

Paris Photo 2021: Highlights

by ANNA SANSOM



 **View Gallery**
14 Photos



Following a lively weekend of artist talks, gallery shows and programmes, Anna Sansom reflects on just some of the standout moments

The 24th edition of [Paris Photo](#) (11 – 14 November) at the Grand Palais Éphémère this weekend showed how contemporary photographers are increasingly revisiting older analogue processes and incorporating them into their work. It also reveals how greater visibility is being given to women photographers who are seeking to stretch the boundaries of the medium. The fair was held in a temporary structure on the Champs-de-Mars, near the Eiffel Tower, during the renovation of its usual home of Grand Palais. After the cancellation of the physical fair last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the electric atmosphere around the event was felt throughout.

Noémie Goudal at [Galerie Les filles du Calvaire](#) (Paris)

Noémie Goudal is one of several young French artists exploring new image-making techniques. Born in 1984, she studied at the Royal College of Arts and Central Saint Martins and has exhibited at The Photographers Gallery in London and the Finnish Museum of Photography, among other venues. Unveiled at Paris Photo are two new large-scale works, *Phoenix Atlantica IV* and *VI*, priced at €24,000, of deconstructed palm trees. After photographing the trees in Spain at night with artificial light, Goudal printed the images and cut them into strips. She then installed the strips back into the landscape and rephotographed the scene to make the final image. Leaving clues to her process, Goudal has left the clips used to attach the strips visible at the edges of the photograph. The overall effect is similar to that of peering at a tree through a blind whilst offering a complex fragmentation.

noemiegoudal.com





Phoenix Atlantica VI, 2021 © Noemie Goudal, Galerie Les Filles du Calvaire.

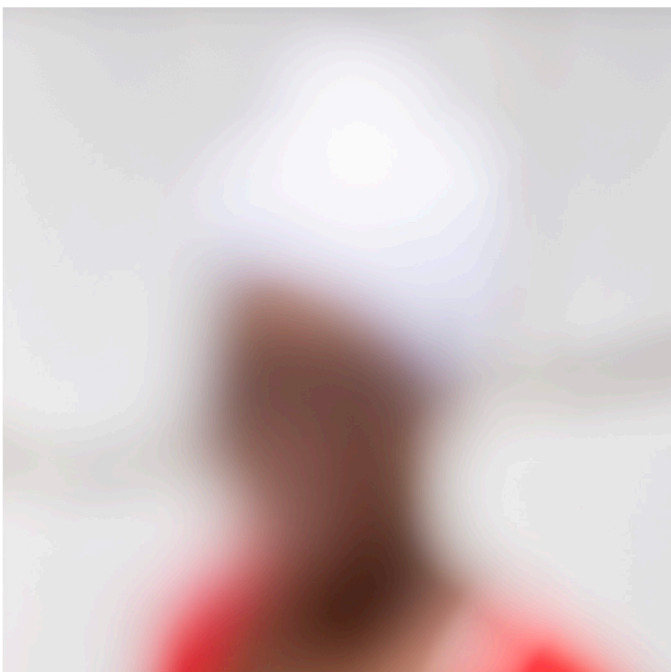


Phoenix Atlantica IV, 2021 © Noemie Goudal, Galerie Les Filles du Calvaire.

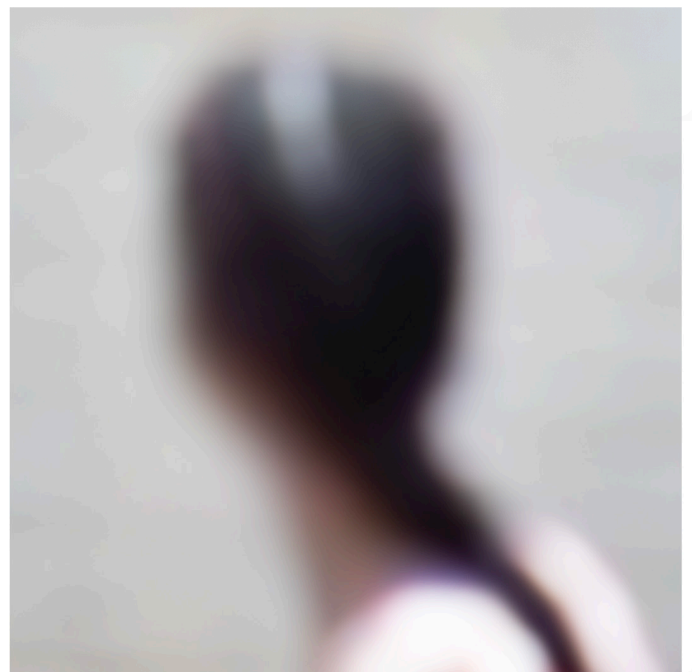
Mame-Diarra Niang at [Stevenson](#) (Cape Town and Johannesburg)

Mama-Diarra Niang is a self-taught artist based in Paris who grew up between France, Senegal and the Ivory Coast. Her work has been presented at the Dakar Biennale and New York's Walther Collection. On view are out-of-focus portraits, priced at €6,000 – €7,800, at the interface of figuration and abstraction. One of them has been acquired by the CNAP, which manages France's national contemporary art collection. During the pandemic lockdowns, Niang, 39, began "travelling online" and took photographs of her screen. "My photographs became peopled because I had a desire to return to portraiture and encounters," she says. "It was during the time of [the murder of] George Floyd when there was a feeling of the Black body not feeling present, visible or valid in public space." The obliteration of each individual's face and identity evokes this sense of non-visibility that Niang calls, "the soft abstraction of the Black body". The blurriness also refers to the lack of knowledge surrounding her father's ancestry and the oblivion of memory.

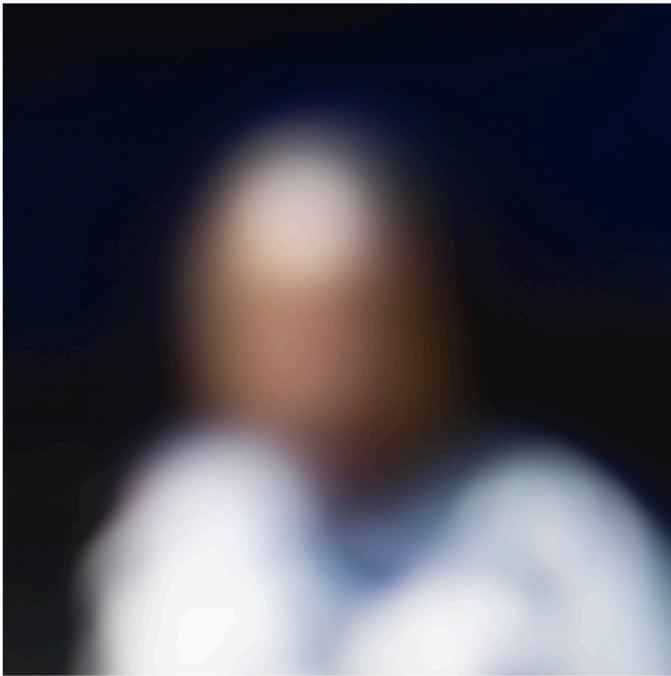
mamediarraniang.com



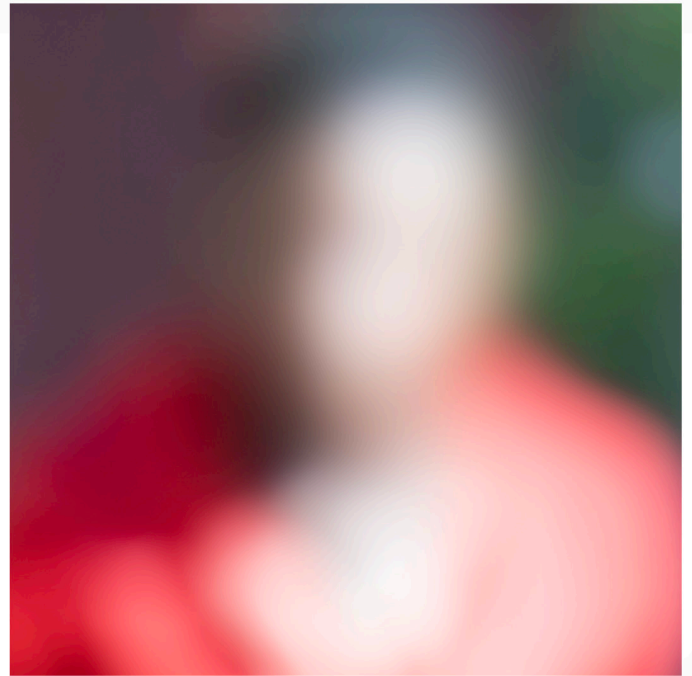
Comme sur le point de devenir © Mame-Diarra Niang, Stevenson



Ce qui monte © Mame-Diarra Niang, Stevenson



Qui doit être vu © Mame-Diarra Niang, Stevenson



Ce qui n'est pas encore là et ce qui a disparu © Mame-Diarra Niang, Stevenson

Gilles Lorin at Jörg Maass Kunsthandel (Berlin)

A former Asian art and antiques dealer, Gilles Lorin is a French photographer who revisits older photographic processes, such as the cyanotype and platinum palladium prints, in novel ways. What distinguishes Lorin's work is how he uses gold leaf and alloys for each separate element to create a unique colour palette and achieve a certain aesthetic. Each meticulous piece takes about a month to make.

Three works from his series *Les Allégories d'Igor* – allegorical images pertaining to his alter-ego – were on display at the Berlin-based Jörg Maass Kunsthandel booth this year. In 'L'Importance de Vivre', a memento mori (rendered in gold leaf and silver) sits on the book that was on his mother's bedside table when she passed away. Next to it is the watch that she gave him six months earlier. "It's an evolution of the vanitas in the history of art but is more personal," he says. "I asked myself how I could make it in colour without resorting to digital techniques and decided to use gold leaf with alloys."

gilleslorin.com/



Les Adieux d'un sex symbol, from the series *Les Allégories d'Igor*, 2019 © Gilles Lorin.



L'Importance de Vivre, from the series *Les Allégories d'Igor*, 2019 © Gilles Lorin



Food Inc., from the series *Les Allégories d'Igor*, 2019 © Gilles Lorin.

Baptiste Rabichon and Fabrice Laroche at [Galerie Binome](#) (Paris)

The French duo Baptiste Rabichon and Fabrice Laroche also revisit early photographic processes in their work to disrupt the canon of photography. For their series, *Les intermittences du coeur* (2019), they made chromogenic prints from original autochromes. Patented by the Lumière brothers in France in 1903, the autochrome process enables an image to be created on a glass plate covered in microscopic potato starch grains dyed red-orange, blue-violet and green. The plate would be developed using reversal chemistry, converting the image from negative to positive. To make *Boulogne le jardin japonais 1911*, Rabichon and Laroche projected an early 20th century autochrome of a Japanese garden in Boulogne-Billancourt near Paris onto a wall. Next, they rephotographed part of the projection.

As well as referencing the first commercially available colour process in the history of photography, the image reminds us of the Impressionism and Pointillism art movements. The duo have left the indicators of the autochrome around the border, achieving the result of an intriguing, arresting work.

rabichon.com

fabricelaroche.com



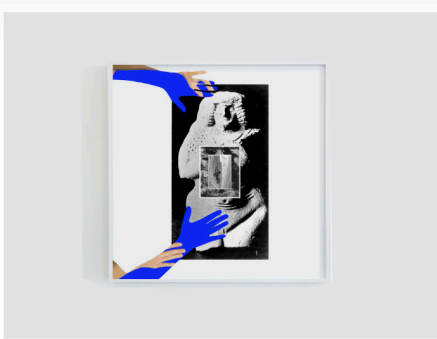
Baptiste Rabichon & Fabrice Laroche, *Boulogne le jardin japonais 1911*, série *Les intermittences du coeur*, 2019, courtesy Galerie Binome
épreuve chromogène par contact d'après autochrome (circa 1910-17) des jardins d'Albert Kahn à Boulogne-Billancourt, collection de Jeanne
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Ira Lombardía at [Galería Alarcón Criado](#) (Seville) in the Curiosa section

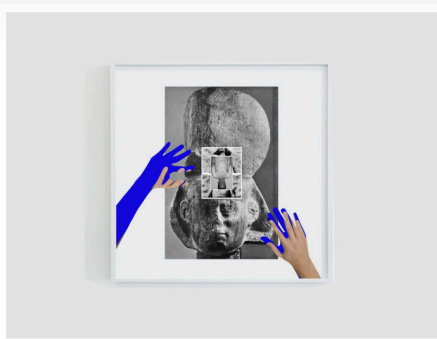
Ira Lombardía is a Spanish, New York-based interdisciplinary artist whose work featured in the Curiosa sector. Curated by Shoair Mavlian, director of Photoworks, it is the section of the fair that is dedicated to spotlighting emerging artists from 20 galleries. She currently has a solo show, titled *Void*, at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, which reflects on the production, distribution and consumption of images. Black-and-white images of classical and historical art and archaeology are superposed with other photographs. Flesh and blue-toned hands at the edges of each work indicate human interaction and manipulation relating to the status of a photograph.

But there's something else at play too. Lombardía has created an app, available to download by scanning a QR code, that enables the viewer to replace the blue shapes with images on their phone. Anyone can therefore customise the work through this bridging of the classical and the digital.

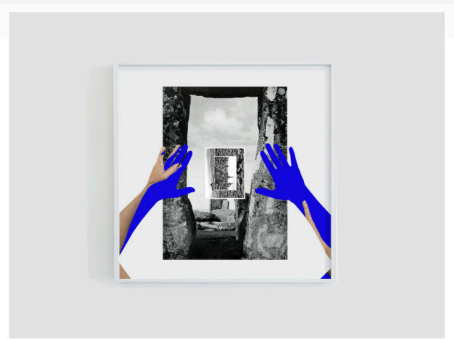
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