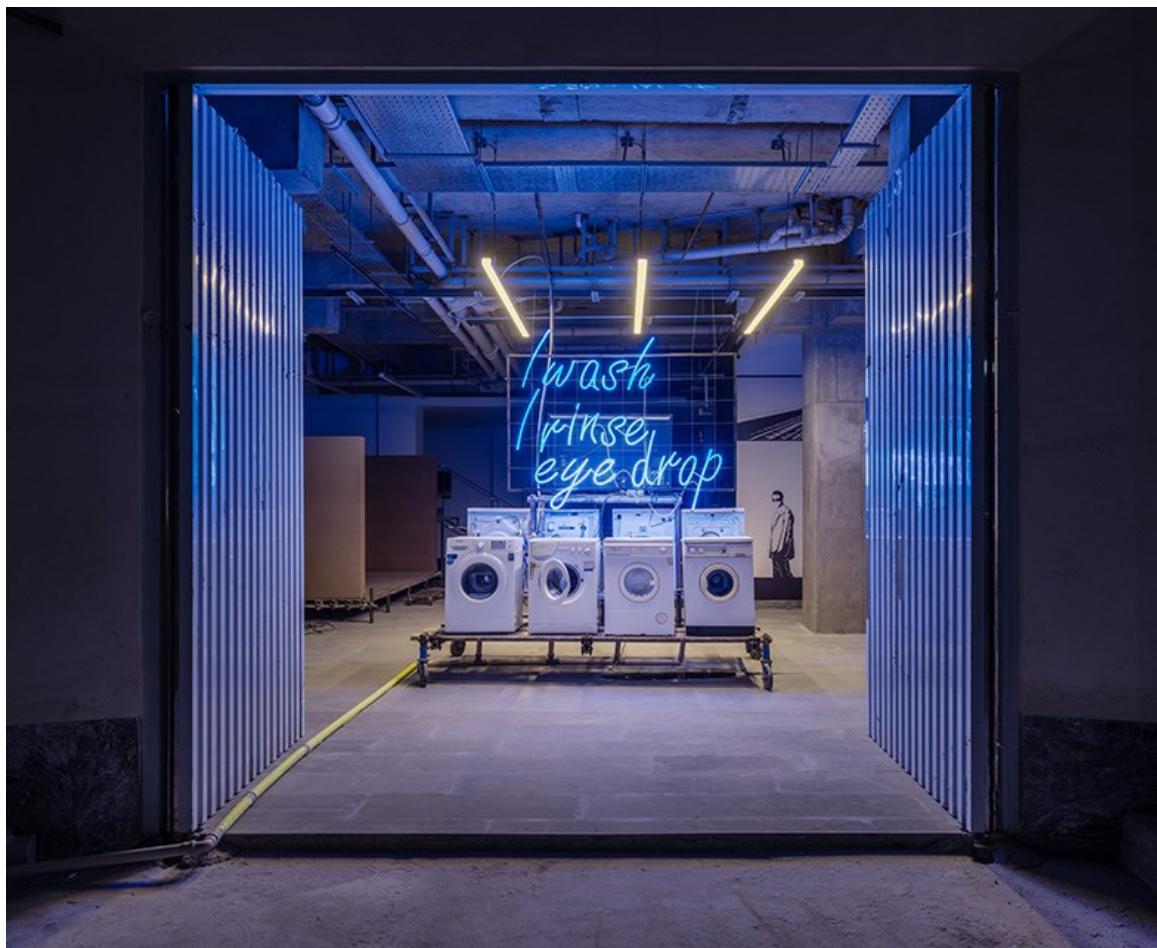


Pop-up Clouds
Arash Hanaei

14 June - 5 July 2019
Yassi Foundation, Tehran



List of works:

Installation views

A paranoid cucumber

Mixed media installation with audio
2019

Transparency effect on my skin is happening

Mixed media installation
2019

Pop-up Clouds

series of digital paintings
2018 – 2019

including: *Alien-Shaped Head*
Diasec digital print
146 x 100 cm

The Lost Drone

Diasec digital print
146 x 100 cm

Fire! Fireworks

Diasec digital print
146 x 100 cm

'Nobody's Car!' [she said]

Diasec digital print
146 x 100 cm

Pokémon Go

Mixed media installation with video
2019

To a Passerby

Digital wallpaper print
333 x 971cm
2016

Arash Hanaei, *Pop-Up Clouds*

Since 2014, when he relocated between Paris and Tehran, Arash Hanaei's work progressively shifted from documentary and photographic practices to inter-media speculations, from strict urbanism spaces to psycho-geographic wanderings and from representation issues to post-Internet strategies.

As an artist who gained international recognition by 2010, when "Iranian Contemporary Art" became a hot subject for the Western art scene, it has been quite easy for him to acknowledge the disillusionments and dead-ends of those identity politics. "Iranian art" as a commodity is almost behind us by now, some other trend or identity must have replaced it. In the meantime the "Iranian artist" has experienced less fancy roles and positions (as a refugee, a migrant, a worker...). These entail their own ideological traps but paradoxically enable the artist to explore the subterranean spaces (or the margins) of the global media society – and eventually of our subjectivity.

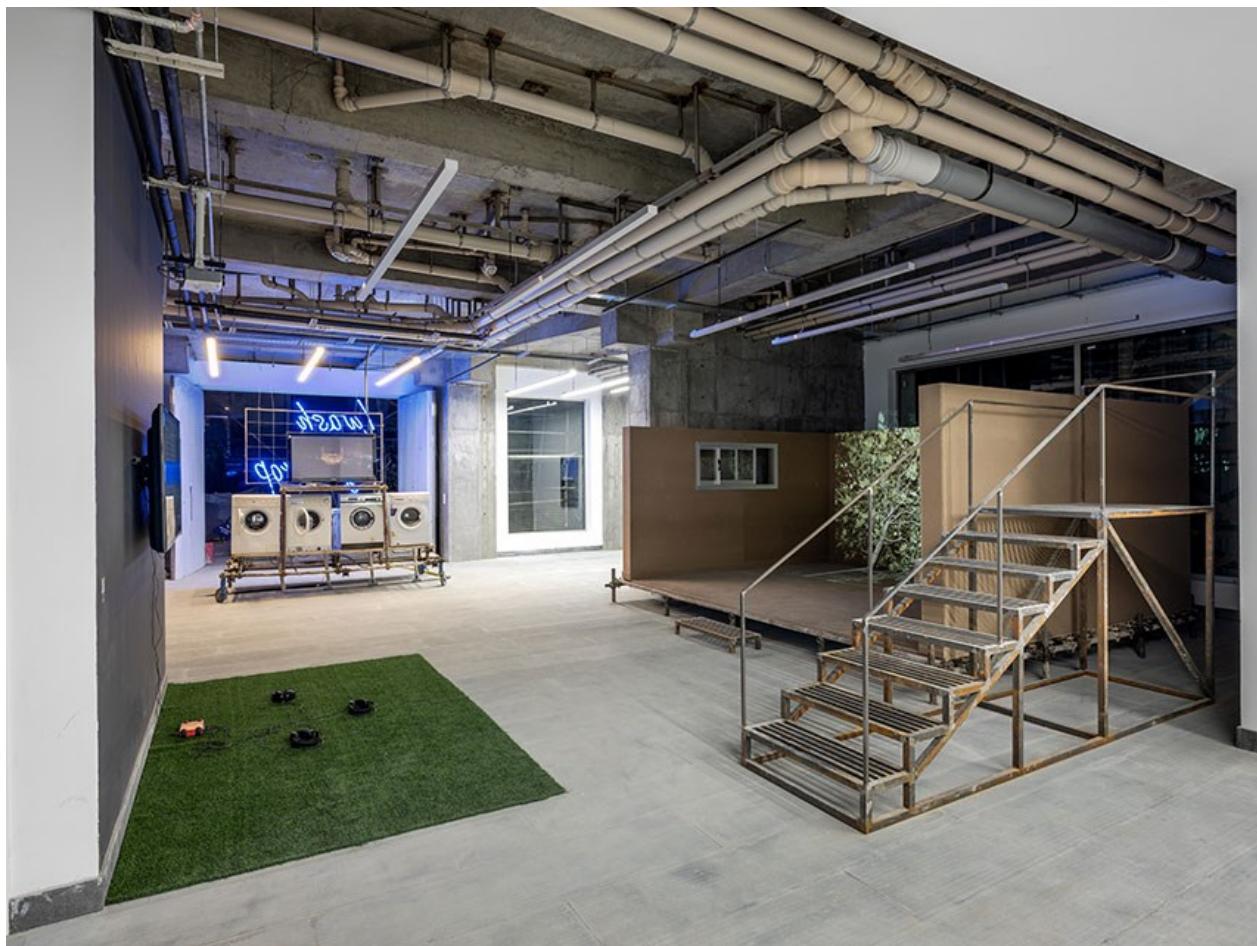
Hanaei's large spectrum of concerns (the migration crisis in a digital age, the suburban or post-urban social life and goods circulation, the relation of labour, citizenship and architecture) almost sounds like a provocation or a statement for working outside of a stable art market representation; as a matter of fact he has often been avoiding to take part in it. A market or commodity system, which in Paris, France traps the artist in the unresolvable dilemma: to emphasize your oriental identity or to remain an anonymous migrant artist subjected to humanitarian grants. The works presented in this exhibition are also the product of an artistic collapse while trying to escape commodification, identity politics and conceptual reductionism; to shift from representation systems to circulation systems.

To a Passer-by as a Baudelairian visual allegory, plays with the genre of autofiction but at the same time with the fear of one's life reduction to a simple data (without aesthetics quality); the digital drawings Pop-Up Clouds (Nobody's Car, The Lost Drone, Fire! Fireworks and Alien-Shaped Head) almost transform social spaces into algorithmic surfaces, where the experience of time and space slips out in a speculative void; A Paranoid Cucumber literally integrates the visitor as an activator to a spatial and sound narrative with no real beginning or end; finally Transparency Effect On My Skin Is Happening looks like an anti-monument to hyperactivity and energy waste as well, or one could add a dream or nightmare machine which threatens both labour force and critical thought; an entropic system subjected to all deregulations.

The general title Pop-Up Clouds stands as a metaphor for the overlaps of the domestic and public spheres, but also in another way of computer based and natural sciences; or a palimpsest of contradictory images to the point of becoming a system of alienation – following the fragmentation of one's memory. In a more positive stream of ideas, Pop-Up Clouds also speaks of Hanaei's installations as producers of delayed vision: something to be seen or witnessed has been delayed in favour of ghost apparitions, unconscious landscapes...

Morad Montazami, June 2019

Installation views



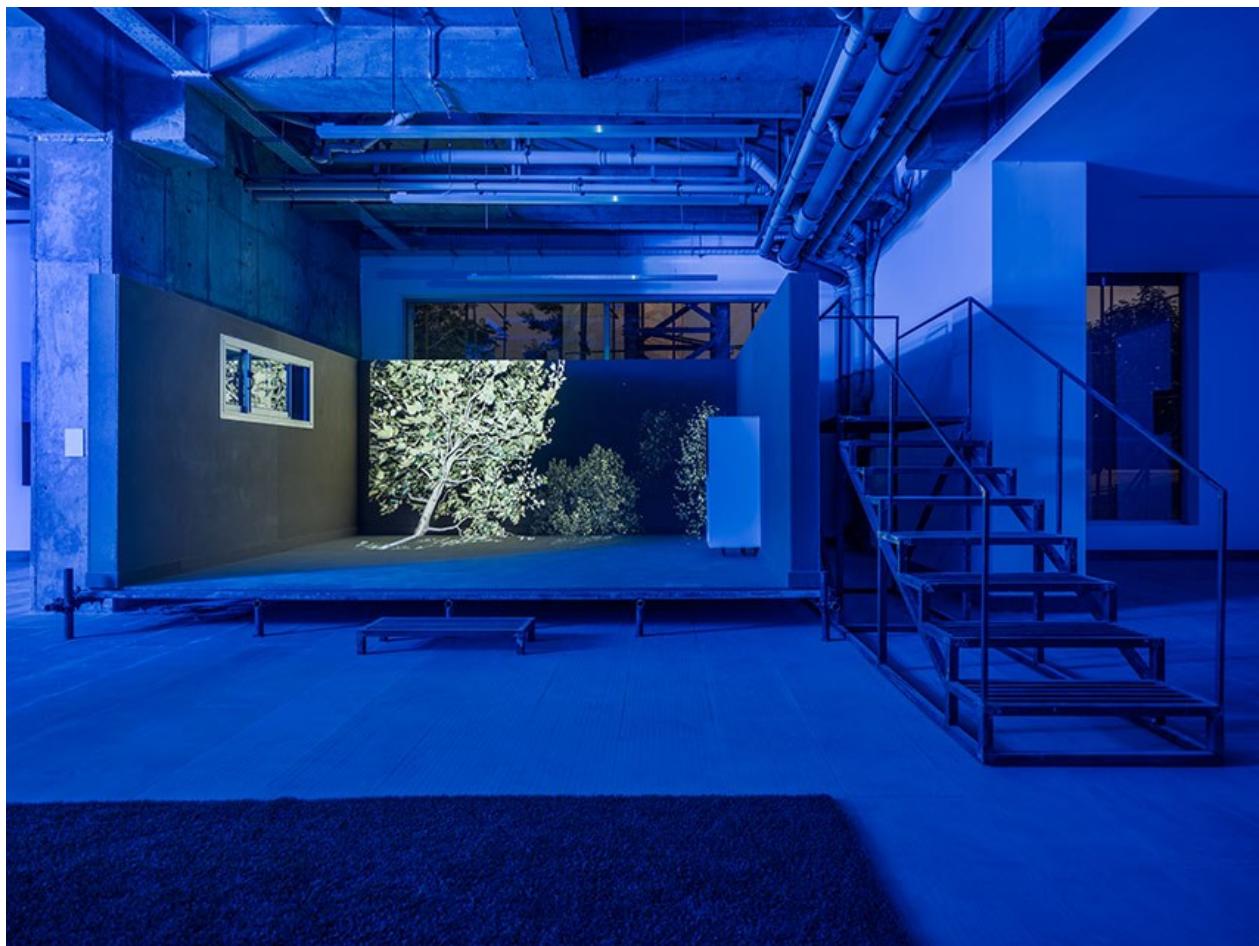


A paranoid cucumber

Mixed media installation with audio

2019

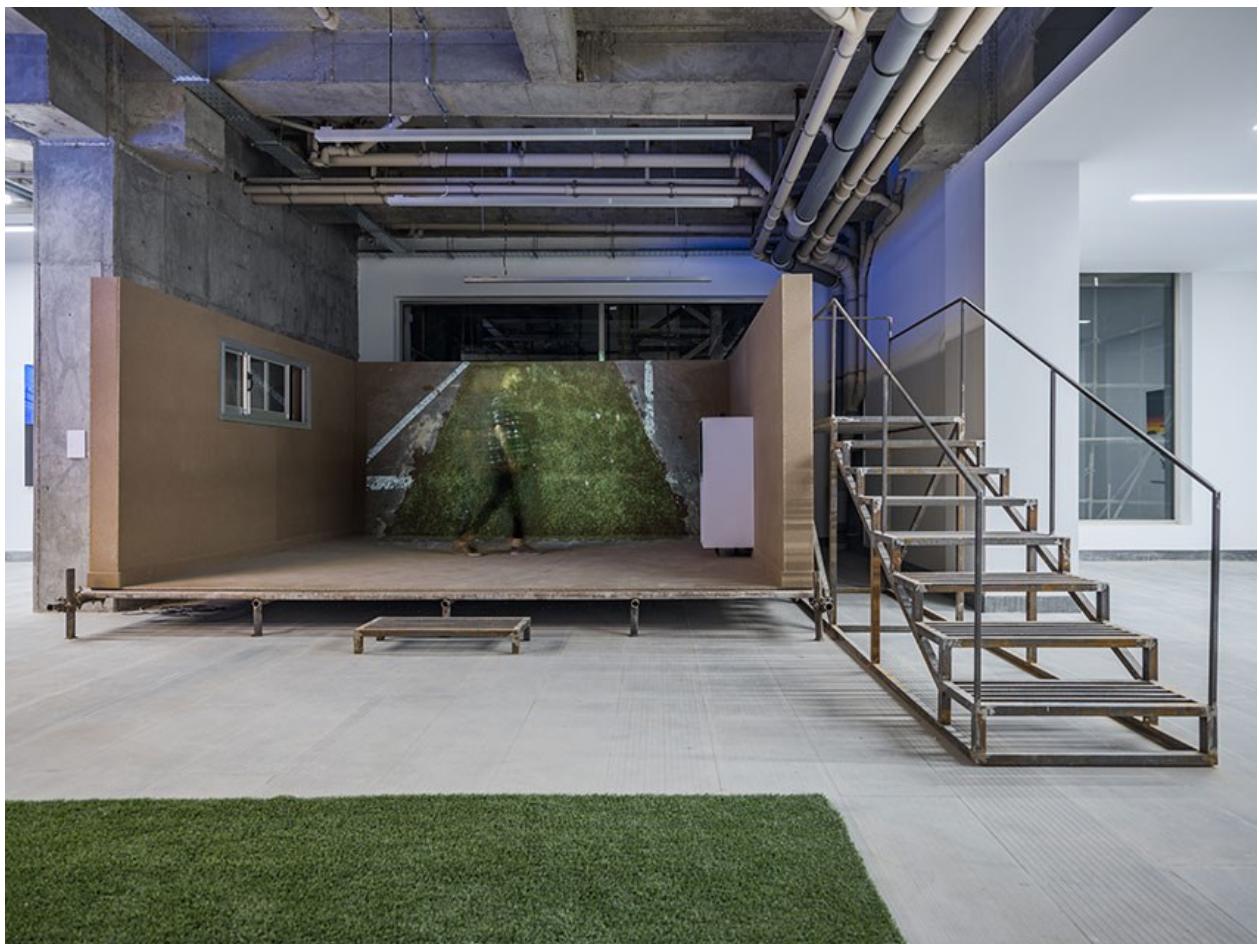
This architectural installation is based on the memory of my childhood apartment, where I have crudely replicated the living room, a window and a mirrored shelving unit for the viewer to enter, or view from the adjacent staircase. This installation then becomes a set for a monologue that plays through the speakers, where a voice claiming to be a ‘paranoid cucumber’ recounts a traumatic memory from his childhood, when his windows were shot by an unspecified attacker.



A paranoid cucumber

Mixed media installation with audio

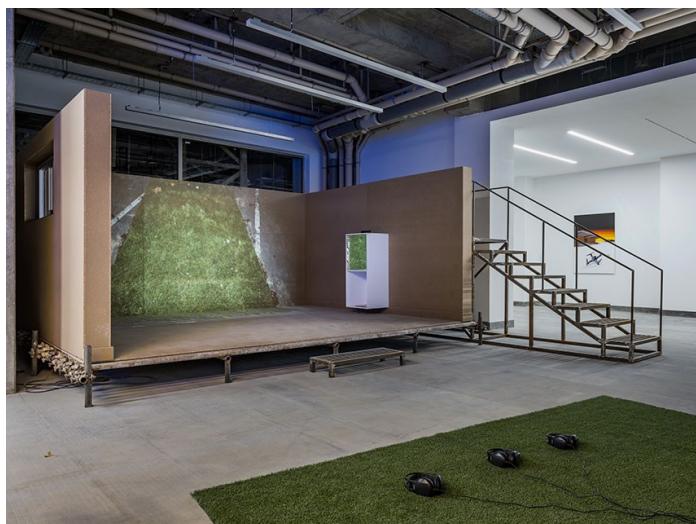
2019



A paranoid cucumber

Mixed media installation with audio

2019



Audio transcript

Cucumber. A widely-cultivated plant in the gourd family. Originally from South Asia, the cucumber now grows on most continents. Many different varieties of cucumber are traded on the global market.

In general cultivation, cucumbers are classified into three different groups: cucumbers for slicing, cucumbers for pickling and paranoid cucumbers.

Who am I? I am a paranoid cucumber with low calories but high in many important vitamins and minerals.

I am mini, seedless, and slightly sweet and available all-year-round except on holidays and mostly during the summer. Easy to cut and peel, I am on average 10–18 cm long, and am commonly eaten chopped up in plain yogurt with mint, or sliced thin and long with salt and lemon juice. My vines are parthenocarpic, which means they reproduce by themselves, requiring no pollinators to be fertilized.

Where is this place? It's a weird location in the memory of someone's mind, on the third floor of a six-floor building, 36 years ago, when the consequence was no more than 6 years old. It's morning now and all of a sudden, I'm gonna hear gun shots five minutes later. Some bullets will hit the window and the wall facing the window. I know this is just archival data, showing the process of transforming "space" into "place" but this doesn't stop me from being scared. After all I believe fear is a natural and important factor in case of an emergency.

What am I doing here?! Well, before I got tripped up by this data, I participated in a panel discussion on transforming spaces in video games and useless utopian architectures. One of the artists in the panel got really angry after I asked a question. I guess he was the one who locked me up in this situation.

"Excuse me, I have a question, I'd like to know who's the audience of this useless program?" I ask, and then the artist replies, "Well, why don't you just go and google the dumbest questions ever asked. Yours could be on top of the list, with questions like, "How do you get YouTube to come and film you?" or, "If money doesn't grow on trees, then why do banks have branches?"

He was so angry with me. Instead I googled, "When anger becomes a problem", but my internet was so slow and there are many reasons your Internet connection might appear slow.

Ahhh! Too late! He has started to download me in to a hidden folder in his mind. Now I'm just a slave of someone else's mind. I am stuck here and am going to be punished somehow. He is forcing me to experience the worst and most dangerous moments in his memory. In less than 3 minutes some bullets will hit the window.

What does a gunshot feel like?

It's a very 'hot' pain, like when you have a blister or a flushed face, but more intense and painful. After a little time passes, there is this very unexpected ache in the surrounding area that feels more like what you would expect from being hit with a baseball bat than from being shot.

Transparency effect on my skin is happening

Mixed media installation with video

2019

A metaphoric factory of tears, this work brings together eight second-hand functioning washing machines, a video montage of various artificial lights, and a three-line poem in neon.



Transparency effect on my skin is happening

Mixed media installation with video

2019

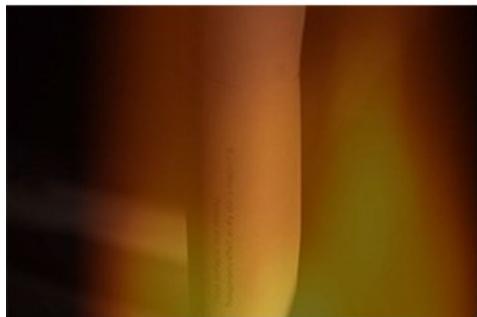


Transparency effect on my skin is happening

Mixed media installation with video

2019

Video stills





Pop-up Clouds

series of digital paintings

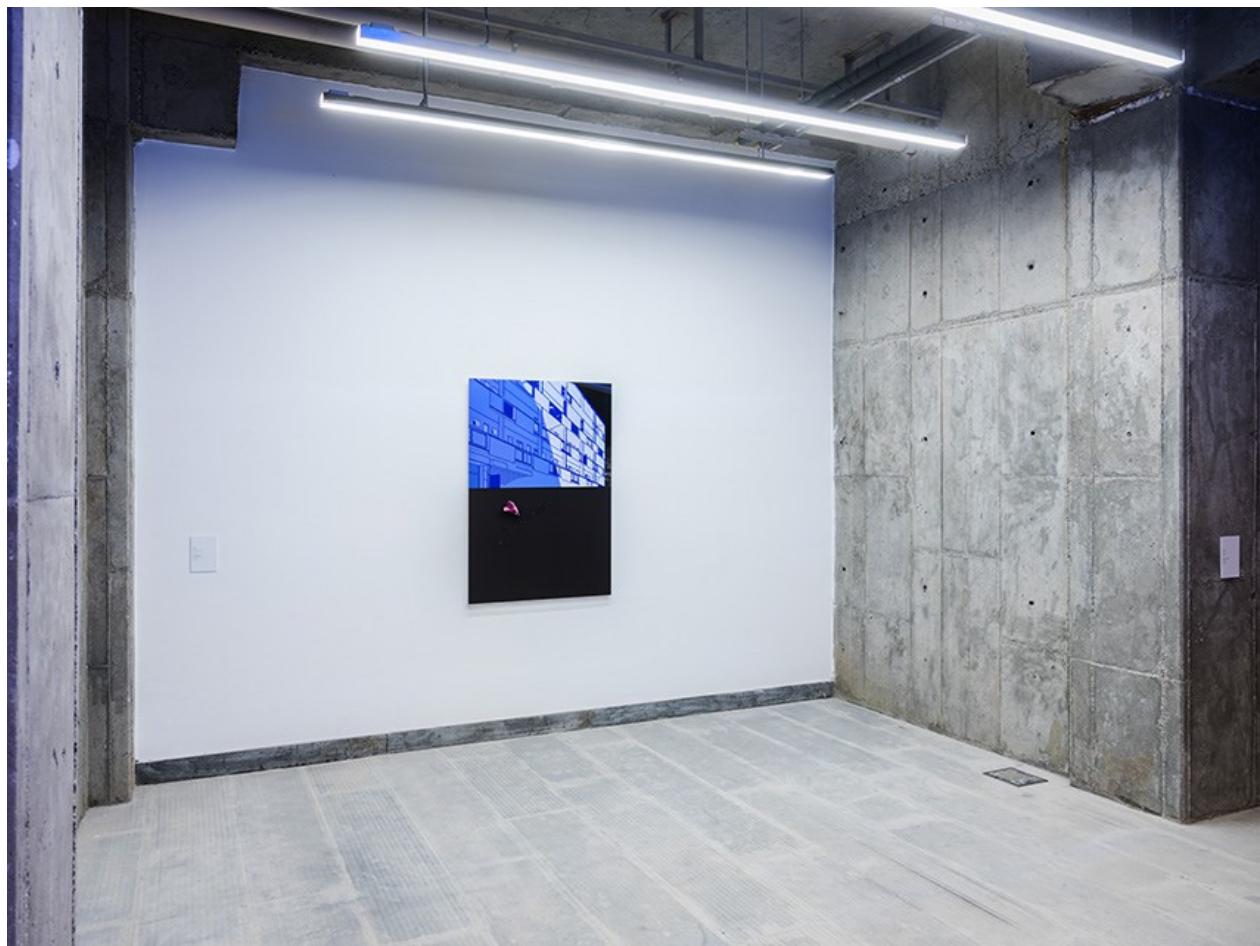
2018 – 2019

Based on photographs taken around the urban wasteland of various European cities, particularly the banlieues of Paris, this series seeks to translate the city's noise into a series of flattened surfaces, each emphasising the uncanny alienation that resonates at the core of both the urban environment, and the photographic image itself.

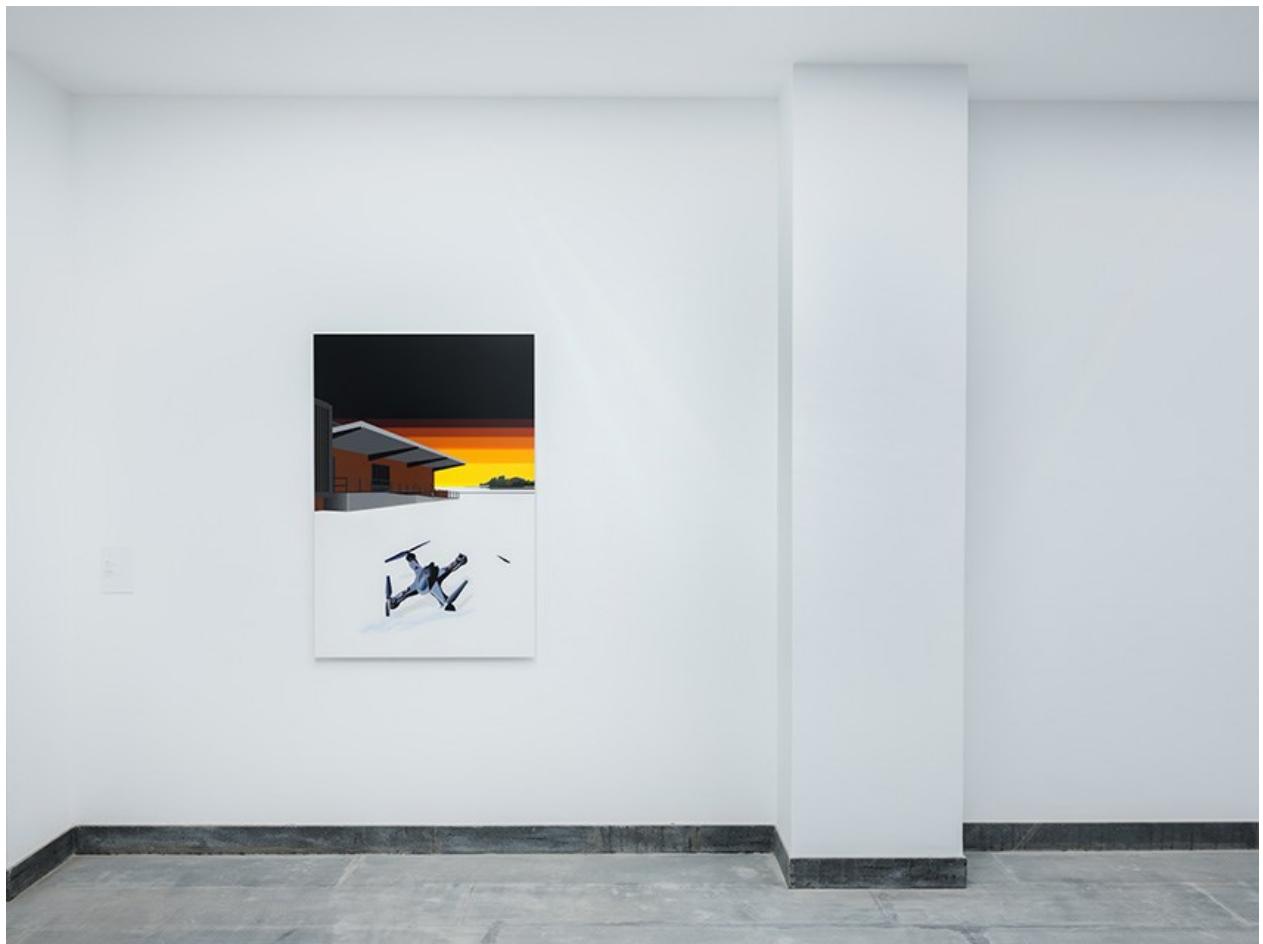
Alien-Shaped Head

Diasec digital print

146 x 100 cm



Pop-up Clouds
series of digital paintings
2018 – 2019

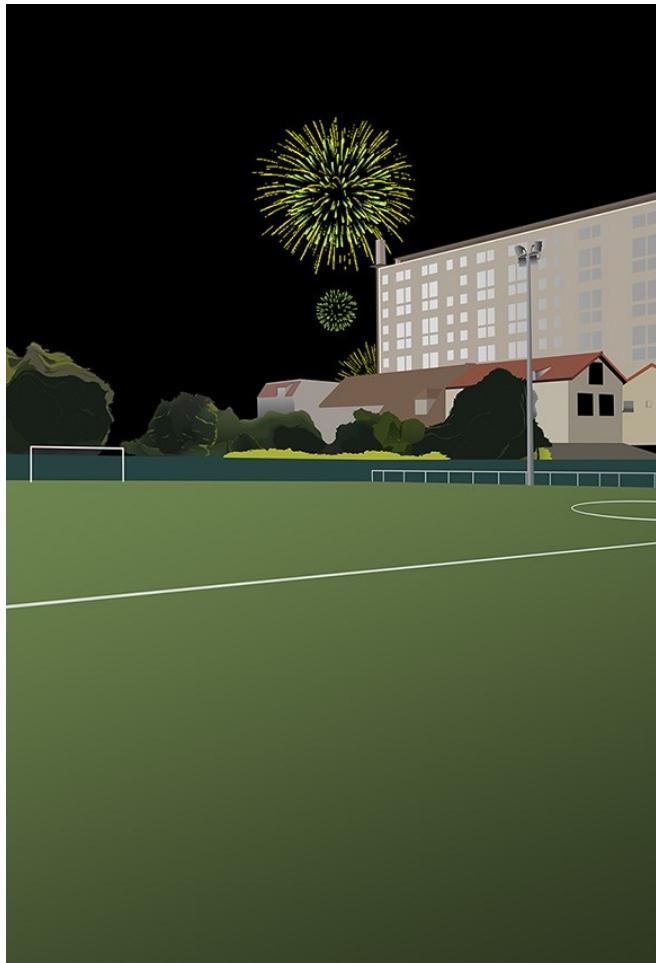


The Lost Drone
Diasec digital print
146 x 100 cm

Pop-up Clouds

series of digital paintings

2018 – 2019



'Fire! Fireworks'

Diasec digital print

146 x 100 cm

Pop-up Clouds
series of digital paintings
2018 – 2019



Nobody's Car! [she said]
Diasec digital print
146 x 100 cm

Pokemon Go

Mixed media installation with video
2019

Pokemon Go, a one-time international virtual reality sensation, was said to have revolutionised the way we interact with media and urban space. A few years after the craze has passed, this work 'remembers' this phenomenon, reflecting on the increasing 'hallucinated' nature of urban space.

Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UUjzUF4LVAk>
published by LetsWiki



Pokemon Go

Mixed media installation with video

2019



To a Passerby

Digital wallpaper print

333 x 971cm

2016

To A Passerby is an immersive wallpaper print, situated somewhere between the visual language of a comic book, a detective novel, and documentation of a situationist dérive. Inspired by a poem of Baudelaire (*À une passante*) the work plunges the viewer into the fragmented logic of the modern city, where all narrative certainty dissolves into a fleeting sequence of images.

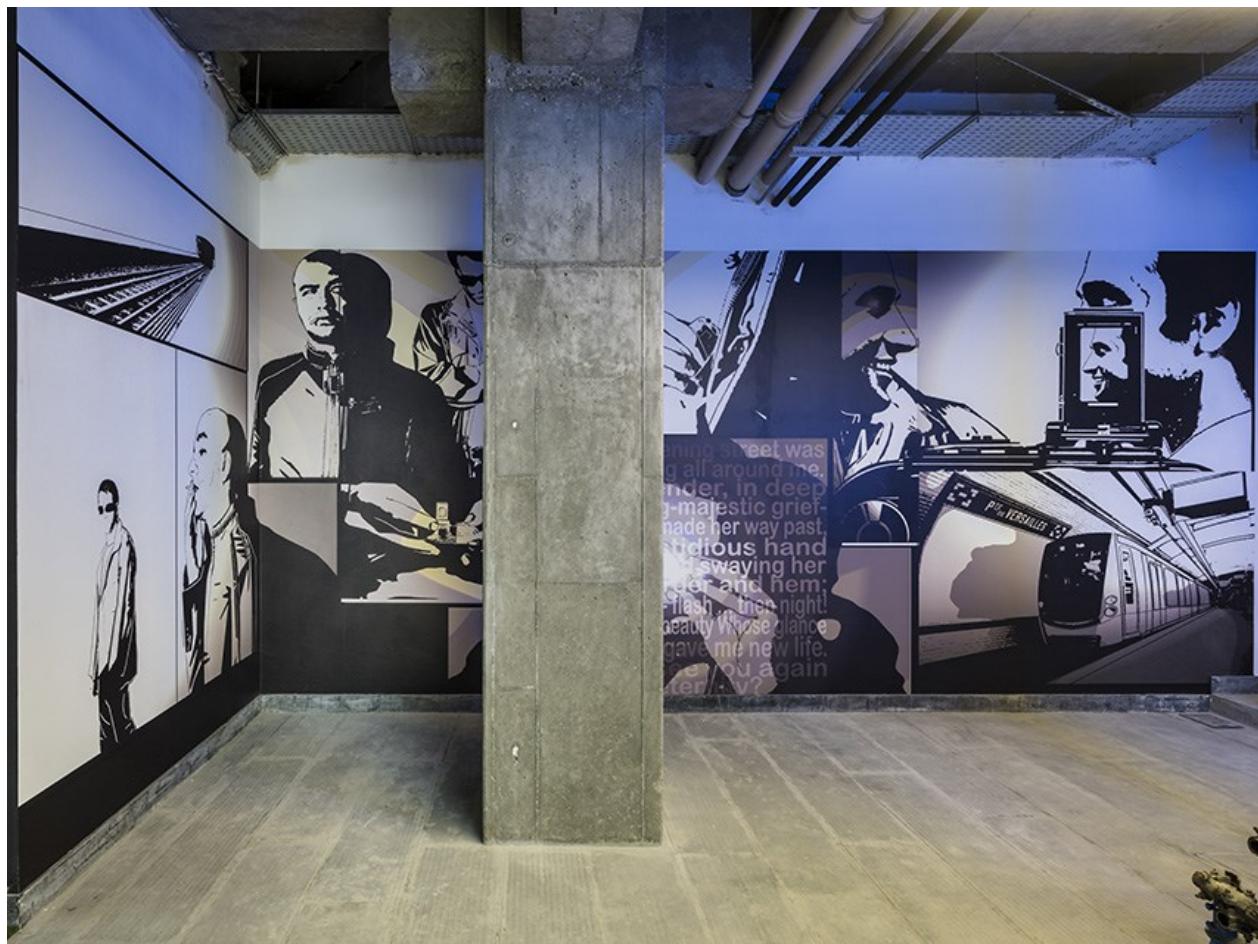


To a Passerby

Digital wallpaper print

333 x 971cm

2016





Photos: Sahand Behrouzi