

Centre
de la photographie
de Mougins

Anna Niskanen



Press kit

**Point sublime :
Anna Niskanen**

**4.11.2023 –
4.02.2024**

Curators:

**François Cheval
and Yasmine Chemali**

**Opening
on Friday 3.11
2023
18:30**

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The Mougins Center of Photography is an institution dedicated to still and moving images, tasked with promoting and exhibiting the many trends in contemporary photography. Open to all forms of photographic modernity, the Center, as a municipal institution, boosts the cultural and tourism sector of the town of Mougins, seeking to enhance the region and foster international communication. From its opening on July 3rd 2021, its mission is to support the creation and experimentations of artists of all profiles: from France or overseas, up-and-coming or established. This support takes various forms including producing, exhibiting, publishing and residencies. Other local authorities in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region (PACA), including those of Marseille and Nice, are already demonstrating a dynamic approach to photography by way of varied exhibitions or thanks to proactive publishing houses and diverse residency programs. The Mougins Center of Photography will complement these activities by providing a similar service for contemporary photography.

Point sublime :

Anna Niskanen

Reclaiming traditional photographic techniques is an attempt, while it is still possible, to resist the standardisation of prints that is a consequence of digital techniques.

By virtue of its uniqueness, a photographic print is more than an artisanal refuge; it affirms a principle of life, a way of paying homage to nature and a refusal of the inevitability of ecological peril. Cyanotype, Prussian blue and gum bichromate, an earthy pigment, are used here to capture a residency in Mougins by Finnish-born photographer Anna Niskanen.

The prints, blue for the Mediterranean and ochre for the hinterland, in large format, capture the place as it burns in the sun. The area around Mougins is beautiful and wild, yet there is also a damaged coastline and a scarred mountain. This sums up the photographer's singular experience of complex landscapes, an admission that they are no more than poetic artefacts, an affirmation of a play on the picturesque as well as her own memories. It is as if the fabric of the landscape could protect and comfort us.

Anna Niskanen's photography rediscovers through the making of images these primitive passions and the emotional spontaneity that stands in modest opposition to the false rationality of the world. An invisible presence that only the sun is capable of revealing.

Under the sun, to be precise.

François Cheval

Biography

Anna Niskanen



Anna Niskanen (born in 1990 in Helsinki, Finland) is a Finnish emerging artist. She approaches photography through alternative printing processes, creating large-scale installations of handmade prints. An overarching theme in her body of work – a continuous flow of unique prints – is memory of place and nature. She builds an archive of photographs and ecofacts collected while visiting places. This vast library of images and natural objects is then used to recreate images in new compositions.

During her graduate studies at Aalto University Photography Programme (Finland), Anna Niskanen developed a distinct aesthetic by exploring photography in printmaking. She was first introduced to the possibilities and limitations of light sensitive materials during her exchange studies at Emily Carr University (Vancouver, Canada). Since then, she has been enhancing her process further in her Helsinki studio as well as artist residencies abroad.

Her work takes on the subject of her surroundings, and the following exhibitions are typically designed for their specific spaces. Her collection of works called 'Oyster' was made of and during her multiple artist residency stays at SÍM in Reykjavik, Iceland. The work was inspired by the surrounding waterscapes, water in all its different forms. Works were made to measure for Hippolyte, an old cinema turned into a gallery, in Helsinki, during summer 2023. The resulting immersive installation was intended to be viewed in person, as if submerged in water.

'Point sublime' follows this paradigm. During an artist residency in the southeast of France, Anna Niskanen has explored, learnt, saw and collected material. The resulting installation at the Mougins Center of Photography represents her first solo exhibition in France.

Series

Anna Niskanen

From a distance, the mountains appear vast and pristine. As I ascend the hill, the perspective of the view changes in size and orientation. Underfoot, the mountain is nothing but soil composed of rock, gravel, and plants. Following the well-worn path, a new vantage point unveils itself: canyons, a flowing river below, and a cliff. The scorching sun bathes the landscape, but soon the light changes. Clouds cast shadows on the mountainside, revealing new colours in the shade. The wind picks up and the murky sky begins to rain. Thunder rumbles in the distance, and, counting the vague seconds between each flash and sound, I discern the approaching storm.

The exhibition at the Mougins Center of Photography takes visitors on a multilayered voyage through the nature of the French Riviera by presenting handmade, unique photographic prints. Within the presented works, humans are absent, allowing the depicted nature to appear untouched. The contemporary landscape of the Riviera has been heavily shaped by people over time, but the exhibition proposes a view without them. This perspective encourages viewers to contemplate alternative roles, such as that of flora or fauna. Each print captures an episode, a moment that does not exist but rather imitates memory.

My artistic practice revolves around materiality, colour, and technique, pushing the boundaries of analog photographic printing processes and reimagining the possibilities of photography in the present age. I recompose new images by combining elements to create surprising or aesthetically pleasing compositions.

The alchemy of cyanotype is simple: the photo-sensitive chemistry is applied to paper, exposed to ultraviolet light, and finally washed with water. The iron salts are rinsed away with water, leaving behind a blue photograph. This straightforward process allows room for experimentation with size, materials, and toning. During toning, the blue pigment is initially bleached with washing soda, making way for tannic dye to replace the blue

in the image. Tannins are found in various plants, such as coffee or tea. Determining the suitability of a specific plant as a toner is a result of experimentation. During my residency trips, I collected a wide variety of local plants to test their toning effects.

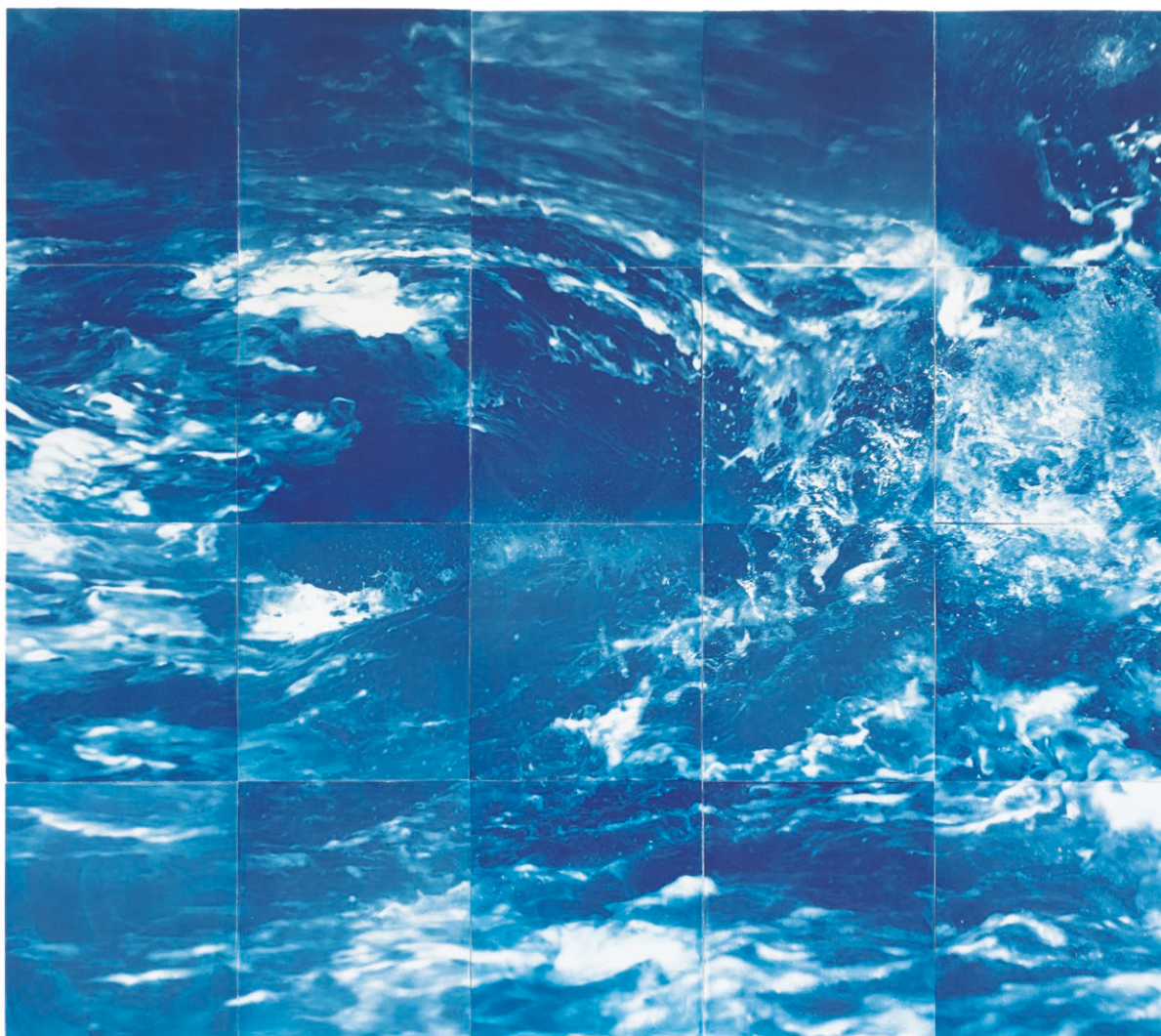
My studio shelf in Helsinki is adorned with stones and plants gathered during my travels. Eucalyptus leaves and bark are preserved in large glass jars filled with water, their solutions later used for toning. The archive resembles that of a scientist's discoveries, yet the pieces have been collected intuitively, devoid of scientific significance. A beautifully coloured leaf or an oddly shaped stone simply caught my eye. The collected coloured pigments speak directly to the landscape. Eucalyptus runs throughout the works as a fading purple wash.

Anna Niskanen

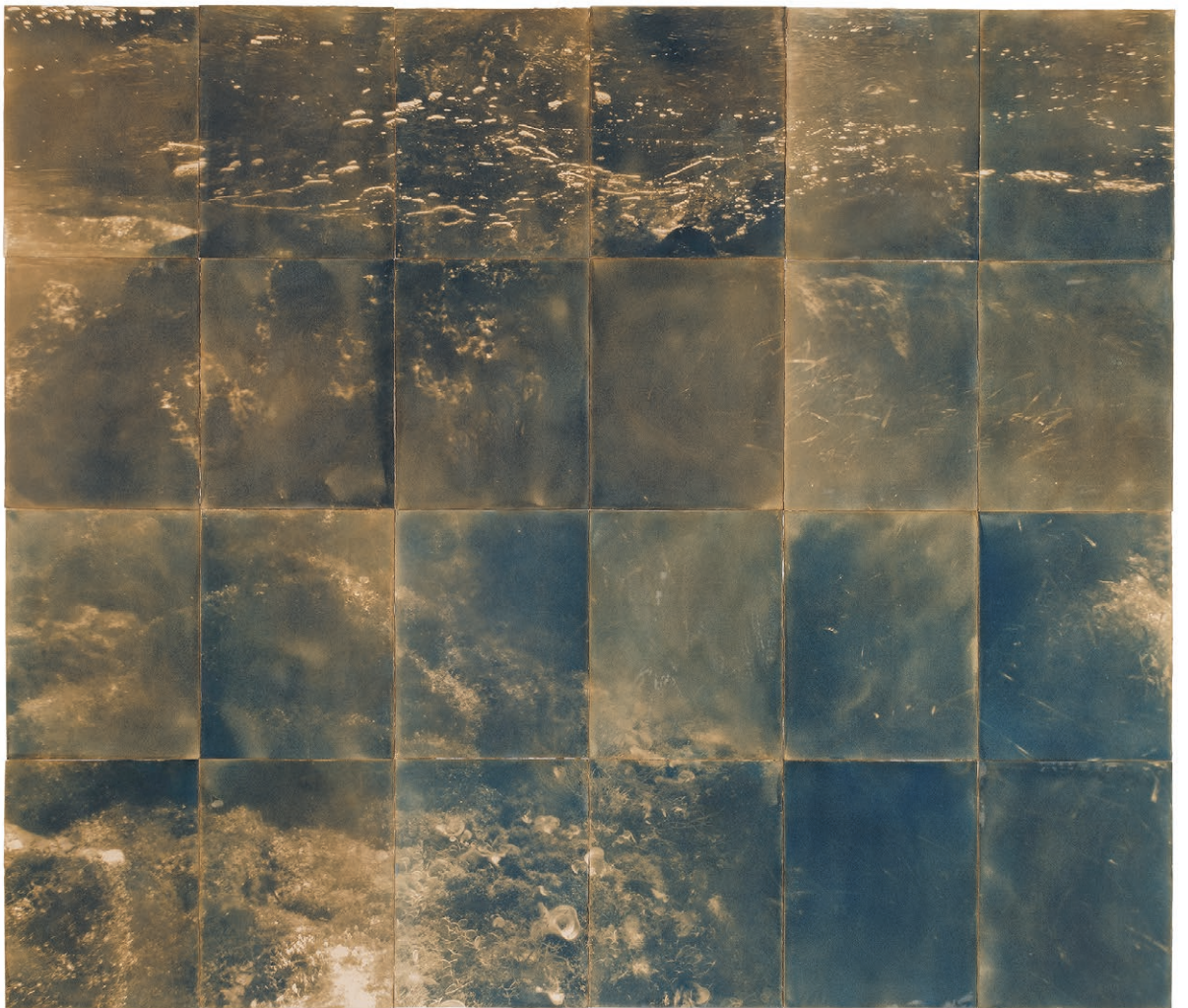
Anna Niskanen



Hold on
2023
Cyanotype
on paper Fabriano Tiepolo
Bleached with French pine
210 × 500 cm



Whirling to Embrace
2023
Cyanotype
on paper Fabriano Tiepolo
240 × 270 cm



Posidonia
2023
Cyanotype
on paper Fabriano Tiegolo
Toned with French eucalyptus,
black tea, coffee and green tea
184 × 213 cm



Summer
2023
Two-channel cyanotype
on paper Fabriano Tiepolo
Toned with French eucalyptus
60 × 75 cm



Small pine
2023
Cyanotype and gum bichromate
on paper Fabriano Tiepolo
Red pigment from a hike
at Point sublime
40 × 30 cm

Cahiers #7

Point sublime: Anna Niskanen
 +
 Nous irons jusqu'au soleil: Jessica Backhaus

Authors:

François Cheval
 András Páldi
 Robert Demachy
 and Constant Puyo
 Anna Niskanen

Publishing:
 November 2023
 Bilingual French/English
 144 pages
 29 €
 isbn: 979-10-90698-56-7

On sale
 in the Mougins
 Center of Photography
 store.

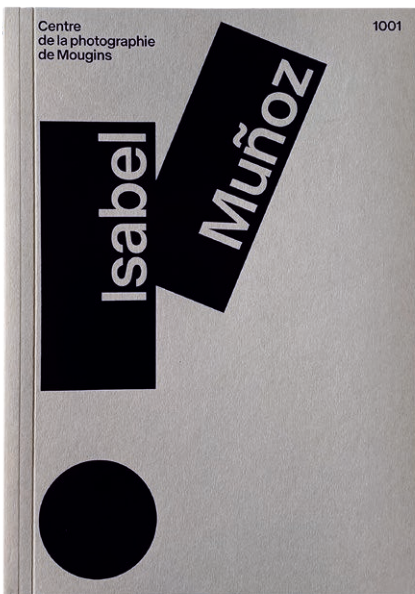


The Cahiers #7 of the Mougins Center of Photography represent a paean to light.

In “Point sublime” and “Nous irons jusqu’au soleil”, we witness the convergence of two photographers who harness the vibrancy of rays to communicate profound messages. Jessica Backhaus’s meticulously curated selection of coloured papers elegantly complements Anna Niskanen’s cyanotypes imbued with essences and natural pigments discovered therein. This synthesis beckons us into the realm of pictorialist heritage, prompting contemplation upon the passage of time.

Previous

publications:



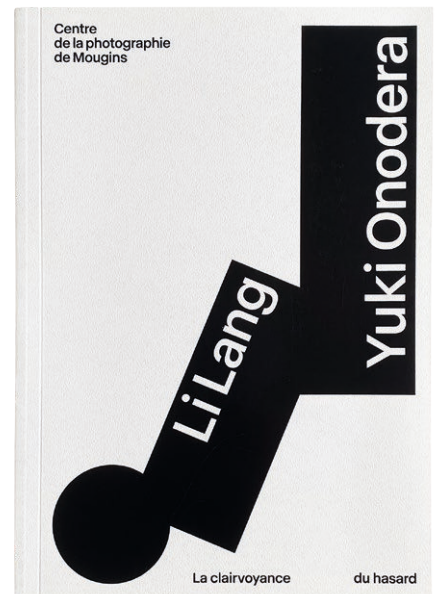
#1 Isabel Muñoz 1001

176 pages
 Isbn : 979-10-90698-50-5
 © 2021
 Authors:
 Yasmine Chemali,
 François Cheval,
 Stéphane du Mesnildot,
 Yuta Yagishita,
 Pascal Bagot,
 Emil Pacha Valencia
 Translation:
 Sara Heft



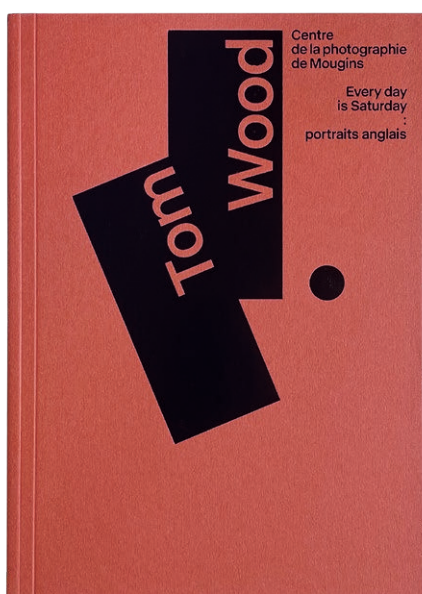
#2 Natasha Caruana + Jenny Rova L'amour toujours

192 pages
 Isbn : 979-10-90698-51-2
 © 2021
 Authors:
 François Cheval,
 Laurence Pourchez,
 Jenny Rova,
 Natasha Caruana,
 Dr Chris Hoff,
 Christophe Perrin,
 Yasmine Chemali
 Translation:
 Sara Heft



#3 Yuki Onodera + Li Lang La clairvoyance du hasard

176 pages
 Isbn : 979-10-90698-52-9
 © 2022
 Authors:
 François Cheval,
 András Páldi,
 Jean Daunizeau,
 Takayo Iida,
 Yasmine Chemali
 Translations:
 Ruth Oldham,
 Patrick Honoré



#4
Tom Wood
Every day is Saturday:
portraits anglais

192 pages
 Isbn : 979-10-90698-53-6
 © 2022
 Authors:
 François Cheval,
 Leïla Vignal,
 Jean Daunizeau,
 Alexis Tadié,
 David Peace,
 John Peel,
 Yasmine Chemali
 Translations:
 Ruth Oldham,
 Alexis Tadié,
 Leïla Vignal



#5
Catherine De Clippel
+ Marie Baronnet
Ce qui nous arrive ici,
en plein visage

192 pages
 Isbn : 979-10-90698-54-3
 © 2022
 Authors:
 Jérôme Esnouf,
 François Cheval,
 Jean-Paul Colleyn
 Translations:
 Ruth Oldham,
 Jennetta Petch



#6
Harold Feinstein
La roue des merveilles

192 pages
 Isbn : 979-10-90698-55-0
 © 2023
 Authors:
 François Cheval,
 Alexis Tadié,
 Ya'ara Gil-Glazer,
 Yasmine Chemali
 Translations:
 Ruth Oldham,
 Jennetta Petch,
 Alexis Tadié

Public

Guided tour

by Anna Niskanen
Saturday 4.11.2023
 15:00

Family tour

The Blue Hour

Flipping through the pages of a book, the young Anna dives into the great secret of the blue hour. Before her eyes unfolds a marvelous world where a majestic blue tree unveils its stories that come to life, one after another, at the mysterious time when the sky turns dark blue.

15:00 → 15:45

Sundays

5.11.2023,

3.12.2023,

7.01.2024,

and **4.02.2024**

From 4 years old

In French

Les visiteurs du soir

Festival Botox(s)

Saturday 19

and **Sunday 20.01.2024**

Free admission

Screening

Saturday 20.01.2024

18:30 → 20:00

Blue

by **Derek Jarman**

(England, 1993,
 Biopic, Drama, Experimental,
 78', VOST)

Free admission

“Blue” stands as the ultimate cinematic masterpiece by the English director Derek Jarman, who passed away from AIDS in 1994. In this feature-length film, the audience’s gaze is immersed into a 78-minute blue shot, accompanied by a fabulous soundtrack by Simon Fisher Turner.

Programme

Artistic Practice Workshops

Introduction to Cyanotype
 with photographer

Emma Tarea

To register,
 please contact us.

Contacts

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de Mougins**

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Florence Buades
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Informations

Open

**4.11.2023 → 4.02.2024
13:00 → 18:00
Closed on Mondays,
Tuesdays
and December, 24**

Admission

**Adult → 6 €
Student → 3 €
Group (10 or +) → 4 € / pers.
Guided tours → 10 € / pers**

Free

**1st Sunday of each month
Under 18, students
from the 06 and 83
departments,
job seekers,
disabled visitor and one
accompanying person,
ICOM / ICOMOS / CIPAC,
Friends of the Center,
teachers, press,
guide-lecturers.**

**Guided tours (express)
every Wednesday
and Saturday
→ 15:00**

**Book your
guided tour + workshop
for schools, groups
and associations:
Sinem Bostanci
sbostanci@villedemougins.com**

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