# DARK GLETSCHER
## project

Frédéric Fourdinier

# Dark Gletscher - project

## présentation

2019 – 2023...

Glaciers or Gletscher in German are, in their various forms, important elements of the earth's atmospheric system, storing immense volumes of fresh water, interacting with the hemisphere in which they are located, controlling changes in sea levels. They create a significant and lasting impact on landscapes. The extent and intensity of each of these impacts varies over time, as glaciers and ice caps expand and disintegrate in response to the mechanisms of climate change. In the current geological period of the Quaternary, often referred to as the Ice Age and covering the last 2.6 million years, glaciers and ice caps have expanded at periods of maximum glaciation to cover up to 30% of the Earth's surface.

Dark Gletscher's work is rooted in a dynamic of displacement, initially through travels, hikes and crossings in different parts of the Alps, in different seasons and over several years. Physical contact with minerals, observation of the many variations in geological strata and rock erosion, led me to explore the world of glaciers. More specifically, the movements, fluctuations and territories of glaciers, which have been the common thread running through my work as an artist for several years, combine with the relationship between human beings and their environment. I'm interested in the impact of our activities on this environment and the role played by glaciers on a climatological and ecological level, as well as their direct interference on our lifestyles, our society, politics and our very existence.

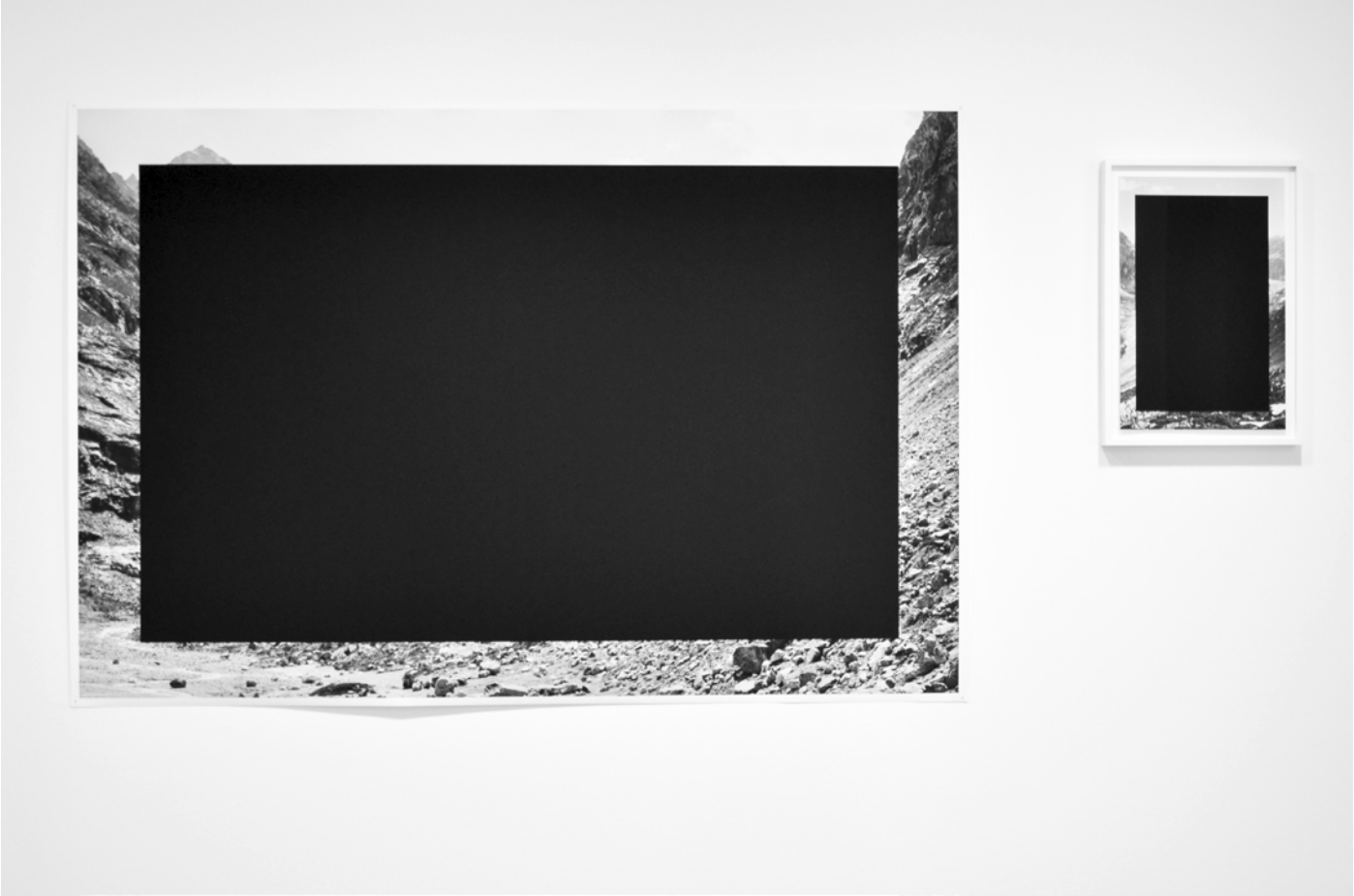
Since ancient geological times, these ice masses have been characterized by cyclical variations that reflect the phenomenon of expansion and retraction, actions that govern the universe as a whole and the elements that make it up. Alongside this interest in glaciers, I'm also interested in the world of physics and cosmology, and in particular the question of the missing mass of the universe. By the missing mass of the universe, I mean the dark energy that would be at the origin of the expansion and acceleration of the cosmos, and which by its theoretical presence would prevent us from seeing the cosmic background, as well as the dark matter that would prevent the dissociation of the clusters of ordinary matter that make up galaxies. Dark Gletscher invites us to immerse ourselves in this research and reflection. I try to interweave these two universes in some of my work, and propose a reflection on questions of movement, limits, presence and absence. The Dark Gletscher project also takes into account human actions to try and preserve these masses in movement, such as white geotextiles spread over glacier fronts and current cartographic observations, the question of «white» as a symbolic color contrasting with the darker facets of reality. These parallels are not unrelated to the subject of climate change, which is altering the glacial environment and its surroundings. A series of short stories, recounting several glacier walks, has been written and supported by visuals, providing a deeper insight into my world, my thoughts and my questions. These multi-technical creations invite a multitude of points of entry on this subject.

Read more : https://frederic-fourdinier.com/installations-sculptures/dark-gletscher-2/

# A part of missing mass

In the near future, a large proportion of Alpine glaciers will disappear. In the foreground, a black rectangle obscures 70% of the photograph's surface, making it impossible to observe. The value of this opaque rectangle refers to the theoretical percentage of dark energy in the known cosmic universe. According to this theory, it would cause the universe to expand and accelerate. Moreover, considered as diaphanous matter, this dark energy would allow light to pass through the cosmos, but at the same time prevent the possibility of seeing its end, the cosmic background, and therefore its past and future: a form of Smithsonian «sight not sight».
The theme is one of missing mass, absence and disappearance, and the viewer is faced with the frustration of not being able to perceive the landscape he or she is supposed to be observing. An anticipation of the future to come in this Alpine territory. The process of this work is always the same: set off on foot from a given point towards a glacial front, take one or more (silver) photographs and block them off with this black surface. The aim is to build up a repository of views of major Alpine glaciers that are about to undergo major (or even total) ablation. To date, 19 glacier fronts have been produced, in a variety of formats and printed on different types of paper. This work is currently being developed and produced, focusing for the moment on Switzerland, with other neighbouring countries to be explored at a later date.

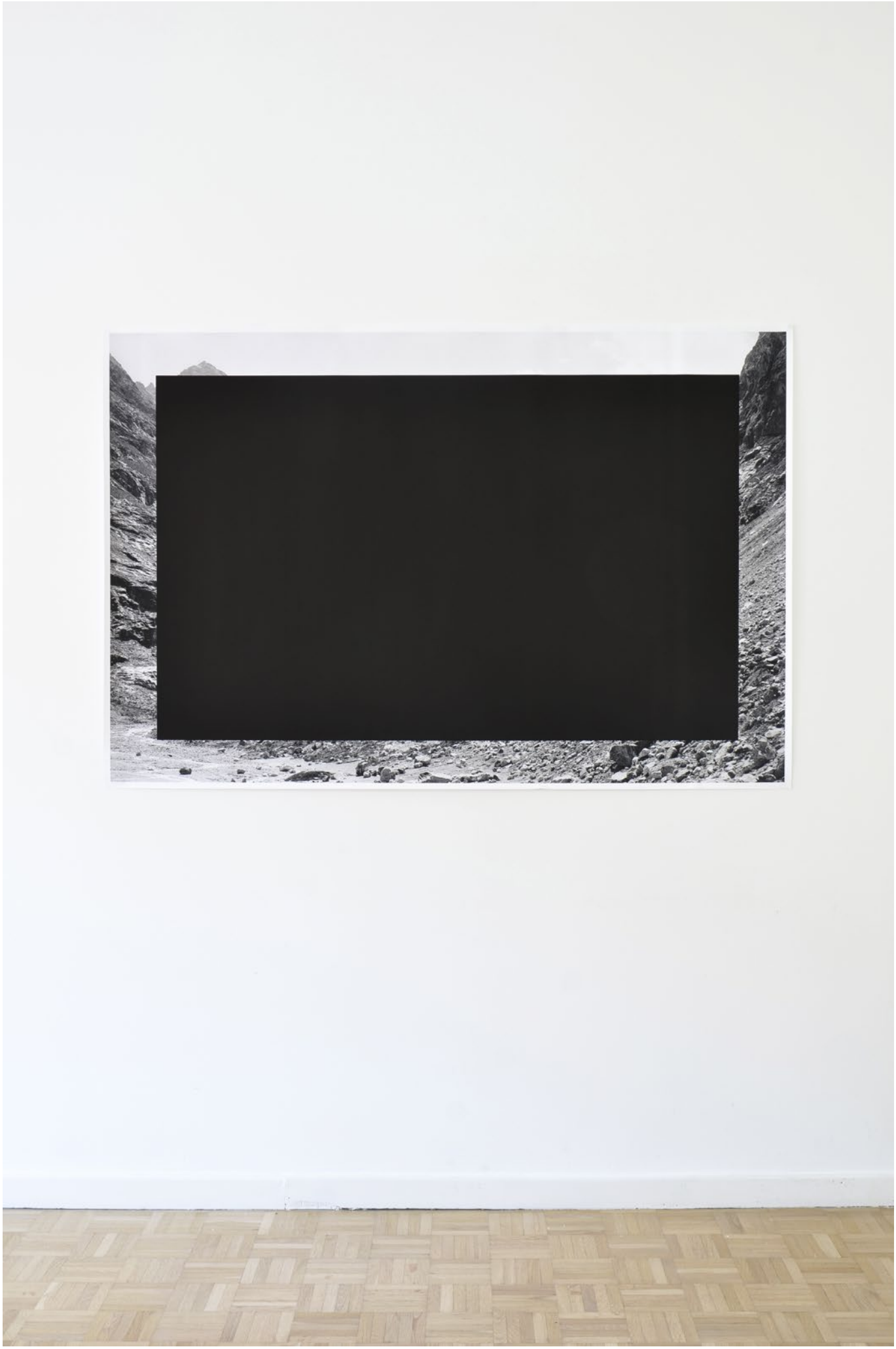
Find out more: website link



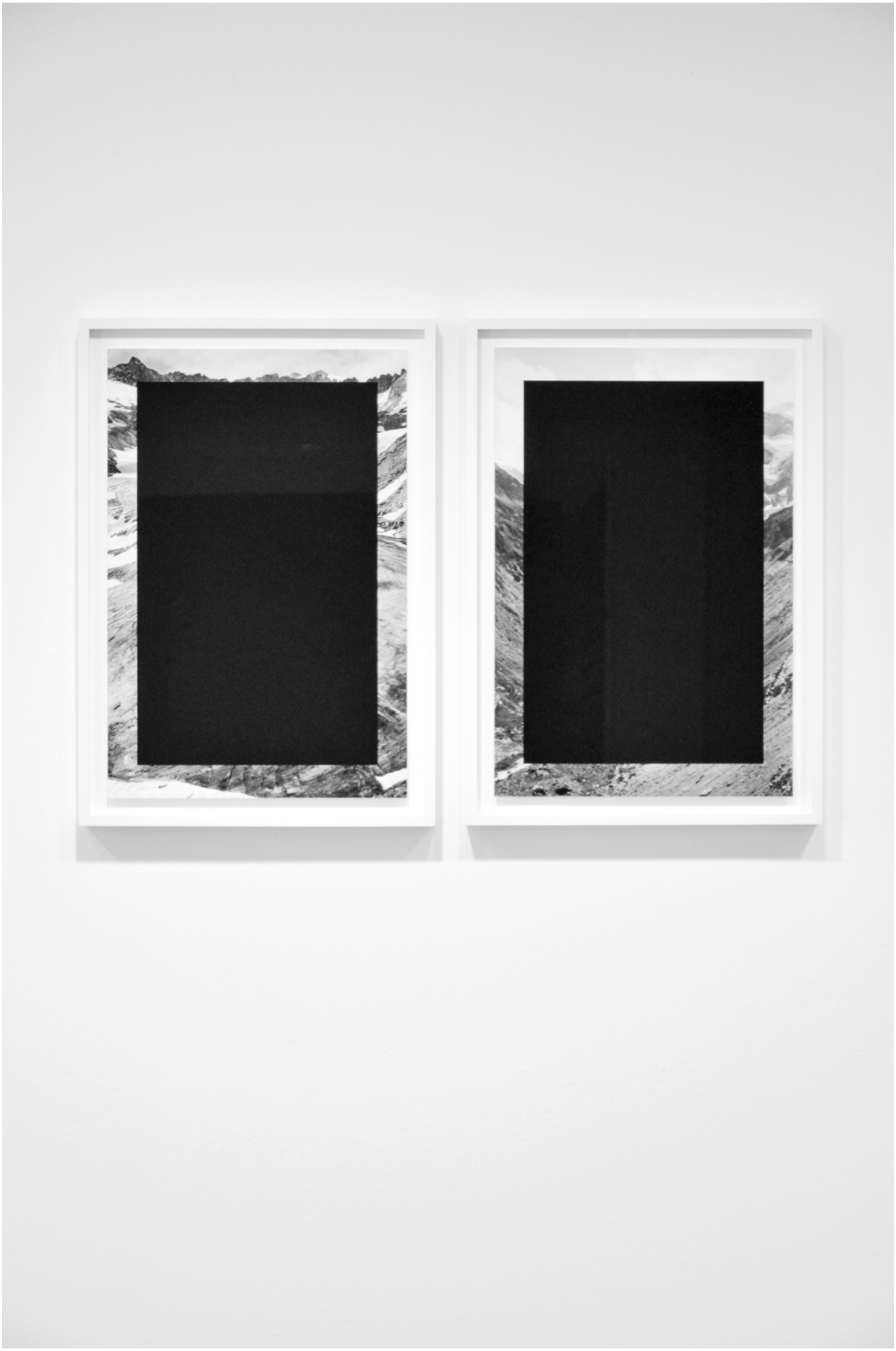
Mont Miné - A part of missing mass - 2020 - 2021 - wall paper - 96x145cm

Aletsch - 2020 - 2021 - 45X30cm - printing on paper hahnemühle

Turtmann - A part of missing mass - 2020 - 2021 - wall paper - 145x96cm



Mont Miné - A part of missing mass  - 2020 - 2021 - wall paper - 96x145cm



Rhône - Zinal - 45X30cm - 2020 - 2021 - printing on paper hahnemühle

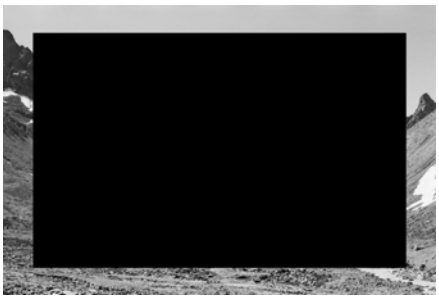
Mont Collon - A part of missing mass - 2020 - 2021 - numérique

Arolla - Cheilon - Unteraar - 2020 - 2021 - 30x45cm - printing on paper hahnemühle

A part of missing mass  - 2020 - 2021  - wall paper - 145x96cm - printing on paper / frames - 45X30cm - printing on paper hahnemühle

# A part of missing mass

To date: 19 glaciers Switzerland photographers (2019-2023)


Arolla

cheilon

Corbassiére

l'En Darrey

Mont Miné

Moming

Tsili ore nouve

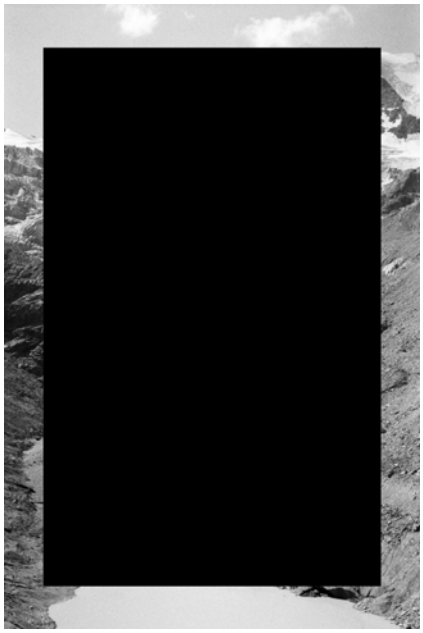
Unteraar

Ferpècle

Lang

Trient

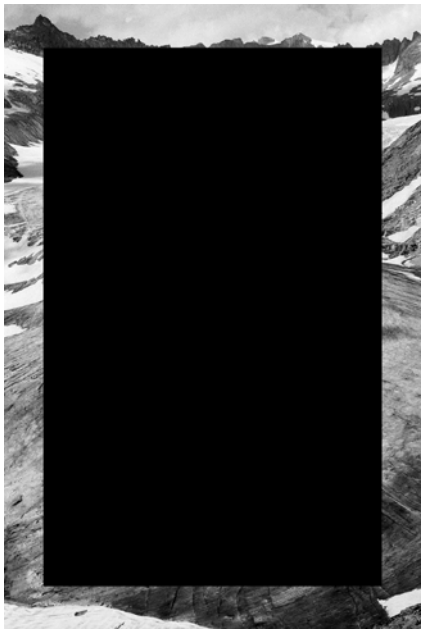
Aletsch

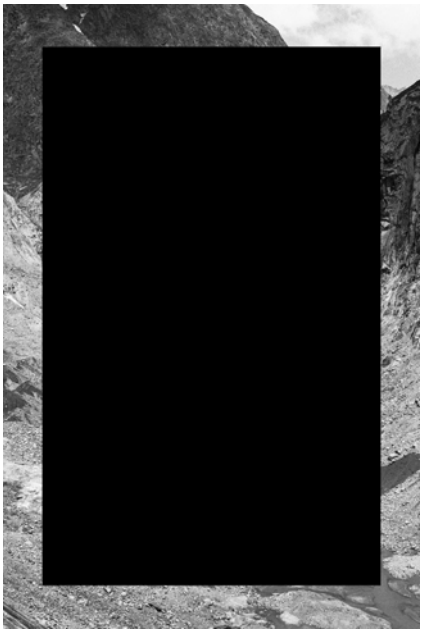

Moiry

Coulon

Turtmann

Zinal


Rhône


Fiescher

# Anatomie

Deployed as a record of what remains of today's glacier networks, these cartographic projections of European alpine glacier networks show their organicities, ramifications and interconnections. Cut with scissors from white geotextile, a material currently used to limit the melting of certain glacier fronts, they are suspended at their northernmost extremity as a reminder of their cartographic origins, and spread out by gravitational force towards the ground without taking into account their original geographical form. Like living organisms in temporary shrinkage, continuing their decline towards certain disappearance in future decades, these anatomies speak of the past, the present and the future, for inexorably their expansion will resume one day, in a future that probably doesn't belong to us.
Technically, these cut-outs are derived from cartographic surveys taken from Swisstopo data (Swiss Federal Office of Topography), which are then projected and drawn onto geotextile, which I cut with scissors and connect together with a thin transparent thread.

Anatomie I - 2023 - Matterhorn network - 250x180 cm - white géotextile - manual cutting

Anatomie I - 2023 - Matterhorn network - 250x180 cm - white géotextile - manual cutting

Anatomie I - 2023 - Matterhorn network (details)- 250x180 cm - white géotextile - manual cutting

Anatomie II - 2023 - Aletsch network - 250x 160cm -  white géotextile - manual cutting

Anatomie II - 2023 - Aletsch network (details)- 250x180 cm - white géotextile - manual cutting

# Gletscher

series of short novels (in french)
2019 - 2023...

These series of short stories recount the walks or approaches, lasting a day or more, to one or more glaciers during my excursions to feed the Dark Gletscher project.
Each itinerary generates a point of view, a theme, questions that often reveal themselves at rest, reading my notes and other visual notebooks taken on the spot, or through various research, scientific and technical readings or post-experience literary works.
These stories are written relatively late after the walk, which allows me to digest the experience and get to the heart of the matter, putting aside certain emotions that might pollute what I want to talk about.
These novels are conceived as keys to approaching the protean work that is Dark Gletscher, a way of allowing readers and viewers to enter the intimacy of my universe.
To complement the texts, analog photographs support the itinerary.

Download link : https://frederic-fourdinier.com/ecritures-nouvelles/gletschers/

8 novels are currently available:
*La masse manquante - La rupture - Les causes à effets - Un constat - Un parallèle - Une incursion - Une traversée - une rencontre*

9 juin 2021, Suisse, Vorder Sänntum, vallée de la Turtmanntale, 9h00, altitude : 1903 mètres.

Si la Suisse est perçu comme un des fleurons de production de paysages, dite «cartes postales», la vallée encaissée de Turtmanntale se situe probablement dans les premières du tourniquet touristique vantant le pays. Tout y est : des forêts denses et feutrées, des routes et sentiers sinueux mais pas trop, des chalets impeccables entourés de granges hors du temps, des chapelles posées sur des promontoires rocheux romantiques ou bien, plantées proprement au milieu des hameaux, des vaches soignées et détendues dans des alpages de rêves, de magnifiques blocs erratiques déposées tout au long du torrent Turtmänna, lui même s'écoulant somptueusement dans la géologie tourmentée des alpes. On est séduit, même par temps gris, froid et humide.

Heureusement, cet éden prend fin autour des 2000 mètres et donne accès à un autre monde. Pas directement vers celui des cimes alpines minérales, non! Mais vers une réalité pragmatique et économique vitale pour notre société ultra consommatrice : le domaine de la gestion des eaux pour l'hydroélectricité. Au centre de la vallée de Turtmann depuis 1958, dans une cluse, un barrage-voûte en béton précontraint barre et retient l'écoulement naturel des eaux en provenance des glaciers Turtmann et Brunegg, il réceptionne aussi par conduits celles des torrents Brändji, Frili, Blüomatt. L'accès se fait aisément par un sentier large entre coupé de plaques de neige. Aux abords de l'édifice, les contre-forts en béton soutiennent les parois rocheuses latérales. Des vestiges de carottages indiquent une partie des actions mécaniques misent en œuvre pour aménager les lieux, les traces des prométhéens modernes. Plusieurs cameras surveillent l'évolution du niveaux d'eau et autres phénomènes, voir plus probablement. Le complexe est constitué de deux bassins : un de décantation, avec sa digue et ces bassins filtrants, et l'autre d'accumulation avec la voûte du barrage, 780 000 $m^3$ de retenue.

Extrait de pages - Gletscher - La rupture

# SPECTRUM

2022
video
2mn - plan fixe
https://youtu.be/Gtzs_PeSqIo

It's a «ritual» in various parts of the Alps to spread white geotextiles over the glacier fronts of several glaciers, in an attempt to reduce their melting during the warmer months.
An integral part of the Swiss identity and a symbol of the Alpine landscape, glaciers are important economic factors for ski resorts and tourism in general, as well as being an essential water reserve for hydroelectricity, agriculture and agro-industry.
These textiles are subjected to the tortured movements of the glacier, as well as the ravages of time and the mountain's geological environment. Their evolution generates new, disjointed, greyish landscapes. Like sheets covering the furniture of a lifeless house, preventing dust from settling, they offer the mountain new permanent inhabitants, ghosts. Only the winds of the glacier will lift these shrouds to reveal the icy masses at the end of these giants' lives.

screen shot

# Exhibitions

## Dark Gletscher

Espace Graffenried - Aigle - Suisse

01/04 > 28/05/2023

espacegraffenried@aigle.ch

www.espacegraffenried.ch

The Dark Gletscher project, initiated in Switzerland in 2019 and presented for the first time at this exhibition, is the fruit of environmental, physical and cosmological reflections. Glaciers - Gletscher in German - are considered here as essential and impacting parts of the Earth's atmospheric system. This work is part of a mobile dynamic for Frédéric Fourdinier, who has been examining the question of glaciers and their movements through travels, hikes and other traverses in various alpine areas, over the course of several seasons and years. At Espace Graffenried, this project takes the form of an immersive installation bringing together extracts from two major works: prints in various formats from the series A part of missing mass, featuring photographs of glacier fronts 70% obscured by a black surface (see details on pages below). This value echoes the theoretical percentage of dark energy that would compose the universe and generate its expansion, while preventing the cosmic background from being perceived.

Frédéric Fourdinier is also presenting a new version of the Anatomie series, which consists of cartographic projections of current Alpine glacier networks, focusing on their ramifications and interconnections. Cut from white geotextile used to limit the melting of glacial fronts, these projections are suspended from their northernmost extremity and spread towards the ground by gravitational force. The artist compares them to living organisms, anatomies bearing witness to the past and shaping the future. Various encounters with Swiss and European glaciers gave rise to a series of short stories written by Frédéric Fourdinier. These texts, presented here (PDF à télécharger) as an integral part of the exhibition, allow us to delve deeper into the questions raised by the artist. Dark Gletscher invites us not only to reflect on our relationship with our environment and the actions we take to preserve it, but also to (meta)physically question the limits that make up the universe, the notions of presence and absence, expansion and retraction, acceleration and emptiness.

Chloé Cordonier
(Exhibition manager at l'Espace Graffenried)

Read more : https://www.espacegraffenried.ch/expositions-en-cours-2

## A part of missing mass

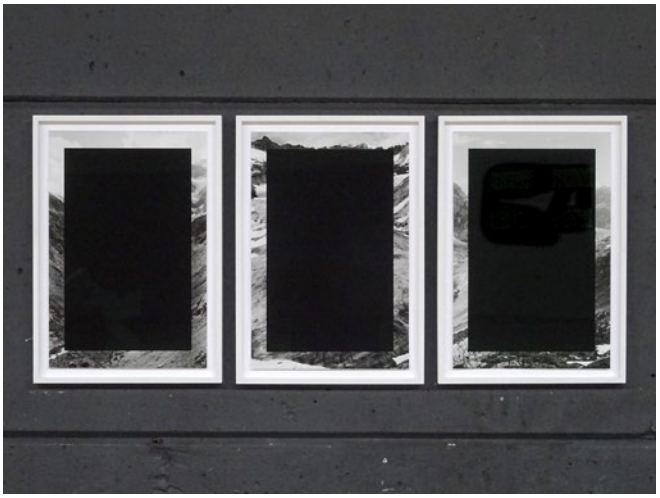
(3 photos, extrait de la série)

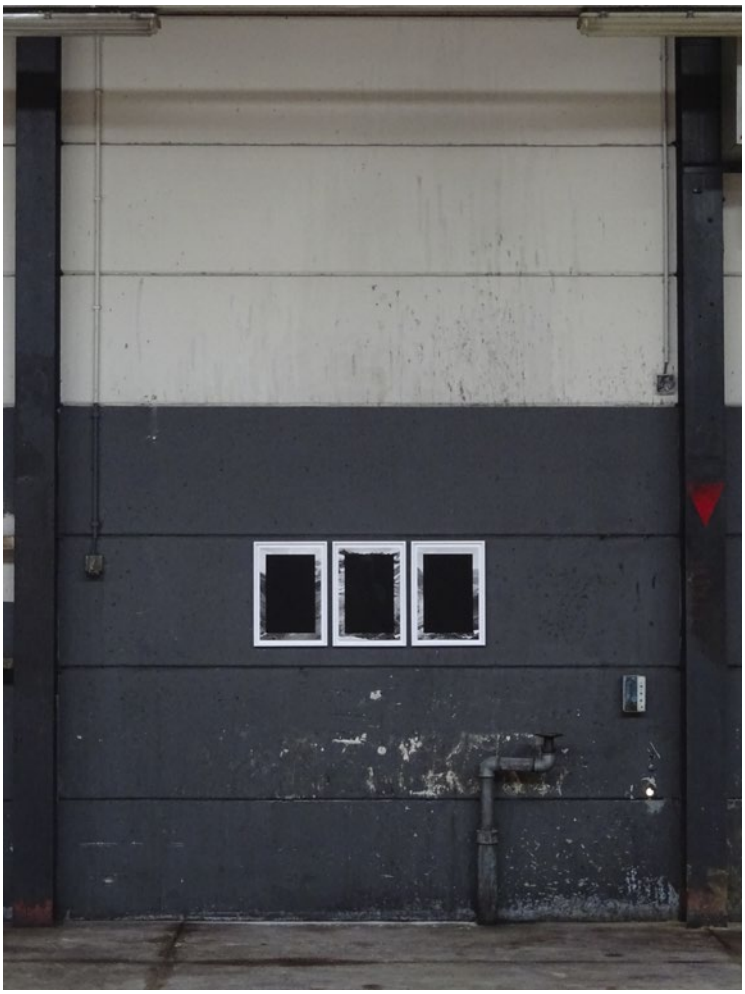
Droom / 1 pour tous -  furtive exhibition, Uccle, Bruxelles

Group show

Organizer : Gregory Decock

21/06 > 21/008/2023





Zinal - Rhône - Aletsch - 2020 - 2021 - 30x45cm - printing on paper hahnemühle

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