

Esther Schipper

Thomias Radin

Entre ciels et terres : contingences humaines

September 5 – October 11, 2025

Esther Schipper Paris



Thomias Radin, **Ode to Ismael Ivo**, 2025, Oil on linen, artist frame,
167 x 123 cm (65 3/4 x 48 3/8 in) (unframed)
193 x 125 x 4,5 cm (76 x 49 1/4 x 1 3/4 in) (framed)
(TRA 083)

Esther Schipper is pleased to announce **Entre ciels et terres : contingences humaines**, Thomias Radin's third exhibition with the gallery and his first at our Paris space. On view will be new paintings and sculptural works, as well as a wall painting.

Thomias Radin's (b. 1993) **Entre ciels et terres : contingences humaines** bring together key elements in the artist's practice. Especially conceived for the space in Paris, the exhibition begins with a suite of new paintings that reflect a sustained attempt to capture fleeting movements. Works appear executed in broad, dynamic gestures, with figures caught mid-motion. The figures are often seen only in fragments. Motifs of feet or muscular backs play with the ambiguous mix of beauty and threat. The tension felt in the depiction of young Black bodies – objectified and instrument of cultural expression – bespeaks this dual legacy.

In the front room, several paintings on wooden, hand-carved panels have a sculptural presence and retain an element of performance: the works, which each have differently shaped metal handles on the left and right sides of the panel, are akin to shields. Protective objects with images that have a heraldic intensity, employing symbolic motifs that recur in Radin's practice – wings, labyrinths, twisted figures – and have mythical and spiritual connotations.

A wall painting in the adjacent space reinforces the recurring motif of water, central to Radin's exploration of migration and the flow of knowledge. The mural references his 2023 solo exhibition at Galerie Wedding, Berlin, where he created a 15-meter-long depiction of waves, while also alluding to a scene in his short film **RIVÂL**, where two characters gaze at the sea, adding emotional depth to the motif. This Parisian iteration links Radin's past and present works, with the exhibition title **Entre ciels et terres : contingences humaines**

highlighting water's role as a symbol of the fluid and interconnected nature of human experience.

Drawing on his series of Domino works – oversized painted domino stones, often assembled in multi-part constellations – Radin has created a new sculpture that evokes a bench or throne. The work continues his celebration of vernacular mathematics and honors everyday life in Guadeloupe, highlighting how knowledge is passed down and lasting connections are forged through these experiences. In this iteration, Radin expands on this theme by arranging the dominoes in random, corresponding numbers – an intentional break from the rules of the game. This choice reflects the unpredictable nature of power, with the throne-like structure symbolizing how political systems often appear chaotic and unjustifiable from a citizen's perspective, where the rules seem arbitrary and incomprehensible. Through this, the sculpture not only pays tribute to his heritage but also critiques the dissonance between the perceived order of power and the randomness felt by those subjected to it.

Radin's introduction of sculptural forms, situated between furniture design and mythic object, anchors the work in physical presence while imagining new architectures of being. **Entre ciels et terres** is not only a reflection on our fragile condition but a proposition: to define new spaces in which to exist, to craft new homes where we reclaim agency and shape the futures we desire.

The practice of Thomias Radin is grounded in embodied knowledge shaped by his background in dance and his upbringing between the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe and mainland France. Music and dance formally enter his painting through fragmented bodies, gestural brushstrokes, and the rhythms of hip hop, Gwo Ka, and Capoeira. His engagement with the legacy of Caribbean music and dance intersects with an examination of its long-underappreciated influence on avant-garde choreography and the important figures of contemporary dance: Alvin Ailey (1931–1989), Germaine Acogny (b. 1944) and Ismael Ivo (1955–2021). These figures, deeply influential to him, also stand as symbols of activism, spirituality, and knowledge.

Thomias Radin was born in 1993 in Abymes, Guadeloupe. He received his BFA and MFA from the University of Rennes 2 in 2015 and 2018. The artist lives and works in Berlin. Radin is the recipient of the LOOP Fair 2024 prize.

Thomias Radin's solo exhibitions include **Old Soul – New Soul**, Esther Schipper, Seoul (2024); **Rhizome: Time of Revelation**, Kunstverein Göttingen (2024); **POLYCHROME – The Myth of Karukera & Cibuqueira**, Galerie Wedding, Berlin (2023), and **The Myth of Inner Landscapes**, SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin (2019).

Among his group exhibitions are: **La Haute Note Jaune**, Fondation Vincent van Gogh, Arles (2024); **Society: Or Infinite Rehearsals**, SAVVY Contemporary (2024), **Poly: A Fluid Show**, KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2023–24); **Embodied Spaces: The Body as Architecture**, Strada Gallery, New York (2023); **Les Enchantées**, Frontview, Berlin (2023); **The Garden**, The Curators Room, Amsterdam (2023); **Trangressive: Nonkonforme Zugänge zu Kunst und Stadt**, Kühlhaus Berlin, Berlin (2022); **Non Playable character, The Fairest**, 59th Venice Biennale, Venice (2022); **Home Alone**, ATM Gallery, New York (2020), and **Berlin-Lagos Mobility and Heritage**, Galerie Wedding, Berlin (2018).

Selected performances include **Sensitivities of Dance**, 48 Hours Neukölln, Berlin (2024); LOOP Festival, Barcelona (2024); **The Myth of a Trinity II**, KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2023); **Oversea Riddim**, Deutsche Oper, Berlin (2023); **What a Time to Be Alive**, The Curators Room, Amsterdam (2022); **Gospel of Wealth : Monumental shadow**, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin (2021); **The Myth of a Trinity**, Oyouun, Berlin (2020); **The Myth of a Trinity**, Temps fort, Saint Domineuc (2019); **The Myth of a Trinity**, Performing Arts Festival, K77 Studio, Berlin (2018).

His work is held in public and private art collections worldwide, among them MACBA, Barcelona.

ESTHER SCHIPPER SAS
16 PLACE VENDÔME
75001 PARIS
TEL: +33 1 42 33 17 67
PARIS@ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM
WWW.ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM