

COMMUNIQUÉ

2017

ADRIEN VESCOVI

FOR THE MEMORY OF  
A LIVE TIME

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Exhibition in Résonance  
program of la Biennale d'Art  
Contemporain de Lyon 2017.

LA BIENNALE  
DE LYON  
RESONANCE

**Adrien Vescovi** (1981) is a French artist, currently based in Marseille and Les Gets, Haute Savoie. Over the last few years he has been developing a practice that is in perpetual transformation, to the rhythm of a gentle revolution, taking advice from *Du bon usage de la lenteur* (The correct use of slowness) \*. His occupations and gestures mix the fields of painting and handcrafted textile work. His abstract paintings can be read as allegories of the landscape<sup>3</sup>. Composed and assembled from fabric that has often been scavenged, they are infused and dyed with organic or chemical dyes that provide him with the elements, nature or the urban environment.

**In Néon, he will be setting up his cabin – studio. We will see in particular some shots of the previous season, transformed by a long work of June to August 2017 in the Alps.**

His recent solo exhibitions include : *Mnemonics* at the Galerie Ceysson & Bénétière (Saint-Etienne, FR) and *Turn off the lights* at the Instituto Francés of América Latina (Mexico DF, MX). His work has also been shown in group exhibitions, notably in 2016 at the La Villa du Parc, Centre d'Art (Annemasse, FR), at the Galerie Praz Delavaladde (Paris, FR), at La Galerie, Centre d'Art Contemporain (Noisy-le-sec, FR) and the Kunsthall Charlottenborgh (Copenhagen, D). He is currently in a residency at Le Cyclop (Milly La Forêt, FR).

<http://adrienvescovi.tumblr.com/>

\*Pierre Sansot, *Du bon usage de la lenteur*, Payot - 2000



Installation, June 2017

Le Cylcop de Jean Tinguely,  
Milly-la-Forêt, FR

Work in progress

Metal, wood, strap / Vegetal  
dye, random dyed, sunwhitened

© Adrien Vescovi

Jung writes in *On the Method of Dream Interpretation* that “the dream series is a kind of monologue taking place under the cover of consciousness. This monologue is heard, so to speak, in the dream, and sinks down during the periods when we are awake. But in a way the monologue never ends. We are quite probably dreaming all the time, but consciousness makes so much noise that we no longer hear the dream when awake.»

A twentieth century philosopher once thought that the larval state and senility were both wonderful things because each of them, the larva and the senile, embody the temporality of the power of transformation. He also said that there where repetition takes place, is not so much a perpetual reference to the previous page, but is rather an exercise, a political practice of transformation, a process of production, a theory of identity itself\*!

Bruno Latour (also a philosopher, among other things) in 1973, during a symposium, said this about the writing of Charles Peguy: «... what is natural is reproduced; what is uninteresting passes and does not remain;

what is false is rehashed; what is essential is repeated. What is important remains present and therefore is repeated continually so as not to pass, and indeed is renewed differently so as not to be rehashed. It is the whole difference between the extensive history dear to historians, which spreads out and is differentiated into a dust of events that ultimately gives the impression of a dull identity, and the intensive history of Clio, which constantly renews an original event – original not because it comes from another time, but because it is from now.»\*\*

Adrien Vescovi, during a conversation, told me that he was concerned with the notion of intensity: «being intense»... did he too want to talk about intensive history, about perpetual reincarnation?! That of representation, of the pictorial gesture for example?

When I was searching for the meaning of the title that he proposed for his *For The Memory Of a Live Time* exhibition, the words Memory and Live intuitively led me to the image of the Still Life, to the Vanity, thus connecting it to the history of painting, this did not seem to me to be too incongruous.

Google-translation also proposed «For the memory of a live time»: in short, a record of the present. A few days later, he remembered that this sentence, anchored in his memory (or in a notebook), comes from a film. He also sent me a screenshot of his own google-translation: «for the memory of a lifetime»

### **The intensive history of Clio<sup>1</sup>, of Adrien and of painting**

Adrien Vescovi (1981) is a French artist, currently based in Marseille and Les Gets, Haute Savoie. Over the last few years he has been developing a practice that is in perpetual transformation, to the rhythm of a gentle revolution, taking advice from *Du bon usage de la lenteur* (The correct use of slowness)<sup>2</sup>. His occupations and gestures mix the fields of painting and handcrafted textile work. His abstract paintings can be read as allegories of the landscape<sup>3</sup>. Composed and assembled from fabric that has often been scavenged, they are infused and dyed with organic or chemical dyes that provide him with the elements, nature or the urban environment.

«At first my fabrics were rough. One day I left two large canvases outside the Parisian studio where I was working at time, and they faded, creating a pattern, naturally, slowly. After creating several series of work in Paris, I decided to move into the former carpentry workshop of my grandfather in the Alps, for the sun, because the ultraviolet light is more powerful there, so the process is accelerated. In my second session of work there, it was autumn: the trees were yellow, red and orange: it was beautiful. It had been a long time since I had spent the autumn in the mountains. This is how I started the decoctions: like a very simple idea of making make «juices» from this landscape.»<sup>4</sup>

Over time Adrien Vescovi tries to tame chance. His gestures are a series of rituals like so many movements of memory, transmitting the thrill of being and doing. His fabrics dipped in decoctions<sup>5</sup> or sprayed with them, were installed on the facade of his studio in the mountains, on the roofs or the facade of an art center, in the middle of a city or suburban area, in the middle of a forest too, and according to a set of experimental protocols, they load and unload information, sometimes in advance, over periods ranging from 3 to 6 months.

As Charlotte Limonne so rightly puts it: «A delicate balance between letting go and working with method seems to be in constant negotiation, and this upsets what is at stake in the painter's trade. We could also characterize this atmospheric equilibrium, because nothing seems more unstable than air and its vapors, as forming, for the ancients, a zone of turbulence between the earth and the ether. As a consequence, the works of Adrien Vescovi are windows wherein the pictorial tradition of the landscape is dissolved in favor of a vision – or, to be more accurate, of a sensation – of the renewed external world, attentive to questions of time span and of climate»<sup>6</sup>.

The artist also offers his workshop to the exhibition. He makes it so that the street, the forest and the art center all become this workshop, to the extent that each one of these places becomes an exhibition space. He seems in this way to expose the fabrics, in both a gesture and a design, to the weather and to the view of others. And the work is here, in this double exhibition of a work in progress, delivered formless, in a «larval state» as Gilles Deleuze<sup>7</sup> might say. Here it symbolizes this random power of transformation, interacting with a landscape

and a given environment that have been chosen by the artist. It establishes the basis for its identity and that of its author in the material of time, in complete permeability with the intensity of the elements and entities that surround it.

Adrien Vescovi practices the asceticism of repetition as a process of production, exercise and political practice of transformation. When the work is shaped and finished, it becomes a «marvelous architecture» sheltering the memory of an instant of primordial and ancestral resistance: the experience of otherness, of what is outside of oneself, in all slowness.

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After a short summer break Adrien Vescovi sent me two excerpts from his beach reading, *Slowness* by Milan Kundera (1996).

- p. 41: «By slowing the course of their night, by dividing it into different stages, each separate from the next, Madame de T. has succeeded in giving the small span of time accorded them the semblance of

a marvelous little architecture, of a form. Imposing form on a period of time is what beauty demands, but so does memory. For what is formless cannot be grasped, or committed to memory. Conceiving their encounter as a form was especially precious for them, since their night was to have no tomorrow and could be repeated only through recollection. There is a secret bond between slowness and memory, between speed and forgetting.”

- p. 135: «When I described Madame de T.'s night, I recalled the well-known equation from one of the first chapters of the textbook of existential mathematics: the degree of speed is directly proportional to the intensity of forgetting. From that equation we can deduce various corollaries, for instance this one: our period s given over to the demon of speed, and that is the reason it so easily forgets its own self. Now I would reverse that statement and say: our period is obsessed by the desire to forget, and it is to fulfill that desire that it gives over to the demon of speed; it picks up the pace to show us that it no longer wishes to be remembered; that it is tired of itself; sick of itself; that it wants to blow out the tiny trembling flame of memory»

To finish, let me summon the guru Kuato, “You are what you do. A man is defined by his acts and not by his memories!”<sup>8</sup>.

Julie Rodriguez-Malti, 2017. Translation : Derek Byrne, 2017.

notes :

\* Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and repetition*, CIP Group - 1968. Listen also to: Répétition, Les chemins de la philosophie, France Culture. <https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/les-nouveaux-chemins-de-la-connaissance/variations-sur-la-repetition-34-deleuze-difference>

\*\* *Les raisons profondes du style répétitif de Péguy*, in Péguy Ecrivain, Colloque du Centenaire, Klincksieck, Paris, 1973. Bruno Latour (1947) is a philosopher, and also an anthropologist and sociologist. Info symposium

1 “History is essentially longitudinal, memory is essentially vertical. History essentially consists of, being within the event, above all not moving outside of it, of staying there, and ascending within it. Memory and history form a right angle. History is parallel to memory, while memory is central and axial.” *Clio. Dialogue de l’histoire et de l’âme païenne*, III, p. 117, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade by Robert Burac: Charles Péguy, *Œuvres en prose complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987-1992).

2 Pierre Sansot, *Du bon usage de la lenteur*, Payot – 2000.

3 Phrase borrowed from a communiqué for Le Cyclop by Jean Tinguely, Milly La Forêt, residency of Adrien Vescovi from April to September, 2017.

4 Interview with Adrien Vescovi and Dorothé Dupuis, Mexico City, September 16th, 2016.

5 “The main protagonist of the plant kingdom, chlorophyll has its source in the absorption of the red and blue components of light that it transforms into vital energy. Indeed it is the only thing able to – not without a certain dose of magic – transform the ordinary encounter of a cyan and a magenta in watery mint green. This natural element is today one of the main ingredients of the mixtures, decoctions and other half paints of Adrien Vescovi. Through a procedure that is close to that of dying, he develops the active principles of a substance by boiling a liquid and then undertaking the progressive coloring of his canvasses.” *La Forêt à perdre la raison*, Arlène Berceliot Courtin, May, 2016.

6 Charlotte Limone, *Toile de peintre ou toile de tente ? À propos des toiles teintées de Adrien Vescovi* – 2017.

7 cf note \*

8 The title of the exhibition and this quote come from *Total Recall*, a film by Paul Verhoven, 1990.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJEllFk3Hqw&ab\\_channel=garak0410](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJEllFk3Hqw&ab_channel=garak0410)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlkKYpnFu5o>

Ps: the translation “For The Memory Of a Live Time” (actually: For The Memory Of a Life Time) proposed by the French version of the film is “Offer yourself a memory for life!”



fig. 1

fig. 1 : Untitled, 2017 -  
Watercolor on paper -  
36x48cm



fig. 2

fig. 2 : **Helena**, 2017 -  
vegetal dye, random dyed,  
sunwhitened - 262x173cm -  
Exhibition view of *Back to*  
*the peinture*, La Station,  
Nice, FR, 2017.



fig. 3

fig. 3 : **The Wall**, 2016 - cotton, steel cable, vegetal dye - 493x376cm - Studo view, La Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, 2016.

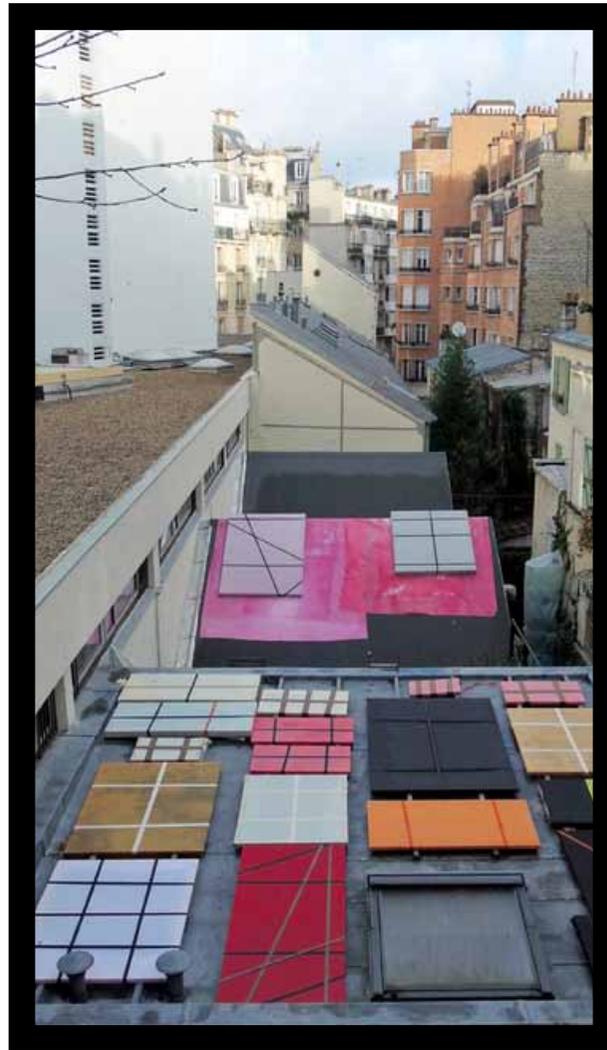


fig. 4

fig. 4 : Studo view, Passage de Cloys, Paris, 2014.

fig. 5 : **Chunking, Step 2**, 2016 - cotton, vegetal



fig. 5

dye, wood, stone - Variable dimensions - Exhibition view, La Villa du parc, Annemasse, 2016.

fig. 6 : **Chunking**,



fig. 6

2016 - natural cotton, natural dye, random dyed, sunwhitened - 1500x700 cm - Exhibition view, La Villa du parc, Annemasse, 2016.



fig. 7

fig. 7 : **Sewcolors**  
**DSCN3246**, 2016 - cotton  
 textile, wood, vegetal  
 dye, sun-whitened -  
 329x203cm - Exhibition  
 view of *Sequoia Dream*,

La Galerie, Noisy-le-sec,  
 2016

fig. 8 : **Back to Mex**  
**DSCN1721**, 2017 - cotton,  
 steel cable, vegetal



fig. 8

dye - 280x70cm - Vue  
 d'atelier, La Cité  
 Internationale des Arts,  
 Paris, 2017.

fig. 9 : **CEFRAN**, 2014 -

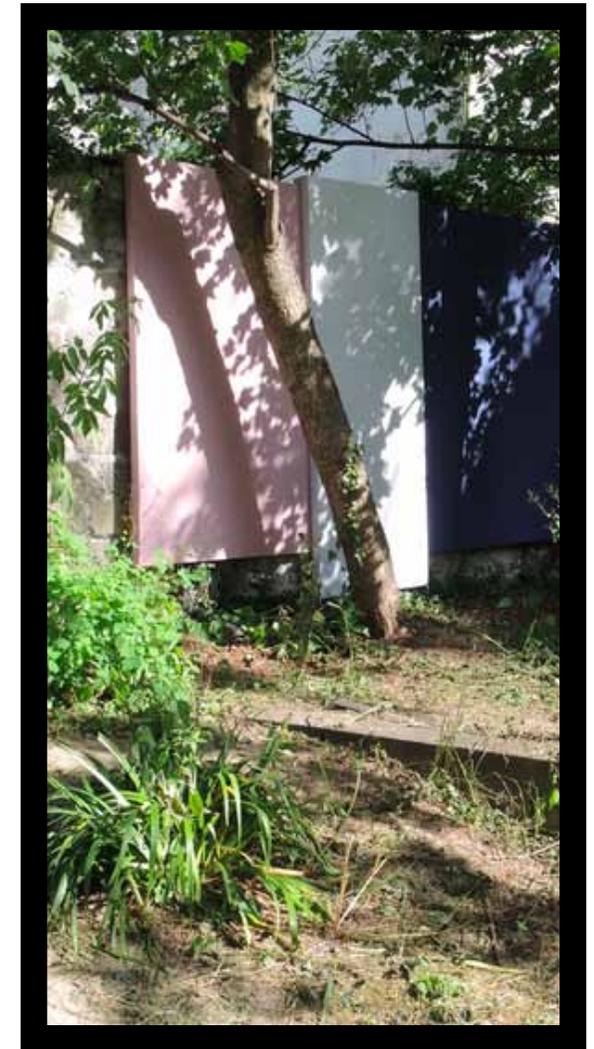


fig. 9

wood, natural cotton - 540  
 x 240 cm - Exhibition  
 view of *Open Mind*, Cité  
 des Internationale Arts,  
 Paris.

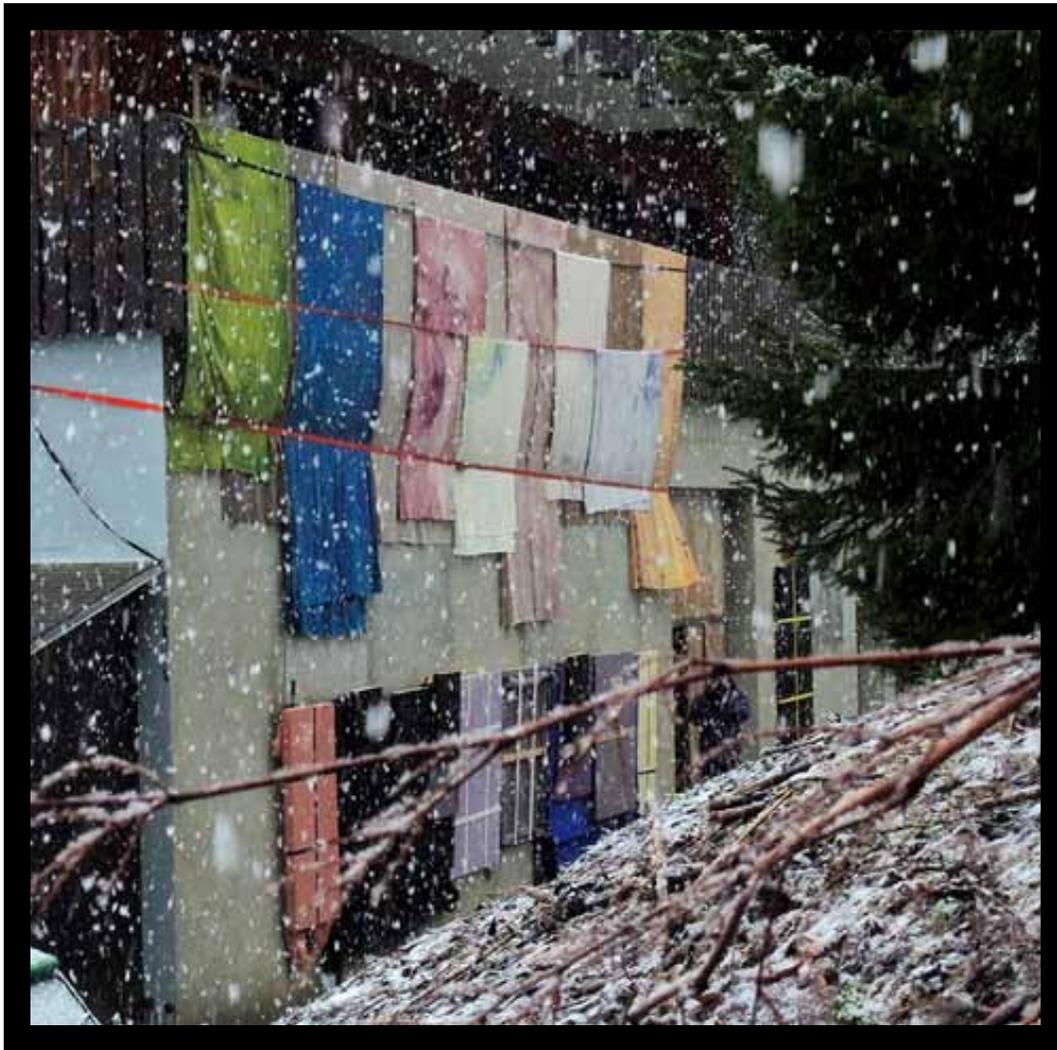


fig. 10

fig. 10 : Studio view, Les Gets, April 2015.



fig. 11

fig. 11 : Studio view, Les Gets, January 2017.



fig. 12

fig. 12 : Studio view, Les Gets, April 2015.

The exposure like a way of searching and browsing, Néon shows since March 2000 an eclectic program, supporting the multiplicity of the debates that are generated by artists projects for the majority is cutting-edge.



**NEON**

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**Open  
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3pm to 7pm**

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