

Julian CHARRIÈRE

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French-Swiss artist [Julian Charrière](#) is showcasing his first solo exhibition with [Perrotin](#) after signing with the gallery back in September 2023. On view in Paris, *Panchronic Garden* examines humanity's fragile relationship with fossil fuels, from the emergence of using materials such as coal during the Industrial Revolution to the adverse effects ecologically experienced today as a result.

Throughout the history of art and literature, fountains have been used as symbols of life, youth and purification. Walking into Perrotin's Saint Claude location, Charrière transforms the space into a burning chapel as a film projection shows an opulent fountain ablaze, metaphorically alluding to how Western society was formed through the use of materials that is now turning the planet into a furnace.

Adjacent on both walls are a series of gold patina artworks on stainless steel panels that feature vague depictions of oil fields, which explore the extraction of fossil fuels in California. The artist employed heliography, a 19th century process invented by French pioneer [Nicéphore Niépce](#) — who anticipated the rise of photography — in which Charrière harnessed the power of the sun to transmit aerial shots of these oil fields, producing a sort of “mirage,” writes Stéphane Malfette, director of the Lyon-based venue Les Subsistances. “Beneath the flashy surface, we are consumed by demons.”

Today's fossil fuels stem back 300 million years, when they were once lush forests formed during the Carboniferous period. Charrière, whose practice regularly consists of traveling around the world to geophysical regions, from former mining plants to volcanic sites, probing into the exploitation of Earth's resources, such as "chemical cycles of materials, specifically the carbon cycle, which has been greatly affected by the burning of fossil fuels since the Industrial Revolution," Charrière said in a statement.

The standout installation on view, which the show takes its title from, immerses audiences in an infrared garden of plants made to resemble ancestral ferns which once populated the surface of the planet — surrounded by mirrored carbon fiber floors and connected to sensors that create unique soundscapes that reflect the extraordinary ways in which plants communicate. "In the various spaces of *Panchronic Gardens*, time is suspended, producing a vertigo of infinity in the face of the incommensurable," added Malfette.

The exhibition is on view in Paris until June 1.

Perrotin

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