

Alex Less

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Alex Less evolves secretly !
A4 Putevie wishes you a good life..!

Whether living in Toulouse or elsewhere in France, in a squat or suburbs, in a tower block or in a gold apartment, A4 Putevie keeps observing the world. Developing an insatiable appetite for images, always keeping his eyes wide open and avoiding filters and prisms as much as possible, looking at the world with his own eyes, wherever he is. Observing the street, those who cross it, those who live in it, even those who avoid it.

A4 Putevie draws life, love, death and sometimes art. His universe is at the height of Man. Humanity reveals itself as such, true, abject, fragile and derisory but also beautiful, whimsical and complex. He approaches the world with modesty, contenting himself within the administrative paper format of the A4 sheet, on which he draws his portraits of a twilight world in gray pencil or felt. But be careful, his lexical field is vast, light paper rubs objects, masks, a whole universe of found elements which are then diverted, reused to fuel his artistic tsunami.

Several series of drawings , close to illustration techniques, invite the viewer to a fantastic universe made of visual clashes. At their side, a prolific colour palette illustrates the bubbling of his thoughts in the same format, where streaks of vagrant colours intertwine with crippled scribbles including raging comments. In other more classic drawings, the line is superimposed, each image is underlined by a legend, reminiscent of the 19th century engravings.

His exhibitions are dense, and often within a maze. You have to dive in, search, search for hatchways, avoid traps, and find hidden treasure. A4 Putevie engages the viewer to have an active behaviour about his work. It is indeed a work, he is a prolific hard worker artist, and hard work and life merge everyday..

You never feel comfort in his work.

The vigorous and precise line disputes him with sharp and provocative legends. If his vision might look sometimes naive, the first feeling gives all his power to his drawings. He is irrevocably ignore the agreed upon cynical lyricism. This good contemporary tone of the intelligent detachment is here broken down with a sincere and whole commitment, ignoring both the posture and the pose.

The art of Alex Less, who is none other than A4 Putevie, is a prime contemporary art, in what is essential and powerful. His tragic haikus are full of a sincere fragility that makes them poetic and mad. His teeming world is a reflection of a complex society that can not always find the meaning of its perpetual flight forward. Art is here as a freeze frame, a social and political point of view.

A voice which, if it is high and clear, flirts at the same time with a guttural rage, that of an unfeigned revolt whose strength is channelled into drawing and writing.

Manuel Pomar



Tension - 2010

A map of Europe made of activated mouse and rat traps, European coins serve as baits. While a Schengen convention tries to free Europe from its borders, new walls, grids and digital limits are built around - as well as inside - the Euro zone. A territory that is getting compartmentalized, fragmented, placed under high surveillance, advocating freedom of movement while barricading itself behind increased control. The euro, a strong currency, is so attractive for both its inhabitants and the citizens of the world that it has become the bait of a pitiless trap.

Wood, coins, metal elements. 100cm x 77cm.



Look up - 2014

Series of 82 paintings made in urgency, in 6 days precisely, arranged in volume within the space. Here the urgency is a performance: it allows to capture the first energy, vital and visceral. This installation invites the viewer to look up during an unhindered walk. He can thus imagine his own stories with the rebound game that is created between iconic and abstract image... until he sometimes loses his balance. The brightly coloured images deal with an acid and virulent humor about the news, various facts, everyday details, poetry and oppression.

82 paintings on 600gm² card stock, acrylic and Indian ink. 56x82cm each.



Class Consciousness - 2014

42 paintings, which are an extension of the “look up” series, are arranged on wooden modules of varying sizes. Some are in the air, directly on the frame of the showroom, others hanging on chains. Some, here and there, are hidden, and reveal themselves by a game of mirrors. Others are placed on hinges and can move when the visitor decides.

Some modules finally are arranged on the ground. The visitor, who wanders in the space as he pleases, by ricochet game or by game of attraction, is invited to discover images from the news and born in the emergency performance. His gaze is solicited in all the directions ... up, down, behind him, in front of him, on all sides ... But beware, at times, the mirror games can destabilize the gaze, and thereby create an unbalance of the body while moving.

Acrylic and ink on 600 gm paperboard, medium wood, mirrors, chains, hinges. 42 paintings of 56cmx82cm each. Wooden element (medium) of various dimensions. For larger 104x164cm, for smaller 56cmx82cm, various



Lightning tomorrow - 2015

Performance and installation lasting a week.

In a changing world where the influx of immediate information is dense and saturated, I am invited - associated with other artists - to carry out my own investigations and to question communication, in the broad sense, using a simple A4 piece of paper.

How to situate oneself, to place oneself in the continuous news landscape?

The creation process requires to react to immediacy ... or to take a critical distance, a step backward. For a week, in order not to be passive spectators of the news, visitors are invited to participate in the creation of their own newspaper / fanzine. Because we are all potential media, vectors, devices.

Tables, chairs, photocopier and printer, light table, laptop computer, flat screens, various pencils and pens, watercolors, A4 paper (21x29,7cm), office tape, microphone and amplifier. 16 m².



Igitur - 2015

In-situ production of 23 elements (22 found extinguishers then reworked and 1 alarm box “Black Madness”) around the notions of security, surveillance, control and what is forbidden. Fire extinguishers are scattered, with omnipresence throughout the exhibition. They are covered with the famous Coca-Cola™ typography to illustrate an ironic and critical look at safety standards and consumption. Is Fear a marketing strategy that pushes everyone to over-consumption? On the pieces, where there is a kind of poetry of the obstacles, the constraints of our everyday hells, we can read:

*Nous - Vous - Amour - Fleau - Sécurité - Cyberte - Addict -
 Techno Deluge - Symptomes - Remedios - Irreversible - Calibrage Intensif
 - Électro-Mafia - Paranoïphobie - Bonne Ambiance - Porcherie - Bonne
 Apnée - Procédure - Angoisse - extinction - Avenir.*

** We - Love - You - Plague - Security -Cyberte - Addict - Techno flood – Symptoms - Remedies - Irreversible
 - Intensive calibration - Electro mafia - Paranoïphobia - Good atmosphere - Pigsty - Good apnea - Anxiety
 procedure - Extinction - Future.*

22 Fire extinguishers found in a recycling dump, white and red aerosol paint, various elements made of metal, glass, metal chain. 23 elements of variable dimensions (designated as follows: height x Diameter in centimeters) of which the most common are: 59hxØ56cm, 40hxØ36cm, 60hxØ36cm, 45hxØ56cm. Alarm box in the format 19x71X5cm.



Creve Hivernale # 1 - 2015

In-situ creation of an immersive experience with temporary shelters against a background of large-scale mural depicting warplanes (sold by France) with rainbow colours. Human silhouettes painted or cut on mattresses appear as sleeping or frightened beings like ghosts,. (The word “mattress” that comes from the Arabic word “matrah” is synonymous with comfort ... here mattresses are lacerated). These beings are continuously being watched by an observation tower that dominates everything. From the height of the tower the entire space is illuminated. Close to this, a child’s cabin, symbol of a paradise, is fragile and ready to collapse at any time. Inscriptions on the walls reveal messages about increasing surveillance, loss of fundamental rights, increased fears and mind manipulation. For a month, the artistic proposal, which is being created live, addresses the theme of wandering - that of refugees, fleeing a country at war or totalitarian, or that of the homeless - by attempting a dialogue between the habitat and the inhabitant, the visible and the invisible.

Large wooden pallets, 12 mattresses, plastic tarpaulin, acrylic paint, aerosol paint, cardboard, mirrors, electric wire, 500 watt lamp, candles, clothes, cooking utensils (type pressure cooker). 72 m² or about 380 m³ of installation.



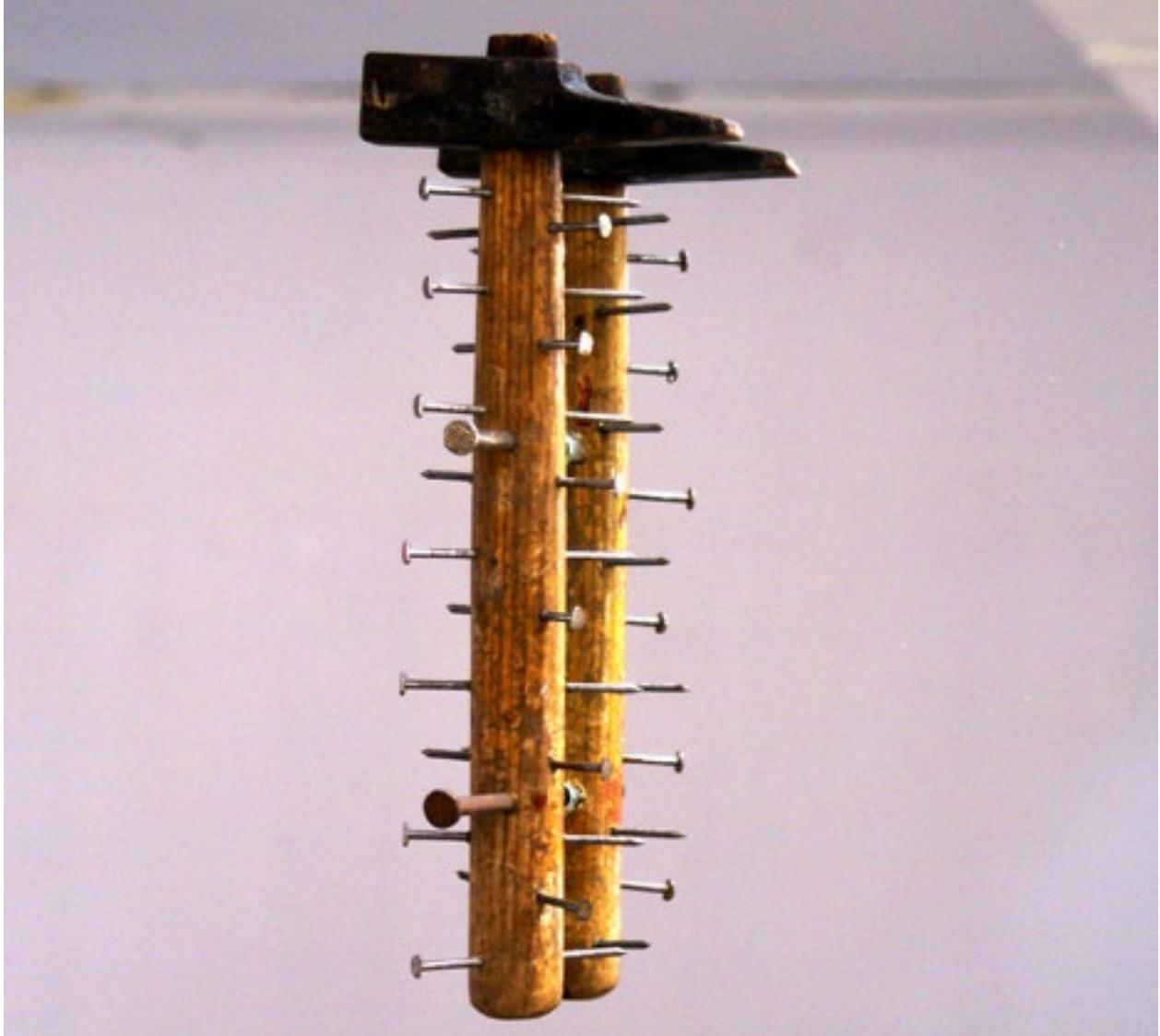
Creve Hivernale # 2 - 2016

In a wasteland, located between the barbed wire of a railroad and a camp of travelling people, creation of an installation of 6 modules organised in a circle, using found objects on the spot (wooden pallets and big windows, more or less broken). Each module consists of two pallets that hold two large glass panels facing each other. On the glass, painted motifs and inscriptions highlight the current political and social situation, the inhuman living conditions of refugees in Europe. The visitor is invited to discover the work, in a freezing cold, by wandering all around or by positioning himself in the center of the installation and rotating on himself. New analogies appear, by mirror game during the night, or by layering effects during the day or at night. Indeed, when looking at two modules aligned face to face from outside the circle, the viewer can perceive a combination of 4 patterns. During the day, the sun illuminates the whole installation, the light turns around the circle. At night, a fire in the center accentuates the mirroring effects.

The painted images seem at times to be merging ... just like the spectators.

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/236326878> (video by Delphine Klos).

Wooden pallets, double-glazed windows, wooden planks, black acrylic paint. 6 modules consisting of 12 wooden pallets (120x80cm) and 12 "double-glazed" 120x80 cm windows as well as 24 pieces of planks form a circle of about 12m².



Subculture - 2016

A set of 24 A4-sized drawings (21x29,7cm) and 30 wooden sculptures and modules form a complex installation, entirely created within urgent timings, to illustrate a thirst for freedom within a suffocating urban environment, a distress of current social political affairs, an economic war and a society of ultra-surveillance. While revisiting the codes of Modern Art such as Surrealism or Dadaism, we can see: a Santa Claus beheaded by a Daesh soldier, a chess game where a small white pawn is surrounded by twenty dark towers, a dove of peace, in agony, pierced by three knives of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity ... One can see there a man in a suit with a sharpened knife-head seated at the UN, the grave of the European Union, protesters whose breasts are pierced by SWAT police aliens, horror portraits of Marianne (French Symbol) mirrored in mirrors, a set plate, ready for a hypothetical dinner, in which the word "security" appears, two flies in full coitus, a pair of eyes in a cage, an unusable hammer whose handle is pierced with nails, plaster sculptures, representing snakes with knife heads, coming out of the bases and crawling on the ground, men caught in spontaneous combustion whose flames are strangely similar to the French Far right's logo, a self-portrait shot at by knives on the sleeves of which are inscribed the words "me, you, him, her, us, you, them" or even 4 symmetrical copies (reversed horizontally or vertically) of Edvard Munch's "scream" with, for each, a spiral in the sky whose center is a swastika. In this installation one can perceive the portrait of a twilight civilization, between anthropology and autopsy, between fantasy and grotesque, between comic and tragic, between tranquillity and anguish.

Hanging structure composed of 6 large planks of medium wood (244x122cm each), various medium wood modules (the largest: 80x50x144cm and the smallest: 7x20x24cm), various mirrors, 24 A4 size drawings (21x29,7cm) framed (42x32,4cm), 30 sculptures based on wire mesh, plaster, knives, silica, acrylic paint, various objects: cage, glasses eyes, coins, hammer, nails,



WE-ACT - 2016

Hooking device combining drawings and workshop objects arranged in-situ, consisting of drafts, sketches, ink drawings, pen, color palettes, a photocopy of a drawing, two notebook diaries, a drawing on a magazine advertising page enhanced with pen, coffee stains or shoe prints, cardboard box, engraved dog scapula. From this intense accumulation, both fragile and strong at the same time, a nonlinear narrative dimension presents several levels. Indeed, the gaze of the visitor moves as he wishes but must keep an active behaviour, either by flipping through the notebooks stapled directly to the wall, or by moving and raising drawings that hide others, or by opening the drawings folder, also nailed to the wall, or by consulting a bunch of drawings on the floor. The installation acts as a playful giant reminder that forms a tree of fluctuating thoughts.

The themes encountered are numerous: the refusal of determinism, the influence of new technologies, social inequalities, imperfections that undermine reality and the unease of human relationships. Whether worried or amazed, the goal is to stimulate the viewer with a multi-sensorial experience.

Graphite, pen, ink, watercolor, blood, spray, photocopy, coffee and shoe prints on various A4 or A3 size paper, bone, drawing board, notebooks, paper cut-outs on placemat. h230cmX150cm is about 3.45m².



AFTER - The House Project - 2017

The installation is organized around a white cell of 8 sq meters, an indoor exhibition space a priori sterile, in which new artistic proposals are presented each week, behind a thick glass and a locked glass door. A kind of showroom in the showroom protected by a surveillance camera. This refers to the art of museums and institutions that want to bring the artist into a standardized framework. But bypassing this cell, there is an element of surprise, the exterior wall is covered with drawings and writings that recreate an urban space where the expression seems free, not fixed ... a sealed waste container from which escapes a kind a dull nightclub music at the end of the night ... In a spirit of palimpsest of superimposed drawings and letters, this outer wall and this waste container suggest that it is a collective work, but it is not the case. Each week, new interventions, both inside and outside, show a process of research, of continuous creation, usually invisible but which is an integral part of the exhibition. The title AFTER is the night that is extended, as a right of response echoing the 50th anniversary of May 68, showing that in cultural institutions people fight to make creation exist in motion, that artists always have something to say, that they still want to create, without nostalgia about a past revolution, but on the contrary for the continuity of History in the present.

Wooden beams, metal brackets, medium wood planks (244x122cm), narrow glass door, lock, large "double-glazed" type glass, waterproof industrial double neon, illuminated sign, waste container, amplifier + CD player + baffles, power strip, 10L of white paint, reams of A4 and A3 paper, acrylic paint, aerosol cans, various large posca markers for all substrates, vinyl glue, different colorex inks, paper money, stuffed African heron, mouse traps, printed circuits, graphite, pallet, photocopies. The cell measures (221x268x154x420x252cm) is about 8sq meters, or 16 cubic meters



Déborderouge - What I am is thanks to what we all are - 2017

24 acrylic paintings on canvas (without frame but some on wood panels) of different sizes that show, next to brothers and sisters, “naked childhood” against the violence of the oldest in an unstable political and geopolitical climate. It shows my childhood memories, characters from popular cartoons and series, or period magazines such as “Alf” or “Mickey”, who rub shoulders with political figures such as Ayatollah Khomeini in a strange mutating climate located near the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and the fall of Berlin’s “wall of shame”. The paintings are clashing each other, the pictorial signs bounce off each other and the themes are teasing each other. The result is a strange, disordered feeling, probably like the emotion that can be felt by the individual addicted to the media influx.

Acrylic paint, canvases, medium sized wood panels. 24 paintings of varying sizes, ranging from 210x129cm for larger and up to 65x45cm for smaller ones.



Isthmus - 2018

A small child, entirely made of fabric, is behind a “vauban” fence. The head, wedged between two bars, shows a large “smiley”. Behind him is a beach-type play area on the concrete floor. Security and leisure. The ‘vigipirate plan’ guarantees security, but the child seems to be captive to a spiral of infernal emptiness.

Different fabrics (black, yellow, white), padding, 7-year-old sunday clothes, sand, umbrellas, plastic bucket, rake.



Hospitality / Shame -2019

“Hospitality”, in April 2018, members of Génération Identitaire deployed a banner at the Col de l’Echelle in the French Alps against the arrival of migrants on French soil. It said “The borders are closed. You will not make France your home. There is no way. Go home”.

Here is a painting that takes the propaganda picture of this group, which makes an act of presence to prevent the passage of illegal immigrants. They have materialized a border between France and Italy and they are proud of their stupidity.

“ Shame “, a mound of earth is first in the painting ... hands pointing an accusing finger so a mound of land located first of the canvas, points the visitor. He can be the migrant, the one who is stigmatized.

This duo-work questions the notions of mobility, space or identity, the porosity or permanence of both geographical and symbolic boundaries. Here is the expression of injustices, exclusions and racisms of all kinds in a chaotic Europe that would be open to the world, of course, only at the economic level devoted to domination (sale of weapons, planes, nuclear weapons, security, total control).

Alex less: Acrylic on canvas (2.30x2.30m) and Claire Sauvaget: molding, plaster, earth.

