© Zanele Muholi, Bester V, Mayotte, 2015, de la série Somnyama Ngonyama, tirage gélatino-argentique. Courtesy Stevenson, Cape Town / Johannesburg & Yancey Richardson, New York

PHOTO-THEORIA 27   **FÉVRIER 2018**

© Zanele Muholi, Julile I, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2016, de la série Somnyama Ngonyama, tirage gélatino-argentique, 65.8x100 cm.
Courtesy Stevenson, Cape Town / Johannesburg & Yancey Richardson, New York

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PHOTO-THEORIA

Créé en 2011, Photo-Theoria vous propose des sujets d'actualité sur la photographie contemporaine, ainsi qu'un aperçu des expositions de photographie en Suisse.
Historienne de l'art spécialisée en photographie, Nassim Daghighian est membre de l'AICA – Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art. Elle enseigne la photographie contemporaine, l'histoire de la photographie et l'analyse d'image au CEPV depuis 1997. Elle a été conservatrice associée au Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne, de 1998 à 2004. Depuis vingt ans, elle s'implique dans la promotion de la création actuelle, notamment comme membre fondateur et présidente de NEAR, association suisse pour la photographie contemporaine, de 2009 à 2013, et rédactrice en chef du mensuel NEXT édité par NEAR, de 2008 à l'été 2015 (72 numéros).

© Jules Spinatsch, Part I – Construct, 2012, tirage jet d'encre, 137.5x212 cm, éd. 5, de la série Sinking Values – oder die Reise zum Nullpunkt der Werschöpfung. Courtesy Christophe Guye

Jules Spinatsch. Summit

Christophe Guye Galerie, Zurich, 24.01. – 21.04.2018
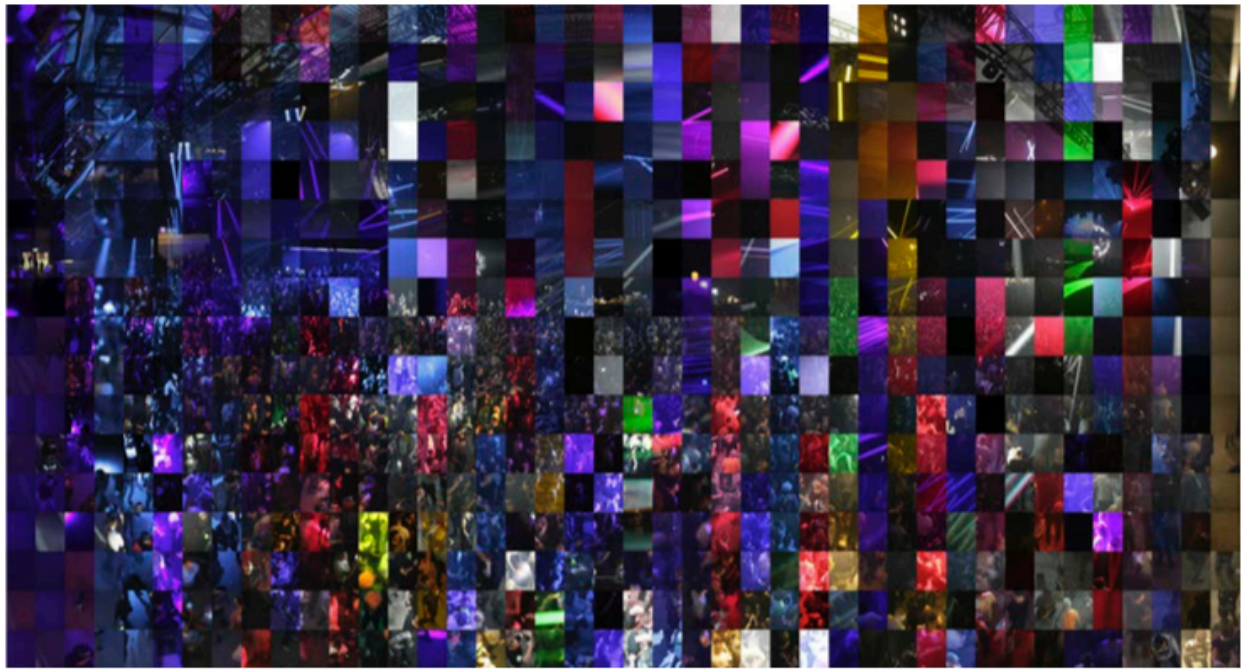www.christopheguye.com

Jules Spinatsch (1964, Davos, CH ; vit à Zurich) est un artiste majeur dans le domaine de la photographie suisse et internationale. Il interroge le médium à l'ère numérique autant sur le plan technique qu'idéologique. *Summit* présente une cinquantaine d'œuvres issues de dix séries réalisées entre 1998 et 2017, dont certaines sont inédites. Il s'agit de la première exposition d'importance de Jules Spinatsch à Zurich depuis 2006. Par cette présentation de seize ans de pratique artistique, *Summit* met en évidence l'implication de l'auteur dans un discours critique, social et politique. Jules Spinatsch est tout particulièrement attentif aux différents rapports de pouvoir et à la manière dont la photographie peut s'y trouver impliquée lors de l'usage de caméras pour la surveillance, la gestion et l'(auto-)contrôle. L'espace d'exposition a été divisé en quatre zones afin de présenter les travaux récents dans la salle principale et les plus anciens dans la zone placée derrière, alors que l'entrée et les vitrines présentent des tirages ainsi qu'une vidéo. Le titre de l'exposition, *Summit*, polysémique, permet diverses associations et suggère au visiteur de percevoir les différents niveaux d'interprétation des séries photographiques exposées.
Curateur : Lars Willumeit

Extraits du texte écrit par Lars Willumeit, curateur indépendant :

" The term *SUMMIT*, here serving as the exhibition title, refers to multiple associations, phenomena and concepts that should serve as a diverse set of layers for interpretation through the perception of the viewer. In Latin *summum bonum* designates the highest good and a *sum* refers a quantity of goods or an ultimate end or goal. Of course, *summit* commonly also refers to a mountain peak or an apex in the nature world, as well as to meetings or conferences between international heads of government or industry CEO's. But on a philosophical level it can also refer to the highest point or level attainable or as a summary, totality or aggregate of something abstract. All these associations can help making connections between the different bodies of work that might not seem to be connected at all on first sight. If a mountain summit, for example as part of a winter landscape that appears in the photos of Spinatsch's *Snow Management* series, might provide a great panorama, the artistic convention or genre of the panorama in Spinatsch's case provides a

© Jules Spinatsch, Tanzboden 1, Time Warp Festival Mannheim, 2015, tirage jet d'encre, 140x245 cm. Courtesy Christophe Guye

" technological and an aesthetic peak-experience as well – especially since he grew up at 2590 meters above sea level on top of the Jakobshorn, a Davos mountain where his parents used to run Ski Resort restaurants.

Spinatsch's large-scale panorama works, each consisting of up to several thousand individual images recorded with programmed cameras, are cases of calculated failure and semi-automated authorship. They are hybrid results of a scopic human-machine interface that captures and records external worlds by detecting and controlling light. So the exhibition appropriates the terminology of summit as a way to trace changing notions of the gaze. Those stemming from the past, such as visions of the sublime and that of visual contemplation as in the landscape images of *Snow Management*, as well as those that relate to the present and near future, such as notions of spectacle and attention economy in cognitive capitalism and its mechanisms of control, surveillance and value extraction based on automated image interpretation systems and the algorithmic capitalization of metadata, as in the Series *Inside SAP*.

By stating that the observer himself is the vantage point, the artist further delegates the act and responsibility of interpretation to the viewer her- or himself, thereby making the exhibition visitor part of the meaning creation chain. Spinatsch has researched, appropriated and experimented with hybrid forms of photographic authorship for well over a decade now. He was partly inspired by the philosopher Vilem Flusser, who pointed out a long time ago now that photographic authorship has been inscribed by the fundamental principles of photography itself through the program of the apparatus and has thereby exerted its influence on visual authorship since the days of its invention. The big difference today is that the technology firms of today have proprietary algorithms that partly not only determine the production of an image but also its circulation and distribution as well as its consumption.

In a rare feat of artistic portfolio diversification Spinatsch has created works that require the viewer to adapt and recondition ones' gaze as well as ones' methods of visual analysis and interpretation.
If in the series *Snow Management* he addressed outdated binary notions of nature versus culture in the age of globalized spectacle tourism and the Anthropocene, the binary of human versus non-human is increasingly dissolved through his working method that he initiated during his earlier series *Temporary Discomfort*. Here Spinatsch tackles both conventional notions of authorship and what is considered a "good image" head-on. But this investigative attitude towards photographic media is not only important in regard to notions of photographic representation as indexical slices of reality and to their connected truth regimes and social conventions. The works *Asynchronous I – X,* of which the show presents two chapters, retells episodes from the history of nuclear technology. Their narrative starts from images either produced for marketing purposes, from news sources or publications promoting nuclear technology.

© Jules Spinatsch, Scene D6, 2005, c-print, 149x180 cm, série Snow Management, Applied Landscapes. Courtesy Christophe Guye

It is also often relevant to the thematic content of his research itself, such as in the case of *Inside SAP,* a series that with renewed intensity reflects visually on the paradoxes and contradictions between freedom, privacy, transparency and control within the ideologies of technological solutionism.

In this case as acted out by SAP, one of the global players for business software that is used by controlling departments globally as well as for big data profiling. Here Spinatsch employs techniques of layering and abstraction through the additive and subtractive processing of still images and video footage, resulting in a work that short-circuits its own interpretations. This SAP series so far presents the latest step in the evolution of the Surveillance Panorama Projects which Spinatsch started in 2003.

SUMMIT as a show presents Spinatsch as a contemporary artist who has mastered the critical practices of high-frequency trade in photographic images, which are often located somewhere in-between human and machine-based authorship. In a wider context the show therefore also reflects the currently increased "weaponization" of images on levels of political and commercial propaganda, as well as on machine-authored and machine-perceived images as in for example in tracking or targeting functionalities used in surveillance systems or drones developed by the military-industrial complex.

Spinatsch is a photographer and analyst of both "divisive moments" and "device-sive moments" - captured moments that relate to some of the pressing and relevant socio-political, aesthetic and technological issues of our time. Today's "decisive moments", as he stated in an interview, "are not happening while taking pictures but before and after."

Lars Willumeit, independent curator

Source : dossier de presse

© Jules Spinatsch, Rote Mirage, 2014, tirages jet d'encre sur aluminium, 77x56 cm chacun, série Asynchron. Courtesy Christophe Guye
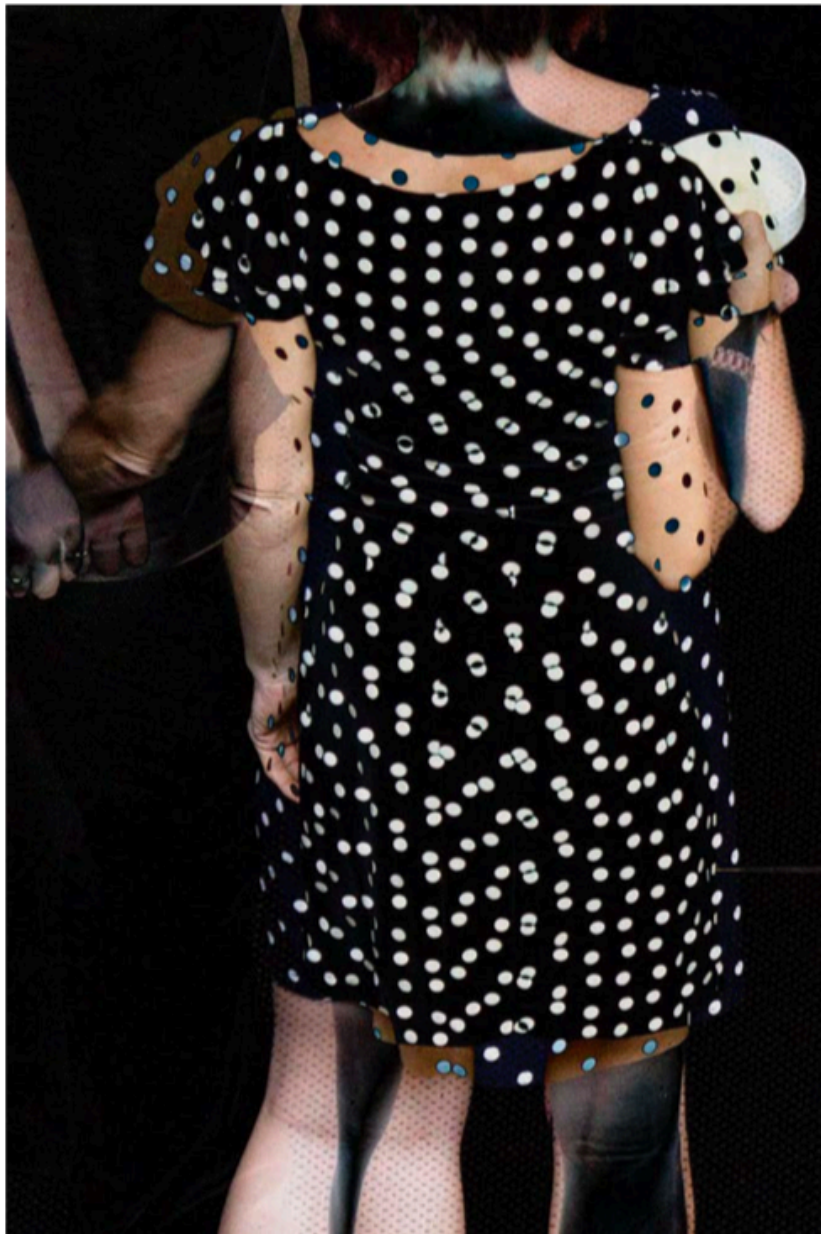
© Jules Spinatsch, Inside SAP, 2016, double installation vidéo, 42'28". Courtesy C. Guye

© Jules Spinatsch, Inside SAP, 2016, double installation vidéo, 42'28". Courtesy Christophe Guye