

alpha | gallery

23 Cork Street London W1S 3NJ

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PRESS RELEASE

VALOTA - WAX



Exhibition dates: 1 October - 2 November 2012

**alpha gallery proudly presents Valota's latest works,
"On the Other Side of the Sky"
and selected paintings from his monograph "WAX"
recently published by prestigious French publisher, Editions du Regard.**

**160 pages, 185 illustrations, 29 x 24 cm, bilingual French / English.
Text by the publisher, José ALVAREZ, and interview by Henri-François Debailleux,
art critic at French daily newspaper Libération.**

Blowtorch in hand, Valota takes on WAX. He colours and heats it in cooking pans: a singular practice of alchemy born from the artist's desires and speculations to create the Great Work.

From the very beginning, Valota has used a rather unusual medium: wax. To the artist: "wax never stops surprising me. It's like a book I open and where I can feel under the page I see the next page and the one afterwards. I have the feeling I paint on the edge. Wax offers all its delicacy and transparency to the touch of the flame of my blowtorch. It absorbs colours, transcends them and guides me in my search for other hues. Wax is alive, sensual. When I was an altar boy, I used to carry the candles, I was the carrier of light. Wax is light, it is at the heart of my story."

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Valota does not behave as a theorist, he carefully conceals the secret meaning of his choices and ambitions and if a work expresses a comment on the world all the better, but this is not what really matters to this self-taught artist. The way he organises forms and reveals matter answers specific pictorial laws perfectly congruent with imagination as well as with doubt. This partially explains his pictorial language which oscillates, in a pendular movement, between representation and abstraction, like that of many 20th- century artists. Valota's work thus presents affinities which connect him, depending on the series and with equal pertinence, to artists who attempted a reflection towards rational forms through abstraction and, in the same movement, were looking for a way to be totally liberated from realism through representation.

His latest work "**On the Other Side of the Sky**" will be shown for the first time at **alpha | gallery** in London. As in the former series "**Days are Dark & Nights are Clear**" colour spreads with total freedom in what the artist calls "mental landscapes". Valota is fascinated by the self-revealing ductility of the wax that he nevertheless controls. Through this very subtle work, Valota reflects on colour, as if the union of form and colour had asserted itself in a last phase of natural genesis.

Tonalities proceed with muffled harmonies from which light and dark, sometimes bright colours spring, playing on very delicate and carefully balanced hues which mix with faint shapes. The smooth and thick pictorial layer of wax composes the backbone of the painting, recalling the delicate work of the Renaissance artists and the egg tempera technique. Colours thus seem to conspire together in a remarkable final concord. The way cold hues agree with warm tones calls to mind the ideal satisfaction Goethe expressed in his Theory of colours: "hence it may naturally be inferred that now, in the junction of the deepened extremes, a feeling of satisfaction must succeed". Valota perfectly masters wax and colour as well as composition, liberating it from all the usual optical influence of painting. This is probably what makes his work so original.

Valota was born in Compiègne in the North of France in 1950. He shares his time between his two studios in Paris and in Normandy. He has exhibited both painting and sculpture in numerous solo shows and group shows.

His work is part of reputable art collections including those of Alain-Dominique Perrin (founder of La Fondation Cartier for Contemporary Art), Daniel Hechter and John Travolta.

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Selected solo and group exhibitions:

- 2012 - « Days are Dark & Nights are Clear » (Solo exhibition, Galerie Hayhill, London)
- « Le Temps au Temps, Identités 1 » (Galerie Riff Art Projects, Istanbul)
- 2011 - « ZEROBULLET\$ » (Solo exhibition, Galerie Riff Art Projects, Paris)
- « Quiet Days Under the Trees » (Solo exhibition, Galerie Hayhill, London)
- Contemporary Istanbul (Galerie Riff Art Projects, Istanbul)
- 2008 - « Accords & Âmes » (Solo exhibition, Galerie Riff Art Projects, Strasbourg)
- 2007 - « Des arbres et des âmes » (Solo exhibition, Maison des Arts d'Evreux)
- 2005 - « Arborescence » (Solo exhibition, Galerie Lavignes Bastille)

Note to editors:

[alpha gallery](#) the most famous street for art galleries in London. Cork Street is next to Bond Street and the Royal Academy of Art. Alpha Gallery offers a unique opportunity to experience contemporary art and modern masters such the sculptures of Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

For further information please contact *Siti Osman-Haywood* or *Simon Tarrant* at alpha gallery, email: contact@alphagalleryuk.com tel:+44 (0)20 7494 9272