

Mysticolithic

contemporary paleofictions

16.07-20.07.2025

Opium Philosophy X DOC

26 rue du Docteur Potain, Paris, 19e arrondissement

Artists : JingXian Zhang, Mari Vautrin, Soline Parra, Pauline Malis, Oscar Jamois, Gabriel Grison Gamet, Elio Cuilleron - Curation : Audrey Gambier & Elio Cuilleron - Assitant curators : Albane Liebel & Zola Duget - Graphic Design : Diego Alvarez.







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The exhibition "*Mysticolithic*" gathered seven artists around the theme of *Ruins*, chosen by *Opium Philosophy* for its 2025 edition. All were invited to display "*contemporary paleofictions*", a neologism we coined to designate imaginary brownfields with fractioned aesthetics throughout which the viewers were led to a time travel. *DOC* generously hosted this project and on this occasion fostered the emergence of a collaborative process. This interactive and underground *modus operandi* was adopted as a reaction to general systemic threats and the progressive decline of state support of the young contemporary art scene in France.

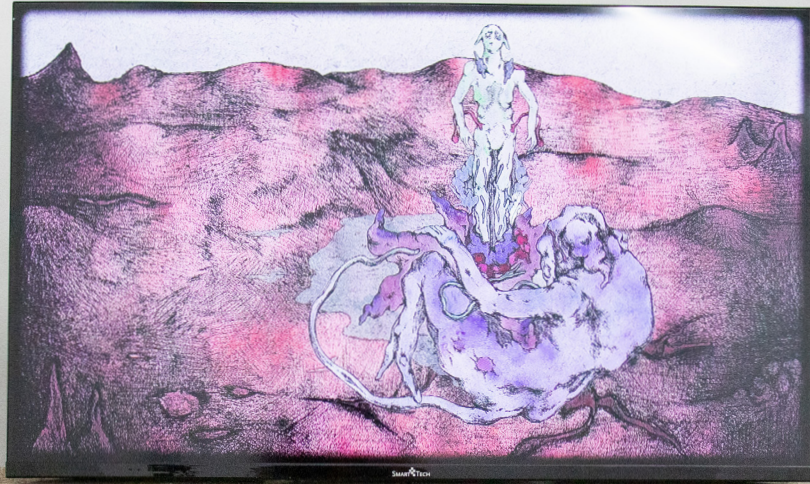
The purpose here was neither to offer a history of ruins nor a dialogue between archaeology and contemporary art. These subjects are amply explored in French historiography. For instance in *Vertige des temps*, a collective book directed by Michaël Jasmin and Audrey Norcia or in the works of Alain Schnapp and notably in the exhibition "*Forms of the Ruin*", at *Lyon's Museum of Fine Arts*, both of which date back to 2024. In our exhibition, we offered time and space for young artists whose effervescent practice is already well assured. The aim of "*Mysticolithic*" was to present developing visions that paradoxically reveal a taste for deliquescence. Each person on show carried out singular research about what Alois Riegl called "*the perception of the necessary cycle of genesis and disparition*". This shared motif generated fictions with troubled temporalities. Each work we collectively chose propels the spectators into bastardized times. The intent of this journey was also to unveil some of the most current reflections around time. All are rewritings of a very ancient topic but each is particularly situated and rooted into specific narratives.

The role of fiction inside discourses about art is omnipresent and betrays its topical dimension throughout the ages. In his *Naturalis Historia*, achieved around AD 77, Pliny the Elder favoured anecdotes inside his rhetorical framework, thus establishing commonplaces about creative forms and their mimetic power. In this collective show, each of the seven propositions contains a revelation. In its etymological meaning, this word denotes reversal and intensity. This substantive derive from the Latin prefix *re*, indicating reiteration, and *velare*, signifying "*to veil*", "*to cover*" or "*to hide*". Therefore, the original meaning of this word invites us to put into perspective a network of complex connections between what is hidden and what is unmasked, bringing us back to the essence of the viewer's engagement with the artworks. The religious connotation of mysticism suggests possibilities for the artists to invent new rituals and alternative cults. "*Mystico*", in the title of this exhibition, emphasises the desire to reveal new artists and their practices. "*Lithic*", from ancient greek *lithos*, refers to stones which are unifying objects, conveying broken temporalities, exceeding the scale of human life. The pieces exhibited here orientate us towards fascinating transcendental fictions.



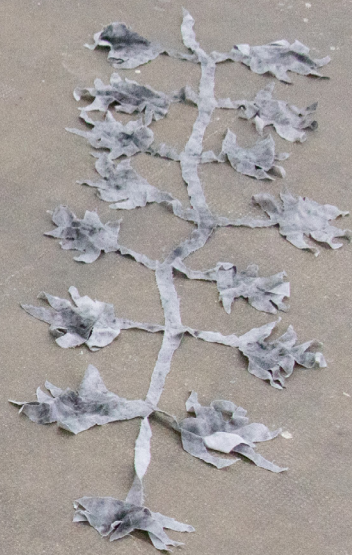




















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Page 1, (on the left), Diego Alvarez, *Poster for the exhibition (2025)*, serigraphy, variable sizes.

Page 2, Overview.

Page 3, (on the right) Elio Cuilleron, *You are as Sexy as a Goddess (2025)*, from a series of ten glazed earthenware skulls, modular installation, variable sizes.

Page 4, Overview.

Page 5, Installation of Diego Alvarez's *Posters for the exhibition (2025)*, serigraphy, variable sizes.

Page 6, Soline Parra, *Untitled-Passages (2024)*, charcoal on canva, 130 x 80 cm.

Page 7, Oscar Jamois, *Les Fleurs Invisibles/Invisible Flowers (2023)*, handrawn animated film and song by April March, 3'03.

Page 8, Gabriel Grison Gamet, *Pile of Memories (2024)*, installation, photographs printed on paving stones, variable sizes.

Page 9, Overview.

Page 10, Pauline Malis, *Untitled-Organic Silhouettes (2023)*, modular installation, charcoal on tissue, 4 pieces, 200 x 50 cm each.

Page 10, JingXian Zhang, *Three Pigs (2024)*, installation of three sculptures, 42 x 42 x 150 cm each, various materials.

Page 11, Mari Vautrin, *Tactile Pavings (2024-2025)*, glazed terracotta, 24 pieces, 6 x 6 x 1,5 cm each.

Page 12, Elio Cuilleron, *You are as Sexy as a Goddess (2025)*, from a series of ten glazed earthenware skulls, modular installation, variable sizes.

Page 13, *Ibid.* (backside).