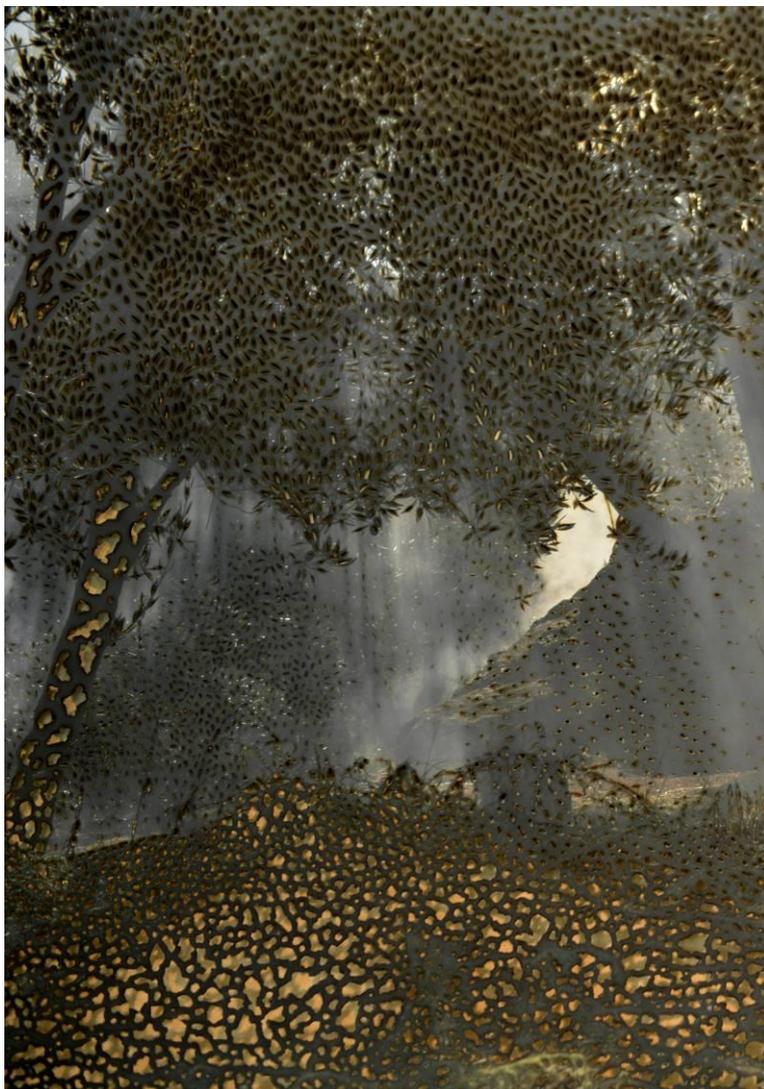


At the Maison de l'Amérique latine

October 15, 2019 - January 10, 2020

Miguel Rothschild The Specter

Guest curator: Béatrice Andrieux



Miguel Rothschild, *The Aura*, detail 110 x 160 cm, ink jet prints with burns.

Beginning on the 15th of October, the Maison de l'Amérique latine will lend its ground-floor exhibition space to the Argentine artist Miguel Rothschild who will produce a new, previously unseen, work. Established in Berlin since the beginning of the 90s, Miguel Rothschild's entire body of work blends installation, sculpture, glass, organic materials and photography. Though performance

played an important part of his earliest creations, with time, he distanced himself from it to tackle other media such as photography, without shrinking from burning or puncturing it.

The whole of Miguel Rothschild's exhibit at the Maison de l'Amérique latine pertains to the central theme of his work: the specter. In this respect, the public will behold **his installation "Groß und Kleingeist", composed of two photographic prints.**

These depict the evolution of an ever-growing cloud of smoke, produced by a forest fire that devours nature into nothingness, from one photograph to the other, obscuring it until nothing is visible. The sizes of the photographs shown vary according to the evolution of the cloud of smoke. As a result, Miguel Rothschild creates a subtle variation of that which is destroyed and that which destroys. His goal is not to evoke a nature undisturbed and flourishing. On the contrary, his interest lies in that chance moment in which something takes place that could alter or destroy everything. At the same time, he repeats that which the photographs illustrate: he punctures holes in areas of the photographs where landscape would appear, thus expressing a perceptible reality of the forest fire. In this way, he allows the spectator to participate and feel the coming danger.

Here, he blends a mixed feeling of menace and mystery. By burning the paper, the artist also abandons the traditional connection with two-dimensionality. Riddled with punctures, the paper seems to extend beyond its edges, endless, and offers yet another perception, towards an opening, an uncertainty.



Miguel Rothschild, *The Spectre*, detail, 140 x 210 cm, ink jet prints with burns.

Echoing this ensemble, **Miguel Rothschild displays a rising white panache of smoke in a glass case, specifically conceived for the Maison de l'Amérique latine: a metaphor for the spirit of the forest.** Creeping over the transparent surface looking for a way to break through and seize it, as if searching for a possible escape. Despite his attempts, the spirit remains trapped between the panes of glass. In the manner of a moving picture, it works both as a spatial and tactile extension of the photography installation. Intersecting several techniques and means, **Miguel Rothschild evokes the spirit of the forests in its spiritual and poetic dimension, in the same way of the shamanic beliefs where each component of nature has a soul.**

BIOGRAPHY

Miguel Rothschild was born in 1963 in Buenos Aires and lives in Berlin. He began his studies at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires and completed his studies with A Master's degree from the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. His work comprises several media including photography, sculpture as well as installation.

Rothschild is represented by the Paris gallery Bendana-Pinel, where he has exhibited several times. He has also had one-man shows at the Galerie Kuckei (Buenos Aires and Berlin).

The works of Miguel Rothschild are to be found in several institutions such as the Berlinische Galerie, the State Museum of Berlin, the Malba Museo de Arte Latinoamericano in Buenos Aires and at the Fondation Carmignac in Porquerolles, France.

3 questions to Miguel Rothschild by Beatrice Andrieux, curator Paris-Berlin July 2019

BA The question of the pierced, perforated, burnt image has been central to your artistic endeavors since your beginnings. What interpretations do you attribute to this transformation of the medium?

MR In transforming the medium, my main interest lies in the notion of reading an image. I thus propose a second rendition to alter its reading. In the specific case of this new work, I was attracted to the shapes of the smoke of a forest fire in the countryside of Granada, Spain. I perceived them so intensely that they made me think of spirits, as if coming out from the inside of the landscape. I was fascinated by the mystery emanating from the sight of that. By calling the exhibition *Le Spectre*, I reinforce this other way of seeing the photograph. I burn a part of my prints, following the forms suggested by nature, keeping the smoke intact in the photograph to which I attribute a strong presence and plasticity. With the burning, I obtain shadows of irregular and ominous forms which evoke the same fire in serendipitous ways. It thrills me to play with the idea of something absurd one could read into the smoke. In an earlier series, I pierced my photographs with a hole-punch. The elements obtained were added to the frame like confetti creating a duality between the tragic and the festive; I have also worked with snoods, broken glass and pins on photographs. The choice of materials used is not arbitrary. Each of these materials has specific properties and References which, in my photographs, allow for new possibilities of interpretation.

BA At the beginning of your activity, performance was very present in your work. It later evolved towards a multidisciplinary approach combining sculpture, installation in which photography plays an important role. How do you explain this evolution?

MR I have always worked in interdisciplinary ways. I use photography only as a means, but not as an end. I have never defined myself as a photographer. I began to use photography as a tool that allowed me to play with images of reality to transform them. But in my exhibitions, I usually create a dialogue between the works on the walls and the objects in the space. At times, some of these objects are rooted in photography; others are not. I believe that the dialogues add a dynamic to the exhibition. I am not interested in the medium, that can change, but, rather, by what I can express through it. That is what defines my work.

BA The Maison de l'Amérique latine has given you free rein for this exhibition, how did you approach the space?

MR For the Maison de l'Amérique latine, I conceived a series of works that, in my view, have a connection to a magical realism, characteristic of a great part of Latin American literature. Associating reality, symbolized by smoke, with spirits —specters of nature—is to endow it with a sort of magical religiosity that fascinates me. In this respect, my project for the Maison de l'Amérique latine resonates with this South American literary movement. The almost-square exhibition space calls for a tangible concept, circumscribed. For this reason, I am exhibiting a series of works presenting different approaches to a central theme. Allowing dialogue among them to create mystery, I pursue my investigations of the double game, the dual reading in my work. I am mostly interested by the possibility to see reality with another eye, adding to it a mystery, a spirituality.

BA The entire body of your work is steeped in spirituality. Here, shamanism seems to have captured your interest in terms of the relation between the natural world and the spiritual world. Are you particularly fascinated by shamanism?

MR I am not specifically interested in shamanism but, rather, as I have explained, in the possibility of seeing reality in a different way, incorporating mystery and spirituality. This seems quite different from the world of shamanism in which the shaman, himself, plays an intermediary role between the natural world and the spiritual one, moving from one to the other in a state of trance. I do not pretend to evoke a religious practice but, simply, to propose a poetic interpretation.

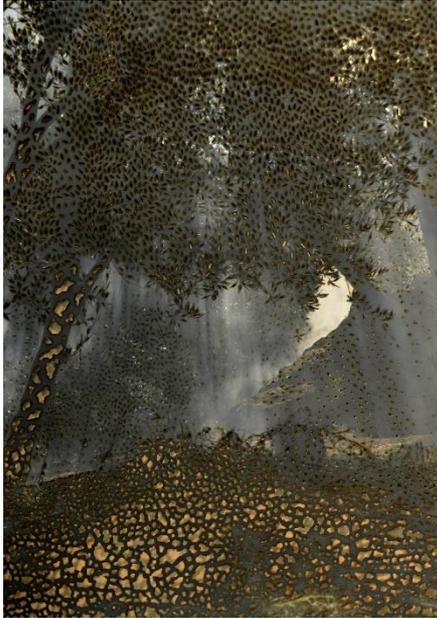
Press visuals available



Miguel Rothchild, *The Spectre*, 140 x210 cm, ink jet prints with burns.



Miguel Rothchild, *The Spectre*, détail, 140 x210 cm, ink jet prints with burns.



Miguel Rothchild, *The Aura*, detail, 110 x160 cm, ink jet prints with burns.



Miguel Rothchild, *The Aura*, 110 x160 cm, ink jet prints with burns.



Miguel Rothchild, *Groß-und Kleingeist*, 118 x 206 cm, diptyque, ink jet prints with burns.

A catalog of the installation will be published.

PRESS CONTACT

Press visuals are available on demand at:
Anne Samson Communications
Morgane Barraud
morgane@annesamson.com
(33) (0) 1 40 36 84 34

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Maison de l'Amérique latine
217 Boulevard Saint-Germain, 75007 - Paris
Tel: 01 49 54 75 00
www.mal217.org
Open Monday- Friday from 10am to 8pm; Saturday
from 2-6pm
Closed Sunday and holidays
Closed from December 23rd to January 3rd 2020
included.
Free admission