

## **João Freitas**

João Freitas's work is linked to the notion of trace, wear and tear, time, and he treats the structures that support him like skinned men: paper, cardboard, fabric, glass paper, wood, etc. The artist's intention is to gently violate the material to make it say something elusive, just as an anatomy sheet reveals the true structures and components of an organism.

With Freitas, there is a desire to reveal, to lift up matter, to give it a mystical meaning by revealing its mysteries and mutations, just as the work of the alchemist transmutes matter into ethers, vapours and other essences.

João Freitas is one of those artists who learn from his own work. Nothing seems decided at the outset of his dissections; he finds by searching, like an archaeologist unearthing a buried object. As an apprentice aesthete, sensitive and attentive, he looks for unlimited combinations of effects and games in these artefacts, generating an infinite poetry that does not exclude violence. And so, in this relationship with matter that is at once brutal and suave, he succeeds in making us resonate with these ineffable questions of time, tangibility and presence, becoming, in his crucible, a durable, touching and immanent material.

Whether through wear and tear, sanding or burning, folding, sewing or creasing, he reveals the material by giving it access to a transcendence, through a surgery that, without betraying it, rebirths the support in another dimension. This is the ineffable meaning of João's work. Like a photographic film, like a sgraffito or a 'scratch card', like a peel of skin, he reveals reality through a repetitive, almost meditative process of removing, butchering, tearing away and scratching, revealing the underlying reality in an approach akin to the new matierism, which grapples with questions of durability, gratuitousness, recuperation and re-enchantment. His demonstration is that of a thaumaturge, a sorcerer who reveals the true nature of the world, laying it bare to show its indevinable constitution.

Constantin Chariot, 2020

## **Baptiste Rabichon**

Born in Montpellier in 1987, Baptiste Rabichon lives and works in Paris. He graduated from the Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2014, and was accepted at Le Fresnoy in 2015, from which he graduated with the congratulations of the jury in 2017. He is the winner of the 2017 BMW prize, of the 2018 Moly-Sabata/Salon de Montrouge prize and of the Picto/Lab 2021 prize. In 2019 and 2020, he is resident at the Cité Internationale des Arts.

In a relationship with images that is as much critical as it is loving, Baptiste Rabichon explores photography in all its forms, tackling both the ancestral methods of photography (photograms, pinhole cameras, cyanotypes) and the tools of modern imagery, which he tries, always with the same jubilation, to push to their limits. Today, the heart of his work consists of the creation of unique photographs, where, through a multitude of stages, digital and silver are intertwined within a single photosensitive medium.

„The Blue Screen of Death is the nickname given to the emergency stop display issued by Windows when it is unable to process a system error. The screen then turns completely blue, with only a small amount of information about the error being displayed in white.

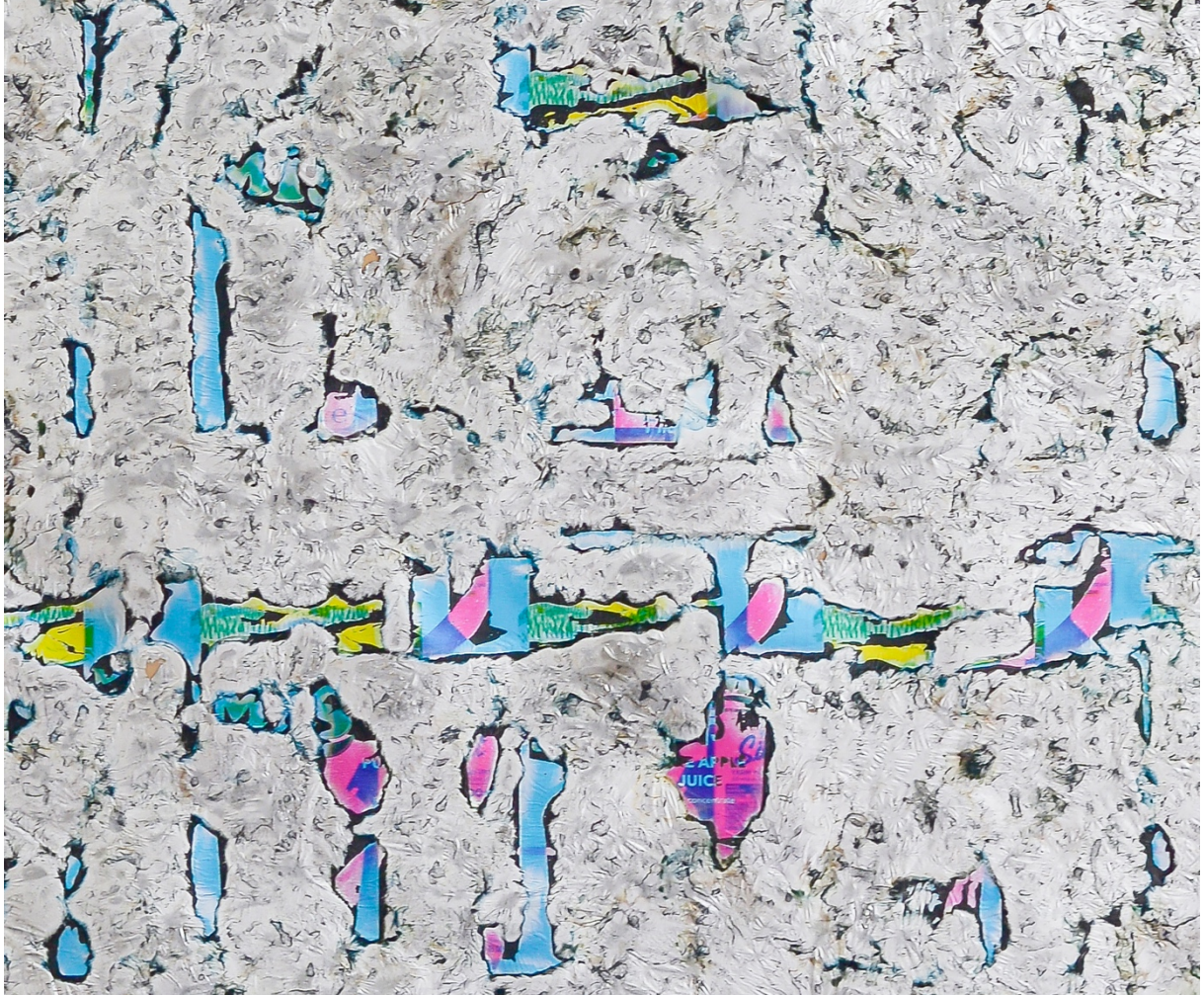
This nickname, given since the 1980s (no doubt in reference to The Death Star) to computer crashes, seemed to me a strange premonition of the gradual invasion of our lives by screens.

It is now generally accepted that the ubiquity of screens in general, and smartphones in particular, is not without consequences. These hundreds of millions of screens manufactured every year (for smartphones alone, the number of units sold annually has exceeded one billion since 2014) pollute, deplete natural resources and are manufactured in working conditions that at worst we prefer to ignore, at best we deplore as an inevitability of globalised capitalism. When it comes to the use of these devices, the situation is hardly any more reassuring. Studies are multiplying on the ravages that too early and intense exposure to these screens can cause in young children: delayed language development, attention and behaviour disorders.

Studies are also beginning to show that teenagers and adults are addicted to smartphones, and that there are links between depression and certain social problems, and between over-intensive use and sleep disorders, difficulty concentrating and even memory loss.

Each work in the *Blue Screen of Death* series is therefore contaminated by the flux of the screen, just as every moment of life already is. Each work has to deal with this new reality, just as we, in Real Life, have to deal with it. But isn't that what we artists are expected to do? To seize and divert? If we can't do without it, at least do something with it?"

Baptiste Rabichon



João Freitas  
*Untitled (detail), 2023*  
Found Tetra Pak cardboard protection (heated)  
139 x 105 cm

© Photo : Sara Labidi



Baptiste Rabichon  
*Blue Screen of Death (179)*, 2021  
Transparent photogram, ed 1 + 1 AP  
40 x 30 cm