

Elia Vanderheyden

b. 2000, Belgium

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Marcel Habetslaan 26, 3600 Genk (BE) * +32(0)475322826

danny@uitstalling.com

"I have to stay alone in order to fully contemplate and feel nature."

- Caspar David Friedrich



EMAIL

eliavanderheyden@pm.me

WEBSITE

eliavanderheyden.com

PHONE

+32 488 09 62 39

INSTAGRAM

[@eliavanderheyden](#)

Full catalogue: artsy.net/artist/elia-vanderheyden

Achievements

AWARDS

2nd Prize	2025	Printmaking - Fonds Hilde De Medts, Deinze, Belgium
Award	2024	Peto Urzua - Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp
2nd Prize	2024	Printmaking Today - Printmaking Today Magazine
1st Prize	2022	Frans Dille - Museum Plantin Moretus, Antwerp

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025	Where Have The Birds Gone? - Uitstalling/KUBE Gallery, Genk
2023	Eschatology - Jacques Gorus Gallerie, Antwerp
2022	Monoliths - The Window Project, Antwerp

COLLECTIONS

--	Museum Plantin Moretus, Antwerp
--	KUBE Gallery, Genk
--	Jan De Nul - Arresthuis Hoboken, Antwerp
--	Het Rubenshuis, Antwerp
--	TBA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026	Bank Delen - Groeps Tentoonstelling, Hasselt
2025	The Threads of Reality Became Shattered Through Nature's Destruction - SEAS CC, Knokke
2025	The Arrows of Resilience - MAD Art Gallery, Warsaw
2025	Prijs voor Grafiek - Mudel Museum, Deinze
2024-25	Polyphonic Resonance - Sichuan / Antwerp / Kentucky
2024	Le Charbonnage Residencies - MAD Gallery, Poznan
2024	Master Expo - Royal Academy Antwerp
2024	Ensor x Studio 23 - Studio 23, Ghent
2024	Voyage Voyage II - The Platform, Antwerp
2023	Close to Twilight - Galerie 10a, Zweveghem
2023	Down to Earth - ITHAKA, Leuven
2023	Bound by Print - De.Kamer_remaK.eD, Antwerp
2023	In Touch - On Boards Biennale, Antwerp
2023	Droomland Genck - Emile Van Dorenmuseum, Genk
2023	Young Botanical Artists - Shirley Sherwood Gallery, London
2023	Dreamscapes - Le Charbonnage, Genk
2022	Uitgestald 1 - De Uitstalling, Genk
2022	Prijs Frans Dille - Museum Plantijn Moretus, Antwerp
2021	On Boards Biennale, Antwerp

Projects

ART FAIRS

- 2025 Art Antwerp - Uitstalling/KUBE Gallery
- 2024 Art Antwerp - Uitstalling Art Gallery
- 2024 Art On Paper Brussels - Studio 23
- 2024 Art Luxembourg - Studio 23

PUBLICATIONS

- 2024 Noise Series - Artist Book, Antwerp
- 2024 Untitled - Artist Book, Antwerp
- 2023 SPLINTER Book 2: Bound by Print
- 2023 Black Series - Artist Book, Antwerp
- 2022 A.L.D. - Artist Book, Antwerp
- 2022 Anonymous Printmakers - Book 1: Unseen World
- 2021 Anonymous Printmakers - Book 0: Hello City

EDUCATION

- 2019-24 Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp
Bachelor & Master Fine Arts, Printmaking
- 2024- Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp
Master Educative Arts (ongoing)

PROJECTS & RESIDENCIES

- 2025 Arresthuis Antwerpen - Tapestry commission, 17 x 3 m
- 2024- Atelier Director - Atelier SPLINTER, Hoboken
- 2023 Residency - Le Charbonnage, Genk
- 2021- Co-founder & Chairman - Atelier SPLINTER
- 2021 The Unthinkable Experiment: Chapter Freedom

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

- 2023 Fameus - A.I. and the Future of Art, Antwerp
- 2023 Royal Academy Antwerp - Pixels and Paintings: A.I.
- 2022 KASKA-dko - Printmaking, Lasercut & A.I., Antwerp

"Here, we can escape if we choose to stay"

Searching for the brittle balance between escape and unease, Elia Vanderheyden (b. 2000) creates landscapes that are not quite too unsettling to preclude an invitation to wander aimlessly. An abstraction prone to glitching immerses us in a world where an absent horizon has swallowed all reference to time or place. Through a process that is as spontaneous as it is deliberate – and where technique and chance go hand in hand – the laser-cut prints, paintings, and digital installations create atmospheres that both entice and repel. They are blurred discoveries of a world never trodden by humans – sites forever inaccessible, or glimpsed only in a distant future beyond our existence. A world where Vanderheyden's fascination with the showdown between the ominous and the sublime takes centre stage.

There are no working compasses in Vanderheyden's landscapes. We move within the realm of what the artist calls 'cosmic horror', a concept that signals his inspiration by the work of writer H.P. Lovecraft (1890–1937). In Lovecraft's stories, true terror lies not in monsters that can be seen and understood, but in a confrontation with the incomprehensible and unspeakable, with forces so primordial and immense that the human mind cannot grasp them without going mad. In a similar sense, Vanderheyden searches for the precarious crossroad where the grim and the wondrous touch one another. This indefinable unease forms the foundation of his vistas, which are never explicitly threatening yet permeated with discomfort. His images bring out the question: would we survive if we stepped into this artwork? Are we certain we're still on Earth? The uncanny emerges as a way of breaking free from our familiar world, beckoning us to stray into the unknown.

And with that we reach the core of Vanderheyden's artistry: his images are the culmination of a desire to escape our world, if only for a moment. In an age where, every day, we're held captive by all manner of concerns and stimuli, these landscapes offer an open door. They are a way of creating a space of one's own, where humans are absent and everything stands still and remains undefined. The absence of people is not, in this sense, a dystopian vision, but rather an expression of romantic optimism, where nature gains the upper hand without becoming threatening. Vanderheyden unites the ominous and the serene in a liberating duality. In this respect, the haze speckling many of his surfaces evokes the white noise that takes us aback when it's finally truly quiet.

The surface's hazy hum also safeguards distance and freedom. As a by-product of the laser cutter, the misty texture is deliberately cherished, for it prevents the works from becoming too obvious or too literal. Like a steamed-up veil clouding the view from a window, the distortion leaves space for the viewer to complete the landscape, should they wish to fathom the images. Where a clear depiction would leave our mind at rest, the fog stirs our imagination. The grain also recalls old photographs, blurring history and inviting us to associate the landscapes with another era. Here, fascination and wonder meet in a timeless shiver.

It's no coincidence that Vanderheyden combines old techniques with contemporary technology. He begins by designing his landscapes digitally, separating the different layers of colour, which he then engraves into wood with a laser cutter before printing them on different kinds of paper in the Japanese manner. The AI he uses is a fairly 'primitive' programme from 2019 – a digital tool that does not always interpret correctly, and at times fails to transfer information, allowing glitches to generate unexpected plot twists. His technique thus becomes a voyage of discovery in which expansive imagined landscapes from video games meet remixed forests by the quintessential Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840), one of his great sources of inspiration. For Vanderheyden, Friedrich embodies the epitome of the sublime in a way that resonates with cosmic horror. He draws from this Romantic tradition, where the sublime is not something you can pursue, but something that must befall you. If you go in search of it, it will not be found.

The sublime – the sense of something so vast it becomes almost unbearable – stands at the heart of Vanderheyden's work. Friedrich's paintings embody human insignificance in the face of a spiritual nature: solitary figures in expansive landscapes, ruins, misty seas, and infinite horizons. Like Friedrich, Vanderheyden seeks to create an atmosphere in which the viewer is confronted with something greater than themselves. Vanderheyden's landscapes approach a longing for the infinite that becomes tangible, whilst a cluster of immateriality and maze-like forms dissolves into structures we cannot place. In these fluid worlds, the horizon is not only removed but also reinvented.

Here, we can escape if we choose to stay.



Untitled

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Instalation in Collaboration with: Superview TV - Koen Meyssen - Milan van Oosten

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Stop The Noise, You're Breaking me appart

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Stop The Noise, You're Breaking me Apart

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Black Noise

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Untitled

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S_A.L.D._5_.I. & There Was Nothing To Fear Nothing to Doubt

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Prints & Paintings

<https://www.artsy.net/artist/elia-vanderheyden>



There Was Nothing To Fear Nothing to Doubt & S._A.L.D._4_.I.

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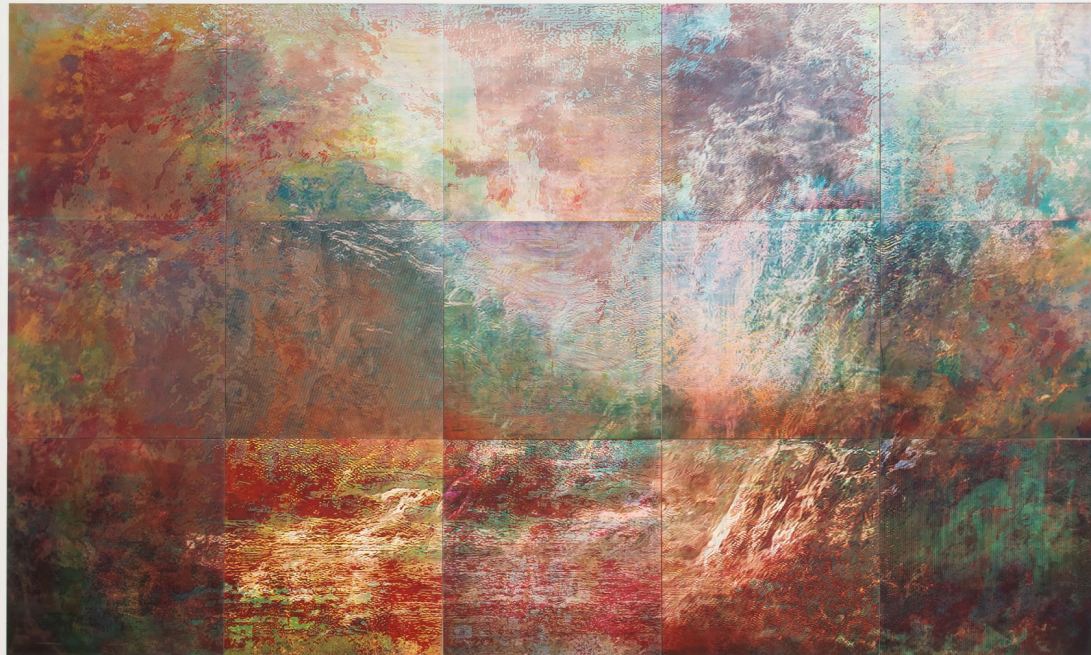
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Untitled

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