

# ALAIN DU PONTAVICE

## *'A JOURNEY, HERE AND BEYOND'*



*'Fusion', oil on linen, 140 x 120cm*

## **19 June- 1 July 2018, Clerkenwell Gallery, London**

Twenty five large-scale paintings by London-based French artist Alain du Pontavice go on show at Clerkenwell Gallery 19 June – 1 July 2018, an inaugural London show. Alain's work is influenced by his extensive travels to both China and South America where he studied regional and traditional art techniques.

Alain du Pontavice's abstract paintings evoke impressions and emotions which can be felt as silent poetry. Oil is to Alain, a limitless medium allowing him to explore techniques of texture and colour which relate to his life experiences and journeys.

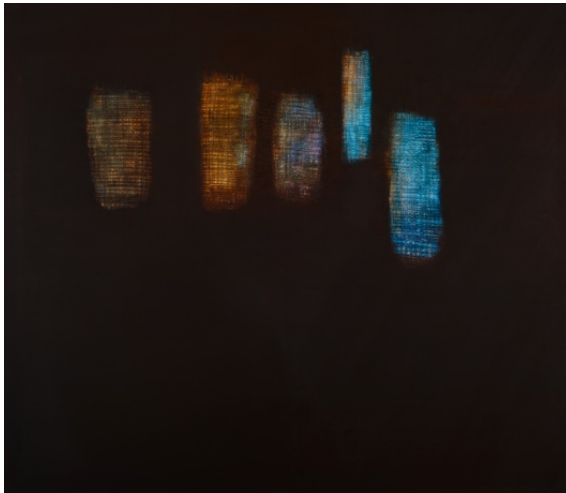
Growing up in Paris in the 60's, with an early interest in art, he began drawing at the French Academy, 'La Grande Chaumière' and in the Montparnasse studios of artists such as Rene Tomasini. These early works were nudes and portraits.

The Russian painter Alexandre Iacovleff, a family friend, was also a great influence. His etchings and paintings of Chinese scenes on The Yellow Cruise, a long voyage to the Far East organised by Citroën in the early 30's, sparked Alain's interest in Chinese arts and culture. In 1987, whilst completing an MA in Mandarin Chinese and studying Taiji in Paris, Alain travelled to China for the first time. A few years later he returned to live for more than ten years in Shanghai where he practiced calligraphy under the tutelage of great teachers as well as working in the textile industry. This chapter of his life has deeply influenced him, particularly the energy of brush strokes in Chinese calligraphy which reveals the nature and origin of the

impulse witnessing the energy (“Qi”) of Masters but also the various ancient techniques of fabric weaving and dyeing such as in Indonesia (Flores island, Solo) with Ikat and Batik techniques that he was exposed to. He regularly travelled to Japan and became familiar with the Shibori techniques. Art Textiles continue to be a great influence in his work.

Fascinated by the landscape and the energy of the Andes, du Pontavice moved in 2002 to South America with his family to pursue his interest in painting whilst continuing working in the textiles field. During the next ten years he explored extraordinary places such as the high plateaus of the Andes, ancient sacred sites in Peru and Bolivia, the virgin and phenomenal lands of Patagonia and remote caves at the frontier of Argentina and Chile where millennium and cosmic paintings were drawn. Whilst living in South America, Alain met Chilean artist Felix Lazo in 2002 who introduced him to oil painting and automatic drawing, enabling him to develop a rich and creative fluidity. This experience triggered for Alain, a connection to the unconscious, freeing the mind from notions and the taught. Also the colour subtlety of oil paint has been an enduring revelation, fruit of the sensitivity he has developed over the years.

*“Oil painting is for me an extraordinary medium which allows me to connect with the unconscious. It is the physical matter in painting which connects me to this level, which is why the texture and background are of such importance. It gives depth both visually and metaphorically. The colours are the subtle expression of the sentiment, like musical notes” .*



'Steles from beyond', oil on linen 120 x 140 cm



'Hypnotic overture', oil on linen 76 x 61 cm

Alain du Pontavice | A Journey Here and Beyond  
Clerkenwell Gallery  
[20 Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DP](https://www.clerkenwellgallery.com)  
June 19 – July 1 2018  
Daily 10am – 7pm  
PV June 19th 6pm – 9pm  
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