

1921



Maison Routier in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, 1907. Photo Compagnie d'Orléans.
Gifted to Dr Daniel Adrien Routier upon his first settlement in the village in 1921.

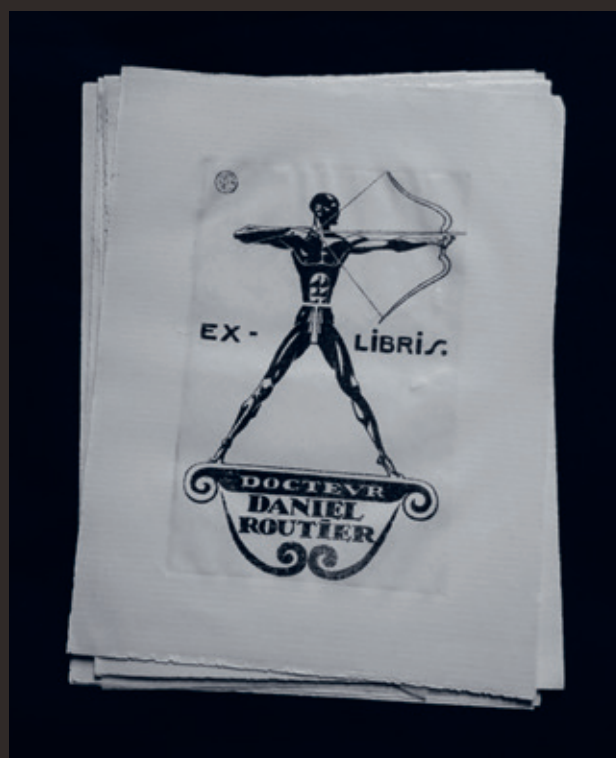
1921



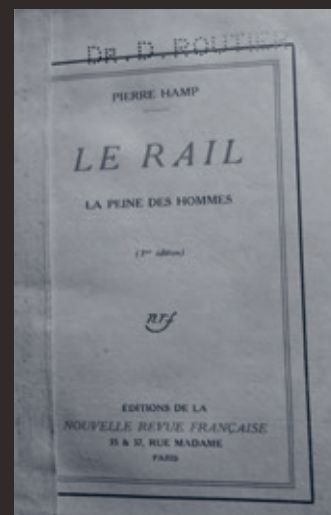
Doctor Daniel Adrien Routier in hospital Saint-Louis, Paris, 1915.



Photograph taken by Daniel Adrien Routier of his room in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, 1930.



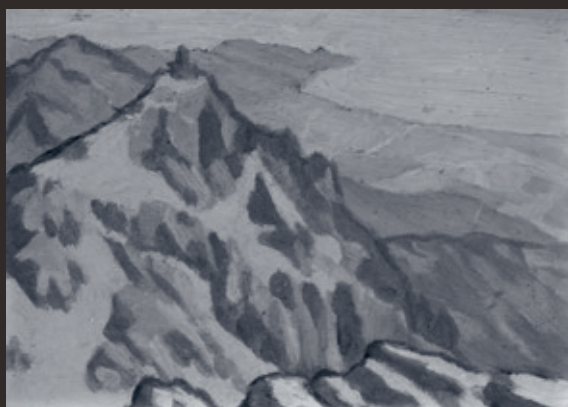
Ex Libris, 1920. Etching on paper.
Design by Daniel Adrien Routier. Photo RE.



Pierre Hamp, *Le Rail: La Peine des Hommes*, Édition de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1914. Hand-bound edition by Daniel Adrien Routier, 1921. Photo RE.



Daniel Adrien Routier, *Saint-Cirq-Lapopie*, 1921. Painting on cardboard, 21 × 15 cm. Photo JS.



Daniel Adrien Routier, *Littoral d'Oran* (n° 1, 2, 3), 1920. Paint on cardboard, 21 × 15 cm (× 3). Photo JS.

2021



Radicale1924 residents at Maison André Breton in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie. Photo AL.



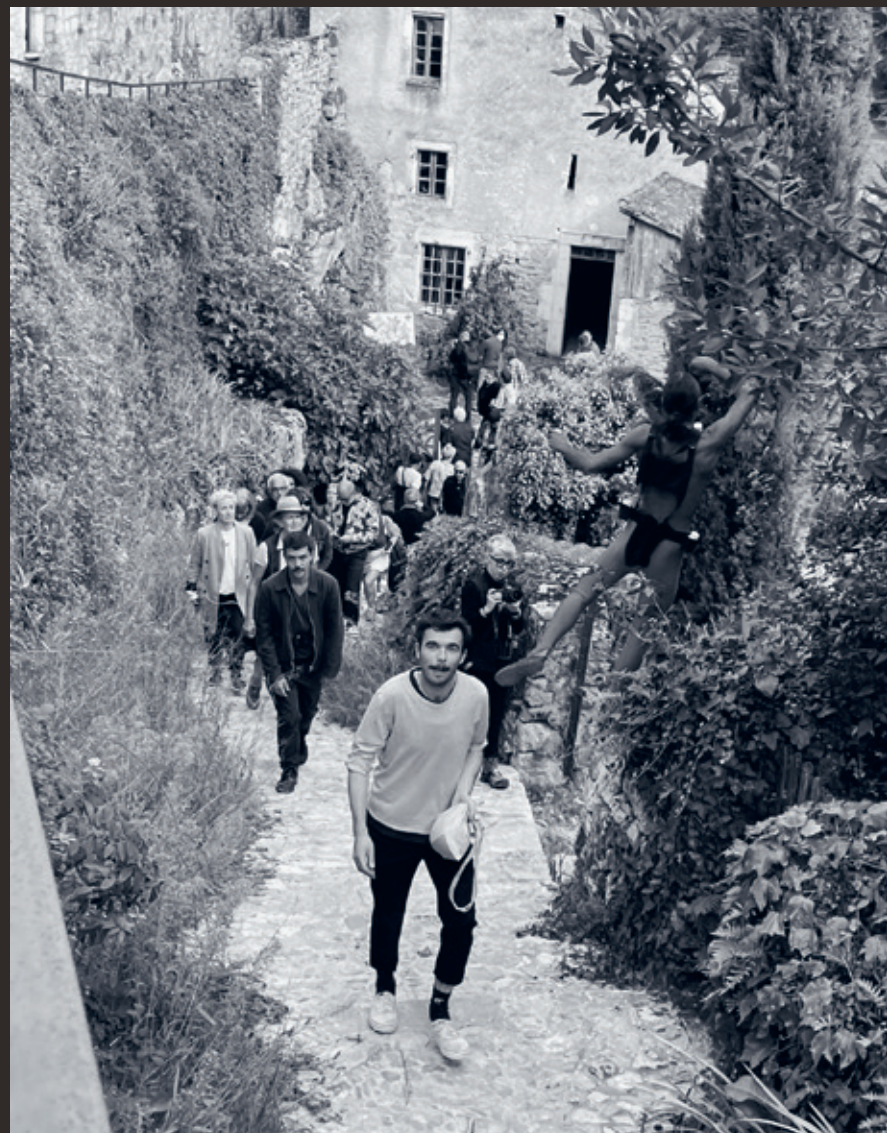
Press release of *Parade*, *The Public Event*, 2021. Design by Michael Hart.



Parade, The Public Event at the Rocher de la Popie. Photo CyZ.



Parade, The Public Event at the Porte de Rocamadour. Photo RP.



Parade, The Public Event at Maison André Breton. Photo RF.



Ria Pacquée in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie. Photo KW.



Guillaume Bijl & Vinicius Couto at Nightshop, Maison Routier. Photo KW.



Archival image: Idris Sevenans, *Tour de Zwanze*, 2021. Photo RE.



Leftovers from the performance by Mikes Poppe. Photo CyZ.



Maison André Breton in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie. Photo CA.



Preparation for performance by Carlos Aires. Photo CyZ.



Installation of *Tour de Zwanze* flyers by Idris Sevenans. Photo RP.



A neighbour who made homemade bread for the residents at Radicale1924. Photo RP.



The keys of Maison André Breton. Photo CA.



Making off *Tour de Zwanze* by Idris Sevenans. Photo CyZ.



André Breton's pipe, coll. Maison André Breton. Photo CA.



Ria Pacquée, Carlos Aires & Alejandro Andújar. Photo CyZ.

2022



Residents of Radicale1924 at Maison Routier, during *Parade, The Public Event*. Photo BG.

RADICALE24

I dedicate this book to my partner, Sylvia Zade-Routier.

CyZ

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

John C. Welchman

AND CONTRIBUTIONS BY

Chantal Yzermans

Dennis Van Mol

Tamara Beheydt

Clément Gaësler

Stefan Wouters

Maya Van Leemput

RADICAL



MER. BOOKS

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INTRODUCTION

CHANTAL YZERMANS

This publication marks the culmination of Radicale1924, a project that began in 2021 as an artist residency at Maison Routier, the house of Sylvia Zade-Routier, and concluded in 2024 with a grand finale at Maison André Breton that coincided with the centenary of the first *Surrealist Manifesto*.

Radicale1924 bore witness, above all, to an improbable sort of gestation: an alchemy born from encounters between artists, figures from the art world, village residents, and even certain visitors—sometimes incredulous, sometimes amused, but never indifferent. Individuals from diverse backgrounds, with no reason to cross paths, wound up forging unexpected bonds. The project took shape through dialogue, mutual admiration and shared intuitions.

For three years, Radicale1924 transformed the village of Saint-Cirq-Lapopie into a sanctuary for artists. Of course, the intention was never to redefine Surrealism; rather, by inviting artists to live and work in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, Radicale1924 sought to explore new creative directions in a world in constant transformation.

Sharing these years together has been both an honour and a joy—a journey towards a future built on uninhibited and generous artistic expression: an urgent and radical(e) action for the first quarter of this new century.

Cette publication constitue un moment culminant pour Radicale1924, un projet qui a débuté en 2021, en tant que résidence d'artistes dans la maison Routier, propriété de Sylvia Zade-Routier et s'est conclu par un grand final à la maison André Breton, dans le cadre du centenaire du *Premier Manifeste du surréalisme*, en 2024.

Radicale1924 résulte avant tout d'une gestation improbable : une alchimie née des diverses rencontres entre artistes, acteurs du monde de l'art, habitants du village et même certains visiteurs, tantôt incrédules tantôt amusés, mais jamais indifférents. Des individus d'horizons divers, que rien ne prédestinait à se rencontrer, qui ont su tisser des complicités inattendues. Ce projet s'est construit au fil des dialogues, des admirations réciproques et des intuitions partagées.

Pendant trois ans, Radicale1924 s'est approprié le village de Saint-Cirq-Lapopie en tant que sanctuaire réservé aux artistes. Bien entendu, il ne s'agissait pas pour autant de redéfinir le surréalisme ; au contraire, en invitant des artistes à vivre et à travailler à Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, Radicale1924 a cherché à explorer de nouvelles pistes de création artistique dans un monde en constante transformation.

Parcourir ces années tous ensemble a été à la fois un honneur et un plaisir – un chemin vers un futur fondé sur l'expression artistique débridée et généreuse – une action urgente et radical-e de ce premier quart de siècle.



Jean Dubuffet, *Vache la belle fessue*, 1954, oil on canvas, 97 × 130 cm. Private coll. © SABAM, Belgium 2025 / Fondation Dubuffet, Paris.



Paul Gauguin, *Drame au village, Pont-Aven*, 1894, oil on canvas, 73.4 × 93 cm.

UNE ENVELOPPE VILLAGEOISE: NOTES ON MODERNITY AND RURALITY

JOHN C. WELCHMAN

Un écrivain libertin pourra-t-il cacher sous une enveloppe villageoise les principes éternels de morale, de devoir, d'honneur?

CHAMPFLEURY, *Le réalisme* (1857)

The question posed by the critic Champfleury in his signature 1857 essay on Realism is as situationally complex, I think, as it is foundational for a key strand of reflection on ideas and experiences of the rural that emerged in France and elsewhere in Europe in the mid and later nineteenth century. Can a 'free' writer, the writer who supports freedom, and writes freely—but who might also, as hinted by the French *libertin*, work with license, even licentiously—hide what he describes as 'the eternal principles of morality, duty, and honour' in—and this is the crux of the interrogation—a 'village envelope'? Can such things be buried, as it were, in an atmosphere of rurality? Or, to transpose the terms, how might it be possible for the rhythms and commitments of village life to meet the obligations associated with traditional manifestations of moral rectitude? Can the village ethos filter these high principles, or enshrine them, from the point of view, or under cover of, genuinely free written expression?

The most persuasive response to these questions would have to be reached for, of course, by way of a close contextual analysis of Champfleury's essay and his arguments about the turn towards a 'realism' subtended by the deep, renovated—and tendentious—attention to the rural, for which it advocates. Here, however, I want to muster these questions, and their ambiguities, as prompts to sketch and briefly to think-through several propositions about the sometimes contentious status of rural experience posited in the visual culture associated with modernism and

its aftermath—assessing artistic and critical reflection in the century and a half following Champfleury's remarks on the ways in which, as Martin Heidegger put it, 'the life of the community gathers and village existence is constantly in play, i.e., comes to presence.'¹

This is, in the end, a meditation on the constitution and reception of provincial space; above all on encounters with the structures, ambience, experience and rhythms of the village and its life. It is striking and little remarked that the modernist project itself was staged in intermittent but telling dialogue with a series of far-reaching investigations into the nature and appearance of rural places, persons and architectures. Think of Pissarro's rooftops in Pontoise, including *Les toits rouges, coin de village, effet d'hiver* (Red roofs, corner of a village, winter effect, 1877) and a series of similarly predicated village views painted by Paul Gauguin in the mid-1870s and later in Brittany (*Pont-Aven, le village*, 1894); of the quarries of Paul Cézanne such as *Bibemus Quarry* (c.1900) imaging the remainders of a negative space prefatory to local construction; or of the squared-off village houses in L'Estaque—seen from above as Henri Matisse recalled in a notable aperçus—that were so important to the development of analytic Cubism around 1907–08,² but where Cézanne had also painted in 1864 and 1865.³

Fueled in no little part by the development of new rail connections (a Paris-Fontainebleau line, for example, opened in 1849) and better engineered roads (the construction of which is pictured in Courbet's *Les Casseurs de pierres* [The Stone Breakers] painted in the same year), we can point to the emergence in the middle years of the nineteenth century of a chthonic modernism associated with the

social, locative and sentimental predicates of the Realist paintings of Jean-François Millet and Gustave Courbet and the rural-situated enterprise of the Barbizon School (Millet, Théodor Rousseau, Camille Corot and others). Théophile Thoré described Courbet and Millet as 'these doctors ... of forests and mountains.'⁴ For Millet place, painting, perception and artistic purpose were so interleaved that, as he remarked of Barbizon in a letter to the collector and writer Alfred Sensier in 1871, 'many of the villages remind me of old tapestries. These lovely velvet meadows! What a pity the cows cannot paint!'⁵ Some eighty years later Jean Dubuffet would go part way to fulfilling this wish in the sixteen cow portraits he painted during the summer of 1954, including *Vache la belle fessue* (Cow with a beautiful bottom).

*Although I never consciously thought of it at the time, on looking back, I am sure that in transferring their image to a devil-may-care, arbitrary, phantasmagoric world of clowns, I had an obscure idea of conferring on them, by means of irreality, a more intensely alive reality. After all, this is the aim that is sought, and in the best instance attained, in all good clown acts, in all good theatre.'*⁶

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, then, a litany of modern artists organised key aspects of their work around the two-step between urban and rural locations. Jean-Baptiste Corot, Henri Harpignies, Lionel Brioux, Mary Renard, René Veillon, Paul Sain, Félix Charpentier, Georges Pioger, Charles Martel, Eugène Boudin, and later Alfred Gardon, René Thurin, Auguste-Jean Claire, André Paly, Anders Osterlind, André Mare, Othon Friesz, Yvonne Jean-Haffen, Bernard



Camille Pissarro, *Les Toits rouges, coin de village, effet d'hiver*, 1877, oil on canvas, 54.5 x 65.6 cm. © GrandPalaisRmn (musée d'Orsay) / Tony Querrec.

Buffet, and André Lemaître frequented Saint-Céneri-le-Gérei in Normandy, constituting what one critic referred to at the end of the nineteenth century as 'Barbizon de l'Orne';⁷ Frédéric Bazille painted in Castelnau-le-Lez near Montpellier in the 1860s; Alfred Sisley worked in Moret-sur-Loing, a short train ride from Paris, also frequented by Claude Monet and Auguste Renoir; Paul Cézanne (and later George Braque) sojourned in L'Estaque; Van Gogh put up in Arles; in 1906 Matisse and Derain famously decamped to the then little-frequented Mediterranean fishing village of Collioure; Juan Gris and Pablo Picasso visited Céret in the Pyrenees (and later, Juan-les-Pins); André Lhote worked in Mirmande and Gordes—the latter also attracting Marc Chagall; Robert and Sonia Delaunay journeyed to Hondarribia, just across the French border in the País Vasco, then Vila do Cond in Portugal; Max Ernst, André Breton, René Char, and others hung out in Lacoste, and later Saint-Cirq-Lapopie; Picasso and Prévert made for Saint-Paul-de-Vence; Alberto Giacometti and Man Ray for Hyères, and Jean Metzinger travelled to Bandol in the Var.⁸ As attested by Van Gogh's *Impasse des Deux Frères* and the

Pepper Mill (1887) and a postcard produced around 1910, when construction on homes along avenue Junot and rue Girardon replaced farms, even the bohemian Paris dormitory of Montmartre itself can be seen as a cipher for a formerly village-like space with its characteristic windmills and barns—incorporated inexorably into the urban fabric of the defining cosmopolitan city of the early twentieth century.

By some reckonings, chthonic modernism reached its early apogee as the site of a deep social crisis read from the work of Vincent van Gogh. One of the chief theorists of postmodernism, Fredric Jameson, takes as his point of departure the 'raw materials' of van Gogh which constitute and must 'be grasped,' he claims, 'simply as the whole object world of agricultural misery, of stark rural poverty, and the whole rudimentary human world of back-breaking peasant toil, a world reduced to its most brutal and menaced, primitive and marginalized state.' He spells out the implications:

Fruit trees in this world are ancient and exhausted sticks coming out of poor soil; the people of the village are worn down to their skulls, caricatures of some ultimate grotesque

*typology of basic human feature types. How is it, then, that in van Gogh such things as apple trees explode into a hallucinatory surface of colour, while his village stereotypes are suddenly and garishly overlaid with hues of red and green?*⁹

At stake here are the negative lineaments of a technical and chromatic sublimation, driven by intimations of aberrant psychology, that transformed a bare rural template of suffering and hardship by means of dazzling formal redemption: as Jameson puts it 'village stereotypes' redolent of toil and emiseration, both human and natural, are overlaid by the provision of supplemental hallucinatory surfaces—and thereby—in some sense—redressed, recuperated ... or redeemed.

A safer and rather more resilient tradition of chthonic modernism was predicated on what Maurice Merleau-Ponty termed the 'return to the things themselves.' Teasing out the scene of this repossession, Merleau-Ponty pits the abstractions of science and disciplinary knowledge against the counter-epistemological priority of the land: at stake here, then, is another 'return': 'to that world



Joan Miró, *La Masia*, ca. 1921-1922, oil on canvas, 123.8 × 141.3 cm. Coll. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C © SABAM, Brussels 2025 / Fundació Joan Miró.

which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always speaks, and in relation to which scientific determination is abstract, significative, and dependent, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt first what a forest, a prairie, or a river is.¹⁰ For Merleau-Ponty it was the deep reciprocity he found in the life and work of Paul Cézanne between self, painting and landscape—as ‘he “germinated” with the countryside’—that epitomized his vision of the landscape as ‘an emerging organism.’¹¹ Elements of this mode of apprehension persisted in the tangible symbolism of the pictorial *terroirs* of Catalonia set out in Joan Miró’s *The Farm* (1921–22) or *Head of a Catalan Peasant* (1925) in the ‘return to the land’ advocated—and lived out during summers at his mother’s farm in Lisoires, Calvados—by Fernand Léger in the 1920s and 30s;¹² and in the rural landscapes, yokes and flora of Armenia remembered, crypto-objectively, in the paintings of Arshile Gorky.

Yet, with the advent of another cycle of commitments to realism in the Soviet Union, Europe, the US, and aspects of Mexican muralism in the 1930s, the country-city polarity was sharpened to the point of caricature as rural locations were populated by stereotypes of productivity, collective labour and simulated well-being. The American Regionalist, Grant Wood (1892–1942), who advocated for ‘American Scene’ painting in the 1930s, penned a manifesto in 1935 explicitly dedicated to what he termed the ‘Revolt Against the City’—a shift underpinned by a defining Transatlantic reorientation. Painting, he argued ‘has declared its independence from Europe, and is retreating from the cities to the more American village and country life.’¹³

The celebration of country life, experience, and places was met by its trenchant antithesis in the untrammelled anti-ruralism vented by some of the more radical avant-garde formations in the early twentieth century. In the ‘Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism’ (1909) Filippo Tommaso Marinetti mobilised this sentiment metaphorically to italicise the clamour and colour of a characteristically modern, urban scene. Framing his remarks as a poetically heightened report on an all-night urban bender, Marinetti writes: ‘Suddenly we jumped at the tremendous noise of the large double-decker trams which jolt along outside, shimmering with multicolored lights, like villages on holiday which the flooding Po suddenly strikes and uproots, dragging them all the way to the sea, over waterfalls and through gorges.’¹⁴ Here, the chaotic and impressionable effects of the thunderous sound and blazing lights of a passing tram are strikingly—and somewhat oddly—registered by the conjuring-up of rural catastrophe as Marinetti imagines an engorged river Po ravaging the villages in its flood plain and

carrying them out to sea. The image is surprising in several dimensions. While we can understand the analogy drawn between the metallic noise of a tram and the roar of flood waters, the colour and light associated with the vehicle doesn’t seem to comport with the image of village buildings being inundated and washed away. More literally, the Po itself is hardly famous for its gorges and defiles—apart from its very upper reaches; it’s equally unclear why Marinetti refers to ‘holidays’—whether holiday villages or settlements visited while on vacation. The ‘Manifesto of Futurist Painting’ signed by Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini in February 1910, throws light (and shade) on the whole enterprise of the artistic rural retreat: ‘Let’s do it!’ they declaim, ‘Throw out the Portraitists, the Genre Painters, the Lake Painters, the Mountain Painters. We have put up with enough from them, all these impotent painters of country vacations.’¹⁵

Elsewhere, Marinetti links the contingencies of language itself to the differential ethe and symbolic attributes of rural and urban life: ‘The different moods and tenses of the verb should be abolished,’ he argued in 1914, ‘because they make the verb into a loose, ramshackle

wheel on an old wagon, one that is adapted to rough country roads but can’t turn swiftly on a smooth one. Verbs in the infinitive, instead, are the very motion of the new lyricism, having the fluency of train wheels or airplane propellers.’¹⁶ These equivocations underline the often contorted haze of pejorative associations used to belittle and demean rural life in several Futurist manifestoes. Gino Severini’s ‘Plastic Analogies of Dynamism’ (1913) makes this disparagement abundantly clear: ‘We must ban,’ he wrote, ‘as we banned the *nude* in our first manifesto of Futurist painting, the *human body*, *still lifes*, and *rural landscapes* considered as *objects of feeling*.’¹⁷

Looking east—before the spectre of collectivization and the grotesque famines of the 1920s and 30s—the hamlets and shtetels of Belarus, Ukraine and southern Russia fired up the proto-Surrealist imaginations of Mark Chagall (*I and the Village*, 1911) and Isaac Babel. Under the pressures of imaginative projection village life was untethered from the ground that had hitherto defined and supported it. Rural buildings and protagonists now floated in a newly defined oneiric space in which narratives, objects, and actions do not conform to normative modes of sequence, location



Marc Chagall, *Moi et le village*, ca. 1923–1924, gouache, watercolour, and graphite on paper, 39 × 30 cm. Coll. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection, by gift © SABAM, Belgium 2025.

ARTIST PAGES







A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small white butterfly with black markings on its wings. The butterfly is perched on the person's index finger. The background is slightly blurred, showing a wicker chair and a tiled floor.

Moi presque mort
Moi pas de temps à perdre
Moi sans air
Moi tout noir
Moi sans mémoire
Moi sans âme
Moi avec hallucinations
Moi sans Dieu
Moi sans respiration
Moi seul corps
Moi sans karma
Moi pas de mystique
Moi sans présence
Moi sans rêve
Moi sans regrets
Moi sans conscience
Moi sans passé
Moi sans moi-même

GUILLAUME BIJL



Guillaume Bijl in Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, September 2021.



James Ensor in Ostend (fictional documentary), 2002, Guillaume Bijl.
Screened at Maison Routier, Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, in 2023.



Guillaume Bijl, *Sorry*, 2021.
Maison Routier, Saint-Cirq-Lapopie.



Guillaume Bijl, *Sorry*, 2024.
Maison André Breton, Saint-Cirq-Lapopie.



Film stills from *André Breton et ses amis à Saint-Cirq-Lapopie*, 2025.



