

Thresholds, Doors, Portals

Late capitalism thrives on the illusion of fluidity. We are sold a vision of seamless circulation, of facilitated consumption of images, ideas and identities while ever more barriers are being erected. What might emerge when the world we encounter is no longer frictionless? When uncertainty and fragility are not obstacles but propositions, when demands for legibility are met with a refusal to be fully grasped and resistance to the compulsion to reduce, measure or contain?

Embracing instability as a mode of enquiry, *Thresholds, Doors, Portals...* convenes works by 24 artists who probe the unsteady space of passage, transmission, translation and transformation, unsettling habitual ways of navigating geographies, meanings and relations.

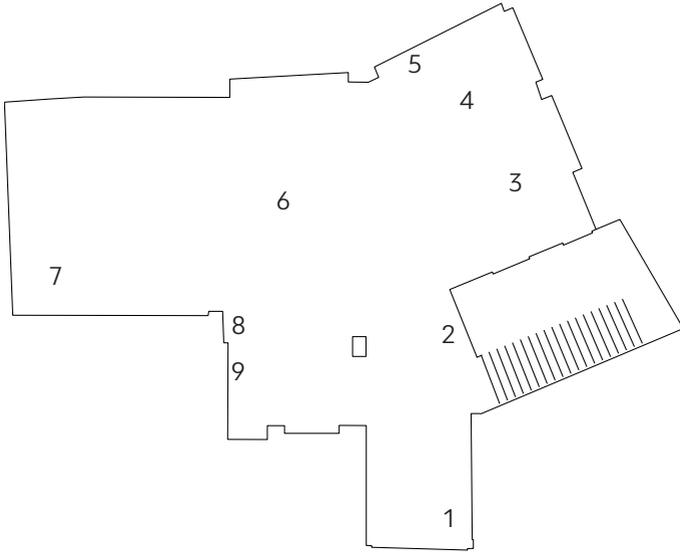
Inspired by Mark Fisher's writings in *The Weird and the Eerie* in which presences and absences disturb by exposing the contingency of what we take as natural, the exhibition unveils a reality that is not fixed but open to forces from the outside.

Unlike a corridor, which prescribes a movement, a door does not merely suggest transition but signals a rupture, leading not to certainty but to unknowns.

Thresholds become sites of encounter between alternatives, holding within their precarity a potentiality, a proposition not yet fully formed. Portals gesture toward the imagination and activation of other modes of existence. The artists invite us to linger in these moments of tension and irresolution, where the known world begins to slip and something else altogether starts to emerge. We remain in a state of suspension.

Marc Buchy, Sten Ceulemans, Valère de Meeûs, Nathalie Muchamad and Angyvir Padilla were invited to present artworks alongside pieces in Frédéric de Goldschmidt's collection by Francis Alÿs, Claire Andrzejczak, Babi Badalov, Elena Bajo, Charles Baudelaire, Mel Bochner, James Scott Brooks, Ting-Jung Chen, Gaëlle Choisne, Lionel Dury, Stefano Faoro, Esther Ferrer, Nadia Guerroui, Mona Hatoum, Tarek Lakhrissi, Violeta Mayoral, Walid Raad, Jamie Reid & Martin Sexton, Trevor Yeung.

G



1. Marc Buchy, *Les traits fortuits*, 2018-2025, protocol, performative action, notebook.*

2. Esther Ferrer, *Monochrome*, from the series «*Dans le cadre de l'art : Cadre qu'encadre cadre, qu'encadre cadre etc.*», 2008, wooden frames painted in white oil.

3. Valère de Meeûs, *Perdre*, 2025, protocol, performative action, cassette recorder.*

4. Ting-Jung Chen, *Envelope (392 Hz)*, 2023, papier-mâché.

5. Babi Badalov, *I have a scream*, 2014, painted fabric.

6. Lionel Dury, *Nuage Atomique*, 2018, incised paper.

7. Angyvir Padilla, *Domestic Ghosts*, 2018-2025, paraffin tiles, white sand, video, sound. (20')*

8. James Scott Brooks, *LAX Los Angeles (Departure)*, 2012, piercings on paper.

9. James Scott Brooks, *NCE Nice (Arrival)*, 2012, piercings on paper.

* invited artists

GROUND FLOOR

Crafted with surgical precision, Lionel Dury's *Nuage Atomique* evokes the turbulence of natural forces that defy borders and containment. His embroidered forms emerge not through addition but through removal, resisting legibility and subverting the map as an instrument of power. While echoing the colonial practice of carving up territories, this act also proposes a quiet reparation—an attempt to undo divisions.

Meanwhile, the buoy—a marker of borders and surveillance—is reimaged by Ting-Jung Chen in *Envelope (392 Hz)*, layered with fragments of political newspapers, speaking to the tenuous, shifting nature of geopolitical conflicts and the slow erosion of fixed truths. What once signalled control now wavers in meaning.

Esther Ferrer's *Monochrome* from the series "Dans le cadre de l'art..." overturns the rigidity of frames and perspectives, while the elliptical nature of an airplane journey—marked by James Scott Brooks only by hollow traces of departure and destination in his *Aether Airports*—is confronted with works that highlight more precarious experiences of migration.

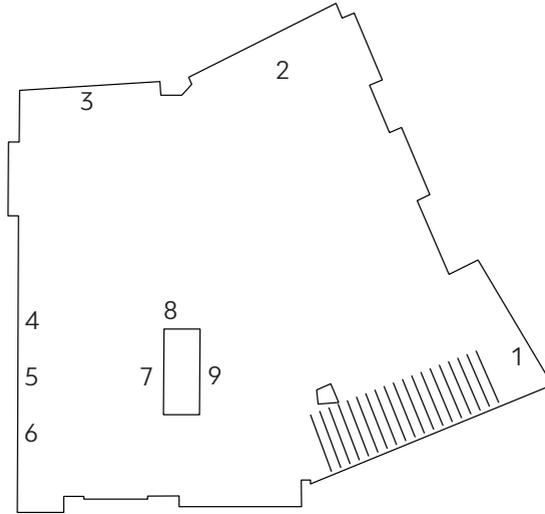
Rooted in his personal experience of displacement and the linguistic dissonance that comes with moving across borders, Babi Badalov's visual poetry disassembles normative systems of meaning. The famous Martin Luther King phrase, "I have a dream", is twisted into "I have a scream"—not as mere wordplay, but as an act of resistance against the assimilation of radical ideals into comfortable slogans.

Angyvir Padilla's immersive installation *Domestic Ghosts* reflects a space in flux—a house where architectural logic has become fractured under the weight of time and necessity. Here, you don't move through rooms—you trespass, drift, hesitate. Born from a residency in one of Caracas' colonial neighbourhoods, her conversation with a friend blind to this part of the city is a call and response between the seen and the unseen, the remembered and the speculative.

Presence and absence are further explored in *perdre*. Valère de Meeûs invites visitors into an unstable archive, unsettling the promise of permanence. Participants are asked to record a memory of the last time they were lost—but to do so, they must erase the previous memory. Their voices linger in the fragile space of passage, where stories surface only to vanish.

Les traits fortuits by Marc Buchy challenges the smoothness and efficiency inherent to communication supports and their role in facilitating exchange and consumption. By asking both the curator and the audience to write using their non-dominant hand, Buchy introduces a moment of vulnerability, resulting in imperfect and playful traces of human presence.

S1



1. Walid Raad, *Translator's introduction (German edition)*, 2016, paper.

2. Nadia Guerroui, *Friction in Plain Sight V*, 2021, polyester and nylon organza.

3. Walid Raad, *Translator's introduction (Arabic edition)*, 2016, paper.

4. Tarek Lakhrissi, *Betraying heritage*, 2022, stainless steel.

5. Tarek Lakhrissi, *Betraying trust*, 2022, stainless steel.

6. Tarek Lakhrissi, *Betraying guts*, 2022, stainless steel.

7. Mona Hatoum, *High relief*, 1992, chrome metal plate, magnet, and razor blade.

8. Nathalie Muchamad, *Butterfly*, 2015, video. (6'46'')*

9. Tarek Lakhrissi, *What remains*, 2023, blown glass.

Part of his wider practice probing museological devices, Walid Raad observed the absence of shadows in a museum display and proposed an intervention to restore them by carving them into paper. *Translator's Introduction (German edition)* and *(Arabic Edition)* reintroduce depth, challenging the demands for clarity and easy legibility. These works refuse the flattening of history and representation, instead invoking the right to opacity and fragmentation that mark acts of transmission. Raad exposes how the objects and histories museums seek to preserve are shaped by interruption, colonial extraction, and displacement.

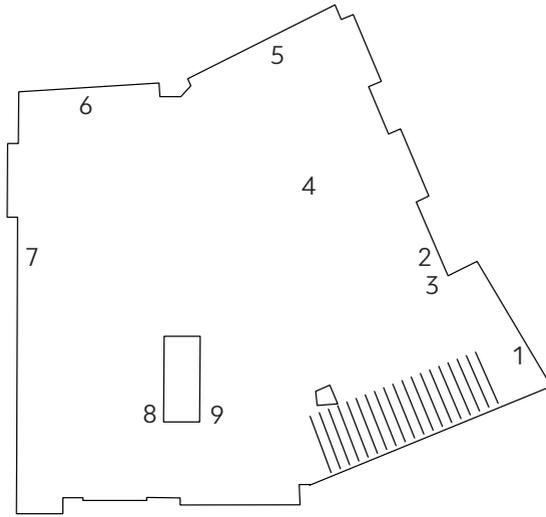
Also evading fixedness is Nadia Guerroui, who in *Friction in Plain Sight* deploys a visual language that resists immediacy. Through subtle shifts in light, material and movement, the work invites the viewer to linger in ambiguity, to attune to the quiet tensions and releases that unfold over time. In doing so, Guerroui forgoes the smooth, consumable surface of the image, proposing instead a space where meaning remains contingent and in flux.

In *What remains*, Tarek Lakhrissi questions the role of the tongue as an instrument of language, love and power. Inspired by Jean Genet's writings, the series of knives—*Betraying Guts*, *Betraying Trust* and *Betraying Heritage*—celebrate betrayal not as a moral failure but as a form of resistance. Lakhrissi carves out a position that refuses respectability and embraces the marginal, the deviant, the poetic. The weapon is transformed into an adornment.

While Lakhrissi's knives betray their own function, violence is explored in Mona Hatoum's *High Relief* through merging the domestic and the hostile.

Examining the power of illusion to shape perceptions of reality, *Butterfly* by Nathalie Muchamad underlines the tension between truth and desire. Her reenactment of the final scene from David Cronenberg's film *M. Butterfly* interrogates how cinematic images can subsume historical facts. In choosing to re-stage the real story of Bernard Boursicot, a French diplomat who unknowingly fell in love with Shi Pei Pu—a man posing as a woman—Muchamad challenges the way identities are mediated and consumed.

S2



1. Mel Bochner, *Counting Alternatives: B3/1R*, 1992, chalk on black paper.

2. Jamie Reid and Martin Sexton, *Switching OFF Stonehenge (1913)*, 2002, silk screen, gold and graphite collage.*

3. Martin Sexton, *Turning ON Stonehenge'*, 2008, Stereoscopic/Augmented/VR slide.

4. Elena Bajo, *Untitled*, 2015, concrete, plastic debris from the L.A. River.

5. Violeta Mayoral, *Untitled XXV (Alguna Direccion series)*, 2024, framed photograph.

6. Claire Andrzejczak, *Duration 01*, diptych, three Polaroids on a shelf, painted, framed with tissue paper.

7. Trevor Yeung, *Declined Invitation*, 2019, polished spectrolite.

8. Francis Alÿs, *Lada Kopeika Project, St. Petersburg*, 2014, framed photograph.

9. Nadia Guerroui, *Untitled*, 2015-2025, vacuum-sealed dried flowers.

* invited artists

SECOND FLOOR

In *Untitled*, Elena Bajo collects debris from the L.A. River—discarded fragments destined for oblivion. The plastic, designed to outlast human use, is encased in concrete, underlining the tension between waste and monument. Bajo elevates the everyday, challenging conventional hierarchies of value and questioning what we choose to preserve or discard.

In a vain attempt to freeze time and decay, Nadia Guerroui's *Untitled* places humble flowers in industrial, vacuum-sealed plastic bags. Flimsy and ephemeral in nature, the flowers's decomposition is slowed to an unnaturally prolonged pace in the absence of air. Evoking a contemporary still life, Guerroui invites reflection on the desire to control time and nature.

Violeta Mayoral captures an undefined moment—hovering between day and night, gravity and levity, presence and disappearance. The photograph *Untitled XXV (Alguna Direccion series)* dwells on the edge of reality, where perception falters.

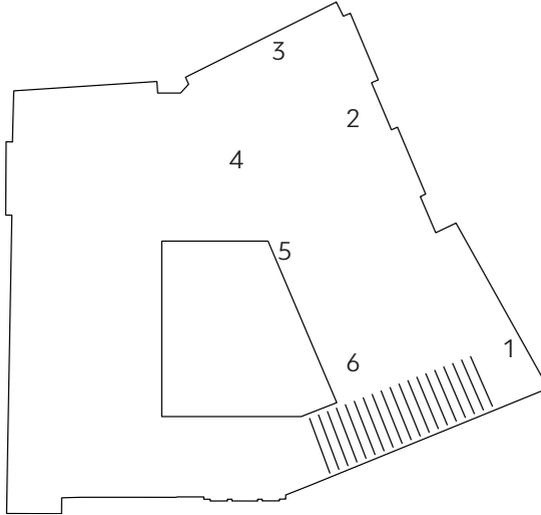
For *Manifesta* in St. Petersburg, Francis Alÿs restaged a personal, unfulfilled memory: a failed teenage road trip from Brussels to Moscow with his brother in a Lada 1500. The original journey was cut short when the car broke down. Alÿs delves into the absurdity of nostalgia and the urge to relive the past—not to freeze time, but to rewind it. The drive, repeated in a 1977 Lada Kopeika, ends with a crash into a tree in the courtyard of the Winter Palace, symbolising the shattering of youthful illusions.

Declined Invitation is a piece of spectrolite known for its shifting, multicoloured shine. Trevor Yeung has partially polished its surface, coaxing out a glimmer reminiscent of the northern lights. The gesture stems from an invitation to travel together which was declined, and the journey never took place. Yeung projects the imagined experience onto the stone, allowing care and longing to crystallise in its surface. The object becomes a proxy for intimacy deferred, for affection displaced, for a shared moment that never came to be.

Claire Andrzejczak, in *Duration*, grasps at suspended seconds in a family photograph when individuals teeter between movement and stillness, between performance and authenticity. These polaroid images were preserved in a sheet of paper, then tucked away among her everyday belongings. Forgotten, then occasionally rediscovered, they were folded and unfolded over time. Marked by use, its creases resemble a landscape, a trace of time and touch.

In *Switching Off Stonehenge* and *Turning On Stonehenge*, Jamie Reid and Martin Sexton revisit a 1913 ceremony in which Stonehenge was symbolically "switched off". Like the digital advice to "turn it off and on again," this gesture proposes a reset—not of devices but of collective consciousness and cultural memory.

S3



1. Charles Baudelaire, *Self portrait under the influence of hashish*, 1844-45, ink and watercolor on paper.

2. Stefano Faoro, *The actors by their presence always convince me that most of what I've written is false*, 2015, cardboard tube, collages, adhesive tape, acrylic, glue.

3. Gaëlle Choisine, *Ka*, 2020, plaster, color UV print.

4. Sten Ceulemans, *From cellar to the sun*, 2024, 30 pictures in various sized wooden frames.*

5. Sten Ceulemans, *Prototype for an entrance ticket*, 2024, classic white paper.*

6. Marc Buchy, *Infravisuel*, 2016-ongoing, online theoretical text, website.*

THIRD FLOOR

Stefano Faoro's fragile sculpture *The actors by their presence always convince me that most of what I've written is false* invites the viewer into a relationship with the figures depicted—chosen for their positioning, with their backs turned to us. Faoro encourages us to consider what the characters are gazing upon or to imagine seeing the world through their eyes.

In contrast, the statue in Gaëlle Choisine's *Ka* looks directly back at the viewer, challenging the audience's gaze. In this reversal, the historical object, photographed at the National Archeological Museum of Naples, is no longer a passive entity to be observed but becomes an active participant in the interaction.

If the museum typically operates as a site of legibility—where objects are categorised, histories ordered, and meaning assigned—Sten Ceulemans's series of photographs *From the cellar to the sun* opens up a provisional space. Architectural elements are subtly warped, vitrines emptied, and frames rendered void through analog interventions. A fragmentary counter-archive, these images act as speculative blueprints—accompanied by a *Prototype for an Entry Ticket*—for an institution imagined otherwise.

Also engaging with the potential and the not-yet, Marc Buchy's *infravisuel* puts forward a tentative definition of an art practice devoid of materiality. First written in 2016 and made freely accessible online, the text remains open to revision, inviting additions and reinterpretations over time. It is meant to be picked up and put down, shared, and repurposed. Visitors are encouraged to take a copy home, not as a keepsake but as a tool: to be activated, misused, and folded into other contexts. In doing so, *infravisuel* embraces impermanence, offering a proposition for how artistic knowledge might circulate—not as fixed doctrine, but as a living, evolving form.

I am deeply indebted to Frédéric de Goldschmidt—without your vision, none of this would have been possible—and to Grégory Lang, for your generous guidance throughout this journey in Brussels.

To the artists, thank you for your inspiring works, which crystallised my thoughts and propositions.

An enormous thank you goes to Arthur Dufoor and Quinten Vanagt. I shared every wild idea that came to mind, and somehow, you brought them all to life. I am grateful also to Lionel Dury and Yoel Pytowski for your help during times of need.

To Nadia Guerroui, a profound thank you for your constant support, both technical and deeply human. Your presence brought clarity and thoughtfulness to every step of this project.

Rossella Biscotti, you were my first visitor, and your sharp insights continue to resonate with me.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo and Michele Bertolino for making this encounter possible.

Finally, I am grateful to the entire Cloud Seven team for your dedication and generosity. Catherine Hervy, Lauren Lizinde, and Anastasia Shevtsova, you enlivened and eased every aspect of my stay in Brussels. Valère de Meeûs, Louise Bakker, and Tibo Vergote, I couldn't feel more confident leaving the exhibition in your hands.

Ariane Sutthavong
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