

PRESS RELEASE



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Study N°19.06, 2005, 150 x 100 cm

ALEXEI VASSILIEV, *Evanescent Portraits* 30 May – 26 July 2008

Evanescent (adj.)

1. *vanishing; fading away; fleeting.*

2. *tending to become imperceptible; scarcely perceptible.*

[Origin: 1745–55; < L *évānescēt-* (s. of *évānescēs*) *vanishing, disappearing. See evanesce, -ent*]

Galerie Blue Square is pleased to present *Evanescent Portraits*, a selection of more than 30 photographs by Alexei Vassiliev from the years 2002 – 2008.

Alexei Vassiliev was born in 1959 in Moscow where he completed his studies in the humanities. After perestroika, he relocated to France in 1993 and began to discover the art of photography. In the last six years, he has pursued with the lens of his camera, an intensive exploration of the effects of light, color and ambiance reflected by the human presence.

In his 1910 treatise *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, Vassily Kandinsky spent years exploring the ideas of color and its subjective relationships to human psychology and emotions. Blue, the color of spirituality, for example, draws the observer towards infinity. Yellow, the color of earth, by contrast, pulls the viewer toward more human concerns. It is this first emotional response to Vassiliev's work that awakens one's senses.

The artist's compositions are akin to the spokes of a color wheel and its subtle variations. Through abstract chromatic gradations one discovers progressively imprecise forms and the blur of human presence swimming in a pool of vibrant color. Each individual represented has in a sense lost his identity. The focal point is absorbed by the colors and space in which it exists. What emerge are silent portraits, in a suspension of time, captured by the eye of the camera. The mystery surrounding these works invites the spectator to identify with these anonymous portraits and to create their own personal interpretations.

Concerning his series, *Troubled Moments*, the artist writes: "*They are there, simply there: elusive yet irrefutable, furtive yet definitive, ephemeral yet eternal... They appear suddenly, in the blur and urgency of tiny moments, then seem to fade away – the better to impose their random presence. Enshrouded in mystery, relieved of all triviality and thus entrusted to the essential, these paradoxical beings defy and haunt me.*"

At the edge of dream and reality, abstraction and figuration, Vassiliev's photography is part of a captivating and mysterious universe, the memory of which remains in one's head and heart as a strong and emotional bond.

Alexei Vassiliev has shown his photographs in France, the United States and Mexico. He lives in Paris and spends time working in both Russia and France.

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