Yann Lacroix

Anthropiques

Solo exhibition from November 7 to December 19, 2026

Opening on Saturday, November 7, 2026, from 2pm to 7pm

For his fourth solo exhibition at the gallery, Yann Lacroix invites us into an imaginary garden, at once a refuge and a realm of possibilities, where reality blurs with its own reflection.



Accommodation lumineuse, 2026, oil on canvas, 180 x 145 cm ©Romain Darnaud

« The viewer must first cast off their layers before crossing the threshold. They find themselves in an apparently empty house. Sounds, scents and warmth are known or imagined only by the mind.

Moving through Yann Lacroix's paintings feels much like stepping into Adolfo Bioy Casares's *The Invention of Morel*. The setting seems deserted, perhaps even hostile, yet it is as much a refuge as it is a space of possibility. Life appears fleetingly, yet it is undeniably present: tangible enough to catch a glimpse of, but too elusive to fully grasp. As the characters gradually emerge, the protagonist begins to piece together his own story, mapping a mental landscape woven from fragments drawn from the unconscious and from the reality revealed through his attentive gaze. The island, once thought to be uninhabited, becomes fertile ground for a perpetual dream, permeated by emotions, sensations, and desires.

This analogy helps us understand the invitation Yann Lacroix extends to the viewer. First, there is the place itself: wild, perhaps abandoned, and altogether luxuriant. Then come the reflections, the layers, the clues that gradually reveal themselves. Finally, there are scattered memories, like remnants which, brought together, form an intimate narrative. The three facets of a single painting are thus revealed to the viewer, who observes from behind a fourth wall which, as in theatre, forms an invisible boundary, one that is always fraught with risk. The risk Yann Lacroix takes is one of laying himself bare. Each canvas is thus a palimpsest, in which one layer covers another without ever entirely erasing it. Pencil strokes and revealed imprints act as archaeological traces, but they are also thoughts so deeply present that they eventually permeate the pictorial surface. The glaze acts like an existential veil, revealing the depth of the work and of all that each viewer brings to it.

Writing about the experience of looking at a painting, Maurice Merleau-Ponty evokes the mirror as "the instrument of a universal magic that transforms things into spectacles, and spectacles into things" (*Eye and Mind*, 1960). This is the very idea Yann Lacroix brings into play through a poetic language in which the disintegration of a landscape unfolds like a series of murmurs, at once echoing and opposing one another. His creative vision is shaped by travels, botanical horizons, vanished palaces and fallen empires. Architectural reminiscences and fragmented settings bear the traces of the past, in all its materiality and erasure, its mingling of grandeur and violence. Beyond the mists and the rustlings, painting has a memory of its own and becomes a reflection of the world, provided we consent to view it through this particular lens.

Yann Lacroix's work inhabits a precarious threshold, tracing a path along which reality may not be what it first appears, and what seems familiar to the eye gradually transforms. We find ourselves contemplating a garden, or perhaps its reflection in a glass window. We are invited into an experience of both interior and exterior, in which the body, absent from the canvas, projects itself into one space or the other. A duality emerges between the hushed interior and the surrounding vegetation. The structure may seem out of place within the landscape, like an invasive presence that has appeared without warning. And might not the garden itself be a means of erasing the memory of the lands once conquered? Few would truly dispute this. Truth is never self-evident.

Nothing in Yann Lacroix's painting is arbitrary. Every gesture carries its own weight, a subtle echo of something remembered. A contrast emerges between a palette of sometimes muted, faded tones and the dreams, fantasies and marks of the past that the mind pieces together. We look at the work without ever quite possessing it; the setting does not entirely belong to us. We share our vision with the artist, but also with those we cannot see, who nonetheless populate the space of the canvas with an almost deafening presence. No ground is ever claimed, no certainty reached. The imagination is suspended in an in-between state where rest is never assured, where present and past overlap and merge, reaching deep into our innermost impulses. The places where the painter constructs his narrative open onto a journey through a landscape inhabited in every way that the mind can conceive.

The shadows, the vaporous forms, the details found in the smaller works… are traces left by time, by the spirits of places and by our own ghosts. They are the cries of love and solitude that Marguerite Duras saw in the negative handprints left on the walls of Magdalenian caves, marks of absences that nothing can ever entirely erase. Every subtle detail is a call that travels through time, a resounding echo bearing witness to a world far greater than what the eye can perceive. The artist becomes the chronicler of the invisible. Drawn and painted, the translucent layers are what remain of the ebb and flow of history and the passing years. »

William Chevillon, October 21, 2026



Spiegel im spiegel, 2026, oil on canvas, 145 x 180 cm ©Romain Darnaud



Myst, 2026, oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm ©Romain Darnaud



Le cèdre, 2026, oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm ©Romain Darnaud



Afternoon, 2026, oil on canvas, 145 x 180 cm ©Romain Darnaud



Totem, 2026, oil on canvas, 150 x 130 cm ©Romain Darnaud

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A long journey, 2026, oil on canvas, 27 x 35 cm ©Romain Darnaud



Emeralde Gaiety, 2026, oil on canvas, 27 x 35 cm ©Romain Darnaud

Yann Lacroix was born in 1986. He lives and works in Paris.

Through his exclusive focus on painting, he creates landscapes - sometimes inhabited by ghostly figures - that unfold a utopian and fantastical iconography shaped by his travel memories and the history of painting. Like metaphors for the process of memory, his works superimpose areas of particularly precise detail, whose intensity contrasts with the blurring and visual distortion of other areas on the canvas.

His practice is centred primarily on landscapes. Their lush appearance evokes the world's most sought-after travel destinations, which have come to symbolise a longing to reconnect with a lost paradise, yet paradoxically drive the creation of artificial spaces. These places, animated by the play of appearances, provide a framework for exploring the fleeting nature of images. Drawing on his memories (images gathered online, trips abroad, everyday surroundings...), Yann Lacroix paints deliberately composite landscapes, filled with architecture, exotic vegetation, tropical greenhouses and swimming pools, defined by their own artificiality yet imbued with sensuality and life through the traces of a past or potential history: a meditation on heterotopias, based on these places that are both fantasised and imbued with the poetry of everyday life, like allegories of painting itself.

First gaining wider attention at the 63rd Salon de Montrouge in 2018, Yann Lacroix has since shown work extensively in France and abroad: in England, Poland, Spain, the Netherlands, Thailand, Tunisia, Hong Kong and Dubai. He has been awarded numerous grants and residencies, including, most recently at the Abbaye de Fontevraud in 2023 and the Domaine des Oseraies in 2024. He was a resident at the Casa Velázquez in 2019.



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