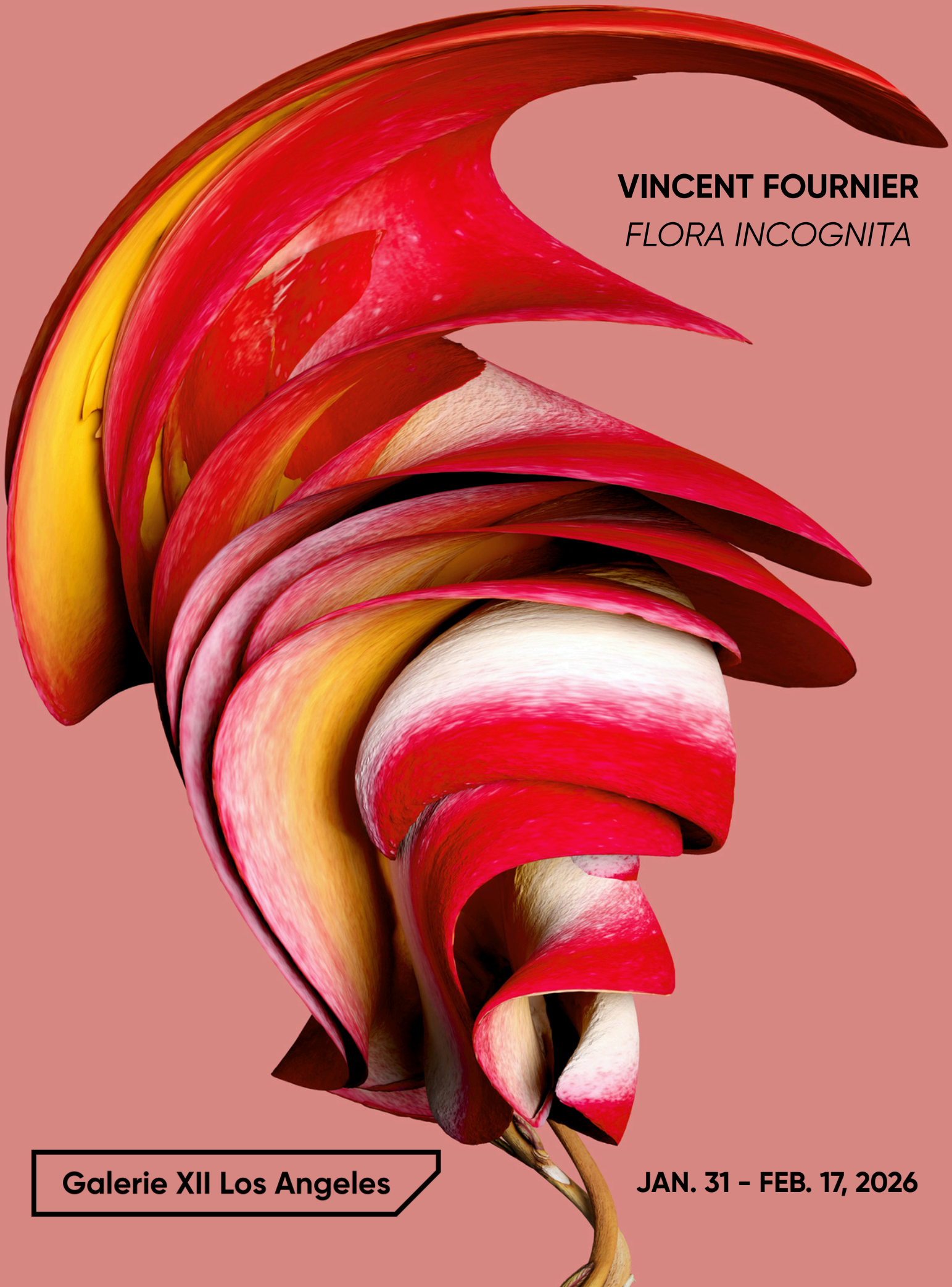

VINCENT FOURNIER

FLORA INCOGNITA

Galerie XII Los Angeles

JAN. 31 - FEB. 17, 2026

Galerie XII Los Angeles

The **Flora incognita** project anticipates a version of our botanical heritage on planets beyond the solar system. At the intersection of art and science, this speculative herbarium envisions plant life forms capable of adapting to extraterrestrial ecosystems.
Just like on Earth—where remarkably singular life forms emerge in the harshest environments—the more constrained an ecosystem, the greater the diversity it seems to generate. Every form is the outcome of a constellation of forces. To survive, plants must develop new strategies and invent novel architectures.
In this dialogue between Earth's flora and its speculative extraterrestrial counterparts, one can hear the distant echo of the climate challenges facing our planet.

Presented as a series of encyclopedic plates, this reinvention of the living world is built through a hybrid technique combining photo-grammetry and 3D animation. These tools allow for the modeling of plants with unprecedented photographic precision, and the simulation of their growth patterns within constrained environments.I

Flora Incognita is supported by the French National Museum of Natural History (MNHN), and benefits from the scientific guidance of Marc Jeanson (former director of the National Herbarium and the Majorelle Garden) for the terrestrial component, and Jean-Sébastien Steyer (MNHN and CNRS) for the extraterrestrial dimension.

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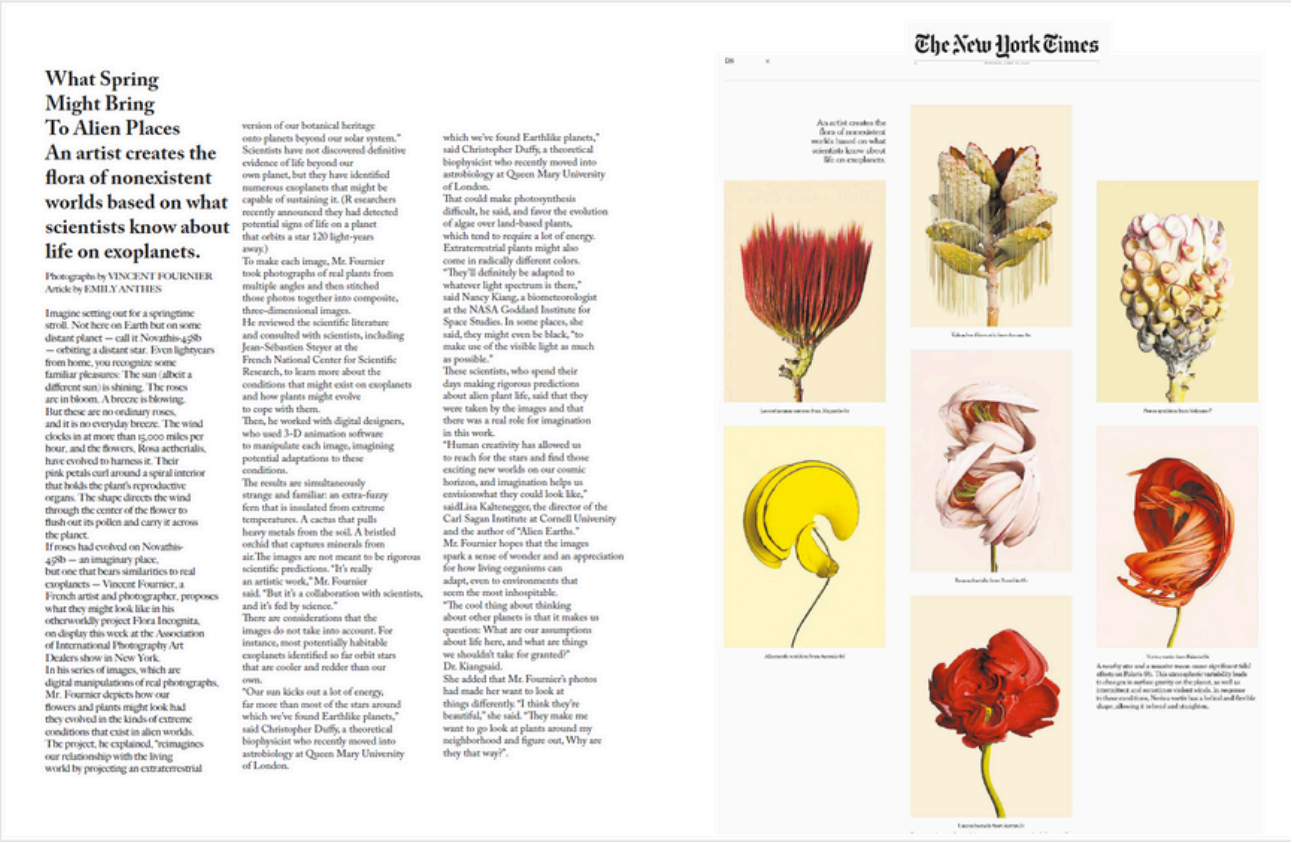

The New York Times

What Spring Might Bring To Alien Places

An artist creates the flora of nonexistent worlds based on what scientists know about life on exoplanets.

Photographs by VINCENT FOURNIER
Article by EMILY ANTHES

Imagine setting out for a springtime stroll. Not here on Earth but on some distant planet — call it Novathis-458b — orbiting a distant star. Even lightyears from home, you recognize some familiar pleasures: The sun (albeit a different sun) is shining. The roses are in bloom. A breeze is blowing.

But these are no ordinary roses, and it is no everyday breeze. The wind clocks in at more than 15,000 miles per hour, and the flowers, Rosa aetherialis, have evolved to harness it. Their pink petals curl around a spiral interior that holds the plant's reproductive organs. The shape directs the wind through the center of the flower to flush out its pollen and carry it across the planet.

If roses had evolved on Novathis-458b — an imaginary place, but one that bears similarities to real exoplanets — Vincent Fournier, a French artist and photographer, proposes what they might look like in his otherworldly project Flora Incognita, on display this week at the Association of International Photography Art Dealers show in New York.

In his series of images, which are digital manipulations of real photographs, Mr. Fournier depicts how our flowers and plants might look had they evolved in the kinds of extreme conditions that exist in alien worlds.

The project, he explained, "reimagines our relationship with the living world by projecting an extraterrestrial version of our botanical heritage onto planets beyond our solar system."

Scientists have not discovered definitive evidence of life beyond our own planet, but they have identified numerous exoplanets that might be capable of sustaining it. (Researchers recently announced they had detected potential signs of life on a planet that orbits a star 120 light-years away.)

To make each image, Mr. Fournier took photographs of real plants from multiple angles and then stitched those photos together into composite, three-dimensional images.

He reviewed the scientific literature and consulted with scientists, including Jean-Sébastien Steyer at the French National Center for Scientific Research, to learn more about the conditions that might exist on exoplanets and how plants might evolve to cope with them.

Then, he worked with digital designers, who used 3-D animation software to manipulate each image, imagining potential adaptations to these conditions.

The results are simultaneously strange and familiar: an extra-fuzzy fern that is insulated from extreme temperatures. A cactus that pulls heavy metals from the soil. A bristled orchid that captures minerals from air. The images are not meant to be rigorous scientific predictions. "It's really an artistic work," Mr. Fournier said. "But it's a collaboration with scientists, and it's fed by science."

There are considerations that the images do not take into account. For instance, most potentially habitable exoplanets identified so far orbit stars that are cooler and redder than our own.

"Our sun kicks out a lot of energy, far more than most of the stars around which we've found Earthlike planets," said Christopher Duffy, a theoretical biophysicist who recently moved into astrobiology at Queen Mary University of London.

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That could make photosynthesis difficult, he said, and favor the evolution of algae over land-based plants, which tend to require a lot of energy.

Extraterrestrial plants might also come in radically different colors.

"They'll definitely be adapted to whatever light spectrum is there," said Nancy Kiang, a biometeorologist at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies. In some places, she said, they might even be black, "to make use of the visible light as much as possible."

These scientists, who spend their days making rigorous predictions about alien plant life, said that they were taken by the images and that there was a real role for imagination in this work.

"Human creativity has allowed us to reach for the stars and find those exciting new worlds on our cosmic horizon, and imagination helps us envisionwhat they could look like," saidLisa Kaltenegger, the director of the Carl Sagan Institute at Cornell University and the author of "Alien Earths."

Mr. Fournier hopes that the images spark a sense of wonder and an appreciation for how living organisms can adapt, even to environments that seem the most inhospitable.

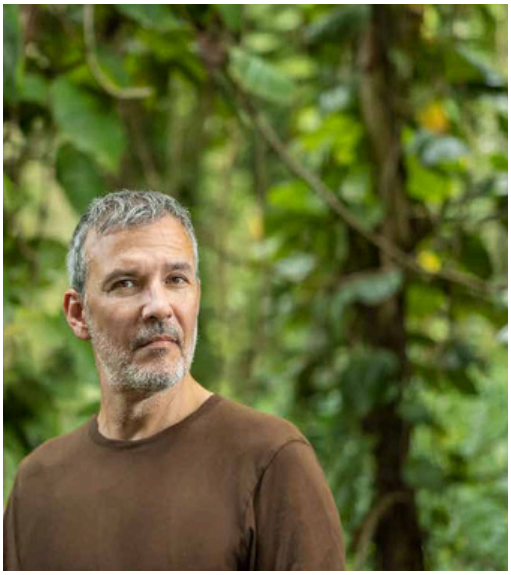
"The cool thing about thinking about other planets is that it makes us question: What are our assumptions about life here, and what are things we shouldn't take for granted?" Dr. Kiangsaid.

She added that Mr. Fournier's photos had made her want to look at things differently. "I think they're beautiful," she said. "They make me want to go look at plants around my neighborhood and figure out, Why are they that way?".

Making its Los Angeles debut, Flora incognita has been featured in numerous institutional exhibitions and has earned acclaim from the international press.

Galerie XII Los Angeles

Vincent Fournier is a French photographic artist whose work has, for over two decades, explored the imaginaries of the future through the lenses of science, technology, and fiction.
From space exploration, *Space Project* (2006–2023), to utopian architecture, *Brasilia* (2012–2019) and *Kosmic Memories* (2020–2022), from humanoid robots, *The Man Machine* (2009–2016), to speculative ecosystems, *Flora Incognita* (2023–2025), his projects are grounded in extensive research and collaborations with institutions such as NASA, the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, and the CNRS.



"The project reimagines our relationship with the living world by projecting an extraterrestrial version of our botanical heritage onto planets beyond our solar system. I explore questions about living organisms: are we like trees, plants and flowers, fragile and sensitive ."

Museum and Institutional Collections
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; LVMH; JP Morgan, New York; Société Générale; MAST Foundation, Bologna; Garance Primat Collection; Vontobel, Zurich; Swiss Life; Black Gold Museum; Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature; Musée des Beaux-Arts de Mâcon; Fondation Bullukian, Lyon; Institut Français du Cambodge, Phnom Penh; Le Doyenné Art Center; Art Museum Solo Independencia, Madrid…

Solo Exhibitions
Chaumont-Photo-sur-Loire, 2025–2026; Spazio Nobile, Brussels, 2025; Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, Paris, 2024; Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris, 2023; Swiss Life 4 Hands Prize, 2023; Le Hangar Art Center, Brussels, 2019; MAMbo – Museum of Modern Art, Bologna, 2017; Rencontres d'Arles, 2013…

Books
Primat Sidera, Filigranes, 2025, *Uchronie*, Filigranes, 2023, *Auctus Animalis*, Filigranes, 2023, *Kosmic Memories*, Noeve, 2021, *Brasilia*, Noeve, 2020, *Post Natural History*, Noeve, 2019, *Space Utopia*, Noeve x Rizzoli, 2018, *Past Forward*, 360°, 2012…

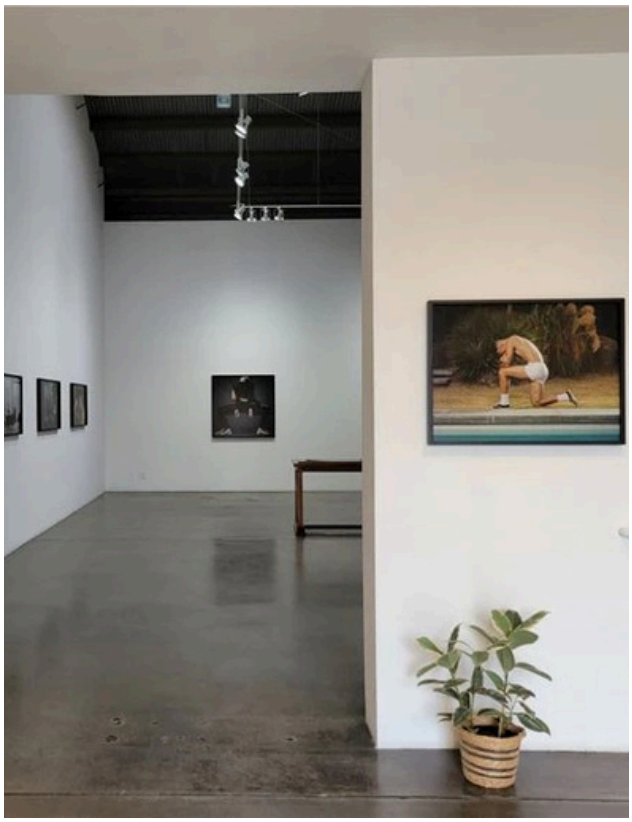
Galerie XII Los Angeles

2525 Michigan Avenue
Suite B2, Santa Monica
CA 90404
(424) 252-9004
galeriexii.com

Valérie-Anne Giscard d'Estaing
Gallery Owner
vagiscard@galeriexii.com

Anatalia Bianchi
Director, L.A.
anatalia@galeriexii.com

Ethan Tague
Curator
ethan@galeriexii.com



Galerie XII, founded by Valerie-Anne Giscard d'Estaing in 2007, focuses on contemporary photography and strives to promote artists with a strong narrative sensibility, often working with a multidisciplinary approach at the intersection of photography, painting, sculpture and collage. The gallery has recently opened its program to international contemporary artists whose work engage in material experimentation and cross-disciplinary approaches
Through exhibitions and participation in international art fairs, Galerie XII highlights the evolving landscape of contemporary visual art, emphasizing its fluid boundaries and the dialogue between traditional techniques and digital innovation.

Galerie XII Los Angeles opened in 2018 and is located at Bergamot Arts Center, Santa Monica. Since its opening, the gallery has received critical acclaim and consistently showcases four to five solo exhibitions a year both at its Los Angeles and Paris locations, as well as group shows. It participates to several Art Fairs such as Art Paris, Paris Photo, The AIPAD Photography Show at the Armory in New York, Photo Basel, Photo London, etc. The Gallery is a member of AIPAD (Association of International Photography Art Dealers) and CPGA (Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art).