

# ■ GÉRARD XURIGUERA

ON FABRICE AINAUT

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The rise of new technologies has fostered planetary communication and reinforced an old dream shared by many artists: to suggest movement, or indeed to produce it. From Tatlin to Moholy-Nagy, or from Gabo to Pevsner — in other words, from simulated movement to real movement — we have reached the very essence of the optical phenomenon and of kinetic-luminous art. A tendency initiated by Frank Malina and Nino Calos, it rests on electricity as a source of dynamism, and on the fluctuations of light, which generate the diversification of harmonies.

Belonging to the latest generations to have come to constructed art, Fabrice Ainaut develops in his own way the advances of this physical expression with its manifold combinatorics, from which he has drawn the most penetrating devices and effects — effects that unsettle the perceptual codes bound to the stillness of the image. Having first passed through the strictures of geometric orthodoxy in the wake of Arden Quin, who advocated the transformable painting, he gradually gains his autonomy, takes an interest in African art, becomes passionate about serial systems, and turns towards movement and its inscription in space, as close as possible to the innovations of the present world.

Ainaut's ruled forms answer to a highly elaborate physical and mental process, which breathes into his structures a rotating movement through recourse to intermittent flashes of light that federate his conical volumes — all of it achieved by means of one or several micro-motors. Generally raised vertically, sometimes bent in the middle, seen frontally or in profile, paired or single, his smooth PVC frames are often accompanied, along the edge of their surface, by a luminous chromatic ray that magnetises the retina. At other times, the frames split in two or amalgamate into small groups, or else adorn themselves with bluish triangular reliefs that offer the eye the tangle of their striated skins.

There is here a great deal of architectonic rigour in the coloured articulation of these rotating arrangements, an exact calibration of the speed of the shimmering, an extreme vigilance in the control of movement and light directly ensured by the computer, a subtle

ingenuity in the synthesis of the elements, and finally an enlightened aptitude for making mind and matter coexist. Yet one also detects the signs of a discreet playfulness, a sure intuition in the staging of so many optical mirages, tied to the pregnancy of an inner feeling that transcends their mechanisms. Within these perimeters, metamorphoses, transparencies and cast shadows secrete silent, muffled atmospheres that join the real and the virtual. Here, everything moves and recedes, reappears and fades once more, in a controlled back-and-forth that finds extensions in each viewer's imagination.

Moreover, on an adjacent register, Ainaut offers a set of digital photographs deriving from his three-dimensional pieces, enclosed in light boxes and governed by microcontrollers, where veiled colours and crumbling supports in weightlessness feed a ballet of infinite variations. Further on, a series of mobile triangular forms painted in acrylic — again on PVC — comes into play, their tapered interstitial framework set into curved volumes, while other arrangements of small, offset dynamic forms, and other compositions clad in non-colours, are made up of an aggregate of short triangular or lozenge-shaped figures that, by cultivating the measure of the simplified, imply that the most fervent geometry can also let fantasy filter through.

Here is an approach brimming with ideas and perspectives in tune with our present day. In short, the work of Fabrice Ainaut — at once restless and coherent — offers more than promise. It is ready for tomorrow.

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ART CRITIC

**Gérard Xuriguera**