exhibition at the Collégiale Saint-Martin, the artist employed pedestals of varying sizes to alter the space's topography, punctuating it with several of his sculptures. As Veilhan explained: "The challenge for me was to engage directly with the space, working within it rather than merely placing objects in it. I wanted the existing statues and pedestals to be the starting point for my work."

exhibition view
Plus que Pierre, 2019
Collégiale Saint-Martin,
Angers, France
Photo © Fanny Trichet

→
exhibition view
Plus que Pierre, 2019
Collégiale Saint-Martin,
Angers, France
Photo © Fanny Trichet



This exhibition highlighted how Veilhan creates physical situations that affect the viewer's perception of space. "The pursuit of truth drives my sculptural portrait practice, but it is not a moral truth; rather, I seek to capture the presence of a body in space at a particular moment," the artist has said. The figures, in addition to asserting the reality of the individuals they represent, assert their own reality as objects capable of creating spatial relationships between themselves and the viewer.



exhibition view
Plus que Pierre, 2019
Collégiale Saint-Martin,
Angers, France
Photo © Fanny Trichet



mobiles and Stables

Mobiles play a central role in Veilhan's practice, which he approaches as a "genre, much like portraiture or landscape."

Throughout his career, the artist has created large suspended structures to occupy museums and galleries, such as the Louvre (2021), the Grand Palais (2013), the Château de Versailles (2009) in France, the Seoul International Airport (2017) in South Korea, and the Hatfield House (2012) in England, among others.

Though mobiles were popularized in art history by Alexander Calder, Veilhan points out that they have a much vaster history as objects that interact with their environment. "In my daily life, I make objects repetitively, like mobiles, which interact with their context: the way they embrace air, light, and how they reveal space. However, my approach is somewhat planetary, as I circle around things, shifting orbit. So, it's almost always the same thing, but from another angle," Veilhan explains.

The Grand Mobile, 2013
aluminum, stainless steel,
fiberglass, polyurethane resin,
polyurethane paint, motor
1550 x 640 x 640 cm
610 x 251 x 251 in
exhibition view

*Dynamo – A century of light and
motion in art, 1913–2013*, 2013
Grand Palais, Paris, France
Photo © Guillaume Ziccarelli



Le Mobile n°4, 2017
Carbon, stainless steel,
polyurethane resin,
polyurethane paint,
cork, polyamide
270 x 180 cm
106 x 70 in



Mobile (Hatfield), 2012
resin, carbon, plastic, steel,
aluminum, polypropylene, paint
polyurethane, epoxy paint
435 x 375 x 375 cm
171 x 147 x 147 in
exhibition view
Veilhan at Hatfield: Promenade, 2012
Hatfield House, Hatfield, England
Photo © Stephen Ambrose

Mobiles can also be understood as metaphors for the artist's practice, with his varied interests—sculpture, performance, music, architecture—articulated within a constantly dynamic structure. Veilhan's mobiles manifest the endless formal and material possibilities. Some mobiles have bases made of fine carbon rods, like Mobile No. 19 (2015); others have sturdy wooden bases, like Mobile No. 22 (2015); there are hanging mobiles, like Mobile No. 28 (2015); wall-mounted mobiles, like Mobile No. 5 (2021); large or small ones, such as Mobile No. 8 (2016); and profuse or minimalist examples, like Mobile No. 1 (2019) and Mobile No. 18 (2016).

Mobile n° 22, 2015
beech wood, cork,
linen, acrylic paint
132 x 105 x 105 cm
52 x 41.3 x 41.3 in

→
Mobile n° 28, 2015
stainless steel, beech,
vectran, acrylic paint
160 x 209 x 209 cm
63 x 82.3 x 82.3 in







Mobile n°6, 2016
Polypropylene and carbon
220 x 160 x 160 cm
86 x 62 x 62 in
Photo © Claire Dorn

→
Mobile n° 24, 2015
Carbon, polyurethane resin,
MDF, polypropylene, acrylic
paint, acrylic varnish
400 x 300 x 300 cm
157.5 x 118.1 x 118.1 in
exhibition view
Horizonte Verde, 2015
Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil





Mobile n°18, 2016
carbon, poplar wood, stainless steel,
aluminium, polyurethane resin,
cork, linen, polyurethane paint
157 x 133 x 66 cm
61.8 x 52.4 x 26 in



“The mobile is one of the few things that can be made on a large scale without becoming oppressive. I always like to joke: it’s impossible to make a fascist mobile. I enjoy how they interact with their environment—you can define the structure of the object, but it transforms. They have a life! Every art object belongs to a context (partly controlled by the artist, partly determined by the surroundings), but in the case of mobiles, the interaction is physical,” Veilhan asserts, seeing mobiles as visual elements that shape the atmospheric construction of an exhibition space.

Stables, on the other hand, are a series of works that counterbalance mobiles while still sharing geometric visual grammar and materiality. However, the primary distinction is, as the name suggests, their stability. These sculptures are, freestanding kinetic sculptures, though, despite their fixed nature, they still alter the perception of space by introducing varied visual rhythms.

Stabile n°14, 2011
stainless steel, epoxy paint
240 x 60 x 55 cm
94.5 x 23.6 x 21.7 in
Photo © Florian Kleinfenn

Stabile n°1, 2015
wood and carbon
262 x 85 x 75 cm
103 x 33 x 29 in
Photo © Claire Dorn, Galerie Perrotin





Stabile n°4, 2010
steel, stainless
steel, epoxy paint
220 x 40 x 40 cm
86.6 x 15.7 x 15.7 in



Stabile n°2, 2010
steel, stainless
steel, epoxy paint
220 x 40 x 170 cm
86.6 x 15.7 x 66.9 in

rays

In 2014, invited to participate in *Made by... made by Brazilians*, a collective exhibition featuring artists from 21 countries at Cidade Matarazzo, Xavier Veilhan created two works: a mobile placed over one of the building's staircases and *Rays (Matarazzo)*, which is part of the series of interventions made by the artist using rubber cables, polyester, and stainless steel. Veilhan's rays are almost always organized in an eccentric manner, originating from a fixed point. This effect creates linear perspectives in three-dimensional space, altering the way we perceive it, a sensation that renews itself each time we take a new position, moving closer to or further away from it.

Rays (Cidade Matarazzo), 2014

rubber and steel
730 x 365 x 500 cm
287 x 143 x 196 in
exhibition view

Made by... Feito Por Brasileiros, 2014

Cidade Matarazzo, São Paulo, Brazil
Photo © Ding Musa

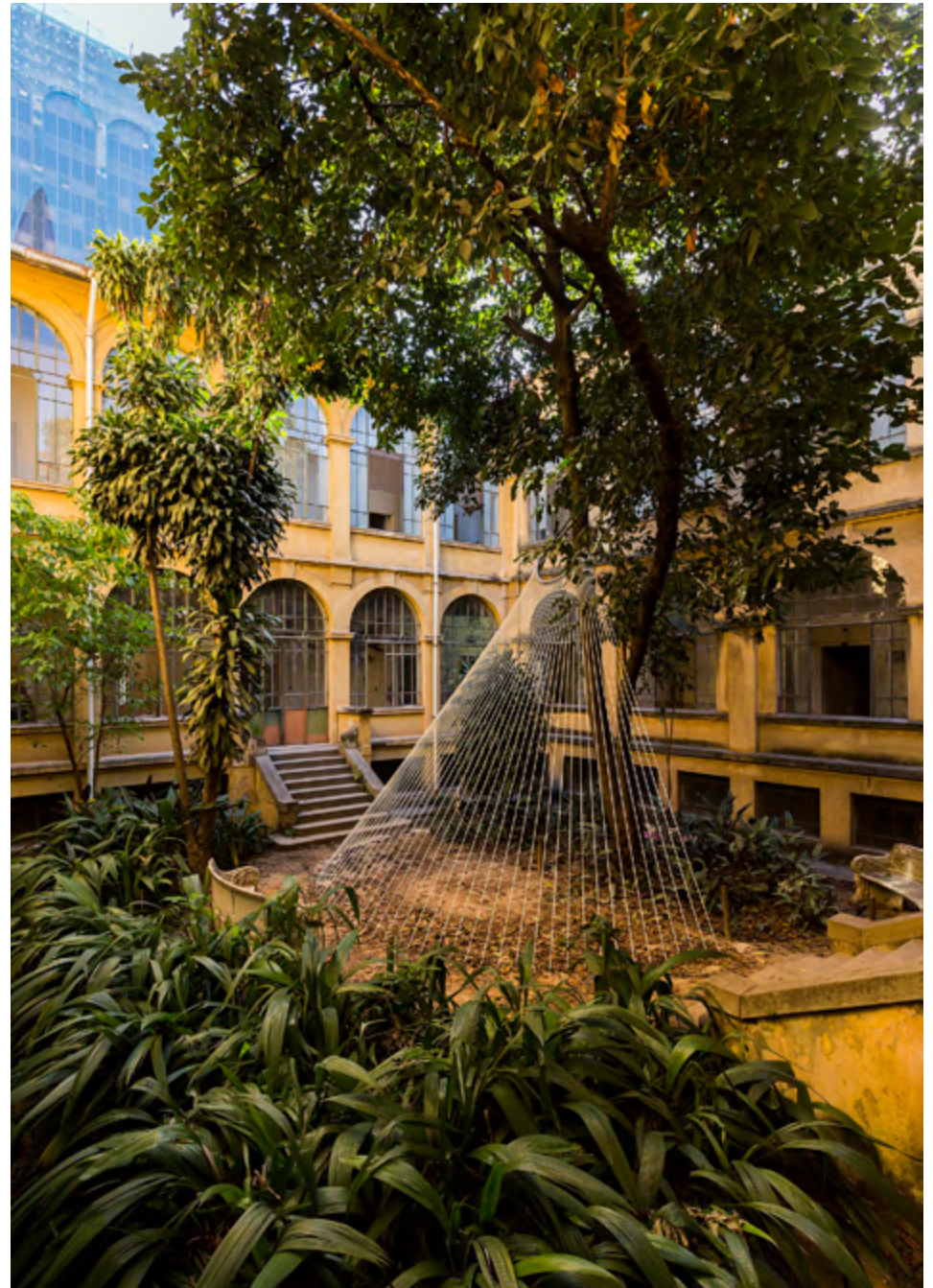
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Rays (Cidade Matarazzo), 2014

rubber and steel
730 x 365 x 500 cm
287 x 143 x 196 in
exhibition view

Made by... Feito Por Brasileiros, 2014

Cidade Matarazzo, São Paulo, Brasil
Photo © Ding Musa

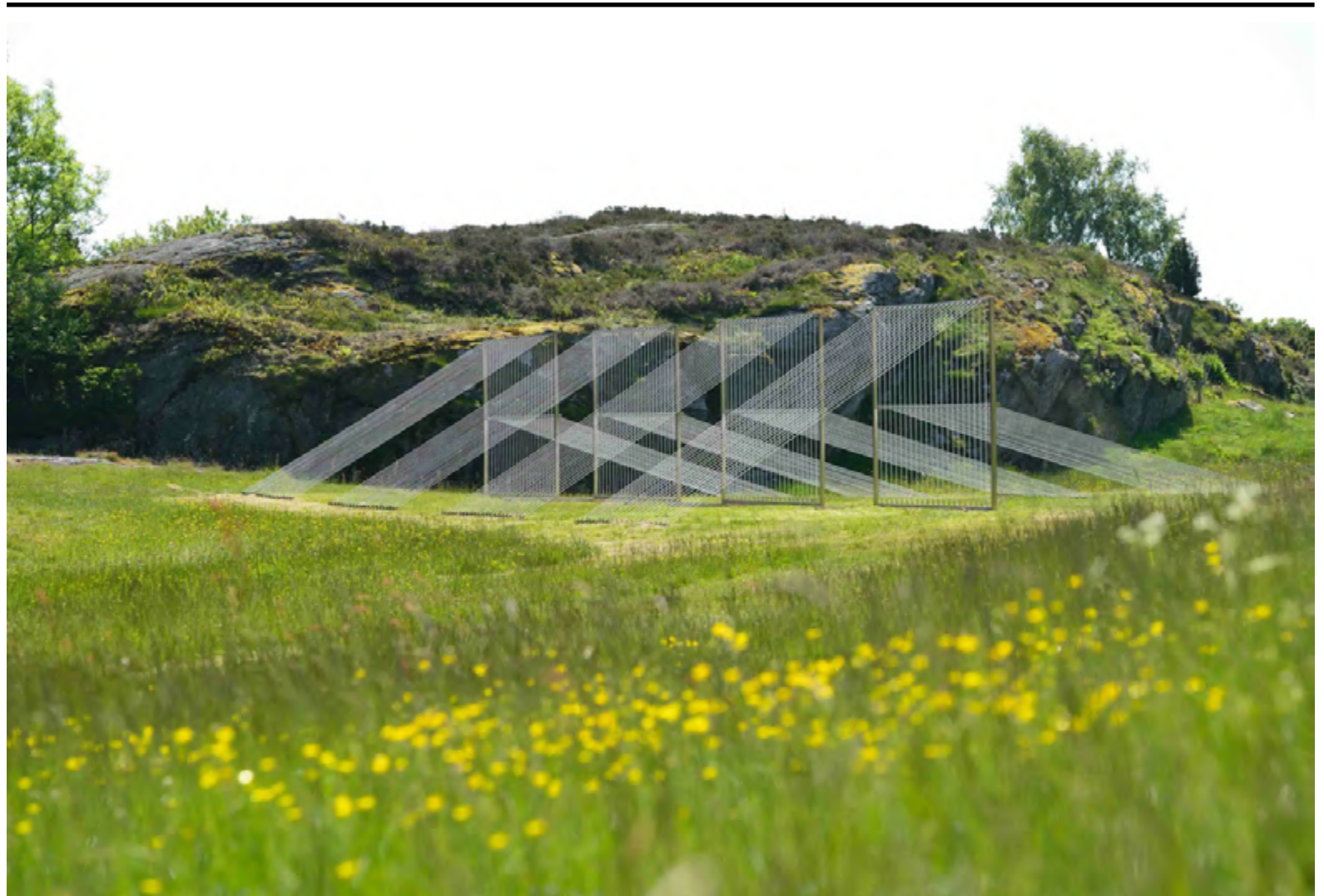






On this occasion, the artist stated: "I like to draw lines in space; I try to do this more to reveal the environment than simply to install a work." The function of this site-specific intervention, then, is to give prominence to the place where it is situated, transforming the way we usually perceive and relate to it. Other examples of *Rays*, such as *Hatfield* (2012), *Sheats* (2013), and *Pilane* (2014), demonstrate the versatility of the series, whose principles can be directly applied to the landscape or architecture.

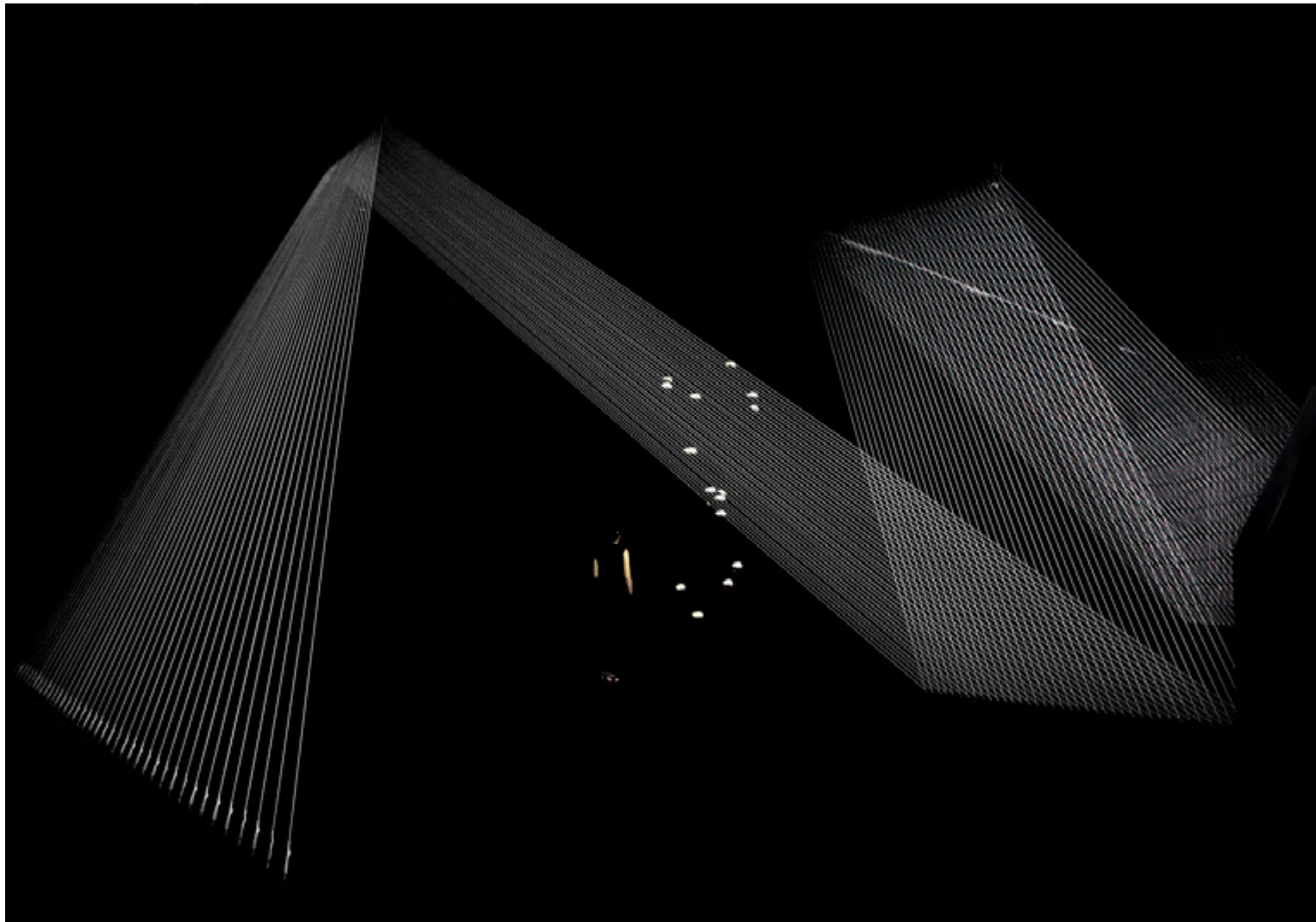
Rays (Orchestra), 2011
rubber, polyester and steel
variable dimensions
Photo © Guillaume Ziccarelli



Rays (Pilane), 2014
rubber, polyester and stainless steel
300 x 2200 x 200 cm
118 x 866 x 78 cm
exhibition view
Skulptur i Pilane, 2014
Pilane Heritage Museum,
Klovedal, Sweden
Photo © Peter Lennby

→
Rays (Lautner), 2013
rubber, polyester, steel
variable dimensions
Sheats-Goldstein Residence,
Los Angeles, USA
Photo © Joshua White





Rays (La Conservera), 2012
rubber, polyester and steel
variable dimensions
exhibition view
Rays, 2012
La Conservera, Murcia, Spain
Photo © Diane Arques

→
Model (Rays), 2014
47 x 114 x 47 cm
18 x 44 x 18 cm
lywood, carbon, wood,
rubber and polyester
exhibition view
*SIMPLE FORMS: Contemplating
Beauty*, 2015
Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan



**architectones (2012-14)
e studio venezia (2017)**

Architectones is the name given to the series of interventions carried out by Xavier Veilhan between 2012 and 2014 in seven iconic modernist buildings in the United States and Europe. His site-specific propositions established dialogues with the structures through sculptures, performances, music, light, and other atmospheric elements, altering the audience's perception of the space. The project led François Perrin, the curator of the seven developed exhibitions, to align Veilhan with other artists who have worked directly in architecture, such as Gordon Matta-Clark and Daniel Buren.



→
exhibition view
*Architectones, Sheats-Goldstein
Residence, 2013*
Sheats-Goldstein Residence,
Los Angeles, USA
Photo © Joshua White

→
exhibition view
*Architectones, Case Study
House n°21, 2012*
Case Study House n°21,
Los Angeles, USA
Photo © Joshua White

→→
exhibition view
*Architectones, Case Study
House n°21, 2012*
Case Study House n°21,
Los Angeles, USA
Photo © Joshua White







We can understand that the central element of this production is the audience's own body, as it is through their physical sensations that they perceive and relate to the space, its objects, and boundaries. For Veilhan, architecture is a great frame. "Everything we perceive optically is a frequency. Everything we hear is also a frequency—not the same, but nonetheless a frequency. Architecture physically delineates these frequencies. Artists in the gallery or museum have defined limits, also set by the walls. For me, there is a relationship between the visual domain and architecture, just as there is between the sonic domain and architecture, in which vibrations oscillate around."

exhibition view
*Architectones, Unité d'habitation
Cité Radieuse, MAMO Audi talents
awards, 2012*
Unité d'habitation Cité Radieuse
Marseille, France
Photo © Florian Kleinfenn

→
exhibition view
*Architectones, Unité d'habitation
Cité Radieuse, MAMO Audi talents
awards, 2012*
Unité d'habitation Cité Radieuse
Marseille, France
Photo © Florian Kleinfenn



The name of the project is a tribute to Kazimir Malevich, who coined the term *Arkhitektons* for his three-dimensional models of architectural structures in plaster, guided by the formal and conceptual concerns of Suprematism. The work began at the VDL Research House (1932/1963) by Richard Neutra, then occupied Case Study House No. 21 (1960) by Pierre Koenig, Sheats-Goldstein Residence (1963/1989) by John Lautner, MAMO Cité Radieuse (1952) by Le Corbusier, Saint-Bernadette du Banlay (1966) by Claude Parent and Paul Virilio, Melnikov House (1929) by the Russian artist and architect Konstantin Melnikov, and Barcelona Pavilion (1929-1986) by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. In 2015, the project was published by MOCA (Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles).



exhibition view
*Architectones, Sainte-Bernadette
du Banlay Church, 2013*
Sainte-Bernadette du Banlay
Church, Nevers, France
Photo © Diane Arques





Architectones synthesizes, but does not determine, the totality of Veilhan's possibilities of action at the intersection of art and architecture. Another example is the acclaimed project *Studio Venezia* (2017), which occupied the French pavilion during the 57th Venice Biennale. Using cardboard, Veilhan built a structure that served as a recording studio for musicians. Every day, an artist occupied the space, not to perform, but to engage in free experimentation, practice music, and, on successful occasions, recordings. Veilhan understood the structure as an activated form of sculpture. When deactivated, the physical and material aspects of the object remained; when functioning, it became a studio.

←

exhibition view

Architectones, Barcelona

Pavilion, 2014

Barcelona Pavilion,

Barcelona, Spain

Photo © Florian Kleinfenn

exhibition view

Studio Venezia, french pavilion,

57a Biennale di Venezia, 2017

Venezia, Italy

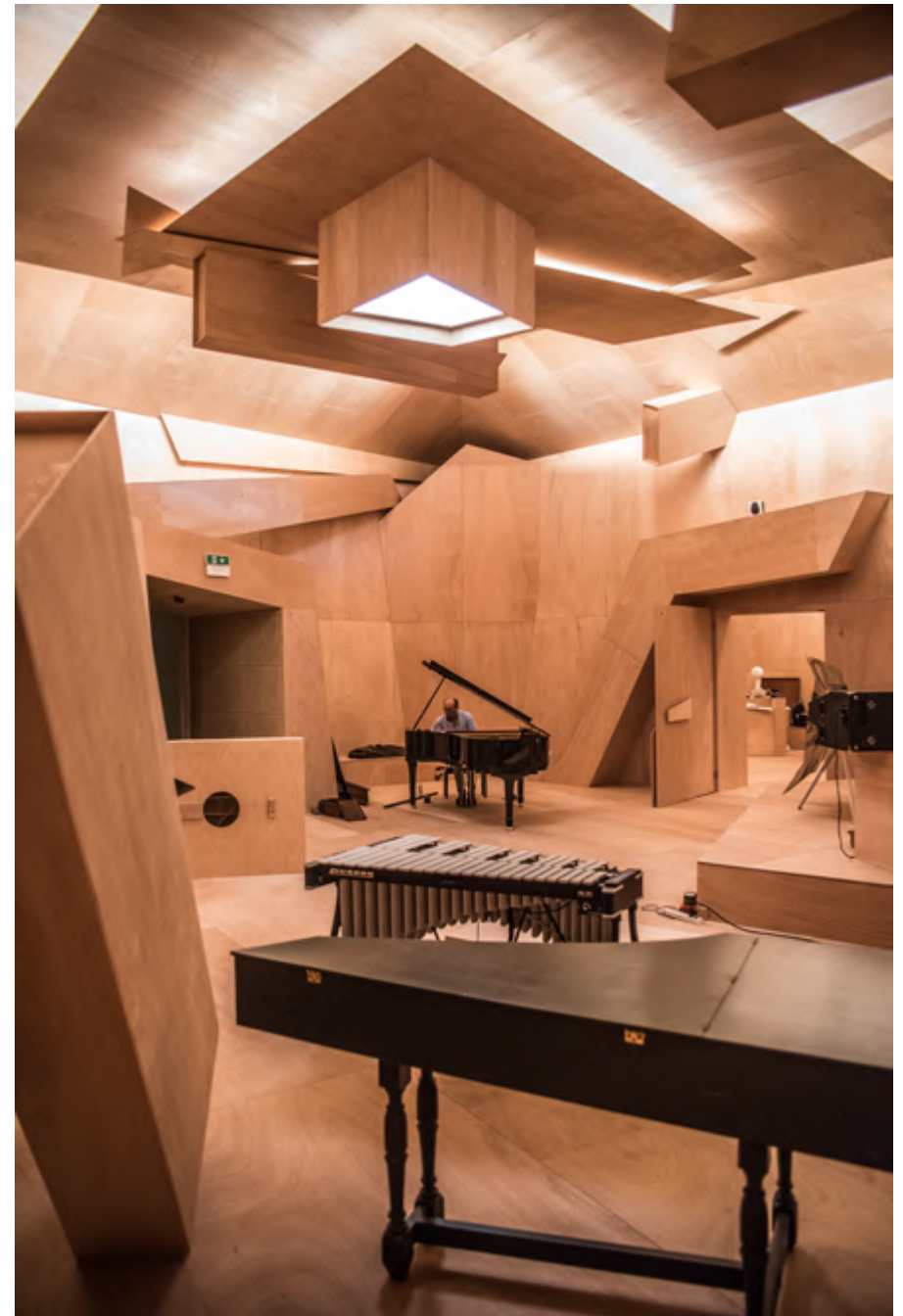
Photo © Giacomo Cosua



Studio Venezia also reveals another fundamental element of Veilhan's work: music. According to the artist: "Music plays a central role in some pieces, where I place a visual environment at the service of a sonic experience. In *Studio Venezia*, I explored the boundaries between different domains: exhibition, musical practice, architecture, and recording. These are transforming boundaries." The organicity of these boundaries leads Veilhan to compare his work to a garden "because a garden is a natural environment created artificially, where people are simultaneously inside and outside, like in a small landscape or a world unto itself."

←
exhibition view
Studio Venezia, french pavilion,
57a Biennale di Venezia, 2017
Veneza, Italy
Photo © Giacomo Cosua

exhibition view
Studio Venezia, french pavilion,
57a Biennale di Venezia, 2017
Veneza, Italy
Photo © Giacomo Cosua



drawings and monotypes

“Drawing is a very joyful experience for me. I am happy to sit at my drawing table, which is my usual place in the studio. I usually start working with an idea, but sometimes inspiration comes while I draw.”

—Xavier Veilhan

Buoy, 2020
ink on paper
42 x 29,7 cm
16 x 11,6 in
Photo © Kei Okano

→
exhibition view
Dessins de Confinement, 2022
Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville
de Paris, Paris, France
courtesy © Veilhan, ADAGP Paris,
2022 © Pierre Antoine





In March 2020, Xavier Veilhan began to create drawings daily, equipped with a ruler and compass. His compositions reference modernism, particularly Futurism and Op Art, focusing on the dynamics and optical effects of the lines traced by the artist. In total, he created over three hundred drawings, which showcase the processes of systematization, repetition, multiplication, and densification employed by Veilhan in his work. Many of these drawings were gathered in the solo exhibition *Dessins de confinement* (2022) at the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, France, as well as in the publication *The Drawing Center – Today's Special – Lockdown Drawings 2020-2021*, published by Les Presses du Réel in 2021.

Pulsion, 2020
ink on paper
42 x 29,7 cm
16 x 11,6 in
Photo © Guillaume Ziccarelli





The procedure developed by Veilhan during this period of daily drawing, followed by sharing them on social media, recalls the protocol executed the previous year in *Compulsory Figures* (2019), a performance in which he produced large-format drawings in front of an audience each night. We can see, in the visual grammar of Veilhan's drawings, the planning of elements that he usually incorporates into space, such as the lines from the Rays series or circles reminiscent of the spheres from his mobiles. By articulating primary shapes, lines, and colors, Veilhan creates visual models capable of synthesizing the ways in which the reality around us creates representations. In this process, Veilhan incorporates errors and surprises, allowing chance to play a role in the compositions.

Deep Blue, 2020
ink on paper
42 x 29,7 cm
16 x 11,6 in
Photo © Guillaume Ziccarelli

→
exhibition view
Dessins de Confinement, 2022
Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville
de Paris, Paris, France
courtesy © Veilhan, ADAGP Paris,
2022 © Pierre Antoine



models and prototypes

“Xavier Veilhan refers to the avant-gardes of the 20th century when he calls his ‘constructive exercises’ ‘models’—objects that experiment with space, without any specific purpose. For the neo-visual architects of the 1920s, such as Theo van Doesburg, models were a generic way to construct a ‘potentially viable’ space. The De Stijl models are delicate, modular, in a state of instability, just like Xavier Veilhan’s ‘models’. The question here is to go beyond a subjective approach to art. In this context, the model is an object without measurement or scale, allowing us to access another space-time dimension,” reveals curator Marie-Ange Brayer, concluding that: “Xavier Veilhan’s ‘model’ is, therefore, a morphogenetic object, devoid of its own status, a semantically rotating object, a ‘tensor’ of space-time that, like the morphogenetic facets of other works, shatters all representation and dislodges any possible rooting.”

exhibition view
Maquettes, 2014
FRAC Centre - Les Turbulences,
Orléans, France
Photo © Diane Arques





Maquettes
Xavier
Veilhan

19/09/2014
22/02/2015

films and performances

Veilhan's films consist of sequentially ordered images that reject a linear narrative, creating a "situation cinema." *Le film du Japon* (2002), the artist's first video work, already exemplifies this approach. The camera captures a series of actions performed by various individuals using different objects, prompting us to reflect on the status of sculpture in modern and contemporary art. Veilhan states that in many of his films, "my starting point is a list of ideas, sensations, references, and a piece of paper with some drawings. This allows me to have an overview of the context without narrative chronology. I can then create and organize the sequences in the order I prefer."



←

exhibition view
Maquettes, 2014
FRAC Centre - Les Turbulences,
Orléans, France
Photo © Diane Arques

Le film du Japon [detail], 2002
film, color, silent
8'49"

We can understand his videos as collages of different fragments that construct a narrative akin to memory, complete with lapses and shuffles. Ordered through editing in a controlled flow, they establish another sense of time, capable of tensioning chronological present through the arbitrariness of the succession of images. The artist's memories also play a fundamental role in constructing the scenes. "This relationship with memory interests me," Veilhan states. "If I dive into my childhood memories, I have flashes of places, landscapes, details, and so on." The past evoked can also pertain to an object. The *Dreyfus Affair* (2010), for example, was made from Méliès' film of the same name, shot more than a century earlier in 1899. Veilhan films only a few scenes, those corresponding to the two missing reels of the original film. "I wanted to restore those lost moments, just like the shaded areas of a restored fresco." However, Veilhan does not follow Méliès' aesthetic but proposes his own contemporary version of the narrative. The result is a hybrid film, created collaboratively, that brings together different times, highlighting their diverse strategies of representation.





Matching numbers [detail], 2015
high-definition film, color
14'25"
Photo © Stéphane Perche

In other cases, editing serves as a linking element between different spaces, as seen in *Matching Numbers* (2015), created at the invitation of the Paris Opera, where Veilhan connects, through his images, the Garnier and Bastille opera houses in Paris, exploring the links between both spaces, or in *Cruiser* (2005), where connected landscapes on screen evoke a contemplative view of nature. In *Vent Moderne* (2015), Veilhan addresses the life and work of architect Robert Mallet-Stevens. Regarding this last film, French director and screenwriter Laetitia Masson wrote:

“This is not a film. It is cinema.
There is no story. There are memories.
There is no linearity; only collisions
between periods.
There are no actors; only a collective.
There are no costumes. There are overalls,
blackouts, and cardboard.
There are no sets. There is architecture.”

→
Matching numbers [detail], 2015
high-definition film, color
14'25"
Photo © Stéphane Perche

→→
Vent Moderne [stills], 2015
high-definition film, black & white
27'38"
Photo © Stéphane Perche





Although Masson specifically refers to *Vent Moderne*, we can extend these principles to other films, such as *Keep the Brown* (2003), *Drumball* (2003), and *Radiator* (2008). “In my films, the camera narrates the action as it happens; it follows the action. There is very little zoom and movement because it is the action that prevails and guides the camera, not the other way around.” Veilhan’s videos are images in motion and of movements, as it is the action, gestures, rhythms, and dynamics of relationships between bodies and spaces that structure the narrative.



Drumball [detail], 2003
film, color, silent
8'33"



Radiator [detail], 2008
film, color
7'14"
Photo © Studio
Xavier Veilhan



One of the central aspects of Veilhan's practice is performance. The artist understands his works as sensory spaces that grant observers perceptual and reflective freedom, enabling them to become actors in this constructed scenario. Veilhan addresses the performativity of the audience within spaces and proposes actions for them. Often, these actions are associated with musical performances, highlighting the importance of sound in Veilhan's practice, as seen in *Val de Marne* (2006), which celebrated the anniversary of the MAC VAL, when the artist linked the museum's collection to a concert by Sébastien Tellier, a singer-songwriter who also collaborated with Veilhan in *Nuit Blanche - Ville nouvelle* (2006), in the gardens of the Hôtel de Ville of Paris.

Compulsory Figures, 2019
performance
Photo © Diane Arques

In *Aérolite* (2007), created during the *Airs de Paris* exhibition at the Centre Pompidou, Veilhan invited the band Air to perform for the audience in a setting he constructed with objects and structures activated by performers. In *Nuit Blanche-Boucle* (2006), black-clad ice skaters glided across a rink at the foot of the Arc de Triomphe, in the Louvre carousel at night, creating shapes with the tracings of their blades on the ice. *SYSTEMA OCCAM* (2013) is a visual proposition for Éliane Radigue's delicate harp compositions.

→
Performance for *OCCAM I*,
composition for Harpa
from Éliane Radigue, executed
by Rhodri Davis
exhibition view
Systema Occam, 2013
MAMO Cité Radieuse,
Marseille, France

→→
Boucle, 2006
collaborative performance
with Alexis Bertrand
exhibition view
Nuit Blanche, 2006
Carrousel du Louvre, Paris, France

Aerolite, 2007
performance
exhibition view
Airs de Paris, 2007
Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
Photo © Florian Kleinfenn









Pendule Dripping [detail], 2011
high-definition film, color, silent
2'30"



Ultimately, Veilhan's performances are complex propositions that involve architecture, sculpture, music, and action, leading us to observe how these different elements integrate into constructing an immersive experience in which, above all, our own bodies are called to be the protagonists. In this sense, the artist has an interdisciplinary practice, working in art direction for shows and fashion parades. Exemplary in this regard are the structures built for Chanel's fashion shows in 2022, including directing short videos featuring Charlotte Casiraghi with a soundtrack by Sébastien Tellier.

*Chanel, Charlotte Casiraghi
monte à cheval dans le décor
créé par Xavier Veilhan, 2022
Photo © Ola Rindal*







CHANEL Fall-Winter
2022/2023 Haute-Couture
Collection, July 5, 2022
Photo © CHANEL

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