



Prototypes for *Violeta*, *Violeta n°1*, *Okapi n°2* and *Eliane* (2021). © Veilhan / ADAGP, 2021

XAVIER VEILHAN

AUTOFOCUS

**Opening reception Wednesday, November 3, 6-8pm
November 3 - December 23, 2021**

Perrotin New York is pleased to present *Autofocus*, a solo exhibition by French artist Xavier Veilhan, opening on November 3 and on view through December 23, 2021. For *Autofocus*, Veilhan continues his experiments into movement and memory by conceiving a new scenario on Perrotin's third floor, composed of a field of new figurative and architectural sculptures.

Entering the exhibition, we encounter a scene frozen in time. Large-scale mobiles hang from the gallery's skylight, consuming the surrounding sculptures. Below, geometric shapes have attached onto blurred human forms and lifelike animals. We are greeted by the gaze of two oversized canines, sculpted in a soft birchwood. Interested in the ability of animals to define man, Veilhan's dogs are voyeurs of the scene unfolding before them. Nearby, human silhouettes appear softened, hovering around the edges of our field of vision. The artist reduces body and form down to their most essential vocabularies, making them barely legible. Beneath, Veilhan has situated his sculptures onto the outline of a cube, leaving our vision unimpeded and unaltered. Inspired by Sol Lewitt's "Open Cube" or Robert Morris's mirror cubes, they evoke rigid minimalist sculptures of the 1970s and act as anchors for the eye. Above, Veilhan has devised a series of fragmented mobiles, suspended from the ceiling. The mobile, an emblem of mid-20th century modernism, lends its symbolic connotations of balance, rhythm, and time to Veilhan's scene. His figures stand static, with only the soft sway of the mobile's cascading orbs to remind us of our temporality. By freezing time, Veilhan invites us to uncover the relationship between seemingly disparate subjects, leaving hints of a larger story.

Inspired by the high ceilings of the space, Veilhan's figures are sculpted in varying scales, from life-size to monumental, which frames the audience as a crucial point of reference. In this way, the exhibition does not exist without a visitor, or as Veilhan says, "the work's appearance is conditioned by the spectator's gaze." Continuing to uncover the layers of Veilhan's installation, we pick up on the smallest hints of unreality, leaving us unsettled as we circumnavigate.

For three decades, Veilhan has developed a multi-form approach to his artistic practice that blends various mediums and scales, playing with the viewer's spatial and temporal perspective. Early in his career he worked primarily in figurative sculpture, slowly developing his own formal vocabulary. Since, he has staged numerous significant interventions around the world, often reinterpreting classical sculptural and architectural elements. In his 2009 installation at Versailles, the artist staged large-scale sculptures of visionary architects within the palace and its gardens; followed by a two-year project, titled *Architectones*, where he thoughtfully intervened in and reactivated historic architectural sites within two continents and five cities; or his 2017 proposition for the French Pavilion at the Biennale di Venezia, titled *Studio Venezia*, where he created a functional recording studio. In *Autofocus*, the artist continues this tradition of site-specific intervention by inviting the viewer to activate the space by moving through his field of sculptures. Often called an artist-engineer, Veilhan carefully choreographs the exhibition, forcing our gaze to shift between hard architectural lines and subtle curves. Offering only fragments of a moment in time, Veilhan allows our vision to become a purposeful actor.

More information about the artist >>>

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