

AUR Ae

Sabrina Ratté

17.03–10.07.22 @ Gaîté Lyrique

#Exhibition-experience

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Curated by: Jos Auzende

As an object of human fascination, even fire cannot rival the image, which hypnotizes, entralls and subdues. Pervasive in our digital lives, images are spreading at an astonishing pace, to the point that they can sometimes cloud our comprehension and leave us disoriented. What if we could recover our clarity of vision by tearing up the veil thrown over our eyes, going beyond the surface to reclaim the substance of images and restore their aura?

Drawing inspiration from web culture and its visual simulations, along with science fiction and architecture, Sabrina Ratté crafts image-spaces to navigate and cross, in which to embed oneself. She polishes their reflective facets like myriad alternative realities that augment our experience of the here and now. And yet at the same time, we are elsewhere. Her art is that of the alchemist, transforming matter into light, illusion into depth. She melds technologies into a poetic hybrid form with holograms, photography, and 3D animation.

Eleven of her works are presented together for the first time as an experience in *Aurae*, a title that refers both to the images' halo and an area of spatial metamorphosis. Immense, enveloping, ambiguous. The human element is absent from the colorful projections but reintroduced by visitors—both the stars and supporting cast—who bring their own original, unique perspective to the landscape, which is unveiled as a sculpture with a pearly sheen far superior to the compressed glow of the Internet.

Ratté creates an experience for the body in which symbolic boundaries fade away, through a monumental architectural edifice where sounds echo into the distance and shapes extend beyond their three-dimensional frames. A movement through space that relates our relationship with screens, our desire to pass through them to fuse with what they display, and the ever-growing distance that separates us from that world closed off behind the window, which we can see but never touch.

Sabrina Ratté

Sabrina Ratté was born in Quebec in 1982 and lives between Montreal and Marseille. Her work lies at the intersection of the visual arts, scenography, performance and music. She investigates the multiple possibilities offered by digital imagery, analogue video and 3D animation, along with photography, printing, sculpture, virtual reality and video installation. Her ongoing exploration of new techniques informs the themes that permeate her works, such as the influence of architecture and digital technology on our perception of the world, and our relationship with the virtual aspect of existence.

Produced by La Gaîté Lyrique, Aurae is the first major exhibition of Ratté's work in France. It was created in collaboration with the scenographer Antonin Sorel, with visual music by Roger Tellier-Craig and Andrea-Jane Cornell, and the invaluable support of the General Delegation of Quebec in Paris, the Canadian Cultural Centre, and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The exhibition-experience

The *Aurae* exhibition features eleven sculpture-architectures formed by unpeopled landscapes, deserted cities and petrified natural environments in which we reclaim possession of the scenes depicted through our presence, our body and our gaze.

1. Radiance IV

Luscious calm
4K video, 2018

The smooth, rhythmic work stands in stark contrast to the harsh avalanche of images piled on us by media competing for our attention. We are welcomed into a hospitable haven between the screen and the image, to reconcile with representations of another nature. It's an invitation to slow down and step into a visual world where subtlety trumps brutality.

2. Undream

Peering into the image
HD video on double-sided screen, mirror, glass,
soundtrack by Roger Tellier-Craig, 2018–2022

A promontory-mirror resembling a seaside pier opens onto a portal. Sabrina Ratté questions the way in which we inhabit the world. Nature and culture coexist in a spectacular, deserted landscape. The dystopian effect is amplified by a soundtrack of electronic textures as the sprawling installation plummets down to the floor below to return to its state of unsteady scaffolding.

3. Monades

The coronation of the image

Printing, photogrammetry,

3m x 3m, 2020

Still images amidst a corpus of works in motion, these monads portray the colossal bodies of hybrid goddesses—half-woman, half-cyborg. The forms were produced from photogrammetry of Sabrina Ratté's body, which were then deconstructed and recontextualized against a backdrop. These iconic images lead us to reflect upon the place of the body in the digital era.

4. Alpenglow

Polarizing glass

HD video, 3D animation,

wood, glass, 2018–2022

In the video projected on the screen, a 3D architectural structure is flooded with iridescent light from a symbolic utopian space. This floating image is surrounded by a similar structure in a *mise en abyme*. The two meld into a single space juxtaposing an interior where we have our place with an exterior that we see and which sees us.

5. Radiances

Failure and brilliance

HD video, double-sided screens, metal tubes, wood, mirror, 2018–2022

Projected on a scaffolding structure derived from *Undream* on the floor above, Radiances seems more fragile than it first appeared in the entrance hall. The heightened sharpness of the screens, alternating filled and empty

surfaces, and the way in which our eyes dart may elicit a tinge of nostalgia.

6 Distributed Memories

Image laboratory

In collaboration with Guillaume Arseneault, Interactive installation, computers, sensors, screens, speakers, metal rods, wood, plexiglas, soundtrack by Roger Tellier-Craig, 2021–2022

In this antechamber equipped with a presence sensor and an interactive installation, ten years of formal research are streamed continuously, forming enclosure of images that can be taken in actively or passively. An immersive experience that reflects our culture of sharing images to the point of blinding visual saturation.

7. Machine for Living

Infinite dissolution

HD video, mapping, wood, 3D animation, video synthesizer, sound by Roger Tellier-Craig, 2018–2022

This work looks back at the modernist urban planning of France's *villes nouvelles* (new towns), which Le Corbusier described as utilitarian "machines for living." A conveyor belt of utopian architectural forms passes before our eyes, taking and losing shape in a race for technical progress.

8. Inscape

Inner overflow

Monitor, 3D animation, video synthesizer, sound transducers, wood, mixed materials, original sounds by Roger Tellier-Craig, 2019–2022

The three-dimensional decor in *Inscape* extends the image-surface to the screen, in a work reminiscent of Kay Sage's surrealist landscapes. The feel is that of a diorama, a naturalistic model depicting an environment or dwelling, without a human presence in this case. The intimate setting ebbs and flows with the environment. An emotional state and the outside world each influencing each other.

9. Aliquid

Fluid mechanics

HD video, screen, 3D animation, video synthesizer, wood, original sounds by Roger Tellier-Craig, 2019–2022

A slowly gliding organic form akin to flowing flesh is torn apart by the edges of a glass architecture and disintegrates into particles that spread into the atmosphere. A mega-structure unfurls, a subtly emerging motion to sit down and contemplate.

10. Floralia

Plant memory

HD video, 3D animation, video synthesizer, speakers, photogrammetry, canvas printing, wood, VR headsets, sound design by Andrea-Jane Cornell, 2021

Here we find botanical archives, a stripped-down digital conservatory for extinct species, nestled deep in the dark. We enter into a virtual repository for plants and their ecosystem. This speculative approach draws inspiration from Donna Haraway, the pioneering biologist behind cyberfeminism, to write a new chapter in natural history. These hybrid forms branch out into an additional VR experience.

11. Oscillations

Primitive waves

Portals (4', 2014)

Sightings: Littoral Zone, Landfall, Habitat (19'30", 2014)

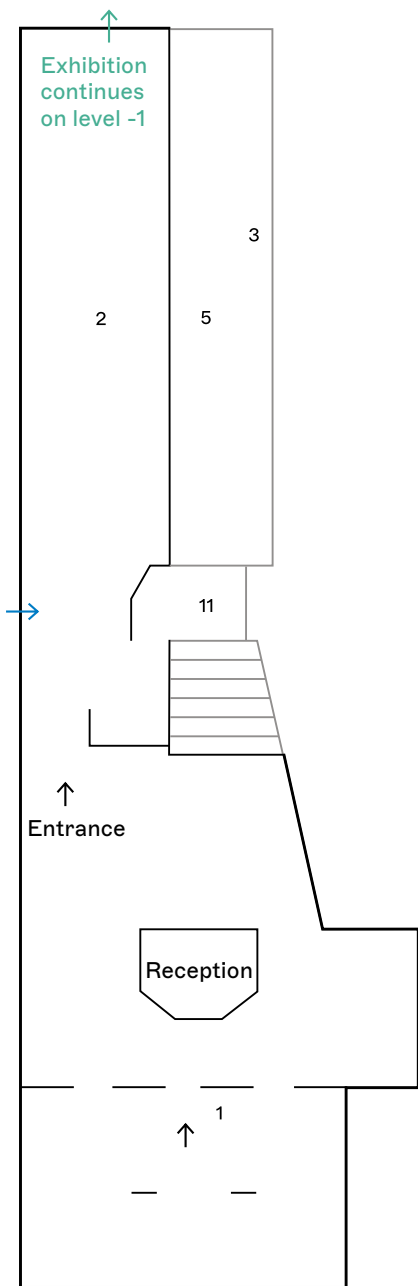
Escapes (6'38", 2015–2016)

Visites possibles (7', 2014)

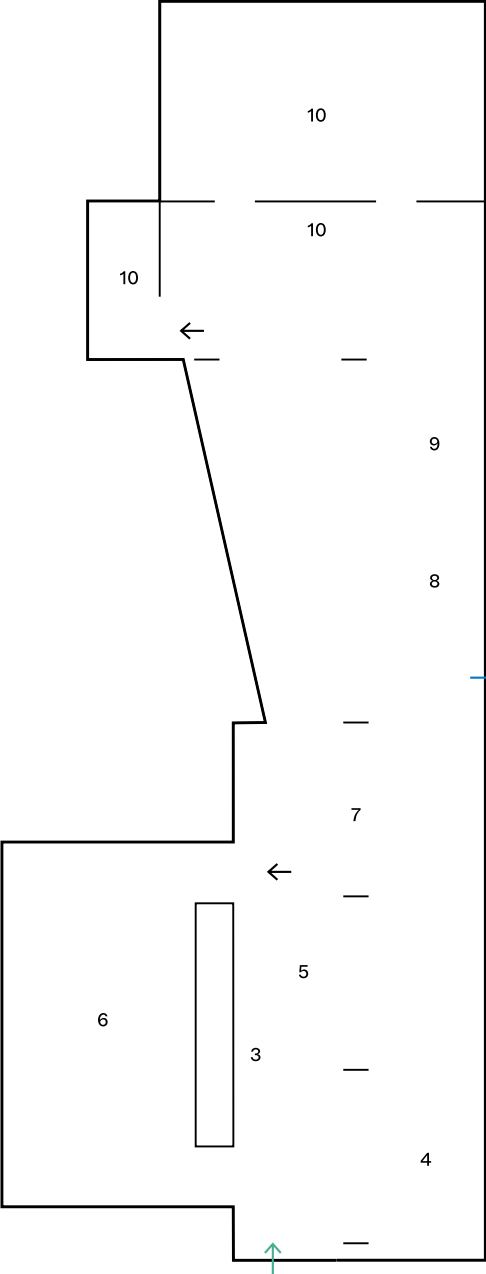
HD video, acoustically transparent screen, video synthesizer, original sounds by Roger Tellier-Craig

These undulating works are preserved like visual fossil matter enclosed within this confined space with spatial sound. The videos reveal a digital substance that has been sculpted, transformed and altered, made of hypnotic images and raw electronic signals.

Level 0



Level -1



→ Exhibition continues on level 0: 11. Oscillations

La Gaîté Lyrique would like to thank its partners:

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Aurae – Sabrina Ratté.



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 Cultural institution
of the City of Paris

La Gaîté Lyrique

La Gaîté Lyrique is a cultural institution of the City of Paris established in 2011 to explore post-Internet cultures. It's a place where new artistic practices and communities that originate from the Internet and its technologies are exhibited, imagined, experimented with and passed on every day. A space for discovering insights into our virtualized era, La Gaîté Lyrique offers a critical, offbeat perspective on emerging art forms and popular culture. Designed as a multidisciplinary platform, the institution is open to all from Tuesday to Sunday for visiting an exhibition, enjoying a concert, attending a conference, having a drink, eating brunch, or taking part in a workshop as a family.

Accessibility

All spaces at La Gaîté Lyrique are accessible to persons with reduced mobility. Tours and projects adapted to disabled visitors can be planned together with you. Get in touch with us!

Environment

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