

les
NUITS CORTICALES
LORIS GRÉAUD

Oct. 4th 2023—Jan. 14th 2024

Press visit: Oct. 2nd, 2023, from 5pm.

curator: *Juliette Singer.*

PETIT PALAIS, MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE LA VILLE DE PARIS
Avenue Winston-Churchill, 75008 Paris.

PARTNERS:

Prof. Michel André — BarcelonaTech (UPC), Dr Audrey Dussutour — CNRS.

BENEFACTORS — *With the support of:*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD:	4
<i>Les Nuits Corticales</i>	4
<i>A word from Annick Lemoine, director</i>	7
<i>Three questions for Juliette Singer, curator</i>	9
 WORKS:	 11
<i>Annonce</i>	11
<i>Prima Belladonna</i>	15
<i>Trajectories</i>	17
<i>Cortical</i>	19
<i>La Machine Molle</i>	22
<i>I—I Tacet</i>	24
<i>Nova Express</i>	30
<i>XX—XX</i>	33
<i>Physarium</i>	35
<i>Moratorium</i>	45
<i>Les Nuits Corticales — Cortical Nights</i>	46
 THE ARTIST:	 48
<i>Loris Gréaud</i>	48
 THE CURATOR:	 49
<i>Juliette Singer</i>	49
 OUR PARTNERS:	 50
<i>Benefactors, contributors and media partners</i>	50
 PRESS CONTACTS:	 51
<i>National and International</i>	51

FOREWORD

Les Nuits Corticales is an exhibition that has been specifically designed for the Petit Palais, the City of Paris' Museum of Fine Arts, its collections and its uniqueness. Each of the works has been imagined and conceived in resonance, in confrontation, in spite of or in contrast to the others.

The artist, the curator, the museum, its director, its teams, its functioning, its reflexes and constraints, the researchers-scientists-producers-craftsmen and the systems at work, all embraced this evolving way of thinking and formed a cohesive whole for more than 15 months, setting out to explore the possibilities of a narrative on the scale of reality.

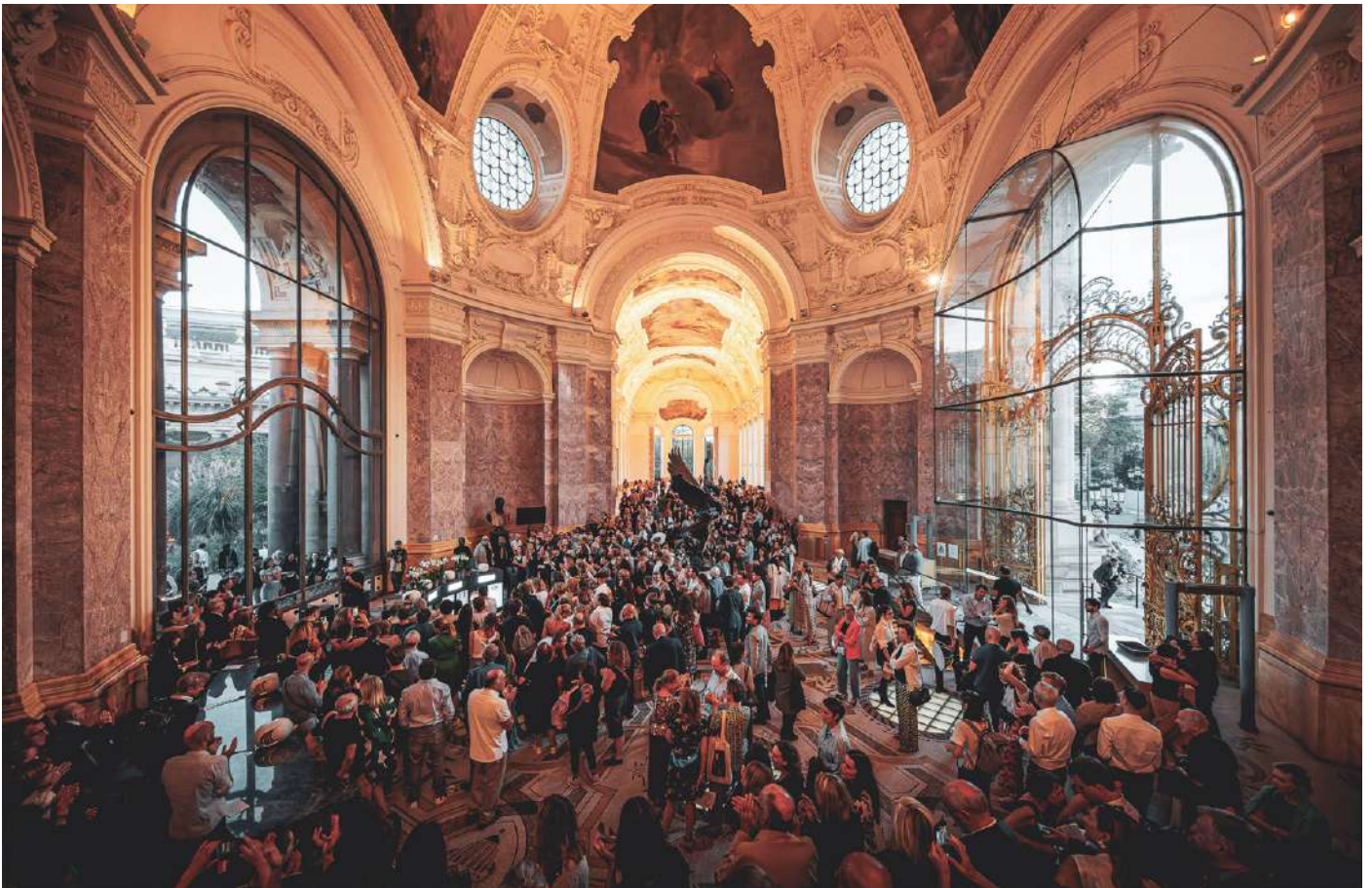
Les Nuits Corticales is a succession of situations and meetings, an oscillating mechanism, always on the margins, a continuous periphery.

It is the attempt to create an interdependent whole in which man, creature, organ, mechanism, machine, their environment, its productions, its structures, are indissociable and act as an extension of each other to form a single surface.

Immaterial, disquieting and sometimes imperceptible, the exhibition infiltrates the building: paradoxically, it is both omnipresent and elusive. It haunts the museum like a phantom ship, moving and evading, acting at certain times of the day and night in accordance with its internal clock.

Although it feels unreal, none of what is recounted here is fiction: everything is true, everything happens. *Les Nuits Corticales* is a choral exhibition without address. It manifests itself as a rumour, a mirage that comes true.

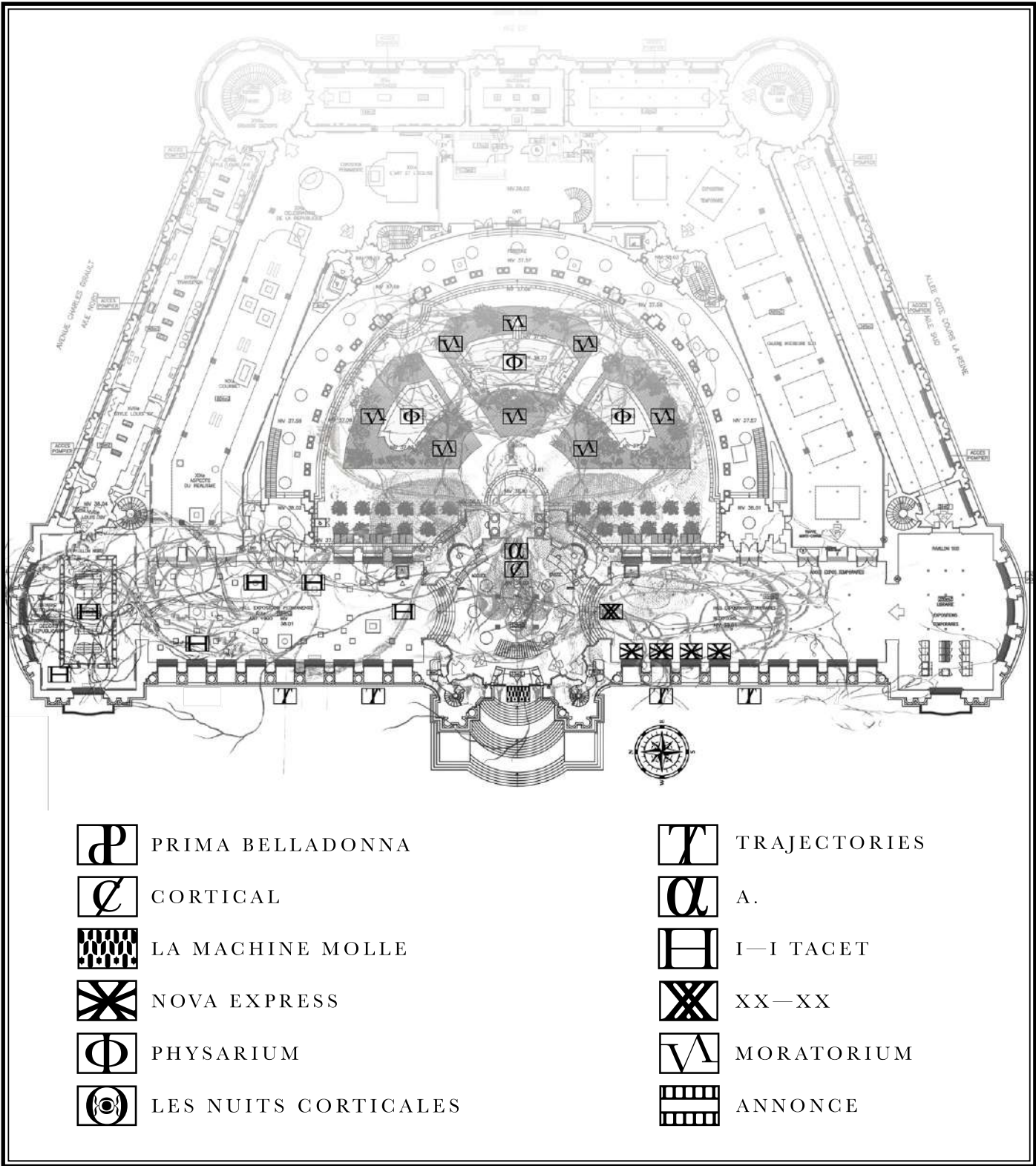
By nature and necessity, *Les Nuits Corticales* is a free, open exhibition, accessible to all.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
Photo Credits: SFX Designer — Geoh.Photo.

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Avenue Winston-Churchill, 75008 Paris.



A WORD FROM ANNICK LEMOINE,
Director.

Every autumn since 2013, the Petit Palais has been opening its doors to the contemporary art scene. This year we have invited Loris Gréaud (born in 1979), an internationally acclaimed artist whose exhibitions are nevertheless few and far between. His presence at the Petit Palais is an event in itself. By presenting his *Nuits Corticales* in the heart of the collections, in the garden and in our galleries, he has enchanted the museum.

The Petit Palais is at the centre of the artistic installation: from its façade, which comes alive at night to the rhythm of a luminous work to be viewed “with eyes closed,” to its inner garden, which the artist connects to the whole world. A magical installation made up of tiny living creatures, *physarum polycephalum*, nicknamed blobs, introduces mysterious life into the heart of the garden. Its colours and contours are constantly reinvented. This garden in metamorphosis resonates with distant infinity, from the depths of the Sea of Japan to the ice floes of the Arctic, *here and now*. With Loris Gréaud, the Petit Palais becomes the “sounding board of our world.”

As an architecture enthusiast, the artist has worked with the building, designed for the 1900 exhibition by Charles Girault, to install “made-to-measure” works. He has entered into an original dialogue with the collections, combining the plasterwork of the sculpture gallery with mysterious “musical angels.” Appealing to all the senses – including the sense of smell, with an olfactory work based on the molecules that are thought to form the basis of the universe – he pushes the boundaries of the museum towards infinite fields and invites us on an enigmatic journey between poetry and dreams.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
Photo Credits: (1) SFX Designer — Geoh.Photo ; (2) Realism Noir.

THREE QUESTIONS FOR JULIETTE SINGER, *Curator.*

1. What place does “Les Nuits Corticales” occupy in Loris Gréaud’s body of work?

Loris Gréaud invests himself entirely and with great care in each of his projects, which he sees as both unique and part of a lifetime’s work, considered from the perspective of a trajectory. *Les Nuits Corticales* is therefore a completely original project, in which the space of the Petit Palais becomes one with the artist’s mental space, as he so aptly suggested when he superimposed a skull on the map of his exhibition at the museum; but the project also revisits some of his leitmotifs – or “obsessions,” to use a term he is fond of.

The mastery of time, already symbolised in *[I]* at the Centre Pompidou in 2011 by means of a human metronome, returns here in the form of a sequencing work: *Cortical*, which enables all the components of the exhibition to be activated according to the hours of the day and night, like clockwork. A pangolin *[XX-XX]* moves in slow motion, bad weather *[Physarium]* is triggered according to the rhythms best suited to the growth of the blobs in the garden, the sounds of the world *[Moratorium]* are activated according to defined cycles, the smell of the molecules at the heart of our galaxy *[Nova Express]* is diffused at regular intervals, angel-instruments *[I—I Tacet]* are played at different intervals during the day and evening; finally, at night, the Petit Palais bursts into flames with *La Machine Molle*.

Of course, this meticulous rhythm also includes a musical dimension, with the inaugural orchid concert *[Prima Belladonna]* setting the tone. The exhibition includes silences, noise, real sounds captured in the universe, and melodious variations produced by “euphones” built into the sculptures, with angelic accents. As a counterpoint to the inaugural concert, the sound performance by the legendary band The Residents will mark the high point of the exhibition, marking its closure and perpetuating its existence in a new form: that of air that is destined to spread and propagate, thereby preventing it from dying out completely.

Loris Gréaud’s work is also characterised by the blurring of boundaries between fiction and reality, the process of immersing visitors in a total experience in which they appear to be projected into a film, whilst simultaneously being brought as close to reality as possible. This dimension takes on a very special form in the garden, where the blob farm owes its survival to special effects borrowed from cinematographic techniques; and where sounds from all over the world, transmitted to the Petit Palais, offer the visitor the attainment of an impossible ubiquity.

2. *What is the key issue of this project in Paris, 10 years after [I] at the Louvre and the Centre Pompidou?*

Aside from the ever-fascinating issues that arise from the confrontation between a living artist and the Petit Palais, a magnificent venue that also has its constraints (with its decorations, its particular architecture and its collections), the main issue of this project seems to me to lie in its eminently relevant anchoring in our post-Covid world. The arrival of the pandemic plunged the world into a very particular dimension: its rhythm was altered in unison – with reduced time outside, limited travel distances, eliminated flight paths –, its future was plunged into the unknown, fiction seemed to have been definitively surpassed by reality.

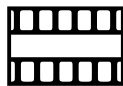
The research that Loris Gréaud has been carrying out for years with Dr Audrey Dussutour on the *physarum polycephalum* (also known as the blob), which has now culminated in the presentation of a living sculpture in the museum garden – the implementation of a truly complex breeding process, also constituting a technical and artistic feat – bears witness to an astonishing acuity. Similarly, his work with Professor Michel André, devoted to capturing sounds to show the impact of human activity on the planet, has a remarkable resonance nowadays, when environmental issues are more topical than ever.

Loris Gréaud's personal experience of a rich and intense presence in the world has produced a body of work that seems to illuminate this world of ours like no other. He shares with us his wonder at its beauty and poetry, whilst leaving room for the sacred mystery of existence, placing human beings between the infinitesimal and the infinite space of the cosmos.

3. *How would you describe your collaboration with Loris Gréaud on this project, which seems to defy description?*

Trajectories – such is the name of the group of flags that Loris Gréaud has placed on the façade of the Petit Palais. Black and white, and combined with the skull and crossbones that he has drawn out of the layout of the museum, these flags could be likened to the flags of a pirate ship, or more accurately, to those of a ghost ship inhabited by spectres. The flags have been stained with the motor oil used during the artist's trip to Monte Verità, the site of all the utopias of the early twentieth century, and of a return to nature.

My collaboration with Loris Gréaud on this fascinating project, which was built up over time and constantly enriched – since the *modus operandi* was an integral part of the creative process – has been exactly that: a journey to unknown lands, interspersed with unexpected stops. Such is the strength, and the generosity, of great artists: to take us so far away, to uncharted lands.



ANNONCE

(2023) Film — #GR-2023-281

NC: 00:07:24:00

Interior — MK2 cinemas — Rendez-vous

Filmed with the exceptional participation of Charlotte Rampling. Editing: Chuck Production - Damien Oliveres, Mix and sound editing: Thomas Bonneau.

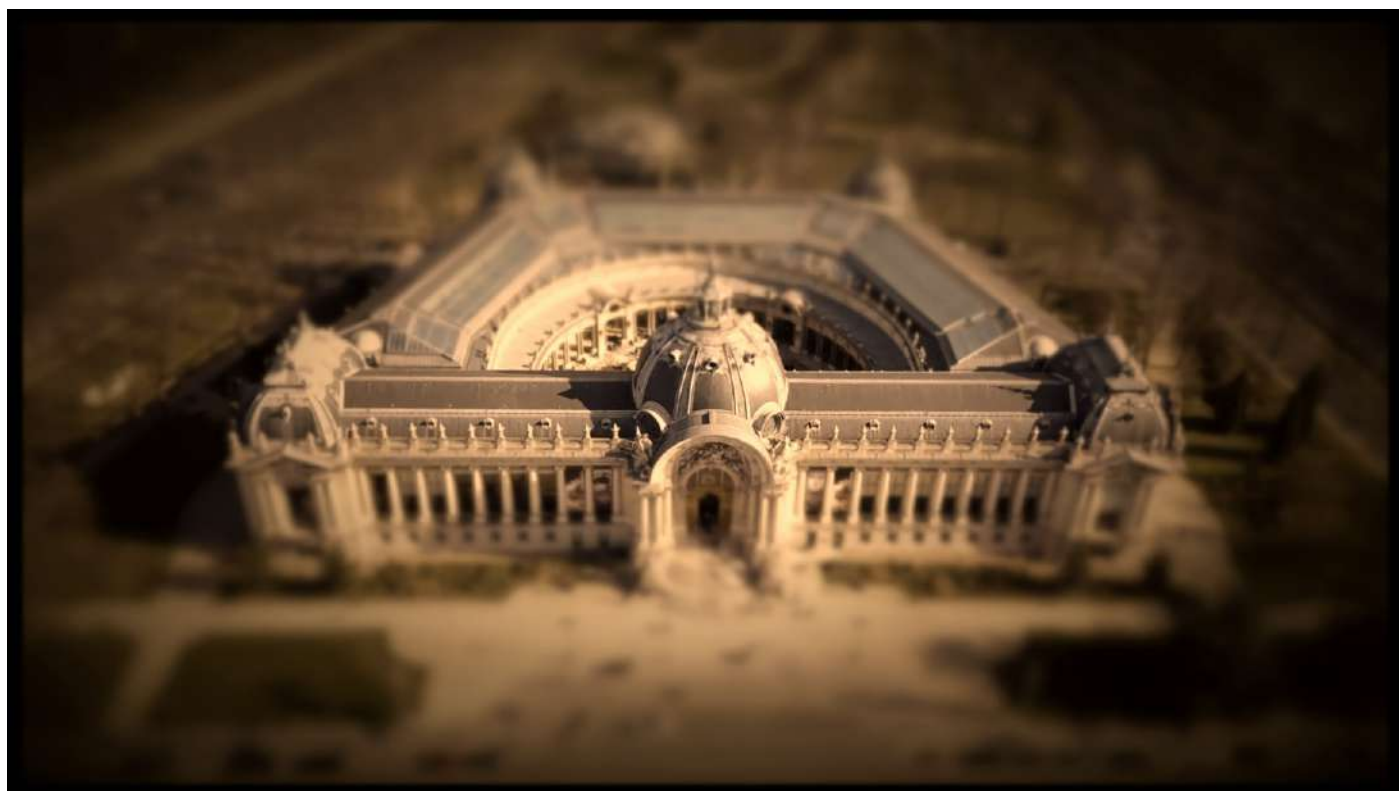
Running time: 30 sec.

The iconic actress and artist Charlotte Rampling is at the centre of Loris Gréaud's film work¹. In partnership with MK2, the two associates have created a cinematic oddity that millions of visitors to the franchise's cinemas will be able to experience.

In this very short 30-second opus, the legendary actress becomes the sleepwalking performer of the *Nuits Corticales* trailer. She delivers the information, draws viewers' attention to the fact that it's free, and invites them on an enigmatic journey to the Petit Palais, the City of Paris' Museum of Fine Arts.

In reality, *Annonce* is a subliminal message, using images and the inversion of sound frequencies to communicate through the unconscious. It is a work in a class of its own, a sudden emergence of the surprise exhibition, a telepathic opening credit sequence that makes use of the off-screen and is part of the continuum proposed by the artist with *Les Nuits Corticales*.

1. *The Snorks: a concert for creatures* (2012) et *Sculpt* (2016).









PRIMA BELLADONNA
(2023) Sound Performance — #GR-2023-270

NC: 00:01:01:00

Interior — Auditorium — Rendez-vous

October 3rd, 2023 at 6 pm.

White phalaenopsis flowerbed, modified analogue synthesiser equipped with 5 DC 2.1 oscillators, 9V+, Mono Audio output, pre-amplified loudspeaker and subwoofer, video projection, edible orchids and projected film.

Duration : variable.

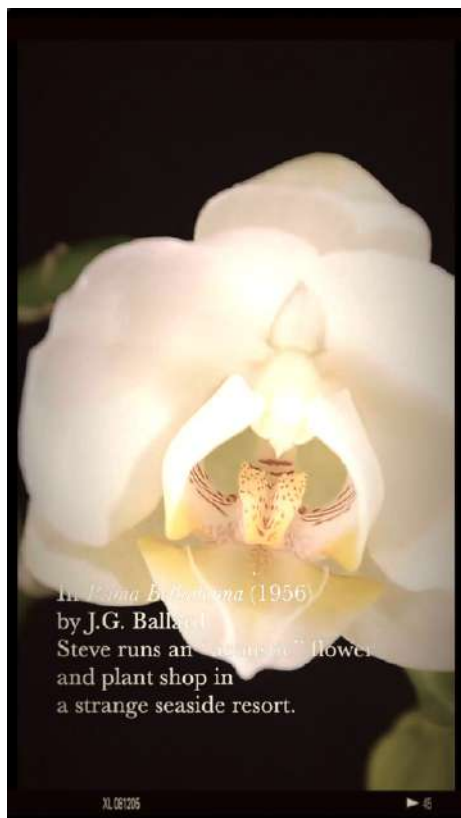
In *Prima Belladonna*¹ (1956), Steve runs an “acoustic” flower and plant shop in a strange seaside resort. Every day he tunes them, checking their pitch and frequency. In this flowerbed is a particular species of orchid: the Khan-Arachnid - the “starter,” the tuning fork. Without it, it is impossible for the others to awaken and sound in harmony. A delicate and potentially destructive role, but the inescapable precursor to each day that passes in this story.

As a preamble to the exhibition *Les Nuits Corticales*, Loris Gréaud will attempt to tune a choir of orchids, literally extracted from the fiction of J.G. Ballard.

Using modified analogue equipment and sensors attached to their stems and petals, Loris Gréaud will raise the sound frequency of each flower in real time, adjusting their timbres, balancing them and bringing them into resonance to create a singular harmony: the subtle yet terrible song of the Khan-Arachnid.

This unique concert will serve as an organic and surreal prelude to the given score, that of *Nuits Corticales* and its proper pitch.

1. *Prima Belladonna* is a short story written by J.G. Ballard in 1956. It is the first story by the masterful author who prophesied all the distortions of the contemporary world.





TRAJECTORIES

(2023) Installation — #GR-2023-271

NC: 00:07:24:00

*Interior and Exterior — South and North Facades and Galleries — Permanent
from Monday to Sunday, at all hours of the day and night*

Installation consisting of 12 flags made from recycled fabric, printed with the motor oil used during a 1728 km round trip between Loris Gréaud's studio in Eaubonne (95) and Monte Verità in Switzerland. Aluminium poles, white powder-coating.

Dimensions : 90 x 150 cm flags, 200 cm flagpole.

Monte Verità (literally “the mountain of truth”), founded in 1900, is a hill above Ascona (Switzerland) where young intellectuals (anarchists, socialists, artists, writers, dancers) gathered as Europe was being drawn into war. Here they tried to invent alternative ways of life, for a peaceful future, in reconnection with the natural world, detached from the acceleration produced by industrialisation.

Monte Verità has become a major venue for discussions, concerts and performances – a curiosity that attracts attention from all over Europe and beyond. Hermann Hesse, Carl Jung, Isadora Duncan, Paul Klee and many other great minds met there, planning and developing the idea of a village with a universal dimension. Harald Szeeman, for his part, attempted to demonstrate that the region possessed a particular tellurism and magnetism.

By 1920, debts were piling up and the founders were caught up by the reality of an increasingly global society. What appeared to be a heterotopia came to an end.

Almost 100 years later, equipped with a customised 4x4 Jeep, the potential icon of an ultra-industrialised society, Loris Gréaud made the 1728 km round trip from his studio to Monte Verità. Before the journey, he changed the vehicle's oil – virgin oil, the “blood” of the engine. On his return, he extracted the motor oil, now loaded with the grease and grime of the engine, coloured by the mechanics and its journey.

The oil was then used to produce banners made of recycled materials, whose dynamic canvas sways and undulates as the wind blows along the façade of the Petit Palais. Visible from the Avenue Winston-Churchill, in the heart of Paris, the modern city par excellence, the flags are in perpetual motion, accelerated by the venturi effect created by the architecture of the building. They can also be seen inside, from the North and South galleries, in front of the mirror. Here they resonate with the rest of the exhibition, offering a sign of the plurality of possible points of view on the same story.

A dystopian ellipse, an observation tinged with the stigma of a bygone world, in the age of the Anthropocene. A space-time journey in which the trajectories so dear to the artist's heart are infinitely more important than the eventual destination, displayed in 12 irresolutely floating pavilions.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
Photo Credits: Realism Noir.



CORTICAL

(2023) Sequencing Sculpture — #GR-2023-272

NC: 00:06:08:00

*Interior — Reception rotunda — Permanent
from Tuesday to Sunday, between 10am and 6pm.*

Modular furniture in raw black steel sheet, epoxy varnish, glass trays, dividers, 8 Samsung The Frame QLED 32" screens, Mini HD media player 1080p, 4 Sunblast IP65 3500MAX strobes, 6300K, 1850 W, 250000 Lumens, DMX controller, programmed sequence, 4 IVYX Scientific 5L incubators, 15 and 20 cm PVC petri dishes, tweezers, agar agar, doser, oatmeal.

Dimensions : (h) 110 x (l) 360 x (prof.) 70 cm.

A sequencer is an automaton that generates the command signals needed to actuate, control or analyse the units involved in executing a given instruction. In the context of the Petit Palais, the City of Paris' Museum of Fine Arts, the sequencer for the *Nuits Corticales* exhibition takes the form of an island made up of custom-built modules to match the circular shape of the reception rotunda and fit into the alignment and format of the existing counters.

Cortical is capable of receiving, transmitting, analysing, monitoring and delivering information, as well as making appointments for visitors to the exhibition. Its structure includes incubators for priming *physarum polycephalum* sclerotia; video screens presenting data about the works and their functioning; a docking station for the frequencies of the world, their spectres and their geographical location; a video-surveillance system for the works active in the museum, the fluid levels in the installations, the mechanics and distance of progress of the work *XX—XX*; the operator of the artificially re-created climate for the growth of the blob in the garden; a recording system to keep track of the acoustic performance of the work *I—I Tacet*; a refrigerated box preserving samples of ethyl formate – the essence of the Milky Way.

Cortical can only be activated by the presence of its agent *A'* which, thanks to a subcutaneous implant, can unlock the island and activate its daytime operation. At night, *Cortical* goes into idle mode² and is transformed into a self-stabilising work of art. Whilst the museum, its systems and its works are dormant, the exhibition continues to broadcast and expand³. *Cortical*, its agent *A*. and the exhibition *Les Nuits Corticales* form an interdependent whole. Without a sequencer and/or an agent, the course of the exhibition is suspended.

1. As an integral part of the exhibition, agent *A*. was trained by the artist and the technical and scientific teams. She is a constituent agent of the exhibition, responding to and interacting with visitors, overseeing the sequencing of the exhibition, perpetuating, cultivating and regenerating the *physarum polycephalum* (blobs) farm, ensuring climate control in the garden and making the transmission of sound signals operational. As a body-scientist-machine, agent *A*. activates *Cortical* every day thanks to an RFID microchip implanted under the skin of the hand. Agent *A*. is fundamental. Without her, the exhibition is dormant. Her physiological and mental state of health is scrupulously monitored by a general practitioner, a nutritionist, a psychiatrist and a psychotherapist. If agent *A*. were unwell, the exposure would be just as unwell. Her prolonged absence would inevitably lead to the degeneration of the exhibition, and in the space of a few days all that would be left of it would be an idle ruin.

2. A video game character enters "idle mode" when he or she takes no action and waits for instructions.

3. See *La Machine Molle*.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
Photo Credits: Realism Noir.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
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LA MACHINE MOLLE

(2023) Kinetic work — #GR-2023-274

NC: 00:07:01:00

*Exterior — Main gate Appointments
from Monday to Sunday, between 11pm and 12am.*

Modular furniture in raw black steel sheet, epoxy varnish, glass trays, dividers, 4 IP65 Sunblast 3500 MAX strobes, 6300K, 1850 W, 250000 Lumens, DMX controller, programmed sequence.
Dimensions : (h) 110 x (l) 360 x (prof.) 70 cm

The *Dreamachine* was designed in 1960 by one of the leading figures of the Beat Generation, Brion Gysin, in close collaboration with William S. Burroughs and with the help of the mathematician Ian Sommerville. This device, developed in the wake of the anti-literary processes of cut-ups and permutations, consists of a cylinder made of thick paper, perforated with regular patterns, at the centre of which is a light bulb that turns on itself at a speed of 78 revolutions per minute. The rotation of the cylinder produces a phenomenon of persistence of vision when the light hits the closed eyelid, known as “phosphene.” This produces complex colour patterns of increasing brightness, swirling shapes and symbols, iridescent vortexes, floating sensations and hypnotic hallucinations: veritable waking dreams that can very quickly overwhelm the dreamer, who simply has to open his or her eyes to put an end to the dizziness.

The *Dreamachine* is the first work to be viewed with eyes closed. Like binaural beats (the brain’s ability to create a frequency by sending out two different frequencies) and their propensity to induce a modified state of consciousness – in this case a hypnagogic state – the light frequencies emitted by the *Dreamachine* oscillate between 8 and 13 Hz¹; they stimulate the optic nerve and modify the electrical impulses of the brain.

In the context of *Les Nuits Corticales*, and specifically in keeping with the cylindrical architecture of the Petit Palais rotunda and its ornamental portal designed by Charles Girault, Loris Gréaud has broken down the light spectrum and frequencies obtained when the Dreamachine is activated, in order to reproduce them on the scale of the museum. At night, when the museum is closed to the public, Cortical goes into idle mode² – in reality, a dynamic standby – and mutates into a *Machine Molle*³.

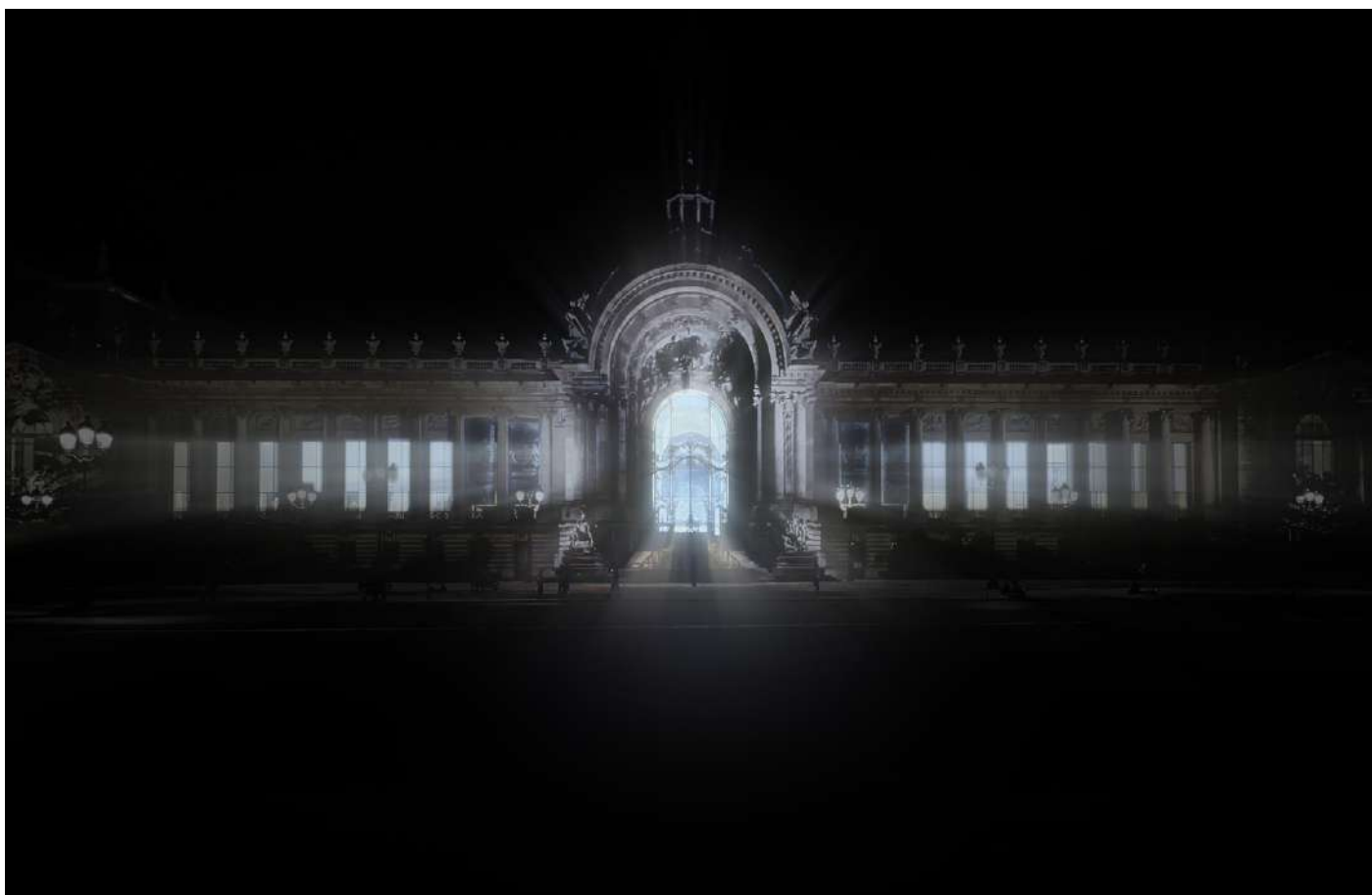
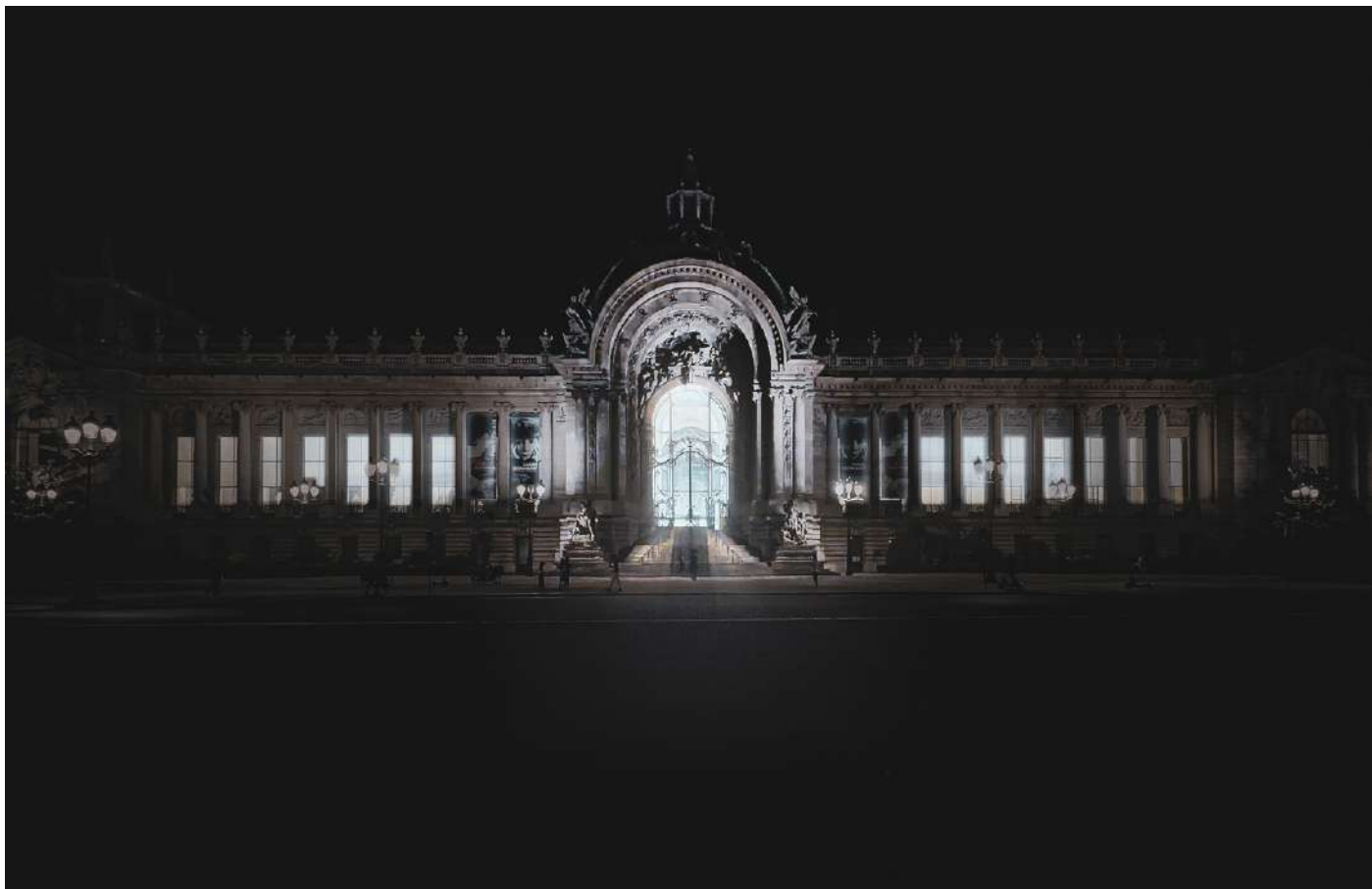
The 4 modified spotlights installed on the front of the modular furniture are switched on in sequences and controlled by extremely precise DMX engineering. The rotunda of the Petit Palais bursts into flames, transformed into a monumental *Dreamachine*. From the Avenue Winston-Churchill, now plunged into darkness by *Cortical*, visitors can climb the steps to the museum entrance to be exposed to the hallucinogenic frequencies. Whilst the galleries of the Petit Palais are deserted, the exhibition continues to broadcast.

Like an undercover agent, *Les Nuits Corticales* will make its finest appearance in the craniums of its viewers.

1. Frequencies between 8 and 13 Hz pose no risk to people with epileptic disorders.

2. A video game character enters “idle mode” when he or she takes no action and waits for instructions.

3. “*The Soft Machine*” is the title of a novel by William S. Burroughs published in 1961. In the novel, the soft machine is the name given to the human body, which, according to Burroughs, has been invaded by control mechanisms.





I—I T A C E T

(2023) Sculptures — #GR-2023-0268 (01 à 04).

*NC: 00:06:08:00**Interior — North Gallery — Permanent**Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm - Special appointments every day at 5.30pm.*

Reproduction mould made of silicone, plaster, fibreglass, fir wood props, stainless steel bolts and threaded rods (A4), crystal epoxy resin, sauerkraut, white siloxane paint. “Euphone,” friction musical instrument made up of 8 tubular aluminium sections, a flat steel base, white epoxy paint, stainless steel rods, steel bolts. Raw black steel mounting, transparent epoxy matte varnish, chemical seal.

Dimensions : 223 x 90 x 91 cm, 223 x 90 x 91 cm, 223 x 114 x 90 cm, 220 x 80 x 91 cm, 223 x 90 x 140, 223 x 90 x 140 cm.

I—I Tacet' is a series of unique sculptures made from the reproduction and restoration moulds of Philippe de Buyster's seventeenth-century ornamental sculptures, the Anges du Dôme du Val de Grâce. The moulds were scrupulously restored following the nomenclature used for the conservation of classical masterpieces. Although their function remains (to produce an exact replica of Philippe de Buyster's angels), these moulds have changed their status to become abstract sculptures in their own right.

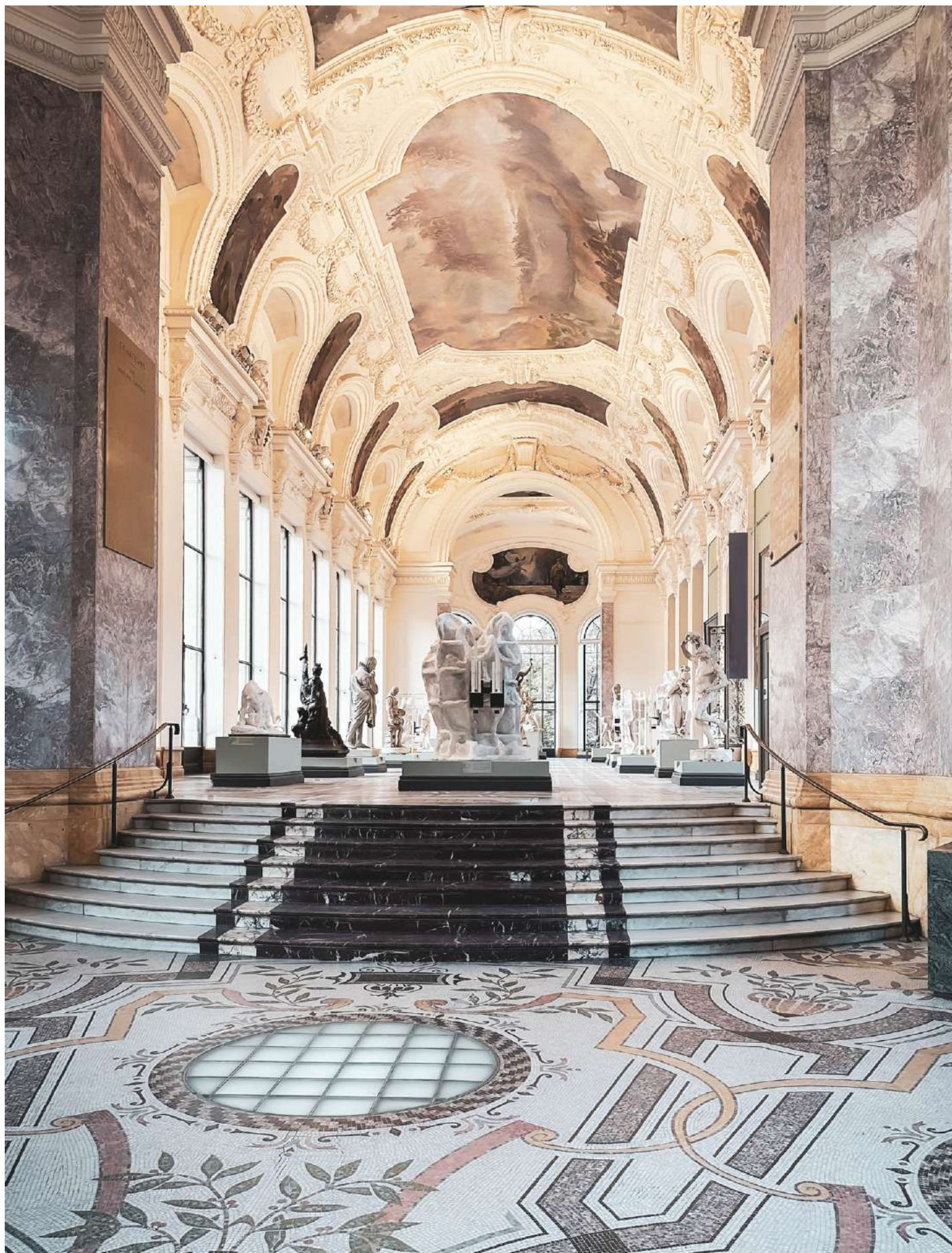
On each of these sculptures, a friction-operated musical instrument called the “Euphone” has been grafted as an integral part of the work. The instrument was inspired by the Cristal Baschet. For *I—I Tacet*, Loris Gréaud designed instruments and commissioned the organ builder Terence Jay to create them to order. Each instrument has 8 notes. Each sculpture has a unique frequency and tonality. The 6 instruments compose a harmony in D minor that resonates with the vaults of the gallery and the North Pavilion, and whose infrasound, if synchronised with the resonance frequency of the building, would cause the collapse and destruction of the gallery and the North Pavilion.

Every evening, half an hour before the museum closes to the public, the works are activated by professional musicians, according to a score, a precise protocol that allows the “angels” to resonate² with each other and with this emblematic space of the Petit Palais.

I—I Tacet suggests a work whose status is in constant flux: from a functional mould, it becomes a sculpture in its own right, from a sculpture, it becomes a musical instrument, its base becomes a stage, to the extent of whispering the end credits of the exhibition every day – the swan song.

1. *Tacet* is a term used in Western music to indicate to an instrumentalist that he or she must remain silent throughout the movement. The Latin word *tacet* means “he is silent” or “we are silent.”

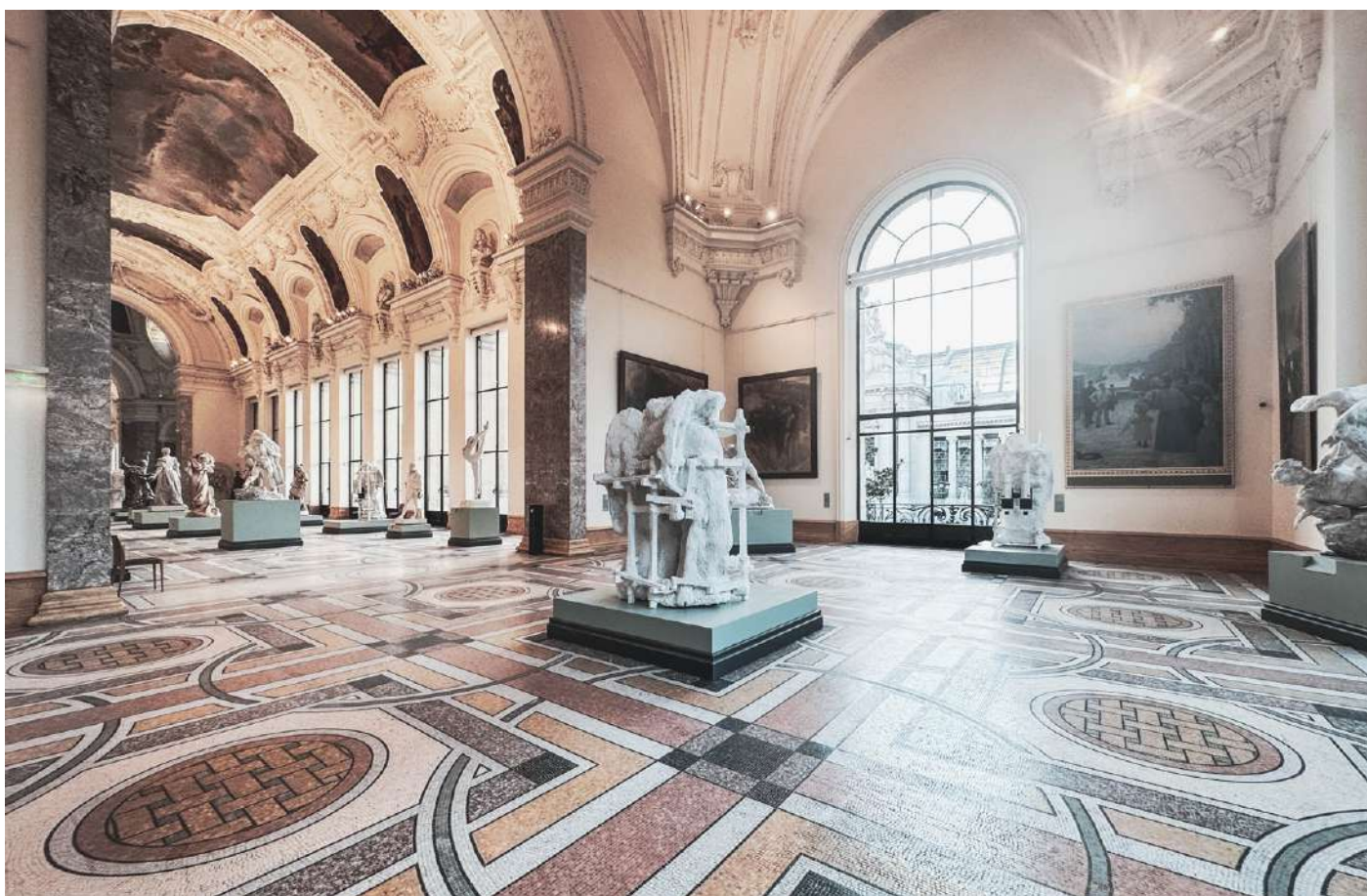
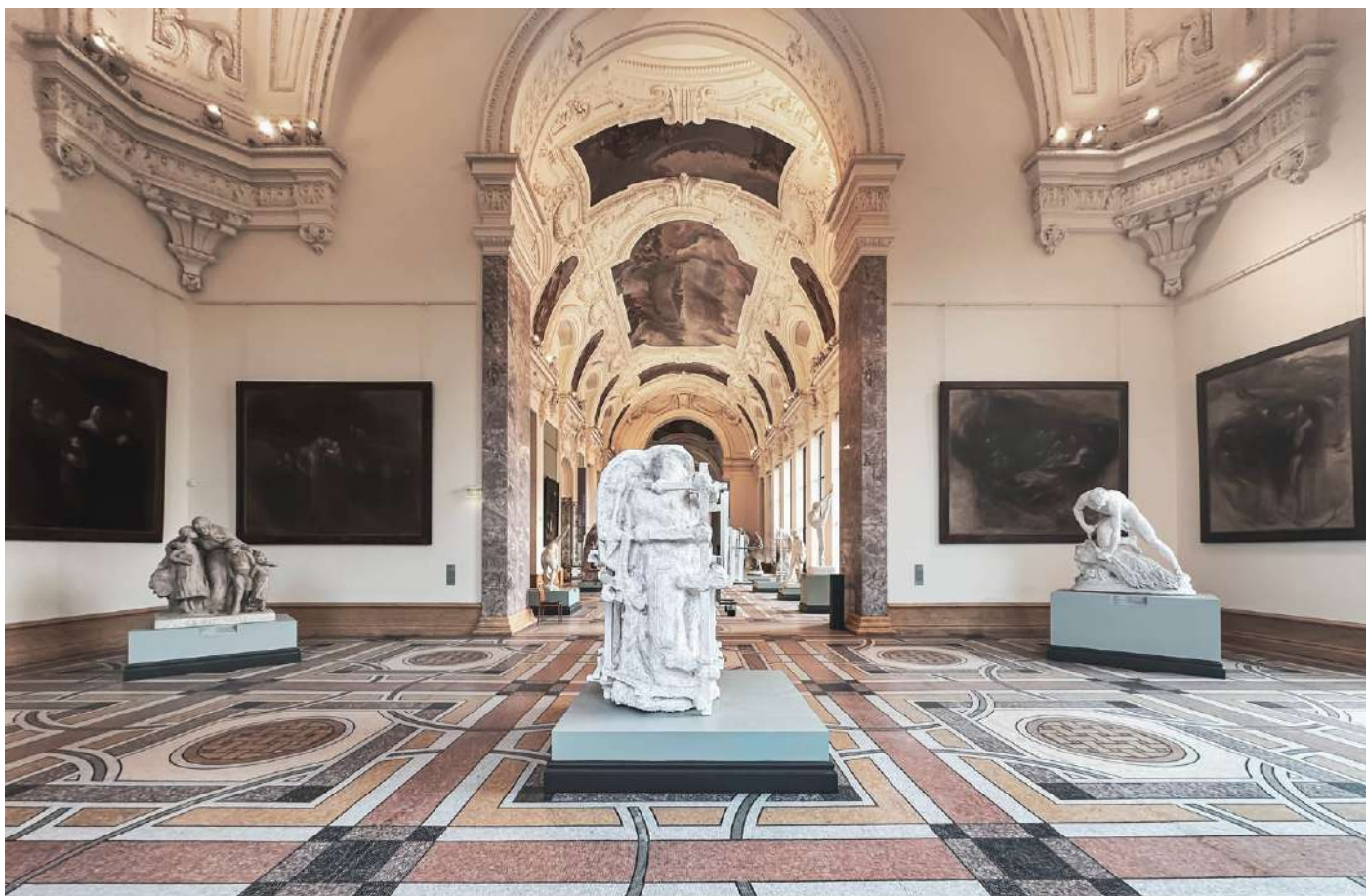
2. Vladimir Gavreau was a French automation scientist who focused his research on the effect of infrasound and the development of weapons for the French army in the 1960s. In the context of his laboratory, he developed a gigantic piston-phone organ that resonated throughout the building. At his own expense, he learned that if the vibration of an instrument (its infrasound) was synchronised with the resonance frequency of a building, the building would collapse.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
Photo Credits: Realism Noir.



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Photo Credits: Realism Noir.



NOVA EXPRESS

(2023) Olfactory Sculpture — #GR-2023-275.1-4

NC: 00:06:08:30

Interior — North Gallery — Permanent

Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm — Special appointments every 30 minutes

Raw black steel base, transparent epoxy matte varnish, glued transparent PMMA bell, olfactory diffuser consisting of a DMX programmer and a canister, transparent PVC tubes, translucent rubber tube, 220V power supply, essence of ethyl formate.

Dimensions : 122 x 177 x 30,5 cm.

In 2009, astronomers from the Max Planck Institute made an unexpected discovery using the IRAM telescope. Whilst searching for traces of amino acids (the building blocks of life) in deep space, they came across ethyl formate, a terrestrial molecule. Surprisingly, this is the same molecule that gives raspberries their taste and rum its smell.

With *Nova Express*¹ the molecules that make up the heart of our galaxy, ethyl formate, are propelled into the vast space of the Petit Palais South Gallery using olfactory diffusers developed specifically for the piece.

This device – its technology and its functional mechanisms – is a sculpture in its own right: it is presented under a bell jar on a base of raw steel. Paradoxically, the work itself is immaterial: it is physically present, but invisible to the naked eye.

Every day, in 15-minute sequences, the 4 diffusers are activated, and the South Gallery and then the reception rotunda are physically filled with the expanding Milky Way. In this empty space, the museum becomes porous, permeable to infinite distance.

1. *Nova Express* is the title of William S. Burroughs' experimental novel in which the author sets out to represent man's position in the universe – an untenable, heart-rending and absurd position.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
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XX—XX

(2023) Kinetic sculpture — #GR-2023-078.

NC: 00:07:24:00

Interior — South Gallery — Permanent

Monday to Sunday, at all hours of the day and night.

Polyester resin print made from a silicone mould of a pangolin, polyester finish, worm gear motor 24VDC 22A 50rpm 421W, tenfold gearing, steel gears and barrel, aluminium motor cover.

Dimensions : (h) 38 x (L) 142 x (l) 30 cm

The pangolin is one of the most unusual creatures in the animal kingdom: discreet and solitary, it lives alone on the desert plains of Africa and Asia. Often perceived as a veritable “alien,” smugglers have sadly made it the most hunted animal in the world, giving it inestimable value on the black market.

The pangolin has been suspected of being the intermediate host in the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus to humans. In other words, the host through which the Covid-19 pandemic began, the one that suspended the normal course of our lives. These speculations, sometimes refuted, sometimes reaffirmed, have made the pangolin the emblem of this particular moment in which, for the first time in our contemporary history, humanity was faced with contamination by one and the same disease, leading to the same emergency, the same health protocols and the same crisis management. It is a paradoxical image for mankind, who had fallen in love with the rare pholidota to the point of threatening its species, which is now critically endangered.

XX—XX is unmistakably a pangolin. A hyper-realistic resin print, made from the imprint of a real animal. Only its finish, its texture, the mechanism with which it is equipped, its cogs, its motor and the steel barrel housed in its lower abdomen make it a sculpture in its own right.

Positioned with its back to the visitors, this animal-machine is placed on the floor of the South Gallery. It advances inexorably, in a straight line, at the almost impossible rate of 1.25 cm per month – the average growth rate of human hair.

Although it is not immediately perceptible to the human eye, its journey is signaled to the public by the visible operation of the engine and the prominent tenfold gear at its flank.

In the vast space of the South Gallery, XX—XX progresses tirelessly, day and night, creating a rumour, an anxiety, in the Petit Palais: the propagation of that moment in which reality surpassed fiction, indexed on a variable of the human scale.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
Photo Credits: Realism Noir.



PHYSARIUM

(2023) Organisme — #GR-2023-076.

NC: 00:07:24:00

*Interior and Exterior — Reception Rotunda and Garden — Permanent
from Monday to Sunday, at all hours of the day and night.*

Physarum Polycephalum specimens bred from strains passed on by Dr Audrey Dussutour (animal cognition research centre, CNRS); 4 UE Snow Tour snow machines, 16 EBM Axieco fans, 8 UE Multi Spray Mist supports, 4 water pumps, 4 Showven Creeper AQ + low smoke machines, 4 Chauvet Amhaze Stadium fog machines, 16 Colordash PAR H12X IP LED projectors, DMX programmer and controller, electrical cabinet, wiring, tubular steel structure, laser-cut steel cladding, epoxy varnish, adjustable stilts.

Dimensions : variables.

The garden of the Petit Palais is an eclectic oasis: banana trees mingle with cherry trees, pampas grasses grow amongst bamboo, and palm trees shade ponds adorned with Art Nouveau mosaics.

On the islands of vegetation surrounding the three pools – which the artist designed specifically for the occasion – primitive life forms have been implanted, in the form of bright yellow plasmodes: *physarum polycephalum*, also known as blobs¹.

This unclassifiable unicellular organism with no bones, brain or nervous system challenges the sum of our preconceptions: it is virtually immortal (it becomes dormant when conditions are not favourable to its growth), it is endowed with intelligence (it is capable of processing information to achieve its objectives and of sharing the knowledge it has acquired with its peers).

For several years now, Loris Gréaud has been working meticulously with the CNRS (Centre National de Recherche Scientifique) and Dr Audrey Dussutour, the world's leading blob specialist. In his studio, he has developed a breeding facility that has been transplanted to the museum enclosure, at the heart of the landscaped garden.

To enable it to grow in the context of the Petit Palais, he and Dr Dussutour studied the necessary climatic and environmental conditions. A climate was recreated using modified special effects usually used in the cinema. The Petit Palais garden is regularly swept by drizzle, showers, snowstorms (in reality a moss loaded with water and nutrients), mist and clouds; bathed in infrared light; or traversed by waves of heat essential to the healthy development of the *physarum polycephalum*.

In the form of rhizomes, *physarum polycephalum* moves and grows at up to 1 cm per hour, disappearing, drying out and then coming back to life, discreetly enlivening the landscape. In this way, it diverts the garden from its original purpose: its configuration is no longer reserved for man, but for this pre-existing being. A host of atmospheric conditions, frequencies and light waves which, far from being effects, are the building blocks of a biotope, a choice setting for the growth of aliens in which humans have become the intruders.

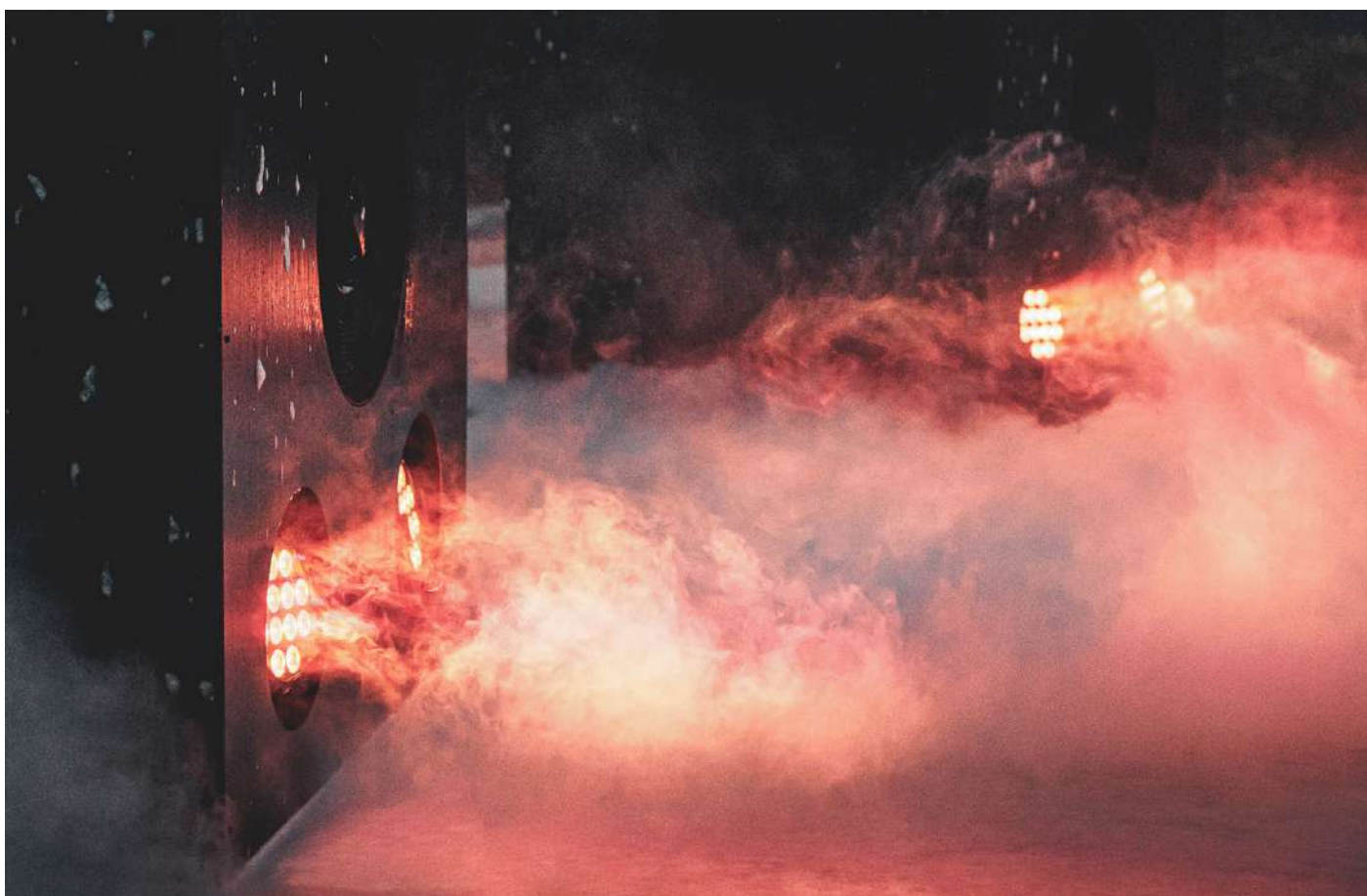
1. *The Blob* is a 1988 horror film by Chuck Russell in which a shapeless mass grows by ingesting the inhabitants of a small California town one by one. The film gave its popular name to “*Physarum Polycephalum*.”



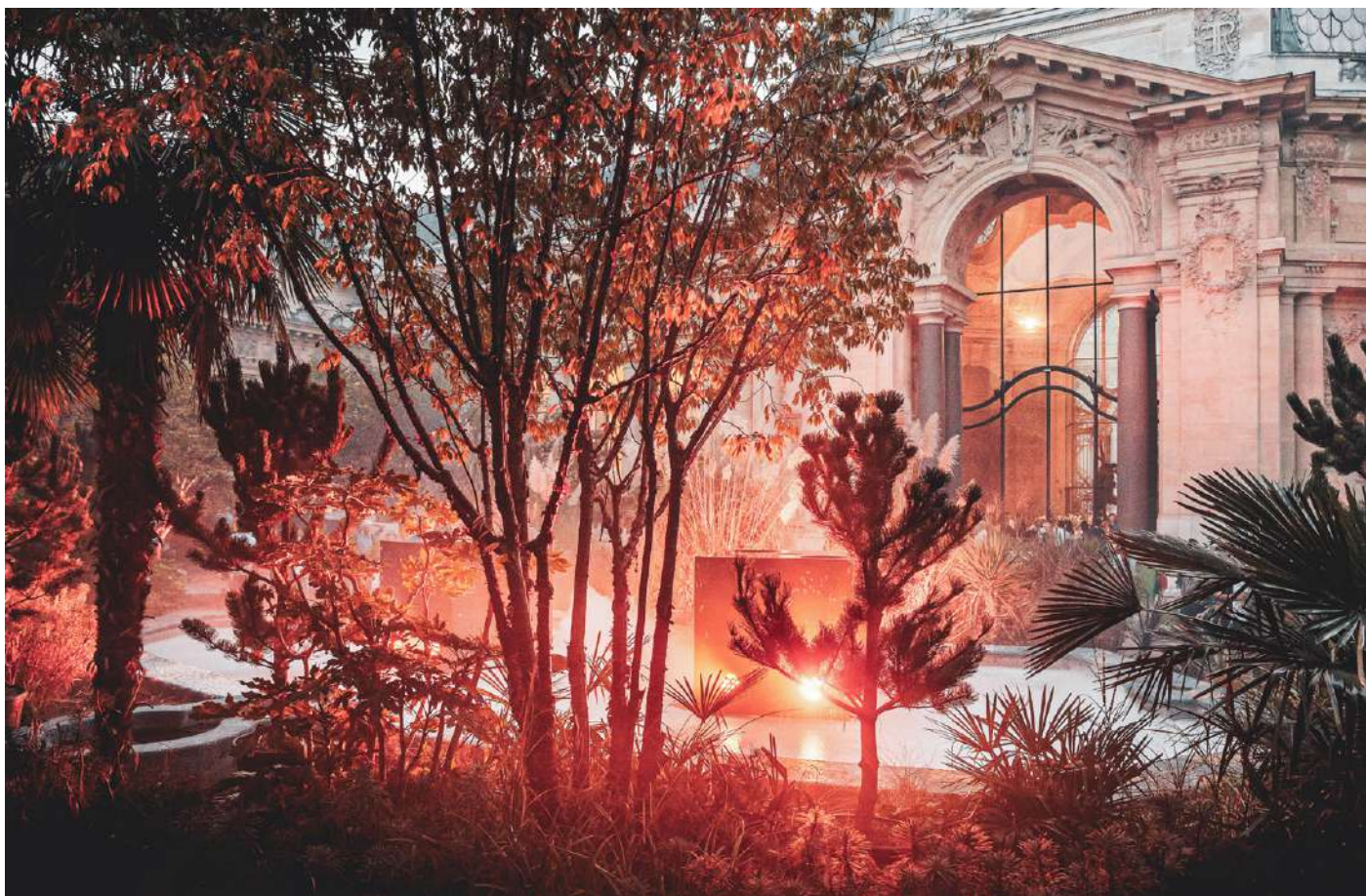
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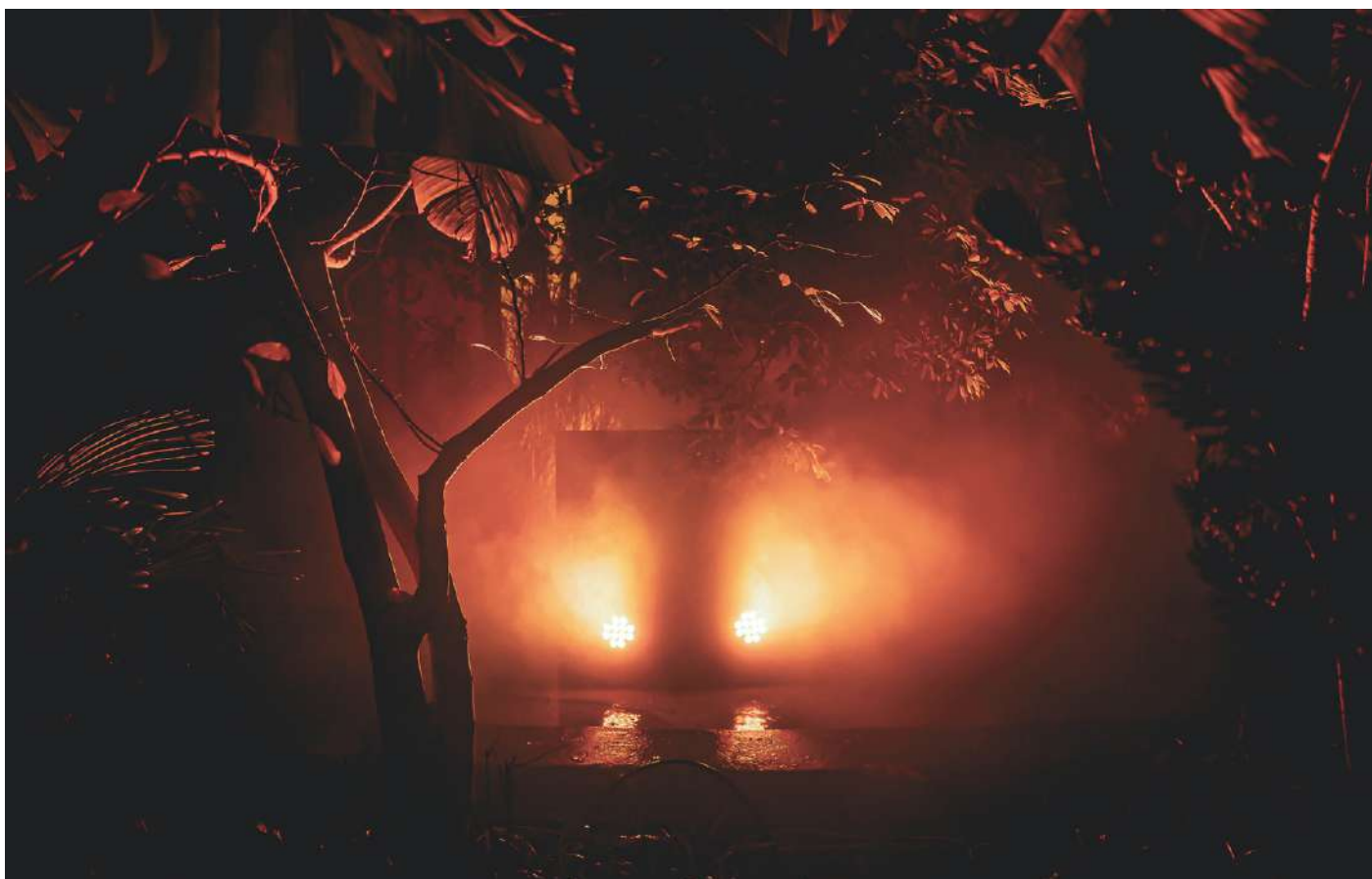
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MORATORIUM

(2023) Sound installation — #GR-2023-277.

With Prof. Michel André, BarcelonaTech UPC and LAB (Laboratori d'Aplicacions Bioacústiques).

NC: 00:06:08:05

Exterior — Garden — Permanent

from Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm.

“Listen to the Deep Ocean” (LIDO) technology, which enables the Laboratori d'Aplicacions Bioacústiques (LAB) to connect in real time to 5 locations on our planet, where sensors and microphones have been installed by Prof. Michel André. Software developed by LAB to adapt this technology to the context of the Petit Palais, PC control computer, 360° sound frequency processing, 2 100W / 100V mixing amplifiers, 20 SHP510 loudspeakers, cabling.

Listening time: infinite.

In Vilanova i el Geltrú¹ a few kilometres from Barcelona, Prof. Michel André works in his bioacoustics laboratory (LAB), which centralises thousands of data points, frequencies and vibrations collected by microphones and intelligent sensors that he himself has placed in the most inaccessible places on our planet. The “Listen the Deep Ocean” (LIDO) technology enables him to connect physically, in real time, to the farthest corners of the globe: the heart of the Amazon rainforest, the depths of the Antarctic seas, the Arctic ice floes, the desert plains of Africa and the Sea of Japan. This data enables him to assess the interaction between the sound universe of ecosystems and the acoustic pollution produced by humans, and to design technological tools to prevent collisions between human infrastructures and animal species, for example.

Prof. Michel André has been a close collaborator of Loris Gréaud since their 2012 project *The Snorks: a concert for creatures*, which consisted of an underwater concert for abyssal creatures. Since then, the artist and scientist have never stopped sharing, exchanging, travelling and developing.

With *Moratorium*², Loris Gréaud and Prof. Michel André are inviting Petit Palais audiences to a world premiere: a static journey of almost 50,000 km in real time from the South Pole to the North Pole, to the Amazon River, to the hearts of the African and Asian continents.

At the exact coordinates of the Petit Palais garden — 48° 51' 57.773" N 2° 18' 52.524" E — 20 loudspeakers have been installed on the islands surrounding the pools. Software specifically designed by LAB enables the venue to connect at regular intervals to one of these 5 locations and broadcast the acoustic environment at a given moment.

The sound halo of lost worlds, of their animal and natural life, penetrates the peaceful oasis of the Petit Palais, which for the duration of *Les Nuits Corticales* becomes a station of multiple ubiquities³ the sounding board of our world.

In a direct, unfiltered relationship, visitors are propelled into foreign dimensions, beyond their reach and access — *here and now*.

1. Literally “new town.”

2. *Ubik* is a novel by Philip K. Dick written in 1966. In *Ubik*, there is a dimension called “Moratorium” in which ubiquity is pushed to its liminal threshold: the spirit of the deceased person one cares about is imprisoned in a state of half-life until their influence gradually wears off and they can pass into the Afterlife.

3. Ubiquity: the ability to be physically present in several places at the same time.



Loris Gréaud, *Les Nuits Corticales*, Petit Palais, 2023. © Loris Gréaud, Gréaudstudio, Petit Palais, Paris Musées, ADAGP 2023.
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LES NUITS CORTICALES CORTICAL NIGHTS

(2023) Song and Concert by The Residents — #GR-2023-280.

With The Residents, Homer Flynn, The Cryptic Corporation.

NC: 00:01:01:00

Exterior — Garden — Rendez-vous.

January 13th, 2023.

Semicircular stone stage, microphone on tripods, PA sound diffusion system, music composed and performed by The Residents.

Listening time: 5:00-10:00 min.

As this text is being written, this work is both a promise and an attempt, which the artist and the teams will be keen to bring to fruition.

After a career spanning 50 years, the identity of the members of The Residents has never been revealed, and probably never will be. Celebrated and acclaimed as pioneers of the musical world and the avant-garde, The Residents are a veritable legend. Pioneers of the music video, they have been the subject of the wildest speculation since their first album in 1974: that they are in fact The Beatles, having reformed an experimental music group after their break-up.

For *Les Nuits Corticales*, and in the wake of their previous collaboration with Loris Gréaud on the project and feature-length film *Sculpt*, the San Francisco-based band has written, produced and recorded a single track entitled “Cortical Nights.” 4 months of adventures, systems, growth, organisms, stories and encounters, criticisms and outbursts deployed solely for this singular purpose, its potential destination: a hidden song with a disquieting melody, an avant-pop precipitate of the exhibition.

The Residents are to reveal “Cortical Nights” on the last day of the exhibition, at a live concert (featuring a single track) in the landscaped gardens of the Petit Palais.

To the glory of *Les Nuits Corticales*, and in the oral tradition of myths and legends, The Residents themselves will reinvent themselves as minstrels of anticipation to deliver the exhibition’s strangest, most disturbing, most obscure manifestation. The exhibition will close its doors and fade away with the last bar of this track, unless this song-event is in fact its ultimate expansion.

LORIS GRÉAUD

Artist

Since the early 2000s, Loris Gréaud has been following an atypical trajectory on the international contemporary art scene. He produces unique environments that often make use of disruptive elements and follow the thread of an ambiguous narrative that tends to abolish all boundaries between fiction and reality. Rumours, poetry, viruses, architecture and demolition, academism and self-negation are all regularly invoked in his work, which strives to bring together physical and mental spaces on a single surface.

Loris Gréaud's projects have given rise to numerous solo exhibitions. In 2008, he was the first artist to take over the entire Palais de Tokyo with his *CELLAR DOOR* project, which was subsequently developed at the ICA London (UK), the La Conservera museum in Murcia (ES), the Kunsthalle Santkt Gallen (CH) and the Kunsthalle Wien (AT). He also had a double-exhibition at the Musée du Louvre and the Centre National d'Art Moderne Georges Pompidou in Paris (FR), with his internationally acclaimed project *[I]*. In 2015, he took over the entire space of the Dallas Contemporary (US) with his ongoing project *The Unplayed Notes Museum*. In 2016, he developed the *Sculpt* project specifically for LACMA in Los Angeles (US), his first solo exhibition on the east coast of the United States. In 2017, he set the 57th Venice Biennale alight with his project *The Unplayed Notes Factory* in Murano (IT). In 2019, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (IL) hosted his exhibition *Sculpt: Grumpy Bear, the Great Spinoff*, the second stage of the project initiated at LACMA. The exhibition *The Original, The Translation* highlighted his publishing activities at the Bibliothèque Kandinsky / Centre Pompidou (FR). Subsequently, after acquiring the work *MACHINE* in 2018, the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris (FR) invited Loris Gréaud to design a specific exhibition, entitled *GLORIUS READ*, as part of its permanent collections. In February 2020, the artist inaugurated his perennial project *The Underground Sculpture Park* at the Casa Wabi Foundation (MX), as an extension of the architecture designed by Tadao Ando. Finally, Loris Gréaud's body of work, *The Multiplication Table of Obsession and Irresolution*, recently joined the collections of the Centre National d'Art Moderne - Georges Pompidou (FR).

Loris Gréaud's works can be found in numerous public collections, including: the Centre Pompidou (FR), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art — LACMA (US), the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris — MAM (FR), the François Pinault Collection (FR and IT), the Fondation Louis Vuitton (FR), the Israel Museum (IL), the Margulies Collection (US), the Goetz Collection (DE), the Rubell Family Collection (US), the Nam June Paik Art Center (KR), the Tel Aviv Museum of Art - TAMA (IL), the Hirshhorn Museum (US), the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, INHA (FR).

JULIETTE SINGER

Curator

Juliette Singer has been chief curator and in charge of contemporary art projects at the Petit Palais since January 2020. With the directors of the museum Christophe Leribault and then Annick Lemoine, she invited the artists Jean-Michel Othoniel in 2021 and Ugo Rondinone in 2022, followed by Loris Gréaud for “Les Nuits Corticales” in 2023. She curated the exhibition “Le Paris de la Modernité, 1905-1925,” to be held from November 2023 to April 2024. She was also interim director of the museum from October 2021 to February 2022.

Having won the Institut National du Patrimoine competition, she was the chief curator in charge of modern and contemporary art at the Louvre Abu Dhabi for four years (2016-2020), following a role as director in charge of collections at Paris Musées (2013-2016), and as the curator of the Boulogne-Billancourt museums (2010-2013). Previously, she was Head of Contemporary Art at the Musée-Château d’Annecy (2005-2010), and in charge of the Art Brut collection at the present-day LAM in Villeneuve d’Ascq (2002-2005). As an exhibition curator and art historian, she regularly publishes in various journals and catalogues.

PARTNERS:

Prof. Michel André — BarcelonaTech (UPC), Dr Audrey Dussutour — CNRS



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Mécénat



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