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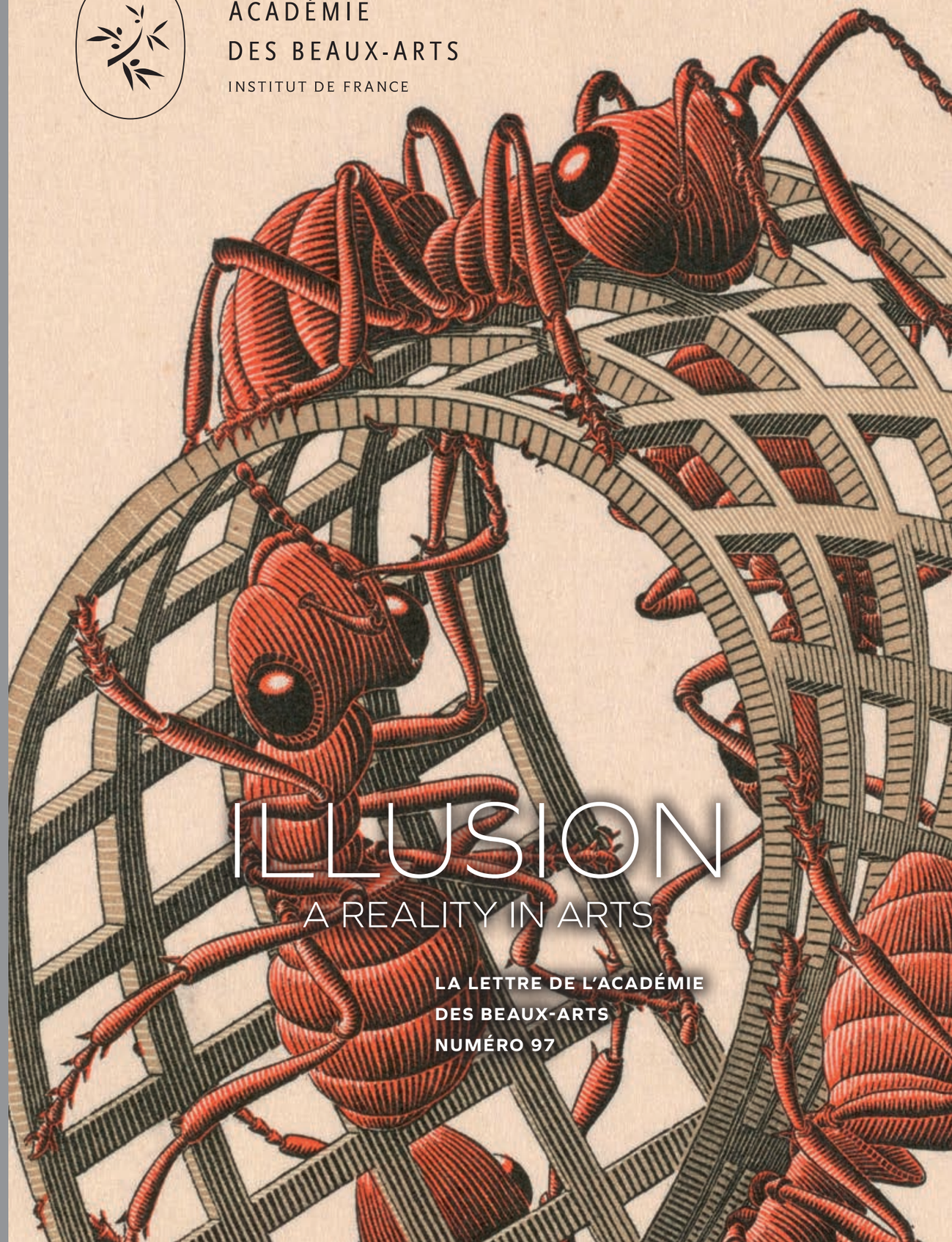
DES BEAUX-ARTS
INSTITUT DE FRANCE



ILLUSION
A REALITY IN ARTS

LA LETTRE DE L'ACADÉMIE
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Editorial

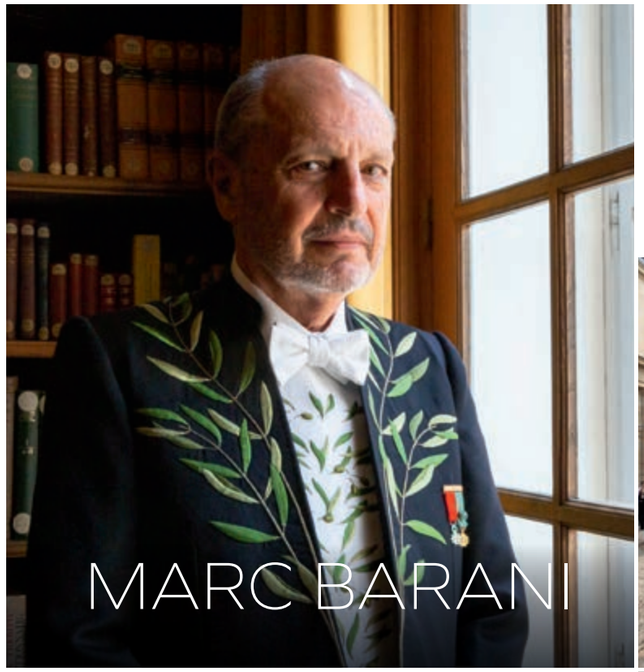
The term "illusion" may refer either to dreaming and suggestion, or to artifice or deception. It is of course the former, the positive and creative aspect of illusion, that has captivated the contributors to this ninety-seventh *Lettre de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts*. I would like to thank them all for their participation.

The contributions of the Permanent Secretary of the First Division of the Académie des Sciences, Étienne Ghys ("Yes or No?", page 28) and member of the Académie Française, Pierre Rosenberg ("Venice and the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture", page 40), bear witness to the ongoing interaction between our Compagnies within the Institut de France.

We wish to strengthen these ties, as we feel that, given the major cultural and societal challenges of our times, places of reflection such as ours need to make the most of their broad array of skills to come up with solutions and inform decision makers.

Laurent Petitgirard
Composer and conductor,
Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts

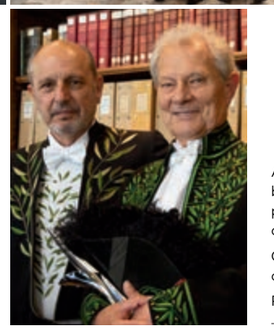
Left: Julien Malland "Seth" (born 1972), *Bambin en short*, fresco, 9 rue Jeanne d'Arc in the 13th *arrondissement* of Paris.
Photo credit: Frédéric Reglain / Alamy Stock Photo.



MARC BARANI

Architect Marc Barani was elected on 14 November 2018 as a member of the Architecture Section in the seat previously held by Claude Parent (1923-2016). He was officially installed at the Académie des Beaux-Arts by his fellow member of the Architecture Section, Jacques Rougerie, on Wednesday 8 June 2022.

Marc Barani was born in Menton in 1957. After studying architecture in Marseille and scenography at the Villa Arson in Nice, he completed his training with anthropology studies in Nepal, and then founded his agency in 1989. His first work, in 1992, was the extension of the Saint-Pancrace cemetery in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, where members of his family lie, as does Le Corbusier, whose *Cabanon* he also restored (1986-1991). His design for the Nice transport hub won him the *Le Moniteur* review's *Équerre d'argent* prize in 2007 and, five years later, the Grand Prix National d'Architecture, an achievement that would then be celebrated through his 2019 exhibition *Tenir lieu* at the Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine. His studio works on a diverse array of projects, in which it develops new construction processes: the *Passerelle du Millénaire* (2000-2001) in Contes, with Bernard Pagès, a private villa on the Côte d'Azur (2000-2004), the Sainte-Croix de Chelles church (2005-2008), with Martin Szekely, the Éric-Tabarly bridge in Nantes (2005-2011), social housing in Nice (2010-2014), the Centre des Congrès de Nancy (2007-2014), the tomb and memorial of Rafic Hariri in Beirut (2010-2017), the Arles École Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie (2014-2019), the Aix-en-Provence Tribunal de Grande Instance (2012-2021), and experimental housing in Bordeaux (2016-2024).
Marc Barani taught architecture from 1993 to 2003, has lectured in France and abroad, and been involved with the Ministry of Culture where he led the working group Innover to establish a national strategy for architecture. He has been a scenographer with Birgitte Fryland for the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and the Musée du Louvre, and curated the exhibition Patrimoines - Héritage - Hérésie at the 2012 Bordeaux Agora Biennial. He is currently working with artist Tatiana Trouvé on the Bagneux train station (2013-2025) and with Stéphane Thidet on the Vitry technical centre.



Above: Les Tambours du Bronx, a band whose music Claude Parent particularly enjoyed, shook the Institut de France's Cour d'honneur.

Opposite: Marc Barani and his colleague Jacques Rougerie.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.

A member of the Académie d'Architecture since 2009 and a Knight of the Order of the Legion of Honour and Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters since 2015, he received the Grand Gold Medal of the Académie d'Architecture in 2018, when the André and Liliane Bettencourt Auditorium was inaugurated at the Palais de l'Institut de France.

Excerpt from Jacques Rougerie's speech:
"You have started from nothing to become almost everything, you are now who you wanted to become. Your story is one of climbing the social ladder, your loyalty goes to dedication. Who must you be, Sir, to show such skill in telling, reciting, untangling with your words and your works the skein of reality, which is always a fiction? Dolce vita *and* Commedia dell'arte*? Not so sure. Because I see the darkness of storms in your eyes. I know your doubts. While you are the architect of light, which is etymologically on the side of* lucidity*, I also know that a shadow looms, that your waters are sometimes turbid. Who is this man who, with boldness and passion, seriously plays architect, who embarks on a project only if it puts his intelligence, his courage and his honour at stake? Architecture, you say, is the science of subtle correspondences – a step back with modesty; infinitely nuanced."*

CAROLYN CARLSON

Choreographer Carolyn Carlson was elected on 2 December 2020 as a member of the Choreography Section created in 2018, and was installed at the Académie des Beaux-Arts by her colleague, Permanent Secretary and member of the Music Composition Section Laurent Petitgirard, on Wednesday 15 June 2022.

Carolyn Carlson was born in California in 1943. She defines herself first and foremost as a nomad, and is always eager to develop and share her poetic universe. In 1971 she arrived in France, with the heritage of Alwin Nikolais' conceptions of movement, composition and teaching. In the following year she signed *Rituel pour un rêve mort*, a poetic manifesto that defines an approach to her work as dance that confidently leans into philosophy and spirituality. Speaking about her work, Carolyn Carlson prefers the term "visual poetry" rather than "choreography". She gives birth to works that bear witness to her poetic thinking and to a complete art form in which movement features predominantly.
Over the last four decades, she has achieved considerable influence and acclaim in many European countries. She has played a key role in the emergence of French and Italian contemporary dance with the Groupe de Recherches Théâtrales de l'Opéra de Paris and the Teatrodanza at La Fenice. She has created more than a hundred pieces, many of which are major pages in the history of dance: *Density 21.5, The Year of the Horse*, *Blue Lady, Steppe*, *Writings on Water, Inanna, Maa* – her first collaboration with Kaija Saariaho – and *Signes*, which was premiered in 1997 for the Ballet de l'Opéra National de Paris with the painter Olivier Debré and the composer René Aubry. In 2006, she was the first choreographer ever to be awarded a Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale. She founded the Atelier de Paris-Carolyn Carlson at La Cartoucherie in 1999 with Pierre Bernier, headed the Centre Chorégraphique National Roubaix Nord-Pas de Calais from 2004 to 2013, was an associate artist at the Théâtre National de Chaillot from 2014 to 2016 and, in 2021, created a last piece for her company, *The Tree [Fragments of Poetics on Fire]*, a poetic reverie for nine dancers, inspired by Gaston Bachelard (*Fragments of a Poetics of Fire*).
Carolyn Carlson is also developing her writing and calligraphy. She has published *Le Soi et le Rien* (2002), *Brins d'herbe* (2011), *Dialogue Traces d'encre* (2013), *Writings on Water* (2017) and recently, *Au bord de l'Infini*.

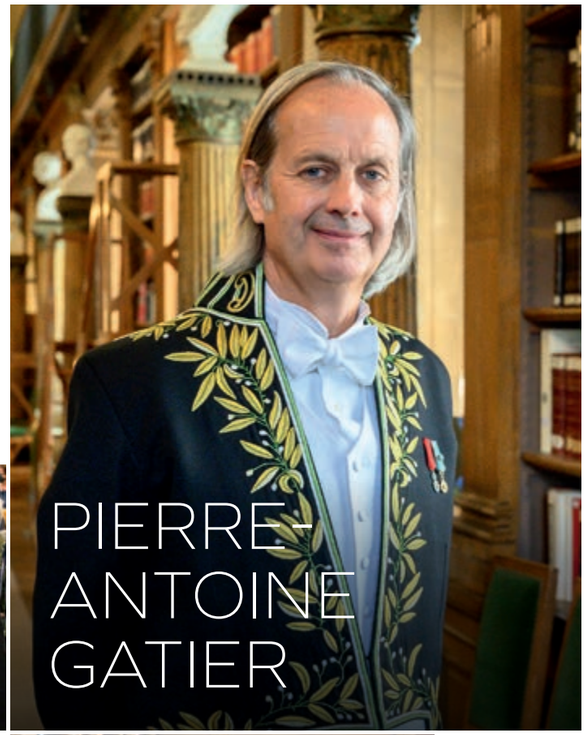
Excerpt from Laurent Petitgirard's speech:
"I'll never forget the poetic force that emanated from you during the presentation of Dialogue *with Rothko at the Théâtre National de la Danse de Chaillot. The presence of the cellist Jean-Paul Dessy, who had composed the music, and your incredible osmosis with this instrument, under Rémi Nicolas' lighting and in Chrystel Zingiro's costumes, made a strong impression on me. As I remember this ballet, I think of a quote of yours, which I read later and took note of:* I do not dance for the eyes, I dance for the soul. *[...] In addition to dance, your graphic creations have been exhibited at Roubaix's magnificent La Piscine museum, at the Toulouse Lautrec Museum in Albi, at Agnès b. in Paris in 2018, at the Chapelle du Méjan in Arles in 2019, and at the Isabelle Gounod gallery in Paris in 2021. Of course, I should also mention your abundantly published poetic works* Le Soi et le Rien*,* Solo*,* Poèmes et encres*".*

Top left: Carolyn Carlson with her academician's sword, designed by Gilles Nicolas, made of water and stone, decorated with a shell.

Right: Céline Maufroid, Sara Orselli and Juha Marsalo after their dance improvizations during the choreographer's "poem speech".

Centre: Carolyn Carlson with the Académie's Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.



PIERRE-ANTOINE GATIER

Architect Pierre-Antoine Gatier was elected on 20 November 2019 as a member of the Architecture Section in the seat previously held by Paul Andreu (1938-2018), and was installed at the Académie des Beaux-Arts by his fellow member of the Architecture Section Dominique Perrault, on Wednesday 6 July 2022.

Pierre-Antoine Gatier was born in 1959. He graduated in museology from the École du Louvre in 1983 and from the École de Chaillot in 1987. In 1990 he ranked first in the competition for the position of chief architect of historic monuments, and created his own agency the following year. He began his career by restoring historic monuments in Haute-Marne (the Langres Cathedral) and Marne (the Reims City Hall). He developed an ethic of historical monument restoration according to which these endeavours should follow a conservation approach integrating even the most recent periods. The preliminary study of the Halles de Reims (1929), a vast reinforced concrete structure, sparked his interest in the conservation of 20th century architecture and very recent heritage. He continued this research in Alpes-Maritimes, where he was in charge of restoring emblematic works of resort architecture, Emmanuel Pontremoli's Villa Kérylos in Beaulieu-sur-Mer (1908) and Eileen Grey and Jean Badovici's Villa E-1027 in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin (1929). In 2005, he was appointed chief architect of the Chantilly estate. In 2008, he restored the La Roche and Jeanneret houses in Paris (1926), which are now listed as World Heritage Sites, for the Le Corbusier Foundation. Since 2010, he has been in charge of the *Théâtre-Lyrique* Opéra-Comique, Salle Favart in Paris. In 2013, he was tasked with overseeing the French buildings in Rome, the Villa Medici and the five churches of the Pious Establishments, and in 2018 he headed the restoration of the 16th century Farnese Palace's facades and roofs. In 2016, he participated in the renovation project for the Bourse de Commerce - Pinault Collection along with Tadao Ando, the NeM/Niney agency and Marca Architects (Eiffel Trophy for the restoration of the dome with the engineering firm T/E/S/S). In 2017, he was appointed by the SETE to lead the Eiffel Tower's 20th repainting campaign. Pierre-Antoine Gatier speaks at universities and conferences. He is a visiting professor in New York (NYIT) and Venice (IUAV),

and teaches at the École de Chaillot and the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris-Belleville. In 2019, he was awarded a PhD in architecture. He also carries out missions abroad, as he did in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 or in Mexico after the earthquake of 2017.

Excerpt from Dominique Perrault's speech:

"That is the point, dear friend: when you restore a building, when you return it to its point of integrity, you also return it to its future. You hand it back to all of its potential becomings; to everything within it, be it exact or open-ended, in both origin and possibility. So, there are two choices: perpetuation or extinction. Material care does not always prevent decline. And sometimes a building disappears from the landscape even before being dilapidated. Sometimes, in order to be revived, it has to go through this decline, this pulse of wear and tear and oblivion, this more or less slow, gradual extinction, which actually keeps it alive.
There is nothing like a good resurrection. Could' heritage not be a workshop of potential architecture, left to the discretion of generations? A reserve of material for art and thought? As you know, one never knows what the past has in store, and no one can escape the future."

Centre left: the architect Dominique Perrault and his colleague Pierre-Antoine Gatier.

Right-hand side: the architects Dominique Perrault, Pierre-Antoine Gatier, Jacques Rougerie, Alain Charles Perrot, Marc Barani and the sculptor Jean-Michel Othoniel, with Astrid de la Forest, member of the Engraving Section and 2022 President of the Académie.

Photo credit: Patrick Rimond.

ANNE POIRIER

Anne Poirier was elected as a member of the Sculpture Section on 23 June 2021, in the seat previously occupied by Gérard Lanvin (1923-2018). She was installed at the Académie des Beaux-Arts by her colleague Frédéric Mitterrand, a member of the Cinema and Audiovisual Section, on Wednesday 6 October 2022.

After studying art history at the Sorbonne, Anne Poirier entered the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, where she met Patrick Poirier. They spent four years as residents at the Villa Médicis, after which they decided to work together, thus forming one of the first artist couples. They brought

together their ideas and sensibilities, and the works they have signed together are the product of this sharing. No longer solitary artists in search of a personal language, they are travellers, surveyors of sites, discoverers of civilizations, religions and different cultures (including, among others, the Near, Middle and Far East, Central America, and the United States). Refusing the conventional roles of sculptor and painter, they assume the interchangeable ones of archaeologist and architect. Their artistic approach to the humanities, free from exclusively formal research, is a journey into memory. As children of the WWII period, they endeavour to reveal the fragility of civilizations, cultures and nature. Their aesthetic is often one of fragments, ruins, and catastrophes.
Their works feature in the collections of the greatest museums: Musée National d'Art Moderne Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Tate Modern, London; Ludwig Museum, Cologne; Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, among others. They were also given numerous solo exhibitions: at the Centre Georges Pompidou (1978), the New York Museum of Modern Art (1978), the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal (1983), the Brooklyn Museum in New York (1984), Munich's Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus (1988), the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna (1994), the Musée de l'Elysée in Lausanne (1999), the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles (1999-2000), the Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris (2017), the Villa Medici in Rome (2019), the Château La Coste in Le Puy Sainte-Réparade (2021), the Musée Régional d'Art Contemporain in Sérignan (2021-2022), and the Ludwig Museum, Koblenz (2022).

Excerpt from Frédéric Mitterrand's speech:

"Working thus from ruins does not simply require one to have the architect's and archaeologist's knowledge and experience, as fascinating as that may be – even though you had written 'architect' and 'archaeologist' under 'profession' in the passports of your youth, a trick that would prove very useful to be granted extended exploration times in ancient sites that were closed to casual visitors and tourists. You, with your sketchbooks, and your husband with his camera, both collecting grass and stones, writings and maps, slowly and relentlessly, to delve deeply into what is given to see and to breathe with the strength of your own sensitivity the very peculiar atmosphere of what these places were when they were still alive, before becoming remains of the past.
'E la vita anche la morte' said Pasolini, and then switched round this sentence, adding, 'E la morte anche la vita': it is life as much as death, it is death as much as life. I translate 'anche' by 'as much', whereas it should probably be translated by "also" – but I love Pasolini too much to spare him this slight betrayal by trying, in my own way, to prolong the emotion he has always inspired in me".

Top left: members of the Sculpture Section Brigitte Terziev, Jean-Michel Othoniel, Anne Poirier, Jean Anguera, with, in the centre, the sculptor's life and work partner Patrick Poirier, who is also a correspondent to the Académie in the same section.

Below: Anne Poirier and her colleague Frédéric Mitterrand.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.

Above: winner of the 2022 Liliane Bettencourt prize for choral singing, the Compagnie *La Tempête*, conducted by Simon-Pierre Bestion, performed pieces by Jean-Louis Florentz and Sergei Rachmaninov, as well as a Byzantine chant from the Romanian traditional repertoire.

Above: the winners of the Académie's prizes and competitions are traditionally announced during the session. Vice-President Michaël Levinas handed Christian de Portzamparc the Grand Prix d'Architecture de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts – Prix Charles Abella, which rewards an architect for the work of their entire career.

Right: to close the session, the Orchestre de Picardie, conducted by Laurent Petitgirard, performed the Final of Georges Bizet's *Symphony in C*, a work composed in 1855 and never played during the composer's lifetime.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.

Palais de l'Institut de France

SOLEMN AUTUMN OPENING SESSION OF THE ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS

The Académie des Beaux-Arts' solemn autumn opening session was held on Wednesday 16 November under the cupola of the Palais de l'Institut de France. After the Académie's President Astrid de La Forest paid tribute to deceased members, Vice-President Michaël Levinas announced the 2022 prize list rewarding some forty artists of all ages and in all disciplines.

This session was interspersed with performances by the winner of the 2022 Liliane Bettencourt prize for choral singing, the Compagnie *La Tempête*, directed by Simon-Pierre Bestion, with excerpts from Jean-Louis Florentz's *Asmarâ*, Sergei Rachmaninov's *Vespers*, and a Byzantine chant from the Romanian traditional repertoire.
QiuLin Zhang of the Compagnie *La Tempête*'s men's choir and the Orchestre de Picardie, conducted by Laurent Petitgirard, then performed Johannes Brahms' *Rhapsody* for contralto, men's choir and orchestra.
The Fondation Simone et Cino Del Duca – Institut de France, on the Académie des Beaux-Arts' suggestion, commissioned a work by José Manuel López López. He created *A la caída de la Tarde*, which the Orchestre de Picardie, conducted by Jean Deroyer, premiered.

Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard gave a speech entitled "Cinema and Contemporary Music", from which the following is an excerpt:
"The creation of composition courses focusing on music for visual arts, including that of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, created on the initiative of our colleague Bruno Mantovani, is a positive point. It gives me hope that a new generation of composers will master symphonic writing, a skill that has become increasingly rare.
However, in my opinion, it does not make up for the fact that there are no courses whatsoever in tonal composition at the Paris and Lyon Conservatoires.
While few films would justify the use of music written in a more contemporary language, it must be said that bold topic choices, supported by strong images, remarkable actors and original direction are most often set to the most basic and banal music.
Without necessarily expecting proper contemporary music scores written specifically for films, it seems reasonable to hope that filmmakers, when they choose a composer, would expect the same level of mastery as they would from a scriptwriter or a director of photography.
While the few film directors willing to try this will find it very hard to get producers and broadcasters to agree, we should nonetheless bear in mind that a film has three authors – the director, the scriptwriter and the composer – and that this alone should justify at least a little more audacity and imagination.

Pavillon Comtesse de Caen - Palais de l'Institut de France

MIREILLE BALTAR
SIEMEN DIJKSTRA
MARIO AVATI - ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS PRINTMAKING PRIZE 2022

From 10 May to 19 June 2022, Mireille Baltar and Siemen Dijkstra, the Mario Avati - Académie des Beaux-Arts Prize winners in 2021, presented a selection of their main works at the Académie des Beaux-Arts' Pavillon Comtesse de Caen (Palais de l'Institut de France).

Mireille Baltar was born in 1942 and studied philosophy and fine arts in Toulon. In 1970, she met Johnny Friedlaender and Jacques Frélaut, who would have a decisive impact on her career. As a painter and draughtswoman, she mostly focused on engraving, which she taught at Paris Ateliers until 2013. Since 1970, she has exhibited her works in France, Germany, Great Britain and Canada. Her works feature in the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the Centre Georges Pompidou, and the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain.

"Cardboard etching has allowed Mireille Baltar to develop a freer intaglio print in her practice, one that is flexible and allows for large and light formats – and a lot of inventiveness. […] She approaches this medium as a draughtswoman would, engraving lines with a drypoint; but also as a painter would, with a brush dipped in varnish; and, finally, as a sculptor would, cutting, tearing, and paying attention to the reverse side of the plate. (Virginie Caudron, head of the Gravelines Drawing and Original Prints Museum).

Siemen Dijkstra was born in 1968 in the Drenthe region of the Netherlands, where he still lives and works in the village of Dwingeloo. He studied graphic arts and drawing at the Minerva Academy in Groningen (Netherlands). He is passionate about nature and has made the Drenthe landscape his main subject: seashores, fields, clearings and undergrowth. To paint them, he uses a rare engraving process called "lost plate engraving". This involves each flat colour's shape being cut individually from a single wooden matrix, which he hollows out and reworks with each press, and successively prints on paper. Some large prints may require of 10 to 18 colour pressings. This technique is said to be "risky" because it does not allow for pentimenti. During his preparatory work, Siemen Dijkstra makes numerous drawings, watercolours, studies on the motif and pen-and-ink drawings. His works are exhibited in numerous European galleries and cultural institutions (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Fondation Custodia, etc.).

Top: Mireille Baltar, *Le combat, hécatombe de poulets*, cardboard etching and painting, 107 x 87 cm.

Right: *Verloren Akker, no. 3 (Lost field no. 3, "Drowned field")*, coloured woodcut, 49.5 x 85 cm, 2008, © ADAGP, Paris, 2022.

Above: Catherine de Braekeleer, director of the Centre de la Gravure et de l'Image Imprimée in La Louvière, engraver Erik Desmazières, laureates Mireille Baltar and Verloren Akker, members of the Engraving Section Astrid de La Forest and Pierre Collin, and a view of the exhibition.

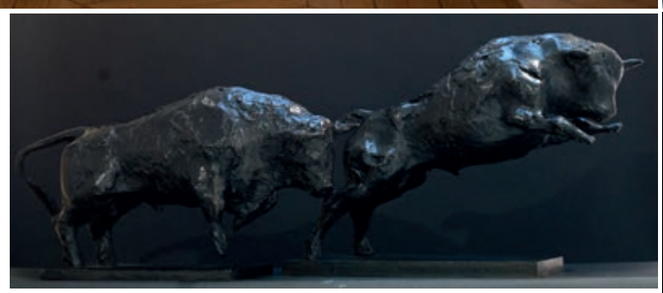
Photo credit: Patrick Rimond.

Pavillon Comtesse de Caen - Palais de l'Institut de France

"AN INTRUSION INTO JEAN CARDOT'S STUDIO"

From 2 July to 9 October 2022, the Académie des beaux-arts paid tribute to one of its recently deceased members, sculptor Jean Cardot (1930-2020), in the Pavillon Comtesse de Caen. This exhibition, for which Jean-Michel Wilmotte designed the scenography, offered a new look at Cardot's work, emphasizing his research and revealing many hitherto unexhibited plaster casts.

For this exhibition, curated by Didier Bernheim, correspondent of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in the Sculpture Section, the studio gallery created by Jean Cardot and his house museum were open to the public for the first time. Numerous drawings and almost 300 sculptures were on display, just as the artist had placed them. The studio gallery and house museum are located at Villa Mallebay, in the 14th *arrondissement* of Paris.
Jean Cardot was born in Saint-Etienne on 20 July 1930. He attended the schools of fine arts in Saint-Etienne and Lyon and then the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he taught for many years. He was elected member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts on 9 November 1983, in the seat previously held by Paul Belmondo (1898-1982). Jean Cardot had chosen to maintain total creative freedom and thus, by refusing to adhere to any school or current, was able to return to figuration whenever he felt like it. He authored over seventy monuments in France, Canada, Poland and China. In Paris, *La Flamme de la Liberté*, erected in the US Ambassador's residence, reflects the unity of his work, which extends from *Jefferson* on the left bank of the Seine, to *Churchill* and *De Gaulle* on the Champs-Élysées, symbolizing the fight for freedom. Jean Cardot died in Paris on 12 October 2020.



Top left: *Churchill* (1996), plaster, 320 cm tall.

Top right: *Taureau lumière* (1968), bronze, 140 x 190 x 80 cm, de Coubertin Foundry.

Centre: Jean Cardot in his workshop (2012).

Above: *Taureau estocard* (32 x 52 x 17 cm), *Taureau bondissant* (40 x 55 x 17 cm), 1961, bronzes, Coubertin Foundry.

Right: *Justice* (53 x 17 x 11 cm), 1998, *Thomas Jefferson* (23 x 17 x 62 cm), 2005, bronzes, Coubertin Foundry.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel, CmP, Didier Bernheim.

Above: at the inauguration, the architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, designer of the scenography, the permanent secretary Laurent Petitgirard and Didier Bernheim, correspondent of the Academy in the sculpture section, and who ensured the curatorship of the 'exposure.

Photos Juliette Agnel.

Pavillon Comtesse de Caen - Palais de l'Institut de France

PASCAL MAITRE, « PEULS DU SAHEL »

2020 MARC LADREIT DE LACHARRIERE PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS

From 20 October to 4 December, the Académie des Beaux-Arts presented the *Peuls du Sahel* exhibition at the Pavillon Comtesse de Caen. Pascal Maitre won the last edition of the Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière Photography Prize in partnership with the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

This prize has allowed Pascal Maitre to spend the last two years working on this project, for which he has travelled to Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Benin. There are 70 million Fulani men and women living across some fifteen countries in the Sahel. After millennia of history, population growth and global warming are imperilling this traditionally pastoral people, living a semi-nomadic life throughout a splendid region between the sands of the Sahara and tropical forests. Inter-ethnic clashes between nomadic Fulani communities and Dogon, Bambara and Mossi farmers have proliferated in recent years. The jihadist radicalization of a significant proportion of the Fulani of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso represents a major threat to the entire region's balance. Now more than ever, the Fulani people are at a turning point in their history.
This exhibition, which is structured around the themes of *Festivities*, *Daily life*, and *Conflict and its consequences*, offers both a sensitive and rigorous account of these communities, and an endeavour to provide some keys to understanding this region of the world as it undergoes geopolitical upheaval.
Pascal Maitre was born in 1955 in Buzançais (Indre, France) and began his career as a photojournalist in 1979 with the Groupe Jeune Afrique. In 1984 he joined the agency Gamma, and in 1989 he co-founded the agency Odyssey Images. From 1994 to 2018, he was a member of the agency Cosmos. Pascal Maitre has worked with prestigious international publications in France and abroad. In more than forty countries, he has covered the multiple facets of the African continent: people and their way of life, politics and conflicts, and traditions. Although Africa remains his preferred field, Pascal Maitre has also produced several photo reports on other parts of the world, including Afghanistan, South America, Siberia, amongst others. His work has been exhibited twice at the MEP (Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris) and about ten times at the *Visa pour l'image* festival in Perpignan.

The exhibition is curated by correspondent of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in the Photography Section, Sylvie Hugues.

The exhibition was part of the 11th iteration of the PhotoSaintGermain festival, from 3 to 20 November, and of Paris Photo 2022, from 10 to 13 November.

Top left: President of the Fondation Culture et Diversité, Éléonore de Lacharrière, Permanent Secretary of the Académie, Laurent Petitgirard, 2022 President of the Académie, Astrid de la Forest, along with Pascal Maître, and Sylvie Hugues, correspondent of the Photography Section and curator of the exhibition. Photo credit: Laurent Stinus.

Top: Tamaya village, Niger. Every year at the end of the rainy season in September, the Wodaabe Fulani (also called Bororos) gather after a year of transhumance to celebrate Geerewol.

Above: Burkina Faso. Koglewogos, militiamen supposed to support the security forces. This mainly Mossi militia regularly attacks the civilian population and very often the Fulani, in reaction to attacks by jihadist groups which have many Fulani members.

Right: Mopti, Mali. Every evening most of the Fulani herdsmen of the region bring their flocks back to town for the night. Insecurity is extreme, jihadists from preacher Amadou Kouffa's Macina Katiba are less than 10 kilometres away.

Photo credit: Pascal Maitre / MYOP.

Musée Marmottan Monet - Académie des beaux-arts

"'FACING THE SUN', A STAR IN THE ARTS"

At the Musée Marmottan Monet, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Monet's mythical painting *Impression, sunrise*, a thematic exhibition celebrates the sovereign luminary which, much like death itself, cannot be looked in the face.

On 13 November 1872, from the window of his hotel in Le Havre, Claude Monet painted a view of the port through the mist. Two years later, when it was exhibited under the title *Impression, Sunrise*, the work inspired critic Louis Leroy to coin the term Impressionists and gave its name to the group formed by Monet and his friends. A century and a half later, the Musée Marmottan Monet saw it as its duty to celebrate the birth of this work, now one of the most famous in the world. The painting ended up in the museum's care through mere chance and the generosity of a collector, Victorine Donop de Monchy, who donated it on the eve of the war. In celebration of this anniversary, Marianne Mathieu, from the Musée Marmottan Monet, and Michael Philipp, from the Barberini Museum in Potsdam, have chosen to explore representations of the sun in art.

As a symbol of power, beauty, and joy since Antiquity, the sun would naturally become the emblem of triumphant dominion – as it did under Louis XIV. But this human-faced star is also the one that floods the visible world in light, a source of inspiration for artists such as Lorrain, Turner, Monet, Signac, Munch and Vallotton, whose works throughout the exhibition are a flamboyant ode to light. Finally, the solar disk, with its formal purity and geometric abstraction, has also given rise to multiple variations, and most recently Gérard Fromanger's *Impression, soleil levant, 2019*.

Thanks to 53 lenders, almost a hundred works set out a history of the representation of the sun in the arts, from Antiquity to the present day. Among them, a rare collection of drawings, paintings, photographs and measuring instruments from the Paris Observatory illustrates the development of astronomy over the centuries. Albrecht Dürer, Luca Giordano, Pierre-Paul Rubens, Claude "Le Lorrain" Gellée, Joseph Vernet, Mallord William Turner, Gaspar David Friedrich, Gustave Courbet, Eugène Boudin, Camille Pissarro, Paul Signac, André Derain, Maurice Denis, Félix Vallotton, Laurits Tuxen, Edvard Munch, Otto Dix, Otto Freundlich, Sonia Delaunay, Vladimir Baranov-Rossiné, Joan Miró, Alexandre Calder, Otto Piene, Gérard Fromanger and Vicky Colombet are just a sample of the masters who have come together to celebrate the most illustrious sunrise in art history.

The exhibition will run from 21 September 2022 to 29 January 2023 in Paris, and from 25 February to 11 June 2023 in Potsdam under the title "Sonne. Die Quelle des Lichts in der Kunst".

Musée Marmottan Monet | Until 29 January 2023

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), *Mortlake Terrace*, 1827, oil on canvas, 92.1 × 122.2 cm. Washington, National Gallery of Art, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Claude Monet (1840-1926), *Impression, Sunrise*, 1872, oil on canvas, 50 × 65 cm. Paris, Musée Marmottan Monet. Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris / Studio Christian Baraja SLB.

Gérard Fromanger (1939-2021) *Impression, soleil levant*, 2019, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 200 × 300 cm. Anna Kamp Collection. Studio Christian Baraja SLB.


André and Liliane Bettencourt Auditorium – Palais de l'Institut de France

SYMPOSIUM "SCIENCE AND ARCHITECTURE: AN EMERGENCY"

On 24 September, with the support of Saint-Gobain, the Académie des Sciences and the Académie des Beaux-Arts jointly presented a symposium on the theme of science, architecture, and urgency, in the André and Liliane Bettencourt Auditorium. The event was organized by Etienne Ghys for the Académie des Sciences, and Dominique Perrault for the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

Urgency, understood in its broadest sense, is of course the force driving our societies. Beyond any one of the topics that round-the-clock news keeps churning out, be it the climate crisis, the capitalist machine, the migrant crisis, the health crisis, increasing precariousness, urgency transpires through speeches, actions, and choices. In the face of an endlessly looming crisis, time horizons shrink, and actions are limited to dealing with the moment, the emergency, and to arriving after the event to dress the wounds. Yet architects and researchers' work belongs in the long term: their energy goes into construction, be it for the great edifice of Science or for an ordinary building. These structures are built to last, to persevere beyond the changes in society and in economic and energy paradigms.

Through long-term oriented work, researchers and architects try to exorcise hazards, catastrophe – in a word, emergency. The Académie des Sciences' and the Académie des Beaux-Arts' aim in organizing this symposium was to bring out diverse and transversal points of view from discussions between speakers from different cultures and backgrounds, and to take the time to talk about emergencies.

After member of the Architecture Section Dominique Perrault's opening speech, four main themes were discussed.

Theme A - Urban planning and mass data: living in/with complex systems

Big Data and big cities: the two seem to mutually inform an understanding of each other. While the history of architecture and planning is a mosaic of trials, theories, and failures, increasingly precise measurements could introduce long-term perspectives in considerations on the future of cities. However, data has its own limitations: bias, uncovered areas, self-fulfilling effects, black-box processing models.

- Dialogue 1 - "Cities as Equations?", was moderated by **Ariella Masboungi**, from **Ajm Urba**, and featured speakers **Paola Viganò**, from the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, and the Académie des sciences' **Cédric Villani**.

- Dialogue 2 - "The Global Village: Building Materials in Global Flows", was moderated by the Académie des sciences' **Denis Jérome** and featured speakers **Yves Bréchet**, from the Académie des sciences, and Harvard University's **Charlotte Malterre-Barthes**.

Theme B - Robustness and optimization: modes of progress

The question of progress is at a turning point. Can the cause for climate ills become the solution? Progress has been driven in terms of optimization following simple metrics – cost, time, quality – especially in the field of construction. Should we rethink our ways of measuring – and what architecture may result from this?

- Dialogue 3 - "Optimization and Form - Mathematics and Construction", was moderated by architect **Marc Mimram** and featured speakers **Grégoire Allaire**, from the École Polytechnique, and **Philippe Morel**, from Ezct.

- Dialogue 4 - "The Material of our Buildings: Cost, Mass, Emission", was moderated by the Académie of Sciences' **Didier Roux** and featured speakers **Edelio Bermejo**, from Holcim, and Stuttgart University's **Werner Sobek**.

Theme C - Living inside: architecture for living environments and live environments

By will or by force, each plot of land, each building, is an experiment in the life-size cohabitation of different species, different realms. Faced with the upheavals we are experiencing, we must take global ecosystems into account.

- Dialogue 5 - "Living in Landscapes: History and Perspectives", was moderated by **Philip Ursprung**, of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, and featured speakers **Anette Freytag**, of Rutgers University, and **Nans Voron**, from Scape studio.

- Dialogue 6 - "Adapting to Climate Change", was moderated by the Académie d'Agriculture de France's **Nadine Vivier**, and featured speakers **Denis Couvet**, from the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, and **Catherine Mosbach**, from Mosbach Paysagistes.

Finally, the Académie des Sciences' **Étienne Ghys** delivered the closing speech.

Photo credit: iStock, Hermine Videau / Académie des Beaux-Arts.

ILLUSION

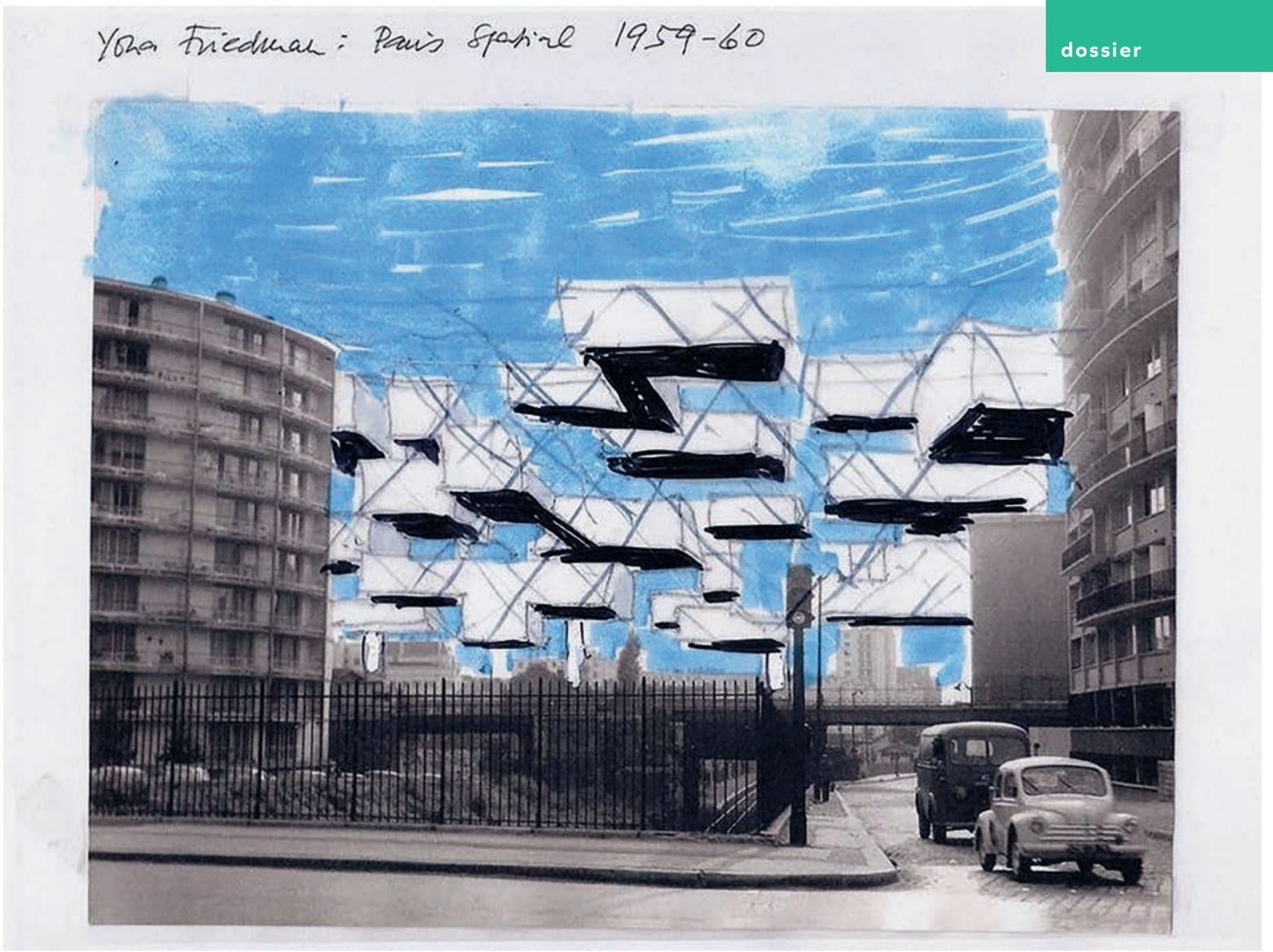
A REALITY IN ARTS

Since time immemorial, art and illusion have followed two parallel paths connected by many bridges. Can the work be the cause or the result of an illusion – and what would its reality then be? Artists throughout the centuries have pondered this question. With the invention of perspective, increasingly competitive realist currents, automation devices and optical effects, virtual worlds and the digital vertigo they induce, the question of illusion inevitably arises – and prompts us to probe the nature of our perception.

Jean-Baptiste Deshays (1729-1765), *The Monkey Painter*, date unknown, oil on canvas, 89 x 62 cm.
Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen. Photo credit: RMN-Grand Palais / Gérard Blot.

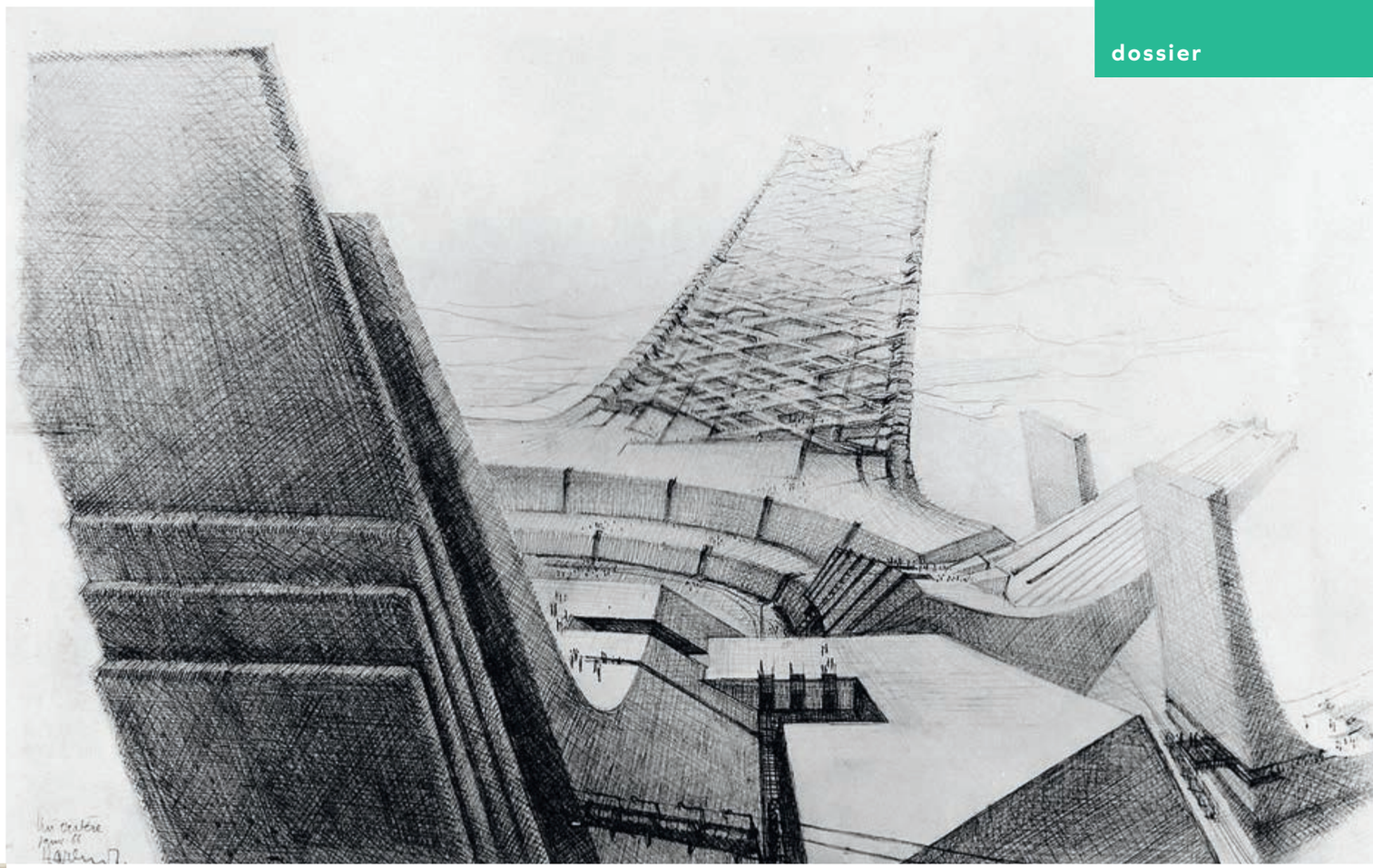
THE URBAN ILLUSION

By **AYMERIC ZUBLENA**, member of the Architecture Section



Philosophers, writers, and architects have long designed ideal cities in pursuit of the dream of offering people harmonious urban spaces where civic life can thrive, and their inspired arrangements and admirable layouts have been written, drawn, reproduced, commented on and analysed time and time again.
There are also those other, real yet fantasized cities, born in the imagination of impoverished people who, in their minds, endow them with all services, with a profusion of jobs, with places of culture and exchange. Dizzyingly vertical cities too: distant cities populating the dreams of millions of men, with colonnaded squares, orderly gardens, elegant buildings erected for the pleasure and pride of the powerful, and the imposing architecture of the palaces where the state's authority sits. The illusion of happiness they create attracts people from all backgrounds and corners of the world, driven by a thousand reasons to undertake a journey from which many do not return.
Upon discovering New York, Jean-Paul Sartre had a different vision. He wrote: "The first days, I was lost... The skyscrapers didn't surprise me, they appeared to me like those dead parts of the urban landscape, rocks, hills that one encounters in cities built on tormented ground and that one skirts around without even paying attention to them". As did Céline. In the part of *Journey to the End of the Night* where the main character Bardamu arrives in New York, he wrote: "What a surprise. [...] We had a good laugh when we saw that, right in front of us. Just imagine, that city was standing absolutely erect. New York was a standing city. Of course we'd seen cities, fine ones too, and magnificent seaports. But in our part of the world cities lie along the seacoast or on rivers, they recline on the landscape, awaiting the traveler, while this American city had nothing languid about her, she stood there as stiff as a board, not seductive at all, terrifyingly stiff."
Migration, which in some countries has already led to the uncontrolled development of gigantic metropolises with distended boundaries, is set to increase in what we fear will be the near future. Will this lead to generational conflicts, culture clashes and internal wars? Some fear it might.
Is any hope of controlling the urban sprawl illusory?
I do not mean to address this concern or this uncertain future here, as many books, studies and articles have already been written on the topic. Neither do I intend to comment on the experience of the new towns created after the Second World War in Europe, nor on the ones that were later erected in the Paris region, and to which I contributed at the time. These cities were built on a state mandate and, in their time, were a bold and original response to a regional problem. Overall, they were mostly a success.
I want to give some thought to the generous illusion in the many ideal schemes I have mentioned above. Throughout the ages, they have been produced in many countries, under the various forms that the needs and concerns of their time demanded.
Jules Verne described a clean and well-lit "Ville-France" in *The Begum's Fortune*; Tony Garnier drew his ideal city, which he would later call "La Cité industrielle", while he resided at the Villa Médicis; Claude Parent sketched out a city based on the concept of the "oblique function" which he explored with Paul Virilio; Yona Friedman housed the inhabitants of his future city in immense spatial structures; Jean-Claude Bernard sculpted the volumes of his "Total City"; Paolo Soleri, along with his students, built his "Arcosanti" city north of Phoenix, which he designed based on his principle of "arcology"; the Archigram group designed futuristic cities; and so many other architects have imagined their own. Those that Jacques Rougerie asked architects from across the world to propose come to mind: cities in space or under the sea. Even I, when I was a student, drew sketches of "City-Gardens", troglodyte cities buried under rocks and greenery. Among artists, we should also mention Anne and Patrick Poirier's project Mnemosyne, a city of Silence and Memory.
Philosopher and art and architecture critic Françoise Choay's 1965 book *L'urbanisme, utopies et réalités (Urban planning, utopias and realities*), published at Editions du Seuil, presents thoughts and propositions from thirty-seven writers, philosophers, architects, and industrialists from the 19th and 20th centuries. It shows how inadequate their abstract theoretical models are to solve a complex problem.
Another philosopher, Jean-Christophe Bailly, expressed the illusion of an ideal city in other words when he wrote: "The city: in the generic use of this word there always looms the ghost of a lost ideal, one that is undoubtedly imaginary, but which every foundational gesture tends to revive... The contemporary city is no longer an integrally composed unit, a body that feels and perceives its limits". In another chapter of the same book, he questioned the ability of architecture, and of spectacular projects in particular, to solve the problem of contemporary cities. I, for one, believe that the architects who create these exceptional works, these "urban pieces" – some of which are created in new cities – are aware that they cannot suffice to meet the challenge of urbanization by themselves, but believe they provide a breath of fresh air, a signal in an architectural landscape which would be purely functional without them. This is what Claude Parent meant when he wrote the following in his book *Errer dans l'illusion* ("Wandering in illusion"): "Venture into theory, stay awake in your dreams, let others care for two-and-two-make-fours, prefer chaos. Work in illusion".

Yona Friedman (1923-2019), "Paris spatial 1959-1960", an illustration of the Hungarian architect's concept of three-dimensional city planning.



Henri Lefebvre, in his 1968 book *The Right to the City* (translated in 1996), spoke out against recent urban planning endeavours, which he claimed were designed by "scholars", and especially architects and town planners whose projects were developed in the secrecy of their offices. In a more collective vision, he wished local communities would directly participate in the design and organization of space, thus responding to "their desire to fully live their urban lives in well-designed spaces, that are conducive to happiness…".

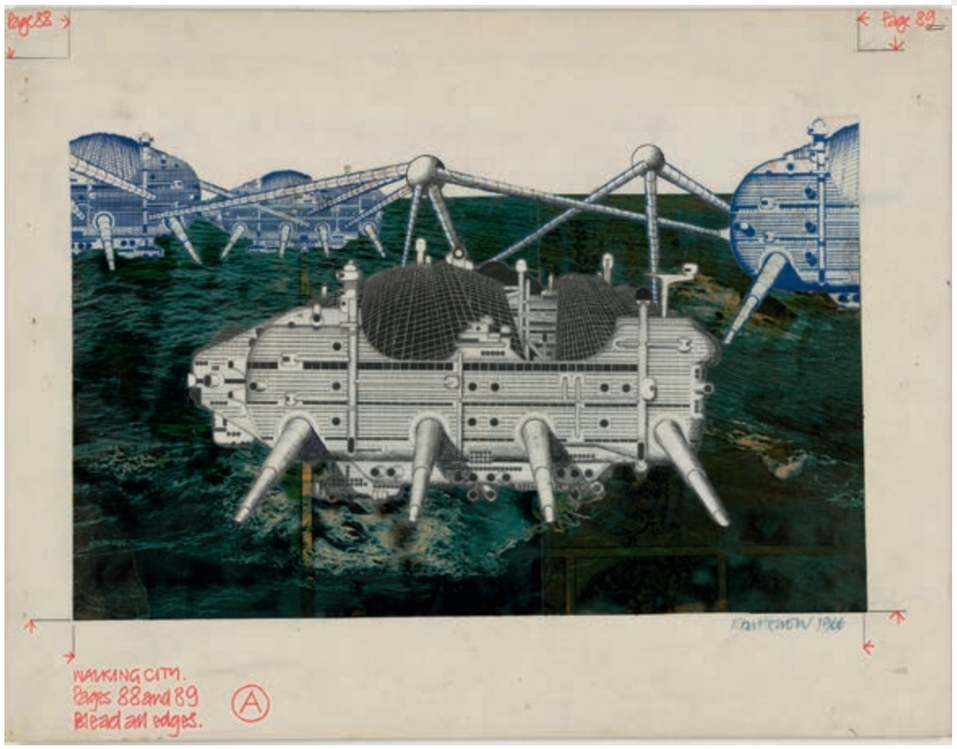
While it is a generous intention, it is difficult to implement, which partly makes it another expression of the urban illusion.

Beyond formal critique or sociological concerns, I, for one, note with regret that these projects – which are of true poetic value – fail to take into account the inevitable and uncontrollable extension of cities beyond the perimeter that those who designed them had defined.

One example of this comes to mind especially – the emergence of the workers' city, which was formed from the first building sites on the outskirts of Brasilia and developed during the construction of the new capital designed by Lucio Costa and partly built by Oscar Niemeyer.

The goal for the New Towns around Paris was more modest. It was not to create autonomous urban entities, but to counteract the anarchic and extensive development of the Paris region.

The purpose of these few reflections is to express how tremendously difficult a pressing issue in urban planning is, and how illusory any hope to solve it with speeches and diagrams is.



Faced with this situation, which persists on many continents, I would like to playfully suggest the following utopia: let us imagine a mysterious urban entity, a city that is unaware of its inhabitants' agitation and free of their vain attempts to manage its development, a macrostructure whose internal dynamics determine its own evolution, space, volume, and limits.

This city would achieve the ideal form of a "re-centred city" by itself, without any help from its inhabitants. This is the title I gave to an article I wrote a few years ago. In this hypothesis, this ideal city would concentrate all activities – both traditional and peripheral – in urban hyper-density, instead of letting the peripheral activities spread outside the city walls in a disorderly, sprawling waste of territory.

By peripheral activities, I mean all those industrial zones, shopping centres, leisure parks, all necessary but space-consuming services, and all the road and rail networks that connect them. Thus reinserted into the "re-centred city", these outgrowths would then let the vegetation reclaim their abandoned sites and cover their lonesome ruins with bushes, flowers and trees in a few years. Ruins that future archaeologists would be astonished to discover.

This reminds me of André Malraux roaming the Khmer temples engulfed by the forest's "tightly woven network and its massive foliage".

This utopia that I imagine would challenge the words of said philosopher, Jean-Christophe Bailly, who wrote that, "It appears that today's city is like a jigsaw puzzle whose pieces do not necessarily fit together. And it seems like it would be futile to expect them all to be able to form an image that is even remotely stable".

I sent my article to former Director of the Marne-la-Vallée New Town project Michel Rousselot. He replied that there would certainly be "… developments in the direction of this city re-centring utopia".

Left page: Ron Herron, *Walking City on the Ocean* (Exterior Perspective), 1966.

Ron Herron's "walking cities" are military submarines combined with insect-like exoskeletons with periscope legs. They can cross oceans and contain a complete set of urban resources. Collage, mixed media, 29.2 x 43.2 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Top: Claude Parent (1923-2016), *Un cratère*, 1966, graphite drawing. Claude Parent Archives.

ART AS AN ILLUSION OF THE WORLD

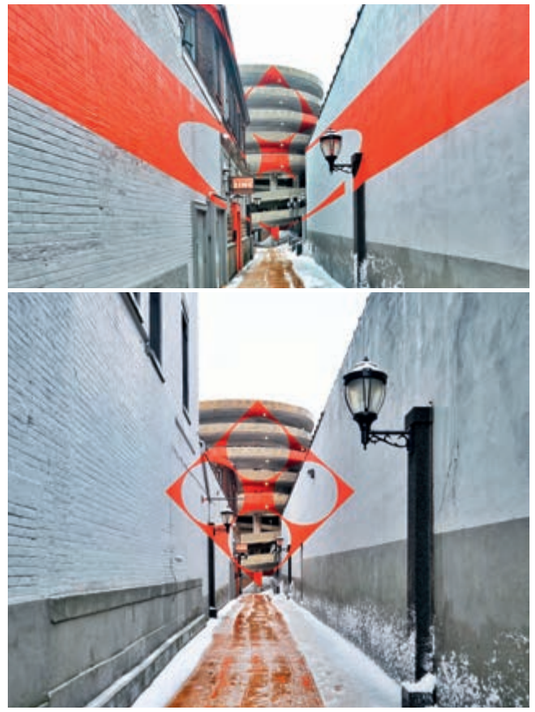
By **CHRISTOPHE RIOUX**, scholar, journalist and writer

Left: Perugino (1448-1523), *Delivery of the Keys* (1481), fresco, 335 × 550 cm. Sistine Chapel, Vatican. An illustration, through its architectural style and use of perspective, of the work of the architect Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446).

Creative Commons license.

Right: Felice Varini (born 1952), *Square with Four Circles*, 2010, installation in Temple Plaza, New Haven, Connecticut, as part of the Public Art People project.

Rodney Nelson / Alamy Stock Photo.



"It is said that when Giotto was only a boy with Cimabue, he once painted a fly on the nose of a face that Cimabue had drawn, so naturally that the master returning to his work tried more than once to drive it away with his hand, thinking it was real, until he realized it was an illusion". This illusion, as Giorgio Vasari depicted it in his *Life of Giotto*, is called a "musca depicta" or "painted fly". Many painters added one to their works between 1450 and 1550. Ultimately, while – as the historian André Chastel has aptly demonstrated – the insect's prevalence encapsulates a deep divide between naturalism and symbolism, it is above all an acute expression of the central question of illusion in art.

As Paul Virilio wrote, "The world of magic is an illusion and art is there to present the illusion of the world" – a reminder that illusion is in fact the beating heart of artistic activity. As they constantly oscillate between reproduction, representation, and interpretation, artists question reality and vie with one another to imitate it. In Ancient Greece, the concept of mimesis was defined precisely as a process of imitating and studying nature to represent it as accurately as possible – but Plato firmly disapproved of it. He accused art of distracting the mind from what is essential, and of drawing it into the trap of illusion. Later, Pascal would also focus his disapproval on a purely mimetic conception of the work of art. As he tersely put it: "What a vanity painting is: it attracts admiration by resembling things, the original of which we do not admire!".

Back to antiquity, Pliny the Elder related two anecdotes in his monumental *Natural History*. The first starts with a challenge from the painter Parrhasios to his rival Zeuxis, to see who could produce the most admirable painting. As the story goes, Zeuxis addressed the challenge by painting bunches of grapes so convincingly that birds tried to peck them. When Parrhasios came to present his work, Zeuxis asked him to draw the curtain so that he could see the painting, only to understand immediately he had been fooled: the curtain itself was painted. He therefore admitted his defeat and congratulated Parrhasios on his illusion, adding: "I have painted the grapes better than the child, for if I had succeeded as well with this one, the bird should have been afraid". Zeuxis had succeeded only in deceiving birds, while his rival could deceive an artist.

The second anecdote from Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* recounts the origin of artworks. As her lover had to leave town, a heartbroken potter's daughter drew the outline of his face on a wall, by the light of a lantern. Her father then applied clay to the sketch and turned it into a fire-hardened relief. In doing so, he created a work of art, which was not a faithful image of the beloved's face, but rather the image of a separation. Once again, an illusion is at the heart of the artistic process.

While Antiquity and these famous apologues were one of the starting points of ongoing reflection on illusion in art, the Renaissance was naturally to follow through with it in very inventive ways. The period saw the emergence of a new mathematical law that would literally revolutionize the question of representation. Self-taught geometrician Filippo Brunelleschi, who is credited with the invention of perspective, heralded the future Renaissance painters, masters in the art of illusion. On the period's iconic figure Leonardo da Vinci, Paul Valéry wrote: "He makes a Christ, an angel, a monster, by taking what is known, what exists everywhere, and arranging it in a new order. He takes advantage of the illusion and abstraction of painting, an art that depicts only a single quality of things, but thereby evokes them all".

In Germany, Albrecht Dürer experimented with the illusion of depth using his characteristic grisaille, as for instance in his studies of hands or draperies. But he also spoke of the "art of secret perspective" that is anamorphosis, the deformation of an image by means of an optical system or a mathematical transformation. This process of illusion is still a favourite of some contemporary artists; we find it in Felice Varini's spatial painting and Georges Rousse's photographs, for example.

Some artists – for instance Piranesi and Escher – have excelled at architectural illusions. With his imaginary prisons, Piranesi overcame the laws of perspective and smashed through the limits of possibility. In the 1920s, Escher in turn imagined labyrinths and equally improbable constructions in his drawings and lithographs. Fascinated by geometric structures and the "Penrose triangle" – an impossible object invented by the English mathematician Roger Penrose in the 1950s – he drew many visual paradoxes from this scientific work, with perception-defying waterfalls and staircases.

While it had been an ideal for art since Antiquity, modern aesthetics seem to have gradually abandoned the quest for perfect illusion. The term "trompe-l'oeil" was coined in the 19th century only, at the very time when modern art was breaking away from the great mimetic tradition and the frantic search for successful illusion. But with the advent of cinema, video games and virtual reality, an illusion far more powerful than that of painting is gradually becoming more prevalent. Freed from the canvas' frame and the context in which paintings are exhibited, which is often difficult to conceal, the illusion of art now offers an immersive and total experience; after centuries of relative illusion, might we now dream of absolute illusion?

YES OR NO?

By **ETIENNE GHYS**, First Division member and Permanent Secretary of the Académie of Sciences

The Jan Michalski Foundation in Switzerland has just hosted an exhibition titled "*Le reflet des mots*", presenting the work of the Swiss painter, printmaker, and great master of illusions Markus Raetz, who passed away in 2020.

1 Look at the object "AHA!" shown on the poster. Seen from one angle, it is a capital A. From the other, it is an H. From the side, it is an exclamation mark!

2 Another of his works is located at the top of a pole on the Place du Rhône in Geneva. From one side of the square, you could read the three letters of the word "OUI". Cross the square, look up and it is now a "NON".

3 One might think that this illusion cannot be translated into English because NO contains only two letters, whereas YES contains three. And yet Markus Raetz did it.

4 Another interesting piece: a coffee table, a large bottle, and a small glass. Let's walk around the table. The small glass has become large and the bottle is small.

The effect of viewpoint on perception has long interested artists, philosophers, psychologists and mathematicians. Since the Renaissance, the use of perspective has been an invitation to reflect on the relationship between the subject and the object. Markus Raetz invites us to question reality and other people's gaze.

5 Our brains are used to "backward perspective". When we see an ellipse, for example, we are often aware that it is actually a circle that we are seeing in perspective. This happens often, but not always: a rugby ball is not a football and yet we effortlessly distinguish the one from the other. Sometimes we are puzzled by M.C. Escher's peculiar kind of impossible images.

6 The cover of Douglas Hofstadter's bestseller *Gödel, Escher, Bach* contains a nice ambigram projecting the letters G, E and B on three planes, which seems to unify the logician, the draughtsman, and the musician in one object.

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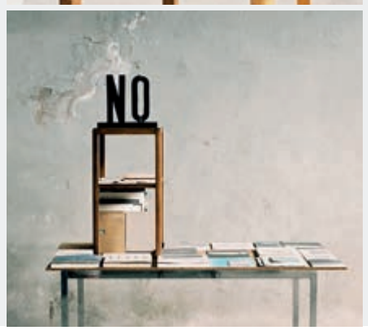

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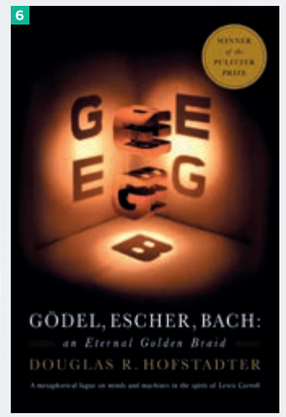

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Markus Raetz (1941-2020):

1- Poster for the exhibition "Le reflet des mots", 2022, Jan Michalski Foundation, Montricher, Switzerland.

2- "Sans titre" (OUI-NON), 2000, Geneva, Switzerland. Photo credit: Fjmustak.

3- *Oui-Non*, 2003, cast iron, linseed oil varnish, burnished, 28 × 41 × 30cm.
Photo credit: Art Foundry St. Gallen / Katalin Deér.

4- *Gross und Klein*, 1993, bronze, cardboard tube and plywood, 173 x 50.5 x 50.5 cm.

5- M.C. Escher (1898-1972), *Another World II*, 1947, woodcut, 31.8 cm × 26.1 cm. Boston Public Library, John D. Merriam Collection.

6- Cover of *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (1979), by Douglas Hofstadter (born 1945), 1999 edition, Basic Books.

Projection is one of the most important geometric tools: a mathematization of perspective in Art. *Projective geometry* was invented by Girard Desargues in the early 17th century and remains most geometers' favourite playground to this day.

I doubt that the *Lettre de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts* has ever published a mathematical theorem?

In 1986, the mathematician Kenneth Falconer, a specialist in fractal theory, had no idea that one of his abstract theorems would lead to a new object being marketed.

7 Draw as many silhouettes as you like on a piece of paper, for example these 24 characters.

Falconer demonstrates the following theorem:

"There is a 3D object that can be placed on a coffee table that has the following property: when turning around the table, one will see the 24 chosen characters in order, like shadow puppets".

To illustrate his theorem, somewhat as a joke, Falconer had the idea of a digital sundial. As he wrote in his article,

"It is possible, at least in theory, to construct a set in space whose shadow at any time of the day gives the time written in numbers,"

8 This is the somewhat unattractive drawing he included.

In 1986, he would have been surprised to hear that one day a patent would be filed and that a digital sundial could be bought cheaply on the internet. When you put your sundial in your garden and, of course, orient it properly, the sun's shadow will show the time in numbers! Unbelievable, yet true.

9 The first prototype for a digital sundial, built in 1994, did not show the time digits in shadow, but rather in light.

Here is a photograph of the dial at 12:40.

10 Since 2015, it has been possible to download a file and print a personal 3D digital clock. This one indicates noon.

Here's an indication on the proof of Falconer's theorem: the principle is that of Venetian blinds. A Venetian blind blocks sunlight in almost all directions and lets it pass unhindered in directions parallel to its slats. If a large number of blinds are placed on top of each other, facing in multiple directions, the light can be made to pass in certain directions and not in others, somewhat as desired.

The result is actually far more general, but it is more difficult to state and demonstrate. Instead of positing a definite number of silhouettes, we might as well consider a continuous film, consisting of an infinite number of images that progressively unfold. The theorem states that there is an object whose shadows under the sun, over the course of the day, play this film.

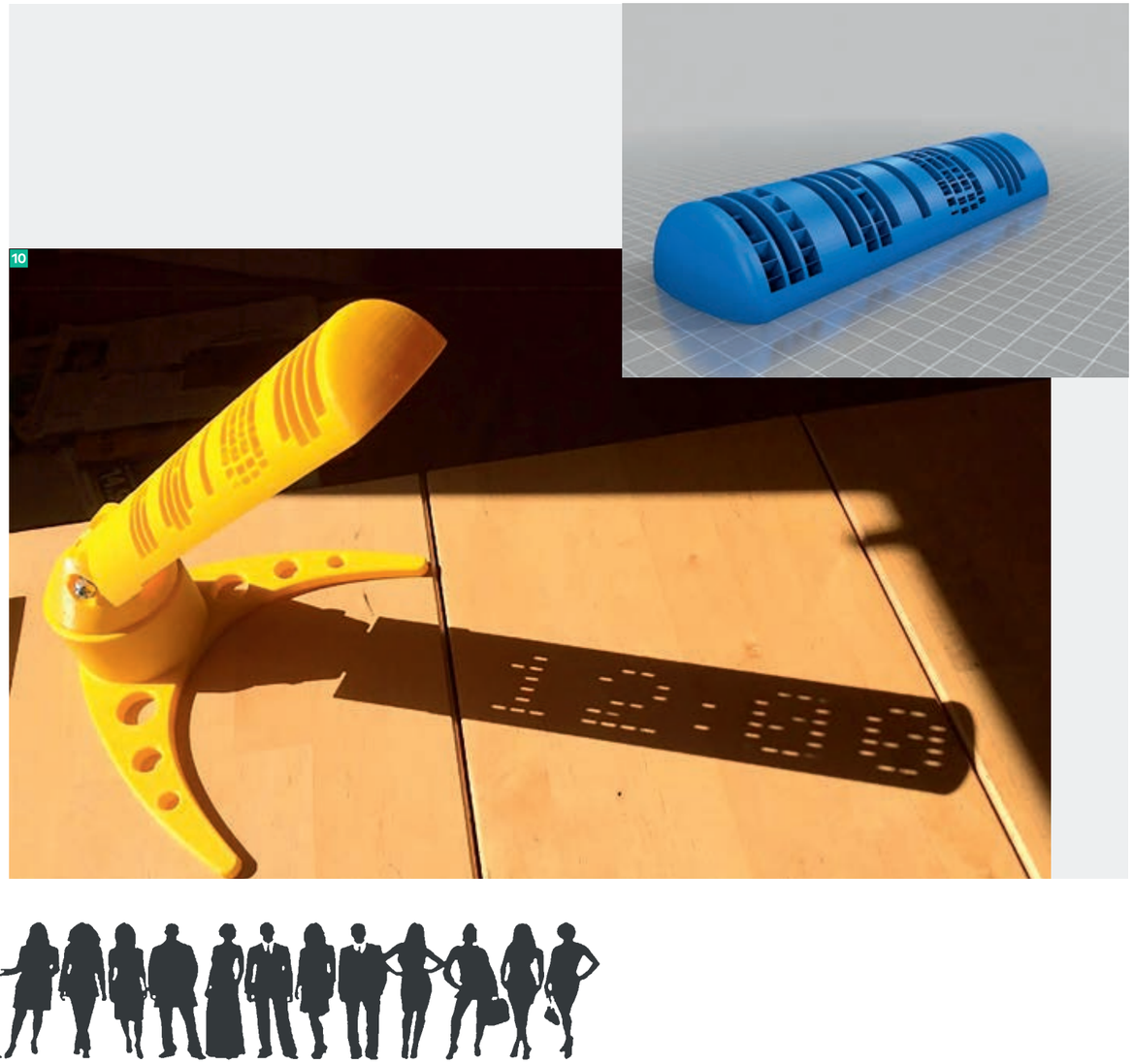
Can one imagine a building being constructed whose shadow would play a film?

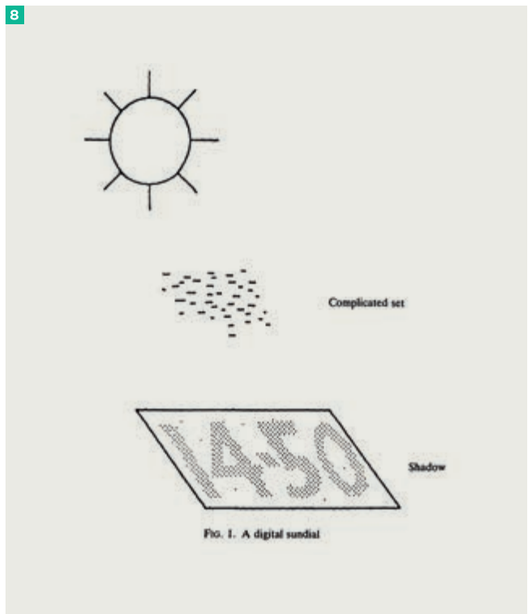
For more details, readers can follow two paths. The first is to read K. Falconer's article, if they are sufficiently well versed in mathematics: Falconer, K. J. *Sets with prescribed projections and Nikodým sets*. Proc. London Math. Soc. (3) 53 (1986), no. 1, 48-64.

The second, for the DIYers, is to read the patent which contains all the details: http://www.google.com/patents/US5590093.

I have a little anecdote about this sundial. K. Falconer gave me a demonstration of "his" digital sundial in his office at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. He explained to me that it was not easy for him to use it because the sun is not so bright in Scotland and his office faces north! He therefore had to resort to demonstrating its operation using a torch. True to the tradition of "pure" mathematicians, he had failed to file a patent for his idea... but the company *Digital Sundial International*, which manufactures the sundial, was "kind enough" to send him one for free!

A charming little book called *Flatland*, published in 1884 by Edwin Abbot, tells of the lives of two-dimensional beings condemned to live in a plane, unaware of the existence of the third dimension. A square is "visited" by a being from the third dimension that he can perceive only through its plane projections. He then tries to persuade his fellow citizens of the existence of other dimensions, but fails to convince anyone and is thrown into prison. The book suggests that we should likewise extricate ourselves from our three-dimensional prisons to gain access to higher dimensions.





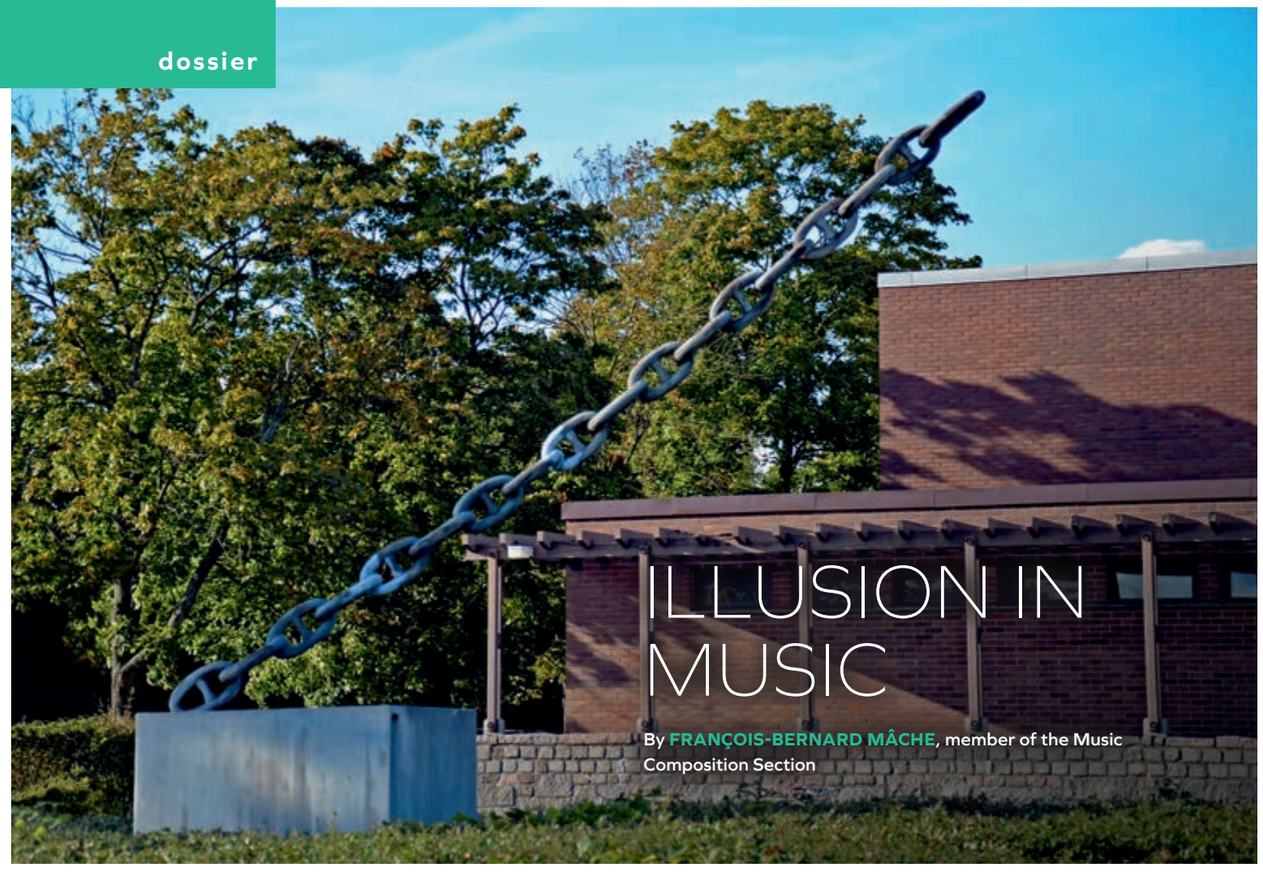
Kenneth Falconer (born 1952):

7- vecteezy.com.

8- source http://www.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/~kenneth/#T.

9- digitalsundial.com.

10- Digital Sundial by Mojoptix, thingiverse.com. Creative Commons license.



ILLUSION IN MUSIC

By **FRANÇOIS-BERNARD MÂCHE**, member of the Music Composition Section

Music was for a long time granted a privilege among the arts: the ability to divorce itself from the "real" world. It was assumed that the play of sounds was a language emancipated from earthly banalities. It could be used to communicate with angels, or to talk to the muses. Cyrano de Bergerac made it the attribute of aristocrats among his "Lunar Grandees": their language *"is no more but various inarticulate Tones, much like to our Musick when the Words are not added to the Air"*, and when they *"disdain to prostitute their Throats to that Office, they take either a Lute or some other Instrument, whereby they communicate their Thoughts as well as by their Tongue"*.

Without going so far, the opinion that music – and even purely instrumental music – is a language remains widespread. Even more untranslatable than poetry, it is nevertheless meant to, and can, say everything, and this polysemy confers on it the status of a supreme language. Music is therefore free from all concern for realism, which gives it all the more range to communicate.

But this may well be a mere set of illusions, on which the 20th century has cast doubt. Debussy's provocation that came out of Monsieur Croche's mouth, "*musicians listen only to the music skilful hands write, never to the one that is embedded in nature*", is somewhat blasphemous towards centuries of humanism. The dogma of tonal grammar, which had weighed heavily on Debussy during his years at the Conservatoire, and that of atonalism, which Schönberg was about to establish in its place, had in common the fact that they organized composition as a language with its own autonomous logic. While the visual arts placed the mastery of illusion very high in the hierarchy of their values – at least since the invention of perspective – music would assert its autonomy through a general disdain for any evocation of the sounds of reality, which were deemed trivial.

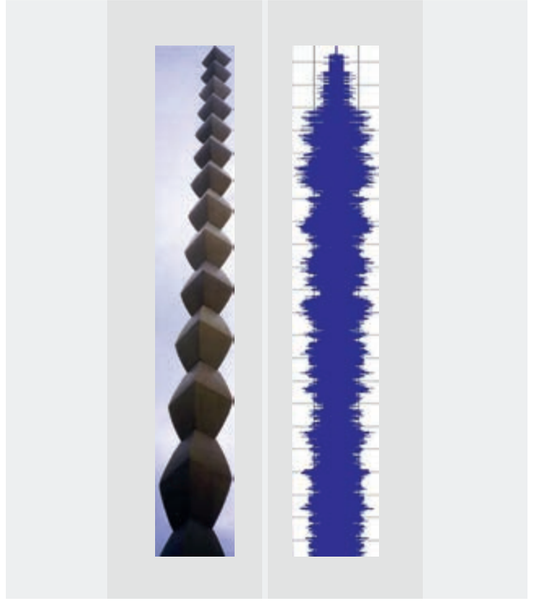
The realities of the sound world other than music were regarded as nothing more than noise, and only a few eccentrics like the Italian Futurist Russolo dreamed of making them into an art form that would replace music. Varèse was the first to dare to compose for percussion on its own, and the progress of research has shown that acoustics alone could not justify the existence of noise as a category. All sounds used in music contain a significant amount of noise, understood as disorder, while conversely the pure sounds of sinusoids, which are free of any "noise", can hardly be of any use in music.

It is true that a lot of music claims to evoke nature; many baroque opera librettos even had their mandatory storm episode. Yet, in the following century, Beethoven would be very anxious to pre-emptively justify quail or storm sounds in the *Pastoral Symphony* by noting that they should be steeped in human feelings rather than sound realistic. In filtering thus, he hoped to clear any suspicion of vulgarity. Any attempt at a realistic illusion would deprive listeners of the symbolic richness induced by the music and signal his collapse into mundanity.

However, even without deliberately questioning the congenital artifice that identifies music as a superior language, divergent aesthetic positions have cast a shadow of doubt. The case of Messiaen is significant. He maintained equally the formalist search for his "musical language" and his fascination for the sounds of birds as secret expressions of some supernatural truths. Xenakis is no less remarkable in this respect. His ambition was to expand the human mind to the dimensions of natural phenomena. Before him, Varèse had already dreamed of transmuting the Zambezi River's whirlpools into music. With help from mathematics and physics, Xenakis tamed models such as an earthquake in *Diamorphoses*, embers in *Concret PH*, and the stochastic buzzing that comes with curls of smoke, with the murmurs of starlings, and with the clamour of tragically dispersed

demonstrations. He not so much ignored the communicative function that is inherent in the great metaphor of "musical language", as he reframed it in a utopian quest, which he defined by writing that "music *must aim towards a total exaltation in which the individual mingles, losing his consciousness in a truth immediate, rare, enormous and perfect*". Henceforth, his work was more than a mere matter of communication between humans, it became an almost mystical fusion between man and nature. In this case, illusion played an even more fundamental role than granting music the power to express the inexpressible with the sole means of language. Music was charged with realizing the utopia glimpsed in Wagner's time, when religion began to lose most of its power.

In the field of illusion, the 20th century also yielded less ambitious but very new elements of reflection. The acoustic research associated with the names of Pierre Schaeffer, Max Matthews, J-C. Risset, Werner Meyer-Eppler, Ircam, among others, revealed the presence of illusion in perceptions where it was not suspected. Until then, one occasionally appreciated Schumann's evocation of a gallop, or certain composers' ability to evoke one instrument with the help of another, for example (hunting horns, human voices, etc.). But when, at the *Groupe de Recherches Musicales* in 1958, I verified that I could perfectly hear the lower notes of a piano on a recording from which the fundamental frequencies



had been filtered out, I learned that pitch perception depends on laws that are far more subtle than a simple architecture associating fundamental frequencies and partial tones. A fellow student of the École Normale Supérieure, J-C. Risset, was to make important discoveries in this field at the Bell Laboratory. His works also made extensive use of Shepard's paradoxical acoustic illusions, which cause the pitches of a sound to rise and fall indefinitely. There is a striking parallel to be drawn with certain optical illusions like those the Swedish artist Reutersvärd discovered in 1934, and the popularized works of Escher or Brancusi, such as the indefinitely ascending or descending staircase. Optical illusions in turn inspired composers like Ligeti, whose pieces 3,4,7 and 8 in the second book of *Etudes for piano* refer to such models (and especially Brancusi's *Endless Column Ensemble* and Escher's *Devil's Staircase*).

Thus, illusion in music can be considered from at least two angles: technically, it is the source of much research which has fuelled the invention of new possibilities, and "philosophically" it informs highly topical questions regarding the very foundations of the relationship between nature and culture, and its porosity. Music listeners are conditioned not only by the traditions and hierarchies of the society to which they belong, but also by the mental processes that govern all listening. This means that while scientific researchers must be as wary as possible of being misguided by illusion, composers and their audience can unabashedly rejoice in all that it renders possible or enriches.

Left page: Oscar Reutersvärd (1915-2002), *Tungt flytande flykt* (heavy liquid escape), 1962, Lund, Sweden. Photo Bengt Oberger, CC license.

Top: Side by side, the *Endless Column Ensemble* (1938) by Brancusi (1876-1957)
and the sound image of the *14th piano study* by Ligeti (1923-2006), performed by Idil Biret. Source: http://alain.cf.free.fr/musiqueroumaine/2colonnes.htm.

Centre: M.C. Escher (1898-1972) *Relativity*, 1953, woodcut, 27.7 × 29.2 cm. Boston Public Library, John D. Merriam Collection.

Above: Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), *Las Meninas* (The Maids of Honour), between 1656 and 1657, oil on canvas, 318 x 276 cm. Prado Museum, Madrid. Creative Commons license.

Right page: Dürer's perspectograph, image from the treatise *Instruction on Measuring with a Ruler and Compass,* 1525, by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). This model, consisting of a screen and an eyepiece, is a simple device called a gate. Thus, Dürer speaks of *Durchsehung*, i.e. "seeing through".

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ILLUSIONISM IN PAINTING

By **LYDIA HARAMBOURG**, correspondent of the Painting Section

For several centuries, the main goal in Western painting was to reflect reality so precisely that the depiction seemed real. A quest for resemblance with nature and a visual confrontation with objects to simulate their reality, with the practice of trompe-l'oeil making this even more disturbing, were the core objective of realism, to which Western art was gradually devoted from the 15th century onwards.

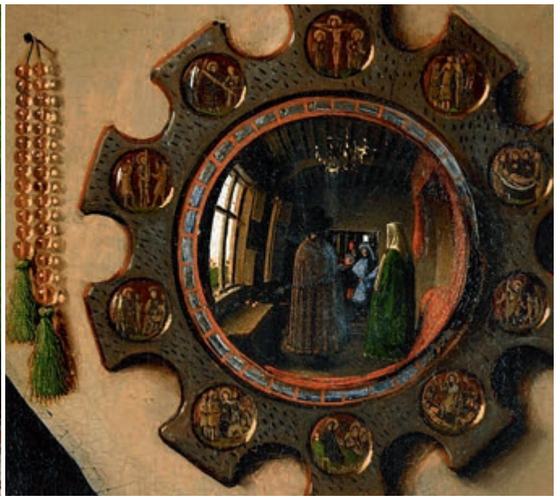
From the outset, painted work belonged to the realm of image, as the cumulated progress of graphic means enabled it to imitate nature. This raised the question of its profound identity. Ancient Greek literature abounds with examples of paintings that create an astounding illusion of reality. These include birds being deceived by a convincing likeness of grapes, painted by Zeuxis, and pecking at the hand of a teenager before flying away in fright, or the skill of Lysippos in reproducing the lineaments of an abundant head of hair, to the point of confusing viewers. Aristotle would soon assert this concept of imitation, the foundation for developing aesthetics.

Two thousand years later, as the Middle Ages drew to a close and the Renaissance dawned, a change occurred in the general worldview and in the perception of man's place in the universe. Driven by his desire to conquer and dominate the universe, to bend it to his organizing principles rather than leaving it up to divine law, man put the power of human reason into action. Henceforth, he would produce his own laws to grasp the visual richness surrounding him and to reflect its appearance through means that he would invent, thus asserting his will to be the sole master of the universe.

The actions of capturing the image as our gaze seizes it, capturing the motif offered by nature, an absolute and irreplaceable model, and demanding that it conform to our perceived vision of it, are at the heart of a graphic research based on codes. All of those codes are decoys, subterfuges, for while nature has its laws, so does art, which also poses its own problem of organizing the elements that constitute its language. Aware of the necessity of thought, graphic will submits its instinctive feelings to the rigour of mathematics. How can one go from reality to graphic depiction and achieve illusion to the point of trompe-l'œil; from intellectual alchemy to pictorial alchemy (the light and matter necessary for the elaboration of the paste); from mathematics to pictoriality? The origins of verisimilitude lie there.

Perspective treatises

The development of treatises in Renaissance Italy in the wake of Fra Luca Pacioli's *De divina proportione* (1505) provided answers to this two-pronged quest for veracity and credibility in images. Leonardo da Vinci was one of the first artists to concern himself with the problems posed by perspective, which he resolved with the golden section, for a realism whose raison d'être was fascination. Thus, the initial principle of the golden section was no longer to be found in a geometric figure but in a mathematical proportion. This study of proportions stemmed from a desire to start from a single, intelligible foundation and to reconstruct the diverse appearances of reality. Plato had laid the groundwork for this, which Piero della Francesca would later develop in his treatise *De quinque corporibus* (1492), the arcana of which put realism at the centre of art. The success of the golden section bore witness to this intent by offering a solution for illusionism in all shapes. This was achieved through its effectiveness in reconciling a simple principle (dividing a straight line into two segments in such a way that the larger one is in the same relationship to the whole as the smaller one is to the larger one) with consequences that were as flexible and varied as the



bewildering complexity of the cosmos itself. Hence, the so-called realism of many artists was based solely on verisimilitude, and the idea of beauty hid under cover of a system of lines and volumes that a specific graphic intention demanded. This idea would very soon find itself at the heart of classicism, while at the same time making leeway for instinctive arrangements. Thus, Dürer first, and Ingres later, would not merely be subject to reality, but would rather bend it in their tormented unconscious minds, much like Botticelli foreshadowing Mannerism.

The use of the camera obscura is another artificial means of simulating perspective and its visual hack. The process dates back to Aristotle, was called into question by Da Vinci, served Vermeer, and would be used by the Venetian vedutists Canaletto, Bellotto, and Guardi.

Illusionism beyond appearances

Jan Van Eyck's prestigious realism was complemented by the introduction of a mirror – about which Da Vinci would explain "how the mirror is the master of painters" (manuscript 2038 BN f°24 verso). As it is flat yet suggests relief, the mirror is the receptacle of the real, of which it captures the image that instrumentalizes the imagination. Imitation tips over into trompe-l'oeil for an escape in time and space. The mirror, an ephemeral place of passage, created a mystery that would end only with mechanical and definitive recordings, photographs. There are many examples: in Flanders with Van Eyck (*The Arnolfini*, National Gallery, London), Quentin Matsys (*The Banker and his Wife*, Louvre), and then Vermeer, and in Spain with Velasquez, whose *Las Meninas* (1656 Prado, Madrid) inverts our spatial perception through an overdone triple vision, enclosed within the bounds of the frame. In this rigorously complex painting, who is looking at whom? The royal couple who have entered the painter's studio look at the Infanta being painted, while we the viewers are thrown out of this fictional space.

Behind this veneer of reality, what do we think we see? While making us aware of an image, does it not hide its true essence? Namely, Painting. If the painted image exists through its laws, there is no certainty that beyond its visible consistency, it is not endowed with a psychological and spiritual background, and does not open onto an "other dimension".

The use of scientific calculations to create troubling perspectives, made plausible by a craft in which pictorial matter contributed towards a suggestion of depth, a deceptive reflection of space, was commensurate with a realism so prized that it was perpetuated for several centuries.

Yet some painters had other, more secret qualities which made all the difference between skill and embodiment. Thus, Gérard Dou's fame, while temporary, came earlier than that of his master, Rembrandt, as did Meissonier's before that of Manet – before values were reversed. An initiatory knowledge, an enlightened thought, inhabited by spirit, are able to cross this window of realism and produce a reality that is attentive to capturing beauty in the disconcerting richness of a dense nature, whose own illusionism the artist also communicates.

So where is the truth? As Gregory of Nyssa observed in the 4th century, "The silent painting speaks on the walls". As realistic as they may wish their works to be, the artist who has planted their easel in front of the motif and uses the transcription that they wish to be the most exact, the most in keeping with their vision, will communicate a parallel reality. This reality will uphold its illusionist truth on a par with its model, because it is the result of the painter's unique encounter with the canvas, with the line, the colour, the matter and the subject. Thus, we could paraphrase Mallarmé and speak of "the empty canvas whose whiteness defends it".

Top left: Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543), *The Ambassadors*, 1533, 207 x 209 cm. In the foreground is an anamorphosis, revealing itself to be a human skull, in the period's typical style of vanities. National Gallery, London. Creative Commons license.

Top (detail) and right page: Jan van Eyck (circa 1390 -1441), *The Arnolfini portrait*, 1434, oil on wood, 82.2 × 60 cm. National Gallery, London. Creative Commons licence.

THE ULTIMATE ILLUSION

By **FRÉDÉRIC MITTERRAND**, member of the Film and Audiovisual Section

When cinema was first introduced in China, as "Les Films Lumière" invented the travelling shot by perching their camera on a tram travelling through the imperial capital Beijing, it was known locally as "Electric Shadows". Everything was already there: the illusion of being able to control the variations of day and night, the illusion of progress brought about by the use of a new and mysterious source of energy, and the illusion of moving around in an immense city and among an Asian crowd, without moving from one's balcony seat in a theatre on a Parisian boulevard.

It is said that some of the first spectators of the *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station* in 1895 fled, believing they would be run over by the train – somewhat like the Congolese characters in *Tintin* who check behind the screen to see the characters who were waving around on the canvas "in real life" and then return, surprised and disappointed, wondering where they could have gone.

Paintings can be looked at, sculptures may be touched, and music listened to, houses that do not yet exist can be imagined, but cinema has us participate. All art is a lie that transfigures reality and, even when it is awful, gives it a beauty that helps us through life. Cinema is no exception to the rule, it is the most sophisticated expression of this lie, which brings us together in a dark room to share our emotions with strangers and friends alike. A lie so effective that it gives one the feeling of joining in with these strangers even when one is alone in front of a television screen. We so often talk with our loved ones about the films we have seen, we read so many articles and books about them, we fervently compare the memories that they leave us with, all to avoid feeling alone...

The lie of cinema is perhaps the most moving of all when a Douglas Sirk melodrama makes us cry, the most delicious when Charlie Chaplin makes us laugh, the most frightening when Frankenstein approaches, the most dangerous too when Leni Riefenstahl stages the deadly nightmare of Nazism in the superb guises of grandeur and glory. The entire history of cinema, with the infinite number of films that could be cited, is the history of this lie.

This is a particularly perverse lie because we believe it over truth while knowing perfectly well that it is still a lie. Who hasn't shuddered at the deliciously sadistic suspense in a Hitchcock film, really projecting oneself into the plot of the story he is telling, without forgetting that it is indeed false? It is completely false, no one has been murdered and you will never get to hug Grace Kelly even if you have learnt that there are birds that it is perhaps wiser to be wary of!

At the cinema, we are the willing hostages of someone else's imagination, the ephemeral accomplices of a story that could be ours and yet is not. We can imagine ourselves as Bruce Lee, Jean Gabin or Fred Astaire, minutes before sitting in the metro or struggling to understand the instructions for our washing machine. Returns from the cinema are often sad; as Fellini so aptly put it, the atmosphere when audiences leave the cinema and scatter in the street is like a roundup.

The worst thing about the lie of cinema is that it works by taking the incomprehensible and secret path of our dreams which tell us something but we don't know what. Lotte Eisner's outstanding *Hauted Screen* affords a clear understanding of the extent to

Left page: Georges Méliès (1861-1938), image taken from *A Trip to the Moon* (1902), in a version coloured by his workshops, recently restored. Lobster Foundation / Groupama - Fondation Gan pour le cinéma.

Above: "The Baron will see me home", promotional poster for the film *Camille*, 1936, directed by Georges Cukor, with Greta Garbo and Robert Taylor.

Left: The "baby dinosaurs" being pampered by the special effects team on Colin Trevorrow's 2022 film *Jurassic World: Dominion*. Photo by Universal Pictures.

which 1920s German films were foreshadowing Hitler's rise to power. Goebbels was also a great cinephile. Those are just some among so many other examples the marvellous Marc Ferro used as the subject of his lectures at the Sorbonne.

The extraordinary progress of trickery has further increased the power of the lie. We laughed out loud at Méliès's *Trip to the Moon* and its ladies in 1900 corsets and bearded selenites. In fact, that was the magician's intention. There is no longer anything funny about Star Wars aliens engaging in fantastic battles in outer space. What if our future was really going to look like that? The first leap forward in trickery was the invention of talking pictures. "Garbo Talks!" – and it was an earthquake: the Divine came to whisper in our ears without coming down from her pedestal. Since then, computers have completed the job by pushing back the limits of trickery to infinity. There must still be dinosaurs on earth because Steven Spielberg found them in "Jurassic Park". No need to go and look for them in the zoo, they are there, somewhere, very close to us, on our screens.

We need lies to live, rather than thinking all the time about the threatening inevitability of death. Lies are built on illusions, and cinema is the ultimate illusion.

Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1675-1741), *Modesty Presenting Painting to the Academy*, 1733, oil on canvas, 99 x 82 cm, Musée du Louvre. RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre) / Jean-Gilles Berizzi.

VENICE AND THE ACADÉMIE ROYALE DE PEINTURE ET DE SCULPTURE

By **PIERRE ROSENBERG**, of the Académie Française

When Louis XIV died, the arts in France were in a poor condition. Le Brun had died in 1690, Pierre Mignard followed five years later, and they had not left any great successor. There had of course been Venetian episodes during the Sun King's reign: the Hall of Mirrors was made possible in part by the expertise of Venetian master glassmakers smuggled in from Italy at the risk of their lives, and visitors to the gardens of Versailles were delighted to find gondolas, but at that point those were only memories.

Then came Philippe d'Orléans (1674-1723), the Regent. Louis XV was only five years old when his uncle seized power. The figure of the Duke of Orléans is far from a universal favourite among historians, and his political role remains a subject of debate. While it is generally agreed that he was one of the most important collectors of his century – and the dispersal of his collection during the Revolution is undoubtedly one of our worst losses of heritage –, while it is certain that he had a taste for art, and while his choice of Antoine Coypel (1661-1722) to guide his cultural policy proved to be excellent, the reasons why he turned towards Venice – if there were any – are still unknown.

The time of Venice's glory seemed to have passed.

In the shadow of Titian, Giorgione and Giovanni Bellini, the triumphant sixteenth century saw the rivalry between Tintoretto and Veronese; in 1664, the Serenissima gifted Louis XIV the immense *Feast in the House of Simon the Pharisee*, which now adorns the Salon d'Hercule in Versailles. The seventeenth century – which has recently enjoyed renewed acknowledgement – lacked any universally recognized outstanding artistic personality. While each of the century's great European powers had its own – Caravaggio and Bernini, Velázquez, Rubens, Rembrandt and Poussin – Venice's future looked bleak. The city of the Doges was in economic decline. Its many painters could make a living only by exporting their paintings, or themselves, to the Catholic south of Germany, to Dresden and Warsaw (Bellotto), to Spain (the Tiepolos) or England (Canaletto) and, for a short time, to France.

What the exact role of the Regent was during this brief period of hope remains unknown. While he enjoyed collecting contemporary Venetian painting, especially Sebastiano Ricci's (1659-1734), it is unclear whether he was aware of the place that Venetian artists visiting Paris would hold in the history of French painting. And this is where the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, the direct ancestor of the Quai de Conti's current Académie des Beaux-Arts, comes in. It was headed by Antoine Coypel, and its Roman branch, the Académie de France à Rome, would soon be headed by Nicolas Vleughels (1668-1737), an unconditional venetophile who transferred its headquarters from the Palazzo Capranica to the Palazzo Mancini. It was at this time that the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture welcomed two leading Venetian artists as members, one of whom, several centuries ahead of time, was a woman.

Rosalba Carriera (1675-1757), known as *la Rosalba*, was no longer in her prime when she arrived in France. Nor was she a beauty. A caricature by Anton Maria Zanetti (1679-1767) kept at the Cini Foundation in Venice shows her facing the viewer, wearing a strange hat above a pox-ridden face – which did not stop Paris smart set from falling in love with her. Not only the socialites, art lovers and collectors of Paris, but also institutional figures, fell at her feet asking for her portrait in pastel, a technique that had long been practised in France, but which she had perfected. She made the *Portrait* of the young Louis XV, which is now in Dresden. Rosalba had come with her sister and her brother-in-law, the painter Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1675-1741), about whom I say more below. Among the aforementioned amateurs was Pierre Crozat (1665-1740), one of the richest men in France and one of the century's most important collectors of drawings. He had just returned from Italy when, on 22 December 1719, he invited Rosalba to Paris. She arrived in April 1720 and stayed at the sumptuous Hôtel Crozat on rue de Richelieu until her departure in April 1721. On 26 October 1720, Rosalba was introduced into the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture. She promised to send her obligatory reception piece, which she did upon her return to Venice. Her pastel, which is now kept at the Louvre, depicts a *Young Woman with a Laurel Wreath*, in fact, as she herself wrote, a *Nymph from Apollo's entourage*. On 10 October 1721, Rosalba announced to Antoine Coypel that the work was being sent to Paris. She wrote to him in French: "I am sending the pastel to the Académie [...] I would think I was doing a disservice to the kindness you [Antoine Coypel] have shown me by persuading all these illustrious figures to grant me the great honour of being among them, if I did not trust that you would moreover persuade

them that I have done my utmost to show them my gratitude [...] [the pastel] also represents a nymph from Apollo's entourage". The pastel was presented to the Académie on 31 January 1722, a few days after Antoine Coypel's death on 7 January. In the next February issue of *Mercure de France*, The Abbott of Maroulle and Pierre Jean Mariette (1694-1774), another eminent collector of drawings and platonic lover of La Rosalba, expressed their enthusiasm about it. An exchange of letters between the Académie and Rosalba concerning the academicians' reception of her work and the choice of a suitable setting to exhibit it testifies to the great interest surrounding this pastel – which, it is worth remembering, was the work of a woman. Maurice-Quentin de La Tour (1704-1788) made a copy of it, which is now kept in the Saint-Quentin museum. For more information and details of the correspondence between Rosalba and the Académie, see Xavier Salmon's note in his catalogue *'Pastels du Louvre des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (the Louvre's pastels of the 17th and 18th centuries), published by Hazan in 2018.

Rosalba was very pious. On the back of her works, between the stretcher and the protective canvas, she hid small engravings, pious images, good luck charms of sorts. One of these pious images, representing the Three Kings, was recently discovered on the back of her reception piece at the Académie.

Rosalba travelled with her brother-in-law Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini. He had married her sister Angela Carriera, and was in turn introduced into the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture on 31 December 1720. He took his time in sending his indispensable reception piece to the Académie, as it arrived in Paris in 1733 only. For this oil painting, which is also now in the Louvre, he chose a subject that could but flatter the members of the Académie, *Modesty Presenting Painting to the Academy* or, as it is actually called, *Painting and Drawing Educating Love*.

But Pellegrini's great adventure in Paris was the creation, for the Royal Bank, of the ceiling of the Mississippi Gallery, on the site of the present-day Bibliothèque Nationale on rue de Richelieu. The illustrious Scottish trader John Law (1671-1729) commissioned him in 1720, a few months before the "Law system" went bankrupt in a major scandal. Law went into exile and died in Venice in 1729. The fresco, called *The Felicity of France* or *Allegory of Commerce and Government,* was quickly destroyed for reasons that have long remained mysterious. Perhaps some people wished for a swift erasure of the memory of the bankruptcy that had ruined many French people, including a host of artists, one of whom was apparently Watteau. Did they want to turn the page on Venice, as the ambitious François Lemoyne (1688-1737) had? His ceiling of the Hercules Salon, *The Apotheosis of Hercules*, overarching the Veronese painting Venice had gifted to Louis XIV, was in a way the answer to Pellegrini's ceiling, the memory of which was indeed to be cleansed.

As they welcomed Rosalba and Pellegrini, the Academicians did not seem to mind the arrival of foreign artists in their ranks. It is widely believed that Rosalba's fellow portraitists Nicolas de Largillierre (1656-1746) and Hyacinthe Rigaud (1659-1743), welcomed them with benevolence, but François Lemoyne, who was born in 1688 and therefore belonged to the next generation, saw things differently. Lemoyne's ambition was to take the place that Venice had held for a time and that Rome, through Carlo Maratta and his many students, still occupied in French painting. With his ceiling, he was taking up the Italian challenge. While he was successful, this feat, in some ways, remained unique in the history of 18th century French painting.

I am yet to speak of an academician who personally knew and admired La Rosalba. He was overwhelmingly prominent throughout the Regency and, better than François Lemoyne, was able to secure the French primacy that Richelieu, Louis XIV and, in all likelihood, the Regent had wished for. This was Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), who had become an academician in 1717. Watteau and Rosalba met at least three times, on 21 August 1720, and on 9 and 11 February 1721. They exchanged their works. Did she paint his portrait? While some think they can recognize his features in three pastel portraits preserved respectively in Frankfurt, Treviso and in a private collection, others disagree. Did he paint her portrait? That is entirely unclear. There is considerable uncertainty regarding the identity of the model for the Amsterdam and Washington sheets. What is certain is Watteau's love for Venice. There can be no doubt that he saw Venetian paintings, and that he wanted to go to Venice. That he copied the works of its most glorious artists, especially those of Veronese, is proven. It was not François Lemoyne who ultimately won with his ceiling of the Hercules Salon in Versailles, but Watteau who, with his *Embarkation for Cythera*, emerged victorious from the battle for the first place in Paris.

Rosalba returned to Venice. Pellegrini left Paris for England and Watteau died on 18 July 1721. In a matter of a few years, the page of Louis XIV's long reign was turned.

Top: Rosalba Giovanna Carriera (1675-1757), *Young Woman with a Wreath of Laurel, Nymph from Apollo's entourage*, 1721, pastel on blue paper pasted on canvas, 62.9 x 56.3 cm, Musée du Louvre.

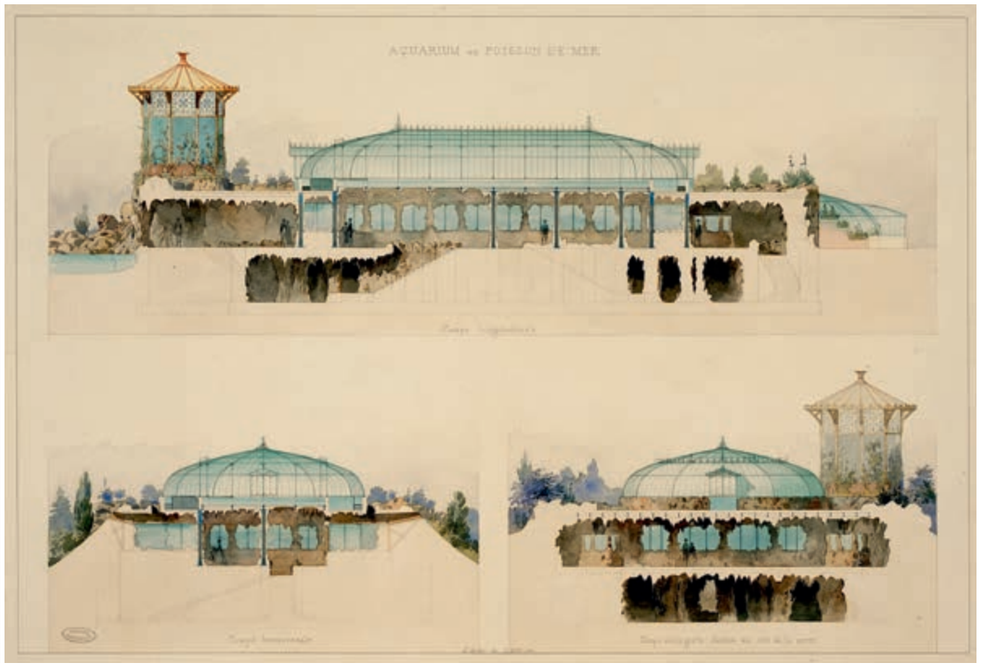
RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre) / Michel Urtado.

Right: Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), *Embarkation for Cythera*, 1717, oil on canvas, 129 x 194 cm, Musée du Louvre.

RMN-Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre) / Stéphane Maréchalle.

FISH AUTOMATA AT THE 1867 WORLD FAIR

By **GUILLAUME LE GALL**, professor of contemporary art history at the University of Lorraine



The 1867 Exposition Universelle in Paris presented two aquariums: one contained freshwater, the other seawater. The aquarium was a recent invention then, and it was quite surprising, as it revealed a world that had until then remained hidden. Instead of seeing nature consigned to jars, inert and lined up on museum shelves, visitors to the Exposition discovered a living, moving aquatic nature. Placed in artificial grottos, decorated with stalagmites and stalactites made of mortar, these two aquariums are to be understood as an extension of the history of 16th century Mannerist grottos. In much the same way, the Exposition's grottos reused the shapes of nature (caves, rocks, stalactites and stalagmites) by staging their formation, in something of a "dramatization of the alchemy of nature"[1].

But the movement of the fish held in these "glass cages" does raise essential questions. Should' it not, for example, be compared to the workings of the machines exhibited at the same time in the same place? The question is crucial because the technical principle of these large public aquariums is partly based on the continuous movement of the water obtained by means of a mechanical device, which is necessary for the survival of the animals. Movement in the aquarium is not absolutely natural. Despite an idealized image of aquatic life, the movement of fish in the aquarium is based on an artificial principle. Thus, are fish not an image of nature and vitality that owe their existence only to the artifice of industrial technology? In other words, there can be no life in the aquarium without the movement of machines. And we must turn to the art of automata to understand the symbolic stakes of movement in the aquarium as well as how the fish could be perceived as the image of a living nature linked to an artificial mechanism. Ultimately, at the Exposition Universelle, were these fish not replacing the automata that populated those 16th century grottos? Should we not examine the presence of moving fish as a vestige of the taste for the mechanical beings that came to life in Mannerist caves – precisely those that constituted the very models of the artificial cavities featured at the Exposition Universelle?

Observers saw the movement of the fish in the aquarium at the 1867 World Fair as "new mysteries"[2]. The aquarium was a mystery because, in 1867, visitors were discovering this artefact and the unusual image it produced: that of seeing the marine depths as if they were facing a sectional view of the ocean. This was the impression the Exposition's marine aquarium made on Henri de la Blanchère when he saw fish "playing silently like ghosts"[3]. As Horst Bredekamp points out in *Machines et cabinets de curiosités*, looking at automata, one perceives an "illusionary effect produced by their autonomous movement" which is similar to "the power of a supernatural apparition"[4]. In the aquarium, as with automata, the wonder this apparition inspires is proportional to the extent to which its mechanical principle is concealed. In his study on *Mannerist grottos in 16th century Italy*, Philippe Morel notes that "the invisibility of the driving power is the condition for the effect of wonder produced by an artifice that is transformed into a work of nature and a reflection of divine creation"[5].

If life in the aquariums depends on a machine, then the man who created this device could well be in the image of the God behind the mechanics of the world's functioning The art of automata opens the door for reflection on the symbolic function of the aquariums in these grottos, which reflected the "matrical caverns" where "the elaboration of metals was carried out as in a natural underground laboratory"[6]. Within this genealogy of man-made nature shows, that is, of the movement of automata placed in the environment of matrical grottos, the aquarium in turn becomes a natural history laboratory. Henceforth, man would take on the role of the Mechanic and create "small oceans in miniature" in which the movements of animals existed only as a function of man's technical intelligence and were at the mercy of the mechanical movement of a machine.

Seventeen years after the Exposition Universelle of 1867, Joris-Karl Huysmans had this vision, effectively imagining fish automata in an aquarium. In the wall of his living room, decorated like a ship reminiscent of Jules Verne's Nautilus, his protagonist Jean des Esseintes transformed a window into an aquarium. It was only after "[operating] the stops of the pipes and conduits" that allowed the tank to be filled with pure water that he ended up contemplating "marvelous, mechanical fish, wound like clocks, which passed before the porthole or clung to the artificial seaweed"[7], just as one could admire the automata in Renaissance grottos and gardens.

Top: "Aquarium (interior)", plate from *François Ducuing, L'Exposition universelle de 1867*, vol. 1. Photo credit: Guillaume Le Gall.

Right: Anonymous (F. Rioux?), Sea fish aquarium: longitudinal section, cross-section, section of the entrance cave on the greenhouse side, watercolour plate, 40 x 60 cm, 1867. Archives Nationales (France).

1 - P. Morel, 2006: "Mannerist grottos in 16th century Italy", *Sixteenth-Century Italian Art*, Blackwell Anthologies in Art History, pp.115-134.

2 - A.-G. Bellin, *L'Exposition universelle : poème didactique en quinze chants*, Paris, Garnier frères, 1867, p. 388.

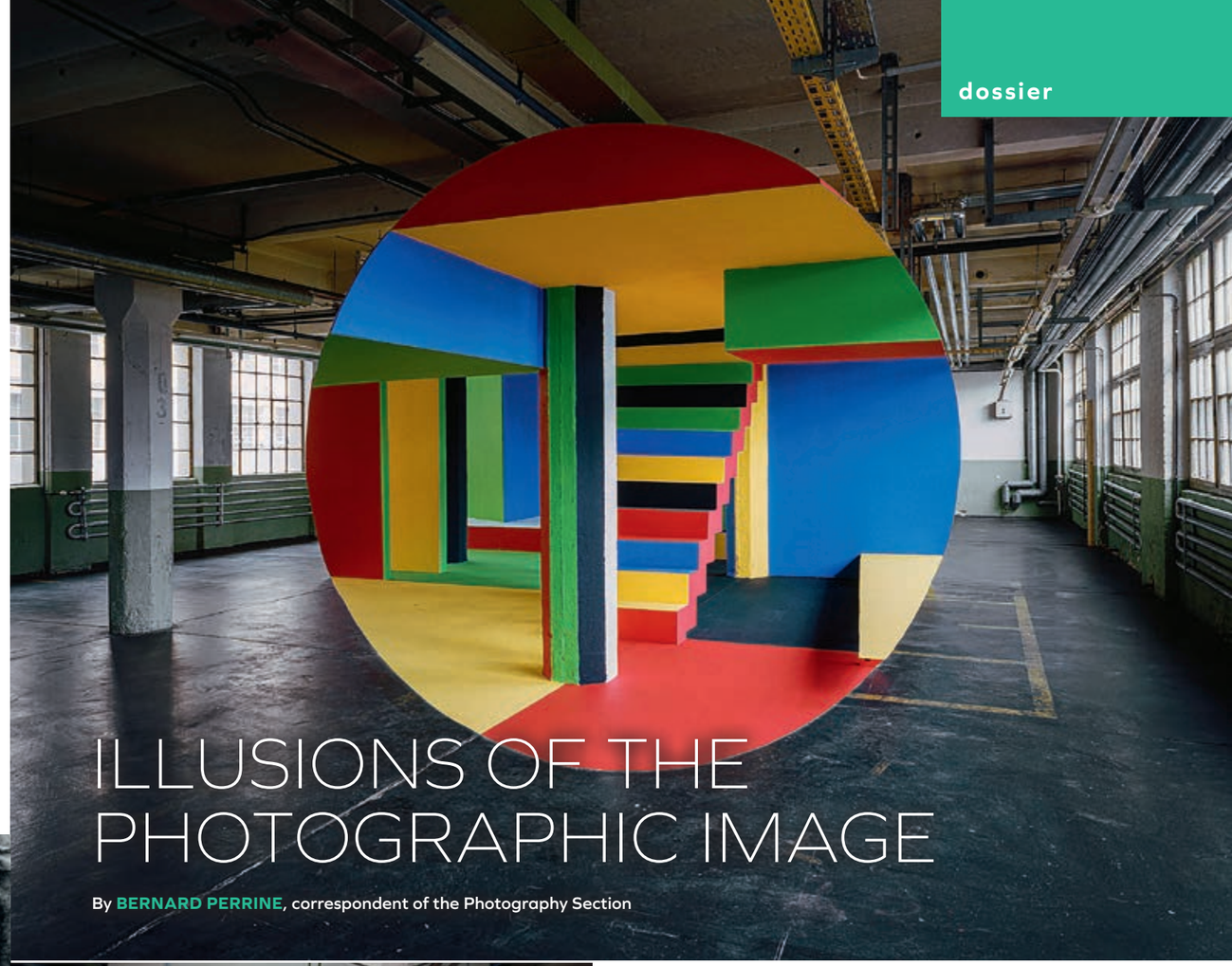
3 - H. de la Blanchère, "L'Aquarium d'eau de mer", *L'Exposition Universelle de 1867 illustrée*, 5 September 1867, Paris, E. Dentu, p. 82.

4 - H. Bredekamp, *Machines et cabinets de curiosité*, Paris, Diderot Éditeur, 1996, p. 8.

5 - P. Morel, *op. cit*. In his study, Morel notes that "The idea that it is the effects of a hidden thing that we perceive with wonder without knowing its cause, at least at first, is obviously fundamental to the study of automata".

6 - *Ibidem.*, p. 70.

7 - J.-K. Huysmans, *Against the Grain* (1884), Penguin Classics



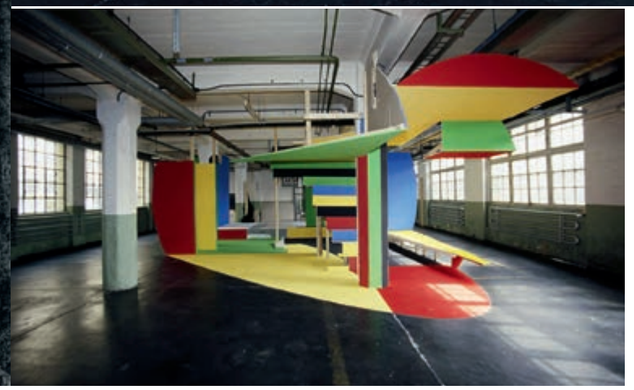
ILLUSIONS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE

By **BERNARD PERRINE**, correspondent of the Photography Section

André Comte-Sponville[1] is under no illusion when it comes to *illusion*, for it fails to keep its promises, and he snaps us back to reality every time we have illusions about it. This is why, as a philosopher, he prefers disillusionment "for the love of truth, an intellectual's primary virtue". The same applies to the photographic image, whose materiality and meaning are often built on illusions. While François Arago put forward photography's power of truth to support its recognition at the time of its introduction in 1839, Hippolithe Bayard immediately questioned it. Be it in the allegory of the cave, in Tiphaigne de la Roche's descriptions or in the legend of Dibutade's daughter, man has always sought to fix the "illusion images" generated by light and especially the image of the "human figure". In one of her first works, Susan Sontag[2] wondered, much like Roland Barthes did, about the relationship that images have with reality and about the relationship that man has with photography. "A photo is both a pseudo-presence and a mark of absence"; it is an illusion to some people who, having remained cut off from the evolution of civilization, do not recognize their photographic portrait and describe it merely as a piece of paper. However, to defend this new invention, François Arago[3] was quick to point out the truthfulness in its precision and speed, because, as Jules Janin put it, "it is the sun itself that's working".

Yet, in the same period, Hippolyte Bayard's famous *Self-Portrait as a Drowned Man*, taken on 18 October 1840, asserted the opposite. It is said to be the first photograph taken to defend an argument before the Académie and the political and scientific world. In her essay *Contre la photographie* ("Against Photography"), Camille Bonnefoi presents this as an ontological war that has been tearing photography apart since its origins, long before it gained status as an artistic work. By staging his suicide, the author shows that photography is not merely a tool for recording reality, but that it can produce false images, thus denying the idea of photographic evidence. And since its author is not dead, the photograph is false. It lies and pre-emptively denies the famous phrase "it-has-been" by retorting "*someone* has been". The text written on the back of the "drowned man" photograph claims that it would be illusory to lend the image any interpretations other than the one it produces. However, as a counterpoint, while this photograph opens the way to the illusions of performance, above all, it also authenticates an author and therefore an artist. Hippolyte Bayard had not foreseen that his "drowned man" would in turn become an illusion, a trace blurred and almost erased by time. The image is locked in a black box kept in storage by the Société Française de Photographie and doomed never to be seen again.

Even the ineffable latent image, which Arago praised for its precision and truth, was in itself an illusion. While it existed in the realm of possibility, it took a century and a half, until the late 1980s and the use of pulsed radiolysis – otherwise known as the dissociation of matter by ionising radiation – for Jean-Louis Marignier's CNRS[4] research team to discover what was commonly known as "development". These illusions, starting from the work of Gabriel Lippmann recording light interference in the late 19th century, led the Hungarian-British physicist Denis Gabor on the road to holography – the real thing, not the "Pepper's Ghost" we have recently seen on the French political scene, an optical illusion that has been known since the nineteenth century and used in haunted houses and in the "magic tricks" of charlatans. Or retinal persistence and its illusion of movement, which gave birth to cinema and, by analogy, to television, before digital, computing, and soon quantum technology came to encode all this, making it invisible, further reinforcing the illusion, and projecting it in 3D.



Before these future technological changes, photographers enhanced their work with this *illusion* that seems to have accompanied photography since long before its birth. Artists such as Jeff Wall, Éric Baudelaire, and Luc Delaye among others banished this illusion of reality and truth to document their times through expertly constructed narration because, as Jeff Wall put it, "photography seemed to me to be trapped in its own novelty, whereas the older arts, theatre and painting, had been able to create, through the force of illusion, situations in which the viewer could have the sensation of sharing a very private space with someone else, without being there"[5] . Shortly before him, Jean-Luc Godard seemed to make the same observation in his aphorism, "it's not a just image, it's just an image...".

Through the ebb and flow of trans-current inter-illusion, the doctrines of John Ruskin, an advocate for the daguerreotype, influenced the Pre-Raphaelite movement born in 1848. Conversely, the end of the same century would see what history would remember as the Pictorialist movement, in which photography resorted to older processes of blurring to give the illusion of painting. Much later, hyper-realism would likewise seek to produce the illusion of photography.

In another field, the work of Ruth Orkin[6], whose background was in image-movement[7] and who was fascinated by the heuristic power of cinema, focused on the "illusion of time".

But many illusions come from this duality of the image described by Régis Durand: "an icon because it contains the world but also a simulacrum, because it is only a flat surface loaded with figures. And our gaze? It is far too close to the lure...".

1 - *Philosophie,* André Comte-Sponville, France Inter, 6 July 2022, 9am.

2 - Susan Sontag, *Sur la photographie* (1977), 1er chapitre «Dans la caverne de Platon».

3 - Minutes of the 19 August 1839 session before the Académie des Sciences de Paris: *"Upon inspection of several of the paintings that have passed before your eyes, surely we all thought of the immense advantage that would have been gained, during the Egyptian expedition, from such an exact and rapid means [...]. To copy the millions and millions of hieroglyphs that cover, even on the outside, the great monuments of Thebes, Memphis, Karnak, etc., would require twenty years and legions of draughtsmen. With the Daguerreotype, a single man could carry out this immense task."*

4 - Jacqueline Belloni, *Le développement photographique et la chimie de l'argentique,* lecture, Institut de France, 15 December 2015.

5 - Jeff Wall, quoted in Jean-François Chevrier, *Essais et entretiens, 1984-2001: Jeff Wall*, Paris, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 2001.

6 - Quoted in the presentation of the exhibition "Ruth Orkin, *The illusion of time*" by Anne Morin at Kutxa Kultur Artegunea, San Sebastian (https://www.kutxakulturartegunea.eus).

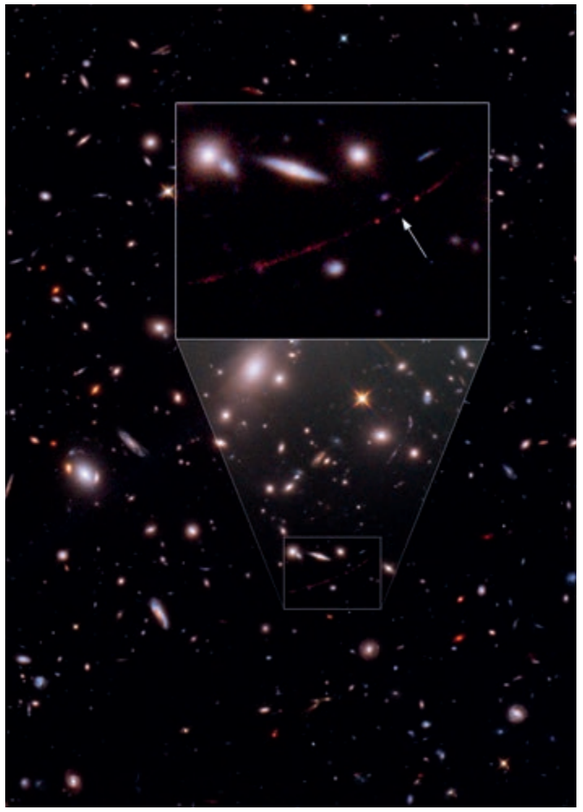
7 - Gilles Deleuze, (2002) [1983]. *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*. London & New York: The Athlone Press

Left page: Hippolyte Bayard (1801-1887), *Self-portrait as a drowned man*, 1840, author's own photographic process. USC's Annenberg School for Communication.

Above: Georges Rousse (born 1947), installation in the Opelvillen Museum in Rüsselsheim, Germany, 2013.

Photo credit: Georges Rousse & VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021, courtesy Galerie Springer Berlin.

Right: In the Sunrise Arc Galaxy, WHL0137-LS (or Earendel) is the furthest star from Earth ever detected by the Hubble Telescope. NASA / Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI).



Thus, as Barbara M. Henke commented, through the illusion of what she refuses to call "self-portraits" (although she is the model), "Cindy Sherman's images lie. But what they do show, in a targeted, caricatured, or perversely exaggerated way, is what exists and conditions us: stereotypical projections of sexuality, beauty, power and violence that serve as tools for defying reality in the form of media strategies and impostures whose sole purpose is to impose the reality they uphold".

The border between reality and illusion is tenuous, as Valérie Belin shows in one of her latest exhibitions, *Modern Royals*[8]. There, unlike in her previous exhibitions, her living models look like celluloid mannequins. As in previous series where mannequins gave the illusion of life, this pseudo-reality of the characters induces a metaphor that gives them a certain timelessness, which in turn arouses a feeling of anxiety and unease. This uneasiness can also come from the absence of any boundary between illusion and "reality". Aided by the progress of artificial intelligence (AI), a 2D surface can become 3D and, thanks to deep learning (GAN, for Generative Adversarial Networks), generate faces, portraits that are truer than life, animated, and endowed with speech.

Finally, while many artists throughout the history of photography have tried to work with ordinary optical illusions, Georges Rousse has become a master at using anamorphosis to question perspective. This is a Renaissance invention which is a mere construction, therefore an optical illusion, and which, as Kasimir Malevitch said, "relates to the flatness of painting".

In his book *Homo numericus*[9], Daniel Cohen emphasizes the *digital illusion*. Not only the one that seals "the end of ten thousand years of history and the beginning of another…", but the one that will reduce to illusions the trillions of images captured every year and recorded on media that are made ephemeral by obsolescence. It does not matter, because this new history will be based on illusions viewed through helmets or glasses, or projected directly onto our retinas. So-called virtual or augmented realities are beginning to invade our exhibitions, generating tools, materials or productions that will soon be commodities in the metaverse[10] – until a potential catastrophe happens, or a return to reality and its illusions!

Yet the greatest cause for questions regarding illusion came from the Hubble telescope this summer, when it rendered the light of the star WHL0137-LS, named Earendel[11], 12.9 billion years after it had been emitted. The star itself has exploded and disappeared a long time ago. Is that the illusion of a reality or the reality of an illusion?

8 - Valérie Belin *Modern Royals series,* 2022, Galerie Nathalie Obaldia.

9 - Daniel Cohen, *Homo Numericus, la "civilisation" qui vient*, Albin Michel, 2022.

10 - www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/286878-mission-exploratoire-sur-les-metavers and Observatoire des métavers, "58% of French people think that museums should be present in the metaverse first" (IFOP/Talan survey, January 2022).

11 - "Morning star" or "rising light" in Old English.

Academic work

The Choreography Section travels to Biarritz

The members and correspondents of the Académie des Beaux-Arts' Choreography Section, along with the Académie's Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard and President Astrid de la Forest, travelled to Biarritz on 7 and 8 September as part of the 32nd edition of the festival *Le Temps d'Aimer la Danse*, at the invitation of its artistic director and academician since 2019, Thierry Malandain. Photo credit: Stéphane Bellocq

On 7 September at the Le Royal cinema, the programme focused on the Académie des Beaux-Arts' women choreographers. Two documentaries were shown: *Elektro Mathematrix*, dedicated to and directed by Blanca Li, and a preview of *Carolyn Carlson at work*, directed by Béatrice Camurat Jaud.

On 8 September, after a decentralized section meeting, held behind closed doors, a professional meeting of the Choreography Section with the directors of French ballets, national choreographic centres and opera ballets was organized in the Salle Garamitz of the Théâtre de la Gare du Midi. This was part of the Académie des Beaux-Arts' mission to reflect on artistic and cultural matters, and to advise public authorities, as stipulated in its statutes. It was followed by a public meeting with the academicians of the Choreography Section, to allow the public to discover the Académie des Beaux-Arts, its workings, its heritage and its missions (supporting artistic creation, awarding prizes, managing artists' residences, etc.), which are not always well understood. The evening ended with a performance of *Mythologies* (2022), a choreography by Angelin Preljocaj, performed by the Ballet Preljocaj and the Ballet de l'Opéra National de Bordeaux.

Top: Correspondent Didier Deschamps, 2021 President Astrid de la Forest, Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard, and members of the Choreography Section Carolyn Carlson and Thierry Malandain.

Photo credit: Stéphane Bellocq.

Heritage

The Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild

As of 1 January 2023, the Académie des Beaux-Arts will take over direct management of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild (Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat). The Académie has elected Muriel Mayette-Holtz, from its Free Members Section, as director of the Villa for a five-year term.

The Académie des Beaux-Arts, which has owned the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild since 1934, and Culturespaces, its concessionaire, have mutually agreed on an early termination of the public service delegation contract that has bound them since 1992 for the management of the site, located in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (Alpes-Maritimes).

The Académie has decided to manage the villa directly from 1 January 2023, as it does for the Marmottan Monet Museum (Paris), the House and Gardens of Claude Monet (Giverny), the Marmottan Library and Villa (Boulogne-Billancourt), the Maison-atelier Lurçat (Paris) and the Villa Dufraine (Chars).

At its plenary session on 12 October, Muriel Mayette-Holtz, from the Free Members' Section, was elected for a five-year term. Under her leadership, the Académie des Beaux-Arts will continue renovating this magnificent villa. She will also be tasked with devising a high-level cultural programme for the coming season.

Above: the façade of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (Alpes-Maritimes). Photo credit: Victor Point / H&K.

Centre: the Villa's new director, Muriel Mayette-Holtz, from the Free Members' Section. Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.

Elections

During its plenary session on Wednesday 23 November, the Académie des Beaux-Arts elected Hervé Di Rosa to the Painting Section, in the seat previously held by Jean Cortot (1925-2018), and the American photographer Annie Leibovitz as a foreign associate member in the seat previously held by the architect Ieoh Ming Pei (1917-2019).

Hervé Di Rosa, a graduate from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, has exhibited his works in Paris, Amsterdam and New York. In 1981, he co-founded the movement know as Figuration Libre, a name coined by fellow artist Ben. Without claiming to belong to any particular style, he has developed a narrative universe of his own populated by recurring characters, and practices all creative techniques, including painting, sculpture, comic strips, tapestry, printmaking, fresco, lacquer, embossed silver, ceramics, cartoons, digital images. He has also authored numerous art books and is inventor of Art Modeste. He founded the Musée International des Arts Modestes (MIAM) in Sète in 2000, where he exhibits the works of numerous artists from across the world, in an endeavour that brings into question the boundaries of contemporary art. Since 1981, his work has been included in prominent public and private collections and has been the subject of over 200 solo exhibitions. He lives and works in Lisbon (Portugal). Photo credit: Victoire Di Rosa.

Annie Leibovitz began her career as a photojournalist for *Rolling Stone* magazine in 1970. After 142 covers and dozens of features, she established herself as a documentarist of the social landscape, capturing personalities in their intimate lives or historical moments. In 1983, she joined the new *Vanity Fair* and worked for *Vogue* from the late 1980s.onward Her work has been exhibited in museums and galleries around the world, including the *National Portrait Gallery* and the *Corcoran Gallery* in Washington, D.C., the *International Center of Photography* in New York, the *Stedelijk Museum* in Amsterdam, the Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, the National Portrait Gallery in London, the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, and the *Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts* in Moscow. She is the recipient of many prestigious awards including the Académie des Beaux-Arts - William Klein Photography Prize. Photo credit: Annie Leibovitz.

In 2023 and 2024 there will be a continuation of these concerts, with a cycle focusing on composers who have been elected as foreign associates. Brahms, Verdi and Shostakovich will be in the spotlight on Wednesday 24 May, with the Orchestre de Picardie, conducted by Laurent Petitgirard, and cellist Henri Demarquette.

With these concerts organized in the Institut de France's André and Liliane Bettencourt auditorium, the Académie's Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard wanted to pay tribute to the composers who have successively held its seats. This cycle of "Concerts d'un fauteuil" offers an exploration of our fascinating musical heritage.

After François-Bernard Mâche for Seat n°5, Gilbert Amy for Seat n°4, Édith Canat de Chizy for Seat n°6, and Laurent Petitgirard for Seat n°1, Seat n°3 held by Michaël Levinas was honoured on 18 May 2022, followed by Seats n°7 and 8 held by Régis Campo and Thierry Escaich, on 12 October.

Concert for Seat N° 3

Programme: André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry - *Richard Cœur de Lion*, Overture; Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny - *Le déserteur,* Act III scene 4, aria by Alexis*:* "Il m'eût été si doux de t'embrasser"; Charles-Simon Catel - *Les Bayadères,* Act II, scene 5, aria by Laméa: "Sans détourner les yeux"; Ferdinando Paër - *Nocturne pour deux voix et piano* dedicated to Mademoiselle Mars; Gaspare Spontini - *La Vestale*, Act III scene 5, Julia's aria: "Toi que je laisse"; Ambroise Thomas - *Psyché,* Act I, n°4, Mercury's aria: "*Des Dieux, je suis le messager*". *Le Caïd,* Act I, n°3, recitative and aria of the drum major; Charles Lenepveu - *Velléda*, Act IV, scene I, Divertissement; Charles-Marie Widor - *Trois pièces pour hautbois et piano*, Élégie; Henri Rabaud - Excerpts from the film *Le joueur d'échecs* by Raymond Bernard; Paul Paray - *Symphonie d'archets;* Raymond Gallois-Montbrun - *Sarabande et Finale pour trompette et piano;* Jean-Louis Florentz - *Vocalise pour voix seule;* Michaël Levinas - *Chemins égarés* (world premiere).
These pieces were performed by the ensemble L'Itinéraire, conducted by Antonin Rey, with Marianne Croux (soprano), Edwin Crossley-Mercer (baritone), Noé Nillni (trumpet), Sylvain Devaux (oboe), David Chevalier (piano) and the Trio Stimmung (Christophe Giovaninetti, Michaël Levinas, and Raphaël Chrétien).
Chemins égarés, by Michaël Levinas, is a trio in two movements, specially composed for this concert thanks to the patronage of the Fondation Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière, which wished to show its support by commissioning an original work. It consists of melodic lines written in polyphonic twists and unstable harmonic grids crossed and shaken by inner paths. The trio's writing and musical forms traverse the temporality of altered and disoriented scales: lost paths.

Concert for Seats N° 7 and 8

Programme: Olivier Messiaen - *Quatuor pour la fin du temps - Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus;* Marius Constant - *Die Trennung, Quartettsatz pour quatuor à cordes;* Charles Trenet - Improvised evocation of songs; Jacques Taddei - *Symphonie improvisée* (1st movement) *for trio with a piano* (arrangement by Philippe Hattat); Charles Chaynes, *Comme un raga pour violon seul;* Thierry Escaich, *Lettres mêlées pour violon, violoncelle et piano;* and Régis Campo, *Zoo Circus* (world premiere).
These pieces were performed by the Ars Nova Ensemble conducted by Régis Campo with Pierre-Simon Chevry (flute), Éric Lamberger (clarinet), Isabelle Cornélis (percussion), Michel Maurer (piano), Yoko Yamada (toy piano), Ambre Vuillermoz (accordion), Marie Charvet (violin), Catherine Jacquet (violin), Odile Auboin (viola), Isabelle Veyrier (cello), Tanguy Menez (double bass), and by the Trio Messiaen.
Zoo Circus for ensemble (2021-2022) is a suite of 11 movements for an ensemble, proposed by the pianist Bertrand Chamayou and commissioned by Warner Classics. The work, a playful illustration of several animals, pays tribute to great composers of the past. This world premiere was dedicated to the composer Vladimir Cosma.

Above: on the stage of the André and Liliane Bettencourt Auditorium, the composers Michaël Levinas (18 May), and Régis Campo and Thierry Escaich (12 October) paid tribute to their predecessors.

From left to right: soprano Marianne Croux, Michaël Levinas and the ensemble L'Itinéraire conducted by Antonin Rey, Thierry Escaich in an evocation of Charles Trenet, Régis Campo conducting the Ars Nova Ensemble in a performance of the *Zoo Circus* suite.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.

Palais de l'Institut de France

The five Académies' opening session

Every autumn, the five Académies that make up the Institut de France meet under the Cupola for their formal session at the beginning of the new academic year. This event is an opportunity for the Institut to reaffirm its values and its role in furthering and disseminating knowledge.

On this occasion, delegates from all five Académies give a speech on a theme chosen together, as seen through the prism of their speciality. On 25 October 2022, the session was chaired by President of the Institut de France and Permanent Secretary of the Académie française, Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, and the theme was "Writing".

The programme included talks on the following topics: "Diplomatic writing" by the delegate of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, Jean-David Levitte; "The geometry of the alphabet's letters" by the delegate of the Académie des Sciences, Étienne Ghys; "From writing to the Scripture: Alexandria, between classical and biblical culture" by the delegate of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Carlos Lévy; and "Writings against the disarray of our times" by the delegate of the Académie Française, Maurizio Serra.
The Académie des Beaux-Arts was represented by member of the Music Composition Section Michaël Levinas, who delivered a talk titled "The amnesia of signs", of which the following is an excerpt:

"My experience with writing predates my activity as a musician. The work of my father, the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, set the feverish pace at which I have lived from childhood. Being around him, I would hear the sound of his pencil on paper for days on end, expressing the almost mineral violence of a sculptor grappling with matter. I understood from a very young age that this quasi-obsessive rhythm was that of thought itself. To think was to write. There was no doubt that for my father, writing, with all the phases of its elaboration – the sketches, pentimenti, accidents and discoveries – gave birth to thought. This was the founding act of my relationship to composition, improvization and interpretation. I will never forget my father's look when I was young, as he came to inspect my composition sheets, which would often feature nothing more than a single sign on the score. I would then hear an imperious voice exhorting me to: "write!" So I associated the idea of writing with that of the sign, the letter, and the act of deciphering […].
I belong to a generation that has always felt the need for a struggle between the quest for a yet unheard soundscape and its formalization in writing. I am still a fighter in this struggle. In many of my compositions, timbre aspires to become music by characterizing itself as an instrument. As a performer myself, my experience of musical writing leads me to say that the sign must also hold a place for the performer's gesture.

Top left: Michaël Levinas, member of the Music Composition Section, during his presentation. At the podium: Chancellor of the Institut de France, Xavier Darcos; Permanent Secretary of the Académie Française and 2022 President of the Institut, Hélène Carrère d'Encausse; and Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Nicolas Grimal.
Top: delegate of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Carlos Lévy; delegate of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, Jean-David Levitte; Hélène Carrère d'Encausse; delegate of the Académie des Sciences, Étienne Ghys; delegate of the Académie Française, Maurizio Serra; and delegates of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Michaël Levinas, Xavier Darcos, and Nicolas Grimal.
Centre: under the cupola of the Palais de l'Institut de France.
Photo credit H&K – Victor Point.

Palais de l'Institut de France

Les Rencontres de l'Académie III et IV

On the occasion of her year as President of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 2022, Astrid de la Forest has wished to initiate a series of roundtables with personalities from the world of art and culture. These regularly scheduled functions are intended to offer a space for debate that is open to a broad audience.

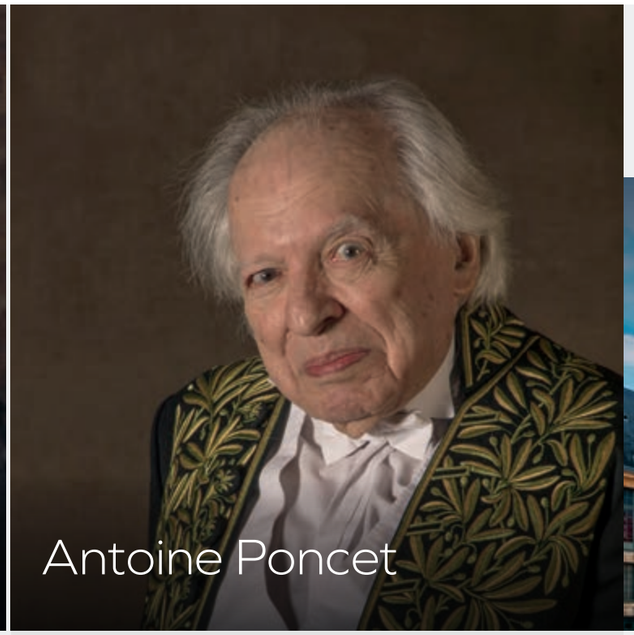
"Architecture, climate and landscapes: the climate is changing… how can we change our cities?" was the theme of the roundtable discussion held under the cupola of the Palais de l'Institut de France on 22 June.
Climate risk prevention is essential and requires profound changes in the way our urban landscapes are built and developed. More than ever, we need to think, to invent methods for action between dreams and pragmatism. In a clear-sighted yet not catastrophist debate, a few solutions were considered that could shape our future world.
The debate, moderated by architect, urban planner, journalist, writer, and correspondent of the Académie des Beaux-Arts **Philippe Trétiack,** brought together architect, urban planner and Académie des Beaux-Arts member **Anne Démians**, architect and urban planner **Éric Daniel-Lacombe**, landscape architect **Bas Smets**, and geographer **Magali Reghezza-Zitt**.

Above: On 23 November, the Cupola of the Palais de l'Institut de France hosted the fourth Rencontres de l'Académie, "Beyond the constraints of photojournalism: can it still bear witness?". Here, Dimitri Beck and Sebastião Salgado surrounded with fellow participants and audience members.

Centre: on 22 June, during the round table "Architecture, climate and landscape: the climate is changing… how can we change our cities?", Bas Smet, Anne Démians, and 2022 President of the Académie, Astrid de la Forest, who initiated this series of roundtables. At her side, architect and Académie des Beaux-Arts member Marc Barani.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel.

On Wednesday 23 November, under the Institut de France's Cupola, the fourth roundtable examined the question: **"Beyond the constraints of photojournalism: can it still bear witness?"**
"Journalists today are like disaster tourists going from one hot place to the next. It has never been my intention to be such a photographer. I think it is better to build a full body of work which demonstrates the longevity of a working photojournalist, today and yesterday". Stanley Greene.
Dimitri Beck, director of photography at *Polka* magazine, gallery and Factory, moderated the debate in the presence of photographer and film director **Raymond Depardon** (by videoconference), photojournalist **Benedicte Kurzen** (by videoconference), 2020 Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière – Académie des Beaux-Arts Photography Prize winner **Pascal Maitre**, and photographer and Académie des Beaux-Arts member **Sebastião Salgado**. Their rich discussions covered the evolution of the discipline and profession of photojournalism, which is at once a witness of history, a memory of time, and a whistle blower. The difficulties photojournalists encounter in their profession were also explained.



Michel David-Weill died on 16 June 2022 in New York. He was elected in 1982 in the Free Members Section to the seat previously held by Bernard Gavoty. Photo credit: Brigitte Eymann.

Michel David-Weill, born on 23 November 1932 in Paris, was heir to a line of high financiers. His father Pierre David-Weill, to whom he succeeded as CEO of the Lazard bank from 1975 to 2001, had preceded him in the Free Members Section. A man of culture, he was passionate about art, in keeping with a tradition that had started with his grandfather David and had been upheld by his father Pierre. Their three names have been given to a room in the department of objets d'art at the Louvre Museum, where some of the furniture of Mesdames à Bellevue is kept. While he was discreet about his donations, they bear witness to his taste, knowledge, and strong belief that "beauty is necessary". His name is forever linked to some of the masterpieces that enrich a museum whose mission is to teach and share the beauties of art. The Louvre owes some of its prestigious acquisitions to his generosity, including, among other masterpieces, Fragonard's *White Bull*, Goya's *Portrait of the Marchioness of Santa Cruz*, works from the Middle Ages, which he was entirely focused on, along with French classicism, from Poussin to Ingres. He had recently participated in the acquisition of the Master of the Osservanza's *Dream of Saint Joseph* for the Louvre. It is therefore no surprise that Michel David-Weill chaired the Arts Council of the Réunion des Musées Nationaux from 1988 onwards, and was President of the Conseil Supérieur du Mécénat Culturel from 1984 to 1989, a member of the board of the Société des Amis du Louvre, of the board of directors of the Cité des Arts, and of the Morgan Library and the Metropolitan Museum Council in New York. He carried his father Pierre's commitment forward by actively supporting the Drawing Prize he had created in 1971. He was a passionate humanist, and the regularity with which he lent works for exhibitions at the Louvre and other museums testifies to his generosity. L.H.

Antoine Poncet died on 13 August 2022 in Châtillon. He had been elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts' Sculpture Section in 1993 in the seat previously held by Louis Leygue, and was the Académie's President in 2009. Photo credit: Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

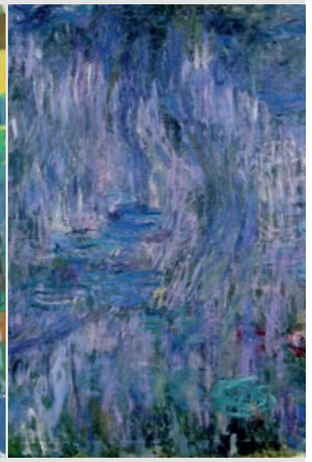
Antoine Poncet was born in 1928 in Paris, into a family of artists. His grandfather on his mother's side was the painter Maurice Denis, a member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, and his father Marcel Poncet introduced him to stained glass and mosaics. His family settled in Switzerland, and he discovered sculpture in Germaine Richier's studio in Zurich. Returning to France in 1947, he moved into Bourdelle's studio. He later continued his training in Zadkine's studio at the Grande Chaumière, frequented Brancusi, and became Jean Arp's assistant and practitioner until 1955.
Antoine Poncet represented Switzerland at the 1956 Venice Biennale. He was drawn towards abstraction and discovered poetic power in a dialogue with matter, especially marble, which he worked on in Pietrasanta and Carrara for over twenty-five years. He held his first solo exhibition in 1959 at Iris Clert's gallery, and was then part of the Nathan Cummings collection's 1969 exhibition at the Palais Galliera in Paris. The renowned collector gave him a footing in the American market by exhibiting his works in New York between 1973 and 1980. Wishing for his work to be part of the urban space, Antoine Poncet took public commissions. He also won the Henry Moore Prize in 1983 and was President of the Salon de Mai from 1998 to 2001.
A retrospective exhibition was organized by the Fondation Coubertin in Saint-Rémy-les-Chevreuse in 2009. His sculptures can be seen in France, China, Japan and in Switzerland at his colleague Leonard Gianadda's residence in Martigny, where one of his latest works was recently installed. L.H.

Composing an opera today

Until 13 February 2023, as part of the "Conférences de l'Institut" held in the Liliane et André Bettencourt Auditorium, the Académie des Beaux-Arts is presenting a series of lectures devoted to opera composition and the place of lyrical works in the contemporary musical landscape.
In these one-hour lectures, eight composers, five of whom are members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, detail their various experiences. The lectures are interspersed with video excerpts and followed by an exchange with the audience.

After **Laurent Petitgirard** (3 October), **Thierry Escaich** (17 October), and **Philippe Hersant** (7 November), the following speakers are invited: **Régis Campo**, on Monday 28 November at 4 pm; **Michaël Levinas**, on Monday 12 December at 4 pm; **Bruno Mantovani**, on Monday 16 January at 4 pm; **Kajia Saariaho**, on Monday 30 January at 4 pm; and **Pascal Dusapin**, on Monday 13 February at 4 pm. Photo credit: iStock.

Free admission, reservations:
www.institutdefrance.fr/actualites-agenda/#conferences



« Monet - Mitchell »
Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris

The "Monet - Mitchell" exhibition, organized in the framework of a scientific partnership with the Musée Marmottan Monet, presents an original dialogue between the works of two extraordinary artists who influenced not only on their era but also generations of painters: Claude Monet (1840-1926) and Joan Mitchell (1925-1992).

The "Monet - Mitchell" exhibition shows the two artists' singular perceptions of a same composite landscape, which they often expressed in particularly immersive formats. His last work, painted in the *Water Lilies* period, Monet rendered motifs he had observed at length around the water lilies at Giverny. Joan Mitchell, in La Tour's studio in Vétheuil, explored the transposition, through the filter of memory, of "feelings", perceptions that remain vivid beyond space and time.
Through some sixty emblematic works by both artists, the exhibition offers visitors an enchanting and sensitive journey, with remarkable visual and thematic correspondences at every turn.

General curator of the exhibition: Suzanne Pagé, Artistic Director of the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris
Associate curators: Marianne Mathieu, scientific director of the Musée Marmottan Monet, and Angeline Scherf, curator at the Fondation Louis Vuitton

Until 27 February 2023
Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris

Top: Joan Mitchell (1925-1992), *No Room at the End* (detail), 1977. The Estate of Joan Mitchell. Photo credit: Primae / David Bordes.
Claude Monet (1840-1926), *Water Lilies, Reflections of Weeping Willows* (detail), 1916-1919. Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris.

Page 1 and opposite: M.C. Escher (1898-1972), *Möbius strip II* (red ants), 1963, woodcut, 45.3 x 20.5 cm. Boston Public Library, John D. Merriam Collection.

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