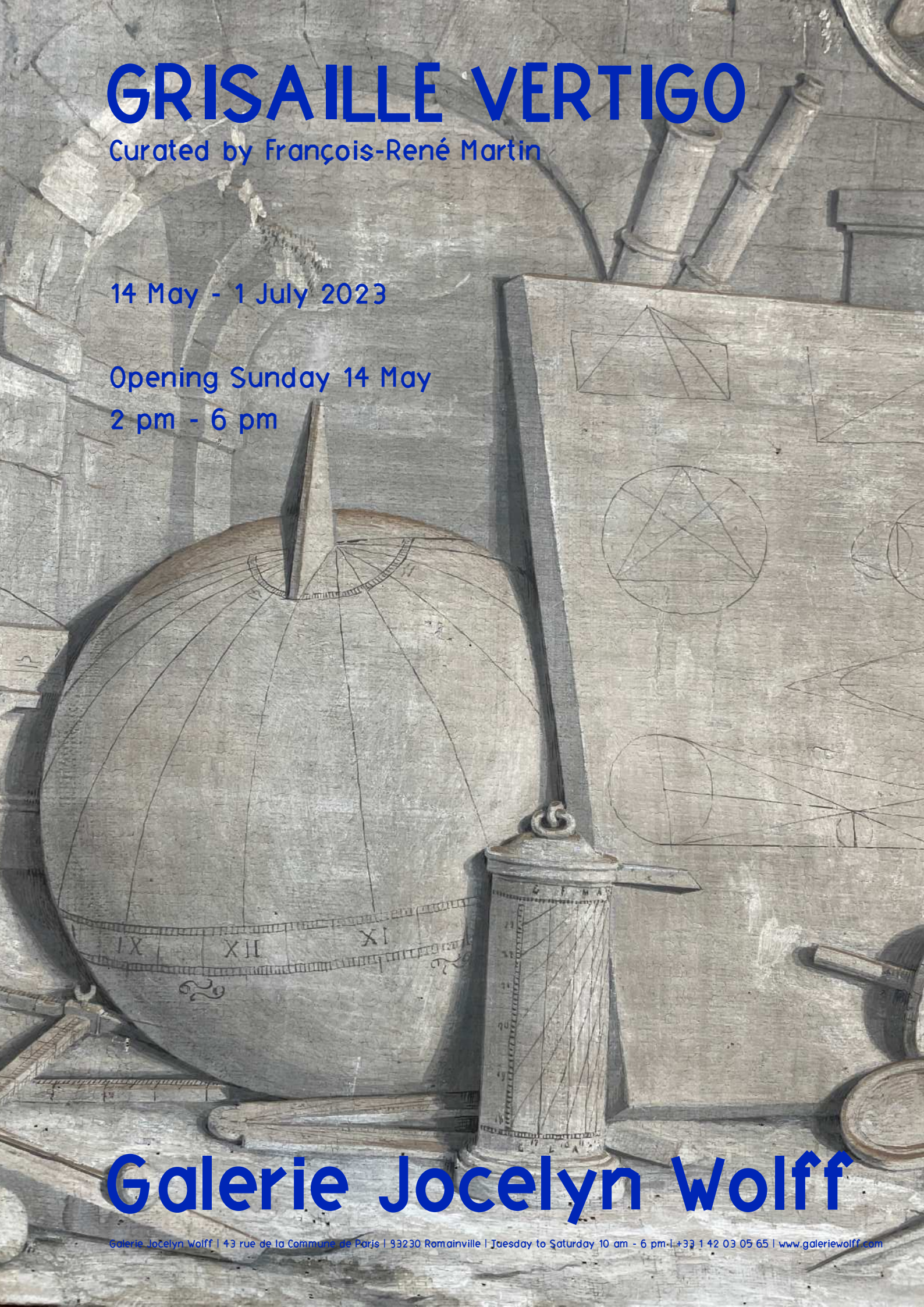


# GRISAILLE VERTIGO

Curated by François-René Martin

14 May - 1 July 2023

Opening Sunday 14 May
2 pm - 6 pm

# Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

Galerie Jocelyn Wolff | 43 rue de la Commune de Paris | 93230 Romainville | Tuesday to Saturday 10 am - 6 pm | +33 1 42 03 05 65 | www.galeriewolff.com

# AN INTRODUCTION
# by JOCELYN WOLFF

*Grisaille* is the title of a painting by Miriam Cahn that was the inspiration for this project. At first glance, it may seem singular for an artist who does not claim to be *historically inscribed* in her artistic positioning; from memory, I do not know of any other title that references *tradition* in this artist's work, other than a rather theoretical allusion to the "classical" register.

Despite being little inclined to reference the great masters, Miriam Cahn has a clear interest in Matthias Grünewald: he appears in our conversations, and of course in her library, which is otherwise very contemporary and literary. Altarpiece art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was often characterised by the presence of trompe l'oeil figures in grisaille on the outer panels, as in the case of Matthias Grünewald's panels kept in the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Karlsruhe.

From museums to exhibitions, lovers of Western art are inevitably confronted with numerous altarpieces presented with their panels open: it is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to read the outer panels in grisaille, and yet one can discern their ghostly presence, make the connection with the later developments of the technique, and feed our imagination.

With the example of Miriam Cahn, or Gerhard Richter in his 1960s series, might there be a form of *unconscious-grisaille* operating in contemporary art, perhaps difficult to identify because it is embedded in a somewhat hackneyed painting/photography conversation?

As a specialist of both the history of art and Matthias Grünewald, but also deeply attached to the most contemporary forms of creation and to the artistic future of his students at the École des Beaux-Arts, François-René Martin seemed to me to be in a position to provide some answers to this question. To this end, he benefited from the support of Hélène Meisel in terms of research, and the assistance of three artists who were asked to take part in the exercise: Marc Desgrandchamps, Francisco Tropa and Achim Reichert (for the graphic design).

With *Grisaille Vertigo*, we are therefore continuing our work of exploration and research, as a direct extension of the *L'Art d'Eugène Carrière* exhibition (curated by Serge Lemoine), a master of brunaille, but also in resonance with our exhibition work comparing archaeology and contemporary art, which began many years ago.

With a bit of luck, a weather announcement on the radio on the morning of a day dominated by *grisaille* will immediately take us on a journey through the vertigo of art history and its multiple inter-temporal connection points.

# GRISAILLE VERTIGO

**The "Grisaille Vertigo" exhibition, an adventurous exploration spanning the period between the 16th to 21st centuries, brings together some forty works made in this distinct chromatic mode**, which filters reality through nuanced shades of grey. Originally practiced as a "chromatic fast" during Lent, then widely developed on the exterior panels of altarpieces, the term 'grisaille' was first used to refer to a "monochrome painting in shades of grey, giving the illusion of sculpted relief." But over the centuries, this most adroit trompe l'oeil went on to serve a multitude of secular applications, linked to the engraved reproduction of images, then to their photographic and cinematographic existence. "Grisaille Vertigo" both celebrates these mutations and explores how a work of grisaille may also transform into a genuine **meta-grisaille**.

Without claiming to be exhaustive, the exhibition offers a selection of significant works, those most symptomatic of the paradoxes and questions raised by the theme, including an altarpiece attributed to the entourage of **Jan van Scorel** (1495-1562), the fake antique reliefs painted by **Piat-Joseph Sauvage** (1744-1818), and striking trompe l'oeil paintings by **Louis-Léopold Boilly** (1761-1845) simulating engraving or drawing. It is also an opportunity to foster exchanges between historical creation and contemporary art, and to establish new relationships. The sculptor **Francisco Tropa**, the painter **Marc Desgrandchamps** and the graphic designer **Achim Reichert** were invited to produce new works.


Miriam Cahn, *grisaille 11.6.07*, 2007


Achim Reichert, 2023

With a selection of works by
The Bentvueghels, Louis-Léopold Boilly, Moretto da Brescia (after), Colette Brunschwig, Miriam Cahn, Cavaliere d'Arpino (circle), Marc Desgrandchamps, Anna Hulačová, Jacques I Laudin, Pietro Morone (circle), Achim Reichert, Thomas Ruff, Piat Joseph Sauvage, Bernard van Orley (circle), Palma il Giovane (attr.), Jean II Penicaud (attr.), Hélie Poncet, Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraten (attr.), Jan van Scorel (circle), Francisco Tropa, Aby Warburg, Clemens von Wedemeyer & anonymous artists from the 16th to 19th century.

Curated by **François-René Martin**, PhD in political science and PhD in art history, Professor of general art history at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris since 2007, and research coordinator at the Ecole du Louvre, Paris. His thesis focused on Grünewald and his critics (16th-21st century), and he is currently working on artistic myths, historiographical issues and Ingres and Raphaël.

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francisco Tropa, 2023

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Piat-Joseph Sauvage, *Les Floralies*, second half of 18th century

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# CONTACT & INFORMATIONS

**Preview by invitation only** | 13 May 2023

**Public Opening** | 14 May 2023 | 2 pm - 6 pm

For press enquieries, images, interviews and additional information :

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