

UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

YEL K. BANTO
LORENZO DE BELLIS
FELICE BERNY-TARENTE
ANGÈLE CHALLIER FONTAINE
GEOFFROY «GARO» CLOP
BÉRÉNICE COURTIN
ORIANE EMERY
VIRGINIE EMONET
GAL & STEFANO
ALEXANDRA GALIAN
NAOMI GAMARRA
MELISSA GHAZALE
CLARA GÖTTE
NIELS HUNG
MARC KÄMPFEN
MATHILDE LESUEUR
MELODY LU
NOLAN LUCIDI
CAMILLE LÜTJENS
AXEL MATTART
LUDOVICO OROMBELLI
KE REN
MASSIMILIANO ROSSETTO
JULIE RYSER
SELINE SYMONS
IGIGO WU
ROMY YEDIDIA

SEASON
IN SEASON

09.07 – 03.08

UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

09.07 – 03.08

PRESS RELEASE

Created in 2020 by gallery owner Fabienne Levy, the Space Invasion program was born out of a desire to provide a platform where art students and viewers can interact. Open to all students from visual arts schools in Switzerland, Space Invasion offers candidates the opportunity to discover the challenges of exhibiting their work in a gallery: from project conception to implementation, including costs and development. Often unprepared for their arrival on the art market, Fabienne Levy wanted to give the students the chance to familiarize themselves with an exhibition space and how it works, as well as helping them to communicate and explain their work to the public and collectors. All sales go to the artists and the gallery covers part of the production costs of the works.

Each exhibition has a given theme around which the candidates submit their artistic proposals. By confronting themselves to these different topics, they explore and question the world around them, offering new and critical perspectives through their creations.

For Fabienne Levy, culture should be open to all, and art a catalyst for social change, inviting everyone to see the world with a new perspective. Space Invasion aims not only to give a voice to young artists, but also to engage audiences in dialogues about the issues of our time.

For this third edition of Space Invasion, FABIENNE LEVY Gallery has selected 27 students from various Swiss art schools to its premises in Lausanne and Geneva. They were chosen among a hundred applications received from all over Switzerland in response to a call for submissions issued by the gallery from September to December 2023.

The shortlist includes students from ECAL (École cantonale d'art de Lausanne), HEAD (Haute école d'art et de design) in Geneva, and ZHdK (Zürcher Hochschule der Künste), among others. They will be exhibiting in the Geneva and Lausanne spaces.

This year's theme "Unprecedented Times" explores the notion of situations that are exceptionally unique, with no previous examples or parallels in history. The term is often used to describe events or circumstances that are highly unusual, unpredictable and far-reaching, making them difficult to deal with or understand on the basis of past experience. They designate periods of significant challenge and change, where traditional responses may be inadequate and innovative solutions are often called for.

We invite you to come and discover the works of the students who have invaded our gallery space.

Opening and meeting with the artists (in French and English):

Tuesday 9 July, 6-9 pm
Rue des Vieux-Grenadiers 2, 1205 Geneva

Wednesday 10 July, 6-9 pm
Avenue Louis-Ruchonnet 6, 1003 Lausanne

Contact: info@fabiennelevy.com / +41 21 711 43 20



Yel K. Banto, *Shards as new beginnings*, 30 x 35 x 40 cm, glazed stoneware and various objects found along rivers and streams, 2024.

I woke up to a sound I'd never heard before. While trying to understand what it was, I slowly opened my eyes and looked at the horizon. The sky was still dark, but it was gradually brightening. As the sun rose, I noticed a creature sitting on a ruin in the middle of an endless landscape of stones, bricks and broken concrete. The sound seemed to come from them, yet it also felt like it surrounded me. As I stared at the creature, I noticed a little seedling that had just started to grow next to me.



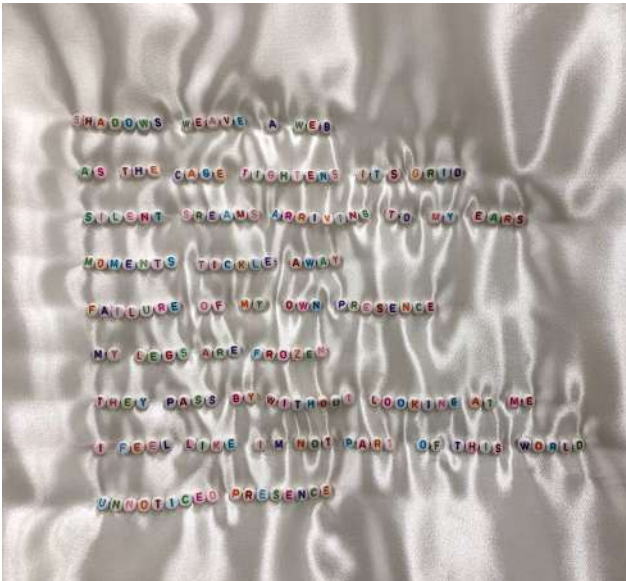
Lorenzo de Bellis, *They call me other names*, installation, wooden candelabras, 2024.

The sculpture consists of three elements: a monolithic dark podium, adaptable in size but typically the size of a table for two to six people; twenty-six wooden candelabras, each piercing through a thin plastic veil; and a protective plastic veil reminiscent of those used to cover household items. The podium supports twenty-six candelabras, symbolizing each year of the artist's life. During gallery hours, the candelabras are shrouded under the plastic veil, which is removed after hours to expose them.



Felice Berny-Tarente, *I Crave*, 4'25", video installation with sound, 2024.

This video installation was thought out around the figure of the escapee. The avatar personifies a remnant. His voyage is imprinted with tragic and comic emotions, where repetitions exacerbate his obsessive journey. It captures an inability to cope or break out of mental loops, as in this vacant act of running and undergoing this performance. The mantra "I crave" resonates as a non-ending inferno.



Angèle Challier-Fontaine, *Unnoticed presence, Intrusion and Forging a path in the dark*, textile installation, 2024.

The three pieces, although distinct, form a coherent whole that explores the relationship between traditional textile techniques and the digital realm of video games. The triptych raises questions about the value attributed to different types of work and leisure in contemporary society. Video games, often perceived as superficial entertainment, are now being re-evaluated as essential coping mechanisms in the face of an increasingly uncertain and complex world.



Geoffroy « Garo » Clop, *American Dream* [detail], oil on canvas, 180 x 300 cm.

Yet another journey on public transportation, surrounded by unfamiliar faces. Daily, multiple sources of distraction (like the little virtual window in our pocket) lead us to avoid eye contact, find refuge in our mental space in the blink of an eye, and become a passing shadow. But not this time. We avoid interaction, we fade away. So why these inquisitive looks? Why have they come out of their torpor to stare at us like this? Can we escape their scopesthesia by looking away or closing our eyes?



Bérénice Gaça Courtin, *NatureaCulturea*, jacquard weave, silk, wool, silver thread, cotton, aluminum, bioplastic, ceramics, 3D printing and glass, variable dimensions, 2024.

“NatureaCulturea” weaves elements of tradition and innovation, interconnecting narratives. Bérénice Gaça Courtin’s alphabet serves as a vessel for hidden messages, back to the origins of binary code. It starts from an investigation related to her polish grandfather Kazimierz Gaca that was decoding the Enigma Machine. She invites ancient symbologies like the Slavic goddess of weaving Mokosh through a “Natural Intelligence” coming from a fusion as an interpretation of Donna Haraway.



Oriane Emery, *Flammes Jumelles*, acrylic on canvas, 190 x 90 cm, 2024.

Flammes Jumelles is a series of four paintings. It's a work on color and text. I add color, then wash it away, and so on. I'm interested in the circulation of memory, its opacity and transparency. The sentences I've written, then erased, are imbued with violent memories, traumatic experiences. Through water, the repetition of gesture and color, I emancipate myself from them and inscribe them publicly. The public is invited to apprehend them both as paintings and as traces of what shapes and builds us.



Virginie Emonet, *Surrender*, film brise-vue sur miroir, 120 x 20 cm, 2023.

Surrender is a mirror adorned with a frosted paper sticker forming the word "Surrender," meaning "to give up" or "to surrender." Suspended at a height that prevents the viewer from seeing their reflection, it challenges our self-perception by diverting the primary function of the mirror. This artwork explores the theme of the exhibition by questioning the authenticity of our presence, often imposed by various means of current representation.



gal & stefano, *comme des poulets dans le poulailler*, video installation, 2024.

gal & stefano create an intimate space and challenge the viewer to break it. By peeking in a hole of a chicken coop, it is possible to see two people intimately feeding each other store-bought chicken. The piece boldly challenges the foundations of contemporary vegetarianism. Does abstaining from eating excessively produced and slaughtered chicken necessarily make us morally superior, or are we still victims of the system? The video features kiki chan and gal, who broke his seven-year vegetarian streak for the performance.



Alexandra Galian, *It Is What It Is... Here And There*, oil on canvas, 175 x 225 cm, 2024.

A « bow tie » shaped canvas recalls the exhibition space, a vaporous yet meticulously depicted image of daisies opens up a space charged with narrative potentials for the spectator to project themselves onto. The foreground reminds the viewer of the flat nature of the painting and its materiality. The canvas, which once was a space for projection, has become autonomous yet situated, like a window open on its own condition of existence.



Naomi Gamara, *Las flores también tienen hambre*, ceramic, wood, metal, rhinestones, beads, beeswax, 60 x 60 x 70 cm, 2024.

Inspired by the Andean Baroque, Naomi explores the forms of hybridity and grotesque sculpted into the colonial architecture that can be seen around Lake Titicaca. Through research based on anthropological texts and colonial chronicles, as well as pre-Columbian narratives, textiles and ceramics, the artist attempts to reconstruct a myth by recounting a journey between identity and cultural hybridity, where the boundaries between historical - mythical, human - non-human and artificial - organic blur.



Melissa Ghazale, *Artist at work, video, 2023.**

*Artist At Work** is an unfinished work revealing the process of the artist attempting to make a work in a time of crisis. It was supposed to be the documentation of a performance the artist made in 2016 that was put on hold because of the political climate. Extra thanks to: The Incompetents (Tabbal/Yared), Firas el Hallak, Aelia Hazil, Miha Vipotnik, M.B., B.M., G.R., J.T.



Clara Götte, *REST*, special intervention, 2023, ongoing.

Inspired by Tricia Hersey's book *Rest Is Resistance*, this work is a meditation on the political power of rest. While exploring the topic through research, experimentation, and conversation, the process of embroidery particularly holds space for slowing down. Art production, exhibiting, and resting merge together: The act of creation intertwines with the display, leisure intertwines with labor, and exhibition extends beyond a mere showcase to the facilitation of collective repose.



Niels Hung, *Curiosity never killed the cat*, acrylic on canvas, 13.8 x 10 cm, 2024.

My practice is transitory and stems from an education as a painter constantly being questioned. A tautological link engages in a permanent dialogue between the studio and production. In fact, between the street, my practice, and history. My painting results from a condensation of information that translates into the establishment of a simple plastic language associated with a repertoire of mental and/or real images.



Marc Kämpfen, *Marsupials And Singing Birds*, oil on cotton, [details of] 4 panels; 30 x 60 cm, 35 x 60, 60 x 60 et 35 x 60 cm, 2024.

This painting originates from a tourist boat trip on the Daintree river I made some time ago in Australia. Looking back at this trip, which was, at that time, a very superficial or naive look, very much on the surface, I wanted to paint my own distorted perception. Looking at myself looking at the river and how "average tourism" narrows our gaze on nature. The painting mixes modes of representation and the four panels have each a slight change in perspective. Inspired by Bi Gan's film *Kaili Blues* and a quote from the UNESCO website on the wet tropics of Queensland, it blends cinematic and panoramic views of land and tourism.



Mathilde Lesueur, *Language of water*, video installation, 2023.

“Language of Water” is a video installation that explores the details of oxygen in an environment. It evokes the notion of preserving bodies in water, inspired by the innovative process of cryonics. The contemplative yet asphyxiating atmosphere of a human in a state of wakefulness can be interpreted in different ways, giving rise to the sensation of not being heard when trying to express oneself, or an apprehension about a possible future immortality.



Melody Lu, *Which is preserved must die*, sculpture, mixed media, 2024.

Two boxes made of frosted glass, with objects of emotional attachment displayed inside. The blurred glass allows the visitors to see partially that there is something inside the boxes but doesn't allow them to perceive it clearly, creating a distance between them. This embodies also the feeling of frustration that comes up when you are apart from what you love and supposed to live with, but also facing the impossibility of truly living with it.



Nolan Lucidi, *Sculpture for a sex worker* [detail], gel transfer on anodized aluminium, varnish, perfume samples: La Nuit Trésor Lancôme; Bel Ami Vétiver; MySelf YSL; H24 Hermès; Only the brave Diesel; Eros Versace; Phantom Paco Rabanne; Idôle Lancôme; Fame Paco Rabanne; Gucci Rush; Gucci Guilty; Boss Hugo; Gentleman Givenchy; Going Bang Emil Elise; L'Homme Idéal Guerlain; Bathing in a Daydream Emil Elise, 35 x 175 x 20 cm, 2024.

Reconstructed rooms from memory where the artist engaged in intimate encounters as part of his sex work. Each perfume sample has been chosen and worn by name and scent to meet the client's expectations and perform a specific fantasy.

Camille Lütjens, *Stars Don't Stand Still in the Sky*, ink and oil on canvas, 80 x 105 cm, 2023.



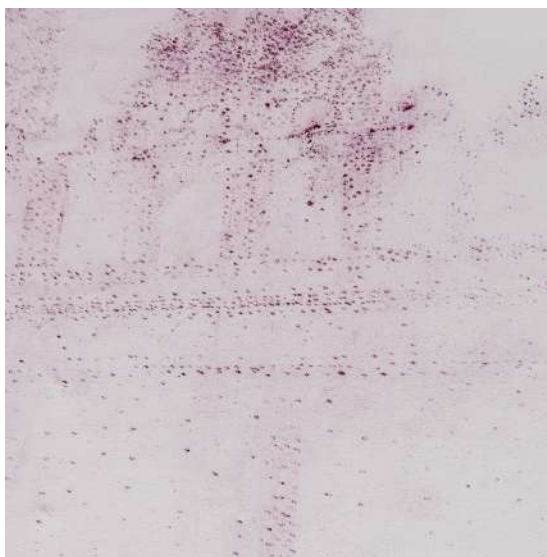
I work primarily as a painter, focusing on the dialectic between Image and Painting. I perceive painting as a technology of the sensible, enabling the chromatic and formal resolution of signs plucked from the media flow. I juggle with the tension that opposes the discursive potential of signs and their abstraction into illegibility, shifting between pictorial genres in search of frozen points of tension. My works for Space Invasion explore conflicting dynamics and seem to incite mischief.

Axel Mattart, *Be not afraid*, acrylic on canvas, 165 x 100 cm, 2024.



In my practice, I'm interested in recurring shapes and colors that have the particularity of touching a collective and optical unconscious. Emerging in different eras and contexts, they question our relationship to motif and abstraction in the plurality of histories and cultures. These figures appear in my paintings in the form of organic motifs that, like fractals, can echo the infinitely large as well as the infinitely small. They invite us to reconsider our relationship with nature and the world around us.

Ludovico Orombelli, *Sinopia* [detail] pigment on wall, variable dimensions, 2024.



Sinopia is the result of a research on the codes and techniques underlying the perspective constructions of Renaissance painting. The backdrop of a XIVth century fresco has been emptied of its figures and transferred on the gallery's architecture with *pouncing* - a technique traditionally employed to make preparatory drawings on walls. The work reveals its fundamental structure, questioned by the volatility of the pigment that composes it.



Ke Ren, *L'Empreinte IV*, carrara marble installation, approx. 35 x 40 x 10 cm, 2020-2024.

Like all those who build monuments, the artist desires that what is inscribed on the stone be preserved for a long time; what is recorded captures everything the artist said in a day, a functional expression of the daily life of an ordinary person, but by using a solemn and ritualistic act to preserve it, it explores the boundaries between triviality and history, temporality and eternity; when we look at the words again, are they really so insignificant?



Massimiliano Rossetto, *Jannis' river*, inkjet print, lavender paper mounted on canvas, wood, staples, 180 x 250 x 5 cm, 2023.

“Jannis’ river” is where they used to swim as a child, a place whose waters and landscape continue to hold profound significance within their memory. This artwork reimagines this cherished scenery in a contemporary context, utilizing fragments of lavender-colored paper on canvas to bridge the gap between past and present. Through meticulous layering, a new collective memory emerges, perceptible only from a certain distance. This artwork pays tribute to the enduring power of memory, the intangible, and serves as a bridge uniting the present with the past.



Julie Ryser, *Étimiled*, base: mirror panel 40 x 40 x 40 cm; painting: photo montage printed on canvas, 150 x 100 cm, 2024.

This work explores the dynamic between individual perception and imposed structures. It transforms the gallery space into a playground where the viewer becomes both observer and participant. By challenging the conventions of traditional frameworks, it encourages us to rethink our relationship with art and our ability to go beyond the set limits. The scenography invites an immersive experience where freedom of perception and questioning are at the heart of artistic exploration.



Seline Symons, *Le temps fera les choses*, installation, MDF, clay, carpet, variable dimensions, 2024

My art practice focuses on forms and sculptures inspired by architecture and industrial objects. Their shapes are transformed into a sculptural language, inviting a reevaluation of how our world is constructed and reflecting our daily visual interactions. In these unprecedented times, the installation stands as a promise of reflection and hope. It takes viewers on a trip through nostalgia, to understand the past and inform the future of the unknown. Symbolized by a sculpture of a railway signal - a consistent rhythmic echo of the relentless march of time.



Igigo Wu, *Metabolism: Experimental Forest and Oumagatoki: When the day meets the night*, oil on canvas, 140 x 160 cm, 140 x 160 cm, 2024

This series of works was inspired by the Taiwanese geopolitical landscape, featuring a specific type of plantations, where I spent most of my childhood: Experimental Forests. In a personal dialogue with the natures in Taiwan, my body absorbed, memorised, and crystallised the colonial and historical legacies embedded within my identity and my ambiguous nationality. As if they were soils and various bodies of water, I metamorphose oil and paints into flesh and blood, in the realm of painting.



Romy Yedidia, *COZY, (Don't get old)*, stilettos, concrete, rebar, 48 x 30 x 21 cm, 2023.

COZY reflects on the Western archetype of feminine success: “boss bitch”, or in academic terms: “neoliberal feminist” – a trope embodied by figures like Beyoncé, the Kardashians, Jennifer Lopez, and Gwyneth Paltrow. Through their shared capital, power, and influence they set impossible standards for women. This collection of concrete-stuffed high-heeled shoes questions whether symbols associated with feminine oppression can in fact be reclaimed as statements of empowerment.

Space Invasion - List of students per school

 = exhibited in Geneva

 = exhibited in Lausanne







ECAL :

- Angèle Challier Fontaine – Master Visual Arts 
- Axel Mattart – Master Visual Arts 
- Felice Berny-Tarente – Master Visual Arts 
- Lorenzo de Bellis – Master Visual Arts 
- Ludovico Orombelli – Master Visual Arts 
- Mathilde Lesueur – Bachelor Photography 
- Mélody Lu – Master Visual Arts 
- Oriane Emery – Master Visual Arts 
- Seline Symons – Bachelor Visual Arts 
- Virginie Emonet – Bachelor Visual Arts 



HEAD :

- Alexandra Galian – Work.Master, Visual Arts 
- Bérénice Gaça Courtin – Work.Master 
- Geoffroy “Garo” Clop – Bachelor Visual Arts 
- Ke Ren – Master TRANS 
- Melissa Ghazale – CCC Master 
- Naomi Gamarra – Work.Master 
- Niels Hung – Work.Master 
- Romy Yedidia – Work.Master 

ZhDK :

- Camille Lütjens – Master of Fine Arts 
- Clara Götte – Bachelor of Fine Arts 
- Gal & Stefano – Bachelor of Fine Arts 
- Igigo Wu – Master of Fine Arts 
- Marc Kämpfen – Master of Fine Arts 
- Massimiliano Rossetto – Master of Fine Arts 

Others :

- Julie Ryser – ex. ECAL Bachelor Graphic Design 
- Nolan Lucidi – Master Fine Arts, FHNW - Institute Art Gender Nature, Basel – ex. ECAL Bachelor en Arts Visuels 
- Yel K. Banto – Bachelor Choreography SNDO - Amsterdam currently – ex. Head Bachelor Fine Arts HEAD 