

## Press Release

### Florian RUIZ *Le monde de l'invisible*

Exhibition from May 4 to July 28, 2024

**Opening with the artist** on Friday, May 3, 2024, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm



*Series Onikuma, Onikuma #1, 2024*  
© Florian RUIZ courtesy galerie Sit Down

In his work, Florian Ruiz undermines a form of tyranny of the visible and, thanks to superimposed images, gets landscape views made of broken perspectives and visual palimpsests that meets the precepts of Far Eastern aesthetics, where the visible is a transient state generated by the undifferentiated background. Far from weakening the medium, these heterogeneous practices allow to revitalize our link with the world and its realities.

**Héloïse Conésa** (curator for contemporary photography in the Prints and Photography department of the BnF).

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## **Le monde de l'invisible**

The world of the invisible brings together three photographic projects carried out in Japan, focusing on the Fukushima nuclear disaster, shamanic spaces, and the legend of Onikuma. In this work, I wanted to question the representation of the real and the invisible in landscape photography by invoking what appeals to the imagination and what appeals to the eye.

In the snowy landscapes of the Fukushima highlands, I aimed to reveal the invisible presence of radioactive contamination. Equipped with a Geiger counter, I measured radioactivity in Becquerels (Bq), a unit that expresses the number of atom disintegrations and mutations per second. Inspired by the simplicity and panel arrangement of Japanese prints, through a digital process, I visualized the alteration of atoms in the landscapes. This distortion of reality, the mutation of landscapes, make the presence of radioactivity perceptible. The effects of transparency, the broken perspectives give rise to moving forms, a passage, a world of impermanence.

Shamanism in Japan, stemming from traditional Siberian societies, is still very present in certain regions, notably on the island of Hokkaido. In this religious thought based on animism, there exists this world, visible, daily, profane, and other worlds, invisible: the world of gods, spirits, ancestors... I photographed these spaces of shamanic sacredness located in nature. Through a digital process, I wanted to make an imperceptible, floating, indecisive world perceptible, intertwining and superimposing with the real world. Landscapes where shapes evaporate, where glimpses of reality may appear, emerge from this world in motion.

In the Nagano region, the legend of a malevolent creature, part demon (oni) part bear (kuma), persists. Onikuma is a gigantic bear capable of walking on its hind legs like humans. It is said to possess exceptional strength and can move rocks that ten men together could not push. Legends say that it sometimes descends from the mountains at night to snatch horses from villages, which it devours in its cave.

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In these snowy forests, I decided to embark on a photographic quest to search for the invisible presence of this mythological animal using scientific imaging processes. By overlaying images captured with technical procedures from night cameras to capture the fleeting passage of the animal at night and using thermal vision to record the heat waves emitted by its body, I sought to create a landscape that makes accessible what our eyes cannot see. Thus, making possible a revelation of the invisible, an encounter with this mythological animal.

Onikuma plunges us into these mysterious forests, into landscapes at the borders of the invisible, the imaginary, and the unreal. By using scientific imaging processes in landscape photography, this approach allows us to grasp reality in an unusual way, making other realities visible. In this project, photography is a construction game, a place of experience that breaks free from realism and the desire to imitate appearances in order to make the invisible perceptible.

In *The World of the Invisible*, photography is a construction game, a place of experience that frees itself from the concern to imitate the appearance of things and reproduce the world. The gaze can get lost in front of these images, leaving reflection in suspension before a sometimes intangible universe to question the encounter between the visible and the invisible.

The photographs of Fukushima bear a title, that of measuring ground radioactive contamination expressed in becquerels (Bq).

Florian RUIZ

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*Series Seiiki, Seiiki #21, 2021*  
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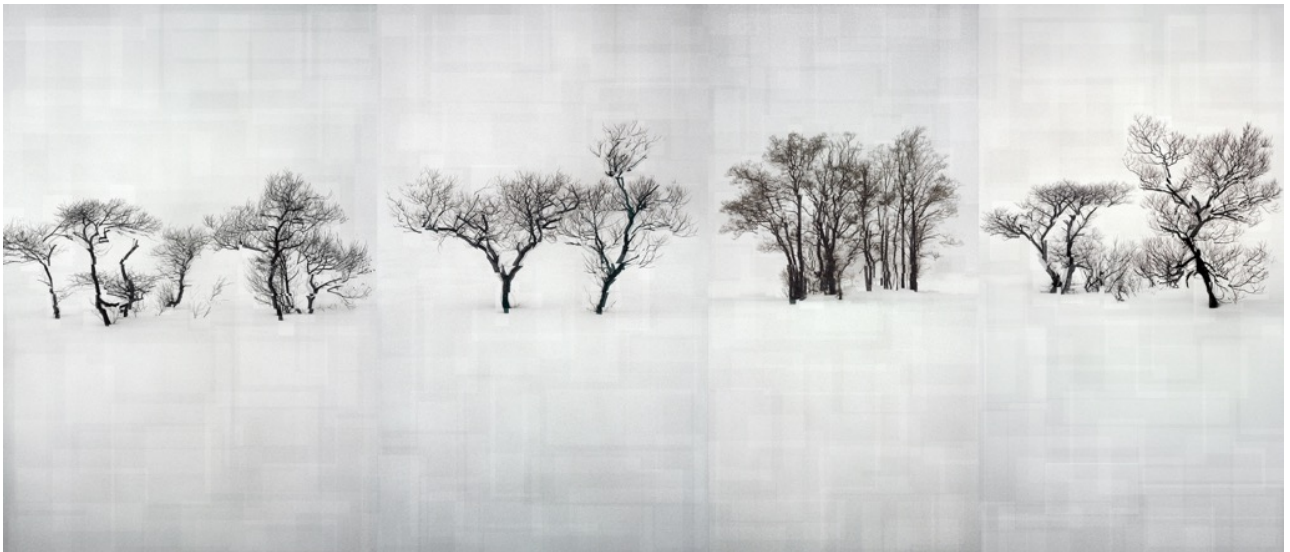
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*Series The White Contamination, 0,453 Bq, 2013*  
© Florian RUIZ courtesy galerie Sit Down

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**VISUELS PRESSE LIBRES DE DROITS**



*Series The White Contamination, 0,363 Bq, 2014*  
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Series *Seiki*, *Seiki* #12, 2021  
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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Born in 1972, Florian Ruiz lives and works in Japan.

Florian Ruiz is a French photographer who creates projects to express the atmospheres, feelings, and sensations of desolate places.

After studying Law and History, Florian Ruiz developed a documentary approach to the desperate social world marked by disillusion. He shot the intimacy of the prostitutes' rooms at Pakistan, the shipbreaking of Bangladesh as well as the story of a Mongolian mining town.

Living since more than twelve years in Tokyo, shocked by the disaster of Fukushima, he seeks to test in his recent works the boundaries of photography by challenging its ability to render the invisible danger of radioactivity, by using assembly, collage, super impression; processes that reinvent and transform the actual landscape. He portrays the unexpected, the fortuitous, and the deformed as a multiple reality. His work has been published many times (Le Monde Magazine, European Photography Magazine, etc.) and has received several awards: Sony World Photography, QPN Award, Bourse du Talent, Felix Schoeller, etc



## EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

- 2023 *La photographie À tout prix. Une année de prix photographiques à la bnf*,  
Bibliothèque National de France, Paris, France  
NOVA Festival, Art Technology Now, Bucharest, Romania  
Night of Photography, Paris, France  
Festival ON/OFF Rencontres d'Arles, Arles, France
- 2022 *Seiki*, Sit Down gallery at PARIS PHOTO fair, Paris, France  
*The White Contamination*, Sit Down gallery at Paris Photo Haute  
Photographie, Amsterdam, Netherlands  
*The white contamination*, Museum of Asian Arts, Nice, France  
*Seiki*, Sit Down gallery at ART PARIS Art fair, Paris, France  
Wiesbaden Photo Days, Wiesbaden, Germany
- 2021 *The white contamination*, Sit Down gallery at Art Paris, Paris, France  
*Le mal invisible*, Photo Marseille, Marseille, France
- 2020 *Project 596*, galerie Sit Down at PHOTO LA Art fair, Los Angeles, USA  
*Project 596*, Sony World Photography Award laureates group show, Somerset  
House, London, England (canceled)
- 2019 *The White Contamination*, galerie Sit Down at The Photography Show by  
AIPAD fair, New York, USA  
LensCulture's emerging talents group show, The Aperture gallery, New York,  
USA
- 2018 *The White Contamination*, galerie Sit Down at PARIS PHOTO fair, Paris, France  
Sony World Photography Award laureates group show, Somerset House,  
London, England  
Sony Imaging Gallery, Tokyo, Japan  
Palazzo Trigona, Italy  
Royal Villa of Monza, Italy  
Willy Brandt Haus, Berlin, Germany  
Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Lille, France
- 2017 Bourse du talent laureates group show, Bibliothèque Nationale de France,  
Paris  
Cultural History Museum, Osnabrück, Germany
- 2014 Blind Pilots Project, Thessaloniki, Greece
- 2013 Month of Photography, Bratislava, Slovakia
- 2010 *Some photographers, some Japans*, Photography Festival in Tokyo, Osaka  
and Fukuoka, Japan
- 2005-2007 Angkor Photography Festival, Cambodia  
Chroniques nomades festival, Honfleur, France  
Vendôme festival, France  
8<sup>th</sup> International festival of Aleppo, Syria

## **AWARDS**

- 2023 Bourse du talent
- 2021 Maison Blanche Award
- 2020 Lens Culture Art Photography Awards: special jury prize  
Sony World Photography Award for Project 596 (landscape category)
- 2018 Lens Culture Art Photography Awards: special jury prize  
Sony World Photography Award for The White Contamination (Creative category)
- 2017 'Bourse du Talent' prize: 'Coup de coeur' of the jury (landscape section).  
Felix Schoeller Photo Award: nominee.
- 2016 Fine Art Photographer of the year  
'Bourse du Talent': finalist  
Moscow Foto Awards: honorable mention  
Arpia prize: nominee  
QPN Award: finalist
- 2015 LensCulture Earth Awards: finalist  
QPN Award: finalist
- 2014 Arpia prize: nominee
- 2013 3rd International Emerging Artist Award (Dubai): finalist

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## REVUE DE PRESSE

- 2021 "Distorted images of radioactive sites – Florian Ruiz", *ART DOC Photography Magazine*
- 2019 "Les Coups de cœur de Damien et Florence Bachelot",  
loeildelaphotographie.com France 2 : Emission « Des mots de minuit » / «  
Photo parlée » - Entretien avec Adrien Pontet, octobre 2018
- 2018 "Nos coups de cœur de la Bourse de Talent 2017", *Beaux Arts Magazine* n°437  
"Sony World Photography Awards: l'observatoire de la photo  
mondiale", *Réponse Photo* n°385, juin 2018  
"The White Contamination", par Coralie Kraft et Jim Casper, *Lensculture.com*
- 2017 *Float Magazine*
- 2016 "La vie volée d'Alep", *Le Monde Magazine*, décembre 2016  
"Mirage Cities", *Prism photo magazine* #23
- 2015 "Fukushima à vue d'œil", *Tenten Magazine* #2, par Virginie Jux  
"Florian Ruiz", *Dohdo Magazine*  
"Contamination road", *Positive Magazine*
- 2014 "Florian Ruiz", *Silvershotz Magazine*  
"Fukushima, invisible pain", *ArtPhotoMag*  
*Dodho Magazine*  
"The end of the worl / a new beginning issue", *TWTGE Magazine*
- 2013 Florian Ruiz, 9.0 (Inside)", *Prism Photo Magazine*  
*FKmagazine*,  
"Florian Ruiz", *Emergenec revue* #2  
"Florian Ruiz", *Aint-Bad Magazine*, janvier 2013
- 2012 *Urbanautica Magazine*  
*LPVmagazine*  
*F-Stop Magazine Issue* #53  
*Prism Photo Magazine*  
*Aksgar magazine*  
*Photoworks magazine*  
Interview, *Art Magazine European Photography*
- 2010 *British Journal of Photography*  
*Photo Magazine*

## LA GALERIE

Située dans Le Marais à Paris, la galerie Sit Down a été fondée par Françoise Bornstein en 2005. Depuis 2013, la galerie est essentiellement consacrée à la photographie contemporaine de la scène française et internationale, avec une attention particulière à la photographie documentaire. La galerie Sit Down présente des artistes émergents comme renommés et s'intéresse également aux artistes qui font dialoguer la photographie avec d'autres médiums ou questionnent les limites de son usage mimétique.

En parallèle des expositions personnelles, Françoise Bornstein invite des commissaires lors de projet d'expositions hors les murs, lors de festivals comme les Rencontres d'Arles. La galerie participe à des foires internationales telles que PARIS PHOTO, ART PARIS Art Fair, PHOTO LONDON, PHOTO LA à Los Angeles, *THE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW presented by AIPAD* à New York, HAUTE PHOTOGRAPHIE à Amsterdam...

La galerie est membre du Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art (CPGA) et de l'Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD).

## ARTISTES

Jean-Michel ANDRÉ (FR, 1976)  
Aurore BAGARRY (FR, 1982)  
Stéphane BELZÈRE (FR, 1963)  
Celine CROZE (FR, 1982)  
Pauline FARGUE (FR, 1975)  
Tim FRANCO (FR, 1982)  
Jean GAUMY (FR, 1958)  
Virginie ISBELL (FR-USA, 1959)  
Marco LANZA (IT, 1957)  
Antoine LECHARNY (FR, 1995)  
Jean-Gabriel LOPEZ (FR, 1962)  
Robert McCABE (USA, 1934)

## CONTACT

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E-mail : [info@sitdown.fr](mailto:info@sitdown.fr)

## THE GALLERY

Established in Le Marais area in Paris, the Sit Down gallery was founded by Françoise Bornstein in 2005. Since 2013, the gallery has been entirely devoted to photography and its programming consists primarily of documentary and fine-art photography. The gallery aims to showcase young emerging photographers and support renowned international photographers. Sit Down is also interested in artists who bring photography into dialogue with other mediums or question the limits of its mimetic use.

In addition to organizing personal exhibitions, Françoise Bornstein invites curators to participate in exhibition projects during special events such as LES RENCONTRES DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE in Arles. The gallery takes part in international art fairs like PARIS PHOTO, ART PARIS, PHOTO LA in Los Angeles, *THE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW presented by AIPAD* in New York, UNSEEN and HAUTE PHOTOGRAPHIE in Amsterdam...

Sit Down gallery is a member of the French "Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art" and of the Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD).

Marie MAUREL DE MAILLÉ (FR, 1978)  
Diane MEYER (USA, 1976)  
Frédérique PETIT (FR, 1949)  
Salvatore PUGLIA (IT, 1953)  
Jean-Charles REMICOURT-MARIE (FR, 1990)  
Simon ROBERTS (UK, 1974)  
Florian RUIZ (FR, 1972)  
Martine SCHILDGE (FR, 1951)  
Laure VASCONI (FR, 1965)  
Matt WILSON (UK, 1969)  
Tom WOOD (IR, 1951)  
Charles XELOT (FR, 1985)