

Nicolas Jasmin (*1967, Toulouse) lives and works in Vienna. His work has been exhibited internationally since the 1990s. Recent solo exhibitions include at Ve.Sch, Vienna; Belvedere 21, Vienna; Croy Nielsen, Vienna. Notable group exhibitions include Liverpool Biennial (2002); Beijing International Art Biennial (2010), as well as shows at Kunsthalle Wien, MUMOK, and Secession in Vienna. Between 1996 and 2006, Jasmin was creating multimedia and video-work under the moniker N.I.C.J.O.B., making heavy use of found footage and sampled material.

Nicolas Jasmin
L'Insecte
May 22 – June 25, 2025

L'Insecte is on display during Independent Space Index 2025, the festival of independent art spaces in Vienna.

The exhibition marks the beginning of an assessment and digitization process of archival footage recorded by Nicolas Jasmin in Vienna between 1990-2010.

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office@pech.is

Pech
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A void only exists in relation to the substance that shapes it. It may be what draws our gaze, but when we look right at it, there is nothing to observe. As David Lynch put it: Keep your eye on the doughnut, not on the hole.

Nicolas Jasmin, the painter, and N.I.C.J.O.B., the video artist, both rely heavily on juxtaposition, repetition, and omission as artistic strategies. In his paintings, monochrome colors and geometric, mirrored shapes come together to form an interdependent whole. In his videos, loops and fragments of sampled footage create a sense of temporal disjunction. Repeating a word over and over until it loses all meaning and blossoms as sound.

Appropriation as an artistic strategy is often understood as support of, or at least indifference to, the visually reproduced subject. In the early 2000s, copyright issues made it difficult to convince institutions to exhibit *Amant/Aimant* around the time of its production. Thirteen years later, it became known that Klaus Kinski – the actor here seen on screen interacting with a butterfly – had been continuously sexually abusing his own daughter Pola, which brought a posthumous end to all efforts to romanticize the already scandal-ridden actor as “enfant terrible”. It also granted curators a new reason not to screen the work. Nicolas claims that *Amant/Aimant* was, however, never about Kinski, but about the butterfly. Today, Nicolas’ primary medium is painting.

I rarely write press releases for the exhibitions at Pech. Here, the challenge is to “address the elephant in the room”, as they say, without applying preemptive obedience through either censorship or contextualization, both of which are institutional strategies which I cannot imagine not to be rather detrimental to the experience of art itself. Sampling is the opposite of contextualization. Repetition is the opposite of reproduction. Avoidance is the opposite of experience.

Georg says I probably shouldn’t be writing a text at all. Sophie says I should mention the word “edgelord”. Nicolas wants to make an insert of the word “L’Insecte” fading into “L’Inceste”. “Have you heard of the butterfly effect?”, he asks. I have. I should also mention that the video screen is 4:3 while the paravent sculpture is 16:9 and that “Amant” means “lover”, and “Aimant” means “loving” as well as “magnet”.

*I look to you and I see nothing
I look to you to see the truth
– Mazzy Star, Fade Into You*

Marina and Nicolas are preparing to move into a new apartment. Sculptures and paintings in various states seem to have spilled out into the living room and mixed with the furniture, tools, and household goods. Feeling like a condiment to a funky salad of human proportions, I listen to the couple’s anecdotes from earlier Vienna years. A lot of objects in this apartment are on wheels. The stories move similarly flexibly through time and references and take unexpected turns. Mobility seems to be a common topic. In the 90s, Nicolas was often seen recording parties, openings, social gatherings, and movie premieres with a handheld camcorder. I ask what happened to the material. He explains that most of the tapes ended up in boxes and haven’t been touched in years.

B.J.H.M.

N.I.C.J.O.B.

Amant/Aimant, 2000

DV Pal transferred on DVD

00 m 12 s (05 m 00 s looped)

Nicolas Jasmin

Paravent (sunset red), 2025

Wood frame, plaster board, paint, metal, rubber wheels

348 × 192 × 46 cm

Nicolas Jasmin

Untitled (l’insecte notice), 2025

Pencil on paper, framed

12 × 19 cm