

Sarah Illouz

Marius Escande

**Looking for a
future ancient
technique.**

Key words :

Felt

felt.international

Low tech/High tech

Primary and local materials

Context

Collective

Streaming

Wool

Wikipedia

Golden Fleece

Diorama

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Marius Escande

Marius was born in the French Alps in 1994.

He graduated from the Sorbonne in Paris in cultural mediation, and then did his master's thesis in the Art-Based Research seminar at Keio University with Professor [Masayuki Okahara](#).

He graduated from the Ecole de Recherche Graphique (ERG) in Performance/Installation under the guidance of Belgian artist and teacher [Joëlle Tuerlinckx](#).

He has been playing music since 1999, curated [ERG Galerie](#) from 2018 to 2021. In 2023, he joins the board of the [Fédération des Arts Plastiques](#). He is the co-founder of the art collective and récupérathèque [Gilbard](#) opened in 2018, the co-founder of the experimental streaming project ergTV started in 2018 and the art collective [DowDareDou](#) born in 2019.

Through transdisciplinary and contextual approaches, he tries to bring together the natural and the supernatural with concrete poetry to reflect on an overly abstract reality. He likes to give value to what does not seem to have any and to make the useless indispensable.

Residencies :

CAIRN centre d'art, Digne-les-Bains, France, one year, 2023/2024.
Thorenc (as part of the Thorenc d'art prize), one week, France, 2022.
Maisons Daura, three months, Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, France, 2021, in collaboration with the Maisons des arts Georges et Claude Pompidou (MAGCP) in Cajarc.

Exhibitions :

Impact, Espace de l'art concret, Mouans Sartoux, from 25/06/2023 to 7/01/2024
Ce qui nous oblige, Villa Arson, Nice, from 29/09/2023 to 07/01/2024
67° Salon de Montrouge, Montrouge, from 05/10/2023 to 29/11/2023
Prix artistique de Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tournai, Belgium, 15/10/2022 to 20/11/2022
Thorenc d'Art Prize - Villa Arson, Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux, France, 17&18/09/2022
Thorenc d'Art, Thorenc, France, 23&24/07/2022
We Work O'Clock, Deborah Bowmann, Brussels, Belgium, 2022
MAGMA festival, MAGCP, Cajarc, France, 2021
MAGMA festival, Lieu Commun, Toulouse, France, 2021
Labo Demo, Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, Paris, France, 2021
InProcess : Supervision, MAD, Brussels, Belgium, 2021



Gulliver, Kunsthalle Pompei, Brussels, Belgium, 2021
FrigoBox, Galerie Arielle d'Hauterives, Brussels, Belgium, 2021
KELDER KAMER MUSIC, Cultuurcentrum Strombeek, Strombeek, Belgium, 2020
Galerie des futurs, Bozar, Brussels, Belgium, 2020
ergTV 2 : erg x La S grand atelier : choolers division's release party, Project(ion) Room, Uccle, Belgium, 2020
Algomancia, erg Galerie, Brussels, Belgium, 2020
Dow Dare Dou, Maison des Arts d'Uccle, Uccle, Belgium, 2019

Awards :

Prix Thorenc 2022

Grants :

Grant for creation/production in visual arts, Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles, 2021-2022

Publications :

Labo Démo #3, Catalogue d'exposition, 2022
02#96, Spring 2021, Portfolio, page 41-49, 2021

Sarah Illouz

Sarah was born in Paris, France in 1997.

She graduated in textile design from [Ecole Duperré Paris](#) (2015-2018), and was the assistant of the painter [Peter Zimmerman](#) in Cologne, Germany for a few months at the same time.

She graduated from the [Villa Arson](#) (DNA), Nice, France, in 2020. She was then an Erasmus student at the ERG Brussels in 2020-2021, with the Belgian sculptor [David Evrard](#) and the German artist [Christine Meisner](#), in the master's degree course Pratique de l'art/outils critiques. She obtained her master's degree (DSAA) at the Villa Arson in 2022. She continues her research in the field of textile and furniture design with materials of local origin. She draws with pencils, wood or wool, and makes this practice the creation of a research on habitat, beyond the distinction between nature and culture.

She collaborates with the American graphic designer and art director [Susanna Shannon](#), starting with the publishing group [Pierre-jo](#).

Residencies :

Maisons Daura, three months, Saint-Cirq-Lapopie, France, 2021, in collaboration with the Maisons des arts Georges et Claude Pompidou (MAGCP) of Cajarc.
Residence in Thorenc (as part of the Thorenc d'art prize), one week, France, 2022

Exhibitions :

Impact, Espace de l'art concret, Mouans Sartoux, from 25/06/2023 to 7/01/2024

Ce qui nous oblige, Villa Arson, Nice, from 29/09/2023 to 07/01/2024

67° Salon de Montrouge, Montrouge, from 05/10/2023 to 29/11/2023

Prix artistique de Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tournai, Belgium, 15/10/2022 to 20/11/2022

Thorenc d'art Prize - Villa Arson, Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux, France, 2022

Thorenc d'Art, Thorenc, France, 2022

MAGMA festival, MAGCP, Cajarc, France, 2021

MAGMA festival, Lieu Commun, Toulouse, France, 2021

Labo Demo, Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, Paris, France, 2021

InProcess : Supervision, MAD, Brussels, Belgium, 2021

FriBox, Arielle d'Hauterives Gallery, Brussels, Belgium, 2021

Galerie des futurs, Bozar, Brussels, Belgium, 2020



Awards :

Prix Thorenc 2022

Grants :

Support for creation/production in the plastic arts, Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles, 2021-2022

Publications :

Special broadcast Audibergue, Sarah & César: winners of the Thorenc prize, Radio Monaco, 2022

Labo Démo #3, Exhibition catalogue, 2022

02#96, Spring 2021, Portfolio, page 41-49, 2021

Artistic Approach

We are a duo of artists born in early 2021. Our practices met during a residency at Maisons Daura for an exhibition at the Maison des Arts Claude et Georges Pompidou in Cajarc, France. Sarah lives in Paris and Marius in Brussels, where. Marius graduated from the ERG (School of Graphic Research, Brussels) and Sarah from the Villa Arson (Nice, France). We explore sculpture, installation, textile art and digital art. We design devices, ways of living, connecting and thinking together, ways of living and learning with others and locally.

We explore ancient techniques, their evolution and history, such as wool felting and pastoralism; stagliola - stucco or fake marble; the history of wig-making; ancient painting techniques; cabinet-making and carpentry; or the link between mythologies and contemporaneity. We work with a certain economy of means. Unlike a production line, we build a genealogy of objects that are related in form and content. Our works are spatio-temporal and emotional markers that connect people and/or places: the techniques and forms used vary according to the context and the era to which they echo. Materials are worked in their

entirety. For example, the offcuts from the previous work are the raw materials for the next, or one of its details may become the setting for a new installation.

At the heart of our practice is the felt technique. Felt is both an old and a new material. It is a non-woven, waterproof fabric, obtained by pressing and agglutinating animal hair or wool, which has the property of absorbing noise and shocks. Our work was born of a common interest in this ancestral technique. Low-tech is the new high-tech if you think in terms of ecology.

At Les maisons Daura, we worked with wool from the Causses du Quercy, supplied by a local breeder and by one of the last French quilters, Jean-Michel Mallent, of Au fil de laine. We used what for them was waste: shearing of sheep that are not bred for their wool; residues from industrial carding.

We have researched the whole process of producing the material, through the stages of scouring, washing, carding, combing, dyeing before felting, in order to understand the interests, to develop our own technique and tools according to

our needs. We want to get to know and promote this local material and these ecological techniques in order to bring this noble material with its forgotten properties back into our daily lives.

What interests us is the link between artists and craftsmen, skills, places, breeders and materials, and the plasticity of this material, without any necessary distinction between environments. As Dewar and Gicquel say: «The reason for using a material is the subject. But the reverse is also true.

We are currently working with the Parc naturel des deux Ourthes, in the Belgian Ardennes, which has enabled us to select specific breeds of wool directly from breeders and shearers, and to buy from them at a fair price, as the Belgian wool market is under reconstruction and subject to a sort of monopoly at the moment.

Another of the major axes we are developing is a precise research on myths and mythologies around wool, such as The Golden Fleece, and Jason and the Argonauts, based on the assumption that these mythologies have a strong echo with our contemporary world and could

help us to answer questions such as why make art today, with whom and for whom, and to reflect on a more benevolent relationship towards nature.

Good things take time.

We see our research and practice as part of what we call a more-than-human blockchain of technologies, production/creation: people, sheep, myths constitute a creative ecosystem that produces our practice.

À propos

«Sarah Illouz and Marius Escande Born in 1997 and 1994, live and work between Paris and Brussels

The duo practice of Sarah Illouz and Marius Escande is driven by an ethic, a way of life, that embraces every stage in the production of their plastic ecosystems: from the search for materials, to the formal results, via various circumstantial collaborations.

The use of felt and its deployment in tapestries, for example, led them to immerse themselves in the wool industry in Belgium, meeting breeders, shearers, sorters, traders and industrialists through a dialogue established at every stage of the transformation of the material, used not only for its plastic qualities, but also for the symbolic charge it carries with it.

This means returning to the source of the material, but also accompanying it through all its cycles, beyond its finitude, as they put into practice circularity and exhaustive reuse, where each scrap is used, finds a new place, a new function and acquires a surplus of existence. Contrary to capitalist production standards, their plastic expression, and all the stages that

precede it, can only take place over a necessarily long and drawn-out period of time, in keeping with one of their leitmotifs, «good things take time».

The material is worked in an exacting, hand-crafted process, which nevertheless incorporates the accidental, welcoming the fortuitous, which blossoms from experimentation with the material and each other's gestures, which blend and merge until it is no longer possible to tell which hand is responsible. While the ecosystems and items in each installation migrate from context to context, each element is non-reproducible, like a unique time capsule of the encounter between a precise moment and a given action. From the unpredictability of the material and the temporal rift they carve into the productivist rhythm, living spaces emerge, habitats for togetherness and ways of living, where tapestries, bookcases and doors take on a different agentivity, one that is no longer merely functional, but aesthetic and organic.

Guided by Emmanuelle Coccia's assertion that «We only really inhabit things», they don't care

what form a house takes, preferring its content and the rich energies that populate it. Each element interacts with the others, according to patterns derived from their drawings, traveling between mediums as if in a great game of assemblage. They invite interaction, from the participatory design of the devices to encounters with the public, who can spontaneously pass through the doors, see through them, pick from or decorate the library, and above all come together and gather.

Plastic transpositions also enable them to explore the dominant historical narrative and the formulation of commonly accepted myths, moving back and forth between different versions and contemporary updates. Placing artifacts of power here and there, hijacking totemic objects, drawing on the various references and derivatives of tutelary narratives, such as that of the Golden Fleece, they rewrite history, overturning pre-established roles, while offering a counterpart to current quests, sketching out avenues for emancipation from the mechanisms of domination and success, to widen

access to action and creation. Sarah Illouz and Marius Escande, resolutely choosing a stealth art, an ecology discreetly slipped into the materiality and the work, give life to constellations of fragments, quotations of moments past or to come, caught up in a tangle of narratives, archaic and current legends.»

Andréanne Béguin



Rain is Gold, Phrixos, Hellé et Chrisomallos, double-sided felt tapestry, 320x200 cm, 2023.



Rain is gold, installation, Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux, from 25/06 to 29/10/2023 (view 1/4)

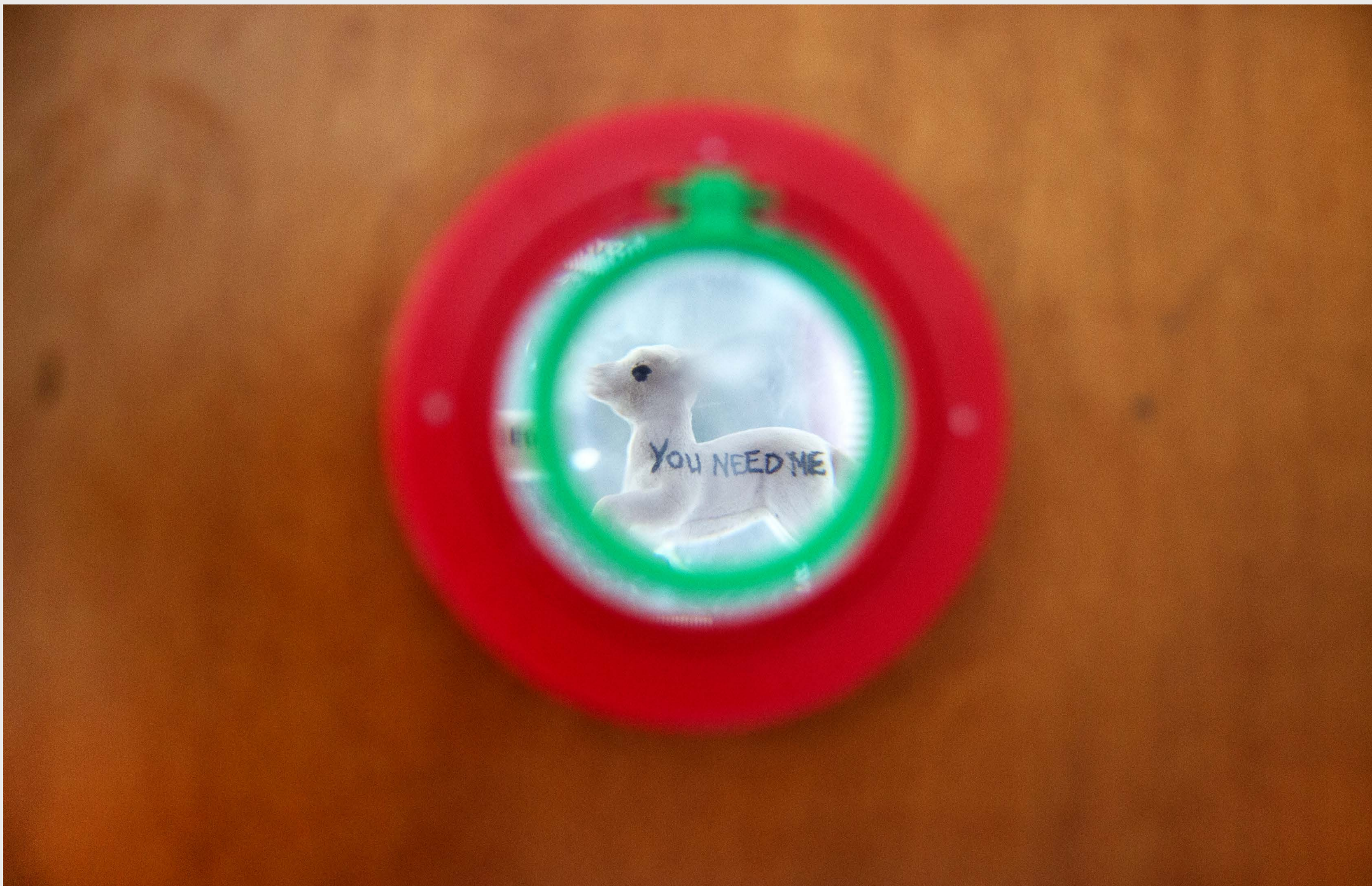
1. **Happy little accidents (Paravent III)**, wooden folding screen, 192 x 150 x 3 cm, 2023.



2. **Rain is Gold, Phrixos, Hellé et Chrisomallos**, recto-verso felt tapestry, 320x200 cm, 2023.



3. **La constellation du Navire Argo**, velvet curtain and plastic dinette, variable dimensions, 2023.



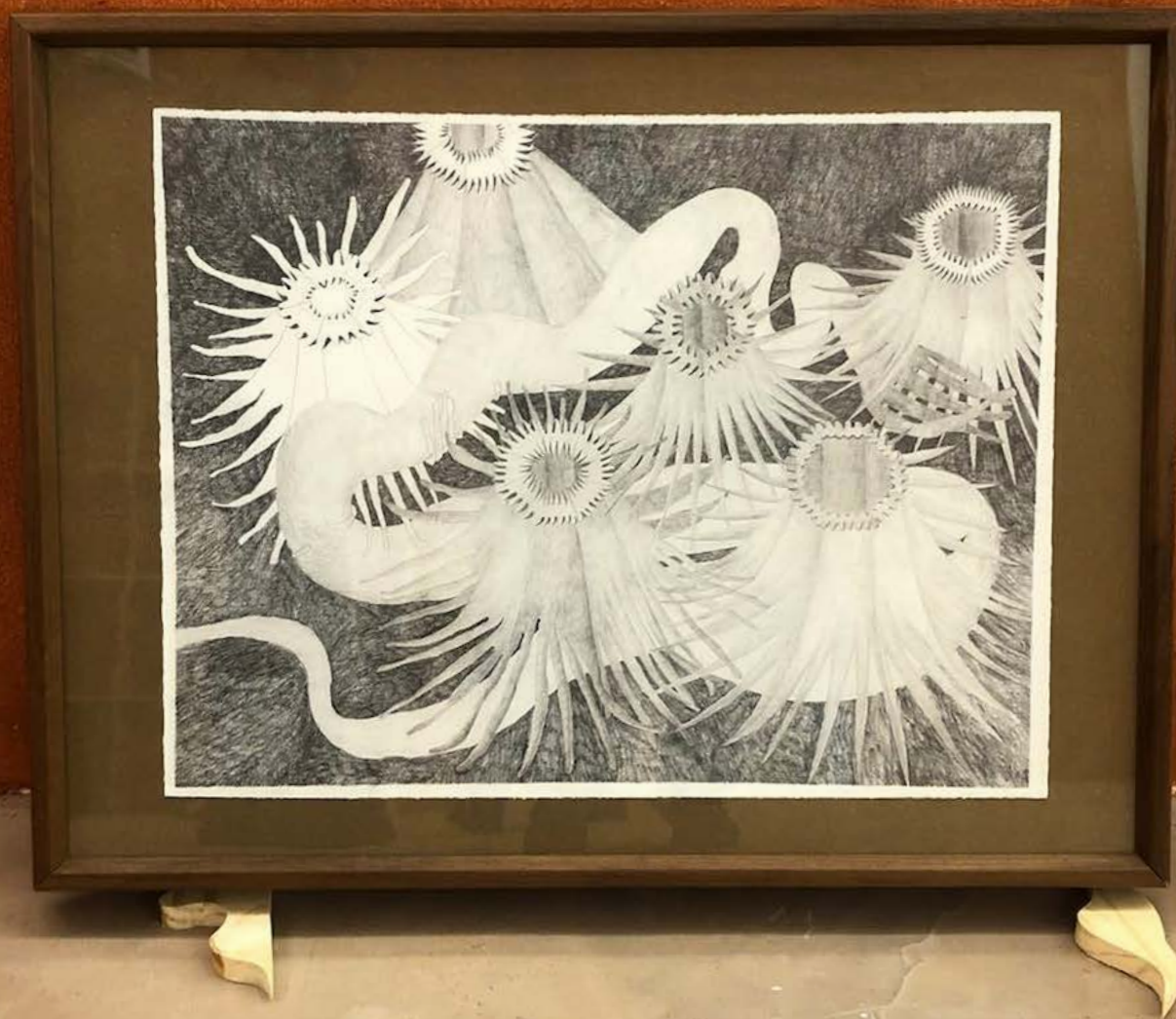
4. **En 2023, le prix de vente de la laine ne couvre plus le coût de la tonte**, wooden door and magnifying insect box, 200 x 70 x 3 cm, 2023.
5. **Le dragon de Colchide**, graphite drawing, 65 x 80 cm, 2021 (view p.15).



Cabinet de curiosité collectif en argile, bookshelf, table, chairs, clay plaster and collective collection of objects, 8 x 5 x 4 m, Maison des Arts Georges et Claude Pompidou, Cajarc, March-May 2021. **Scale for scale**, felt tapestry, 320x200 cm, 2021.







Sans titre, pencil on paper, 50x65 cm, 2021.



Mobilier, table and chairs, glued laminated pine, 2021.

Cabinet de curiosité collectif en argile.

The previous installation is a collective work that continues our research.

The tapestry entitled Scale for scale is an encounter between a drawing by Sarah (attached) and the shadow of the stepladder used to enlarge it.

It is framed by a triple pine bookcase constructed with mortise and tenon joints, without the addition of hardware or other fastening systems. The silhouettes of the posts are directly inspired by the lines of the tapestry. It is an invitation to inhabit for all the artists in the exhibition, like a collective cabinet of curiosities. The furniture - table and chairs - is designed and created in the continuity of the library. The whole thing is wrapped in clay-based plaster dug out of a phosphatière in one of the car parks in Saint-Cirq Lapopie near the Daura houses where we were in residence.

This installation is an exhibition device allowing plastic, formal and literary dialogues, as well as a framework for performances and discussions.





MAGMA, Saloon door, glued laminated pine, 2.50 x 1 m, Festival Magma closing weekend, MAGCP Cajarc, May 2021.



In the shadow of the ether we adore the bodies that entangle our magic technologies, Felt tapestry, 320x220 cm, MAD Brussels, June 2021.

**In the shadow of the ether we adore
the bodies that entangle our magic
technologies.**

With this second tapestry we paid particular attention to the flatness of our work, if we talk about felting, the flatter the object the stronger and more durable it is.

To achieve this, we have explored different mechanical methods of felting.

We have the will to go beyond the materiality of the object by working in parallel on a digital version.

The «green key» colour is a bridge between the technique of felting and new technologies that are omnipresent and accessible such as digital animations, cryptocurrencies and NFTs. Intangible and (almost) incomprehensible magic changes, evolves but never disappears. It is up to us to give them shape and make them our own. How can we integrate old techniques into an emerging economy?





Nous n'habitons vraiment que les choses (!?), DNSEP installation, Villa Arson Nice, June 2022, Chestnut bookshelf, bench, door, and collective collection of objects.







Nous n'habitons vraiment que les choses (?!.)

«In reality, the house-form - the floor, the roof, the walls - is, by definition, the uninhabitable. It is an abstraction: because instead of being based on the reality of gestures and the world of things and feelings that populate the life of each of us, it reduces them to a purely geometric fact. In fact, space, from a moral point of view, does not exist. We never encounter it. We inhabit a world that is always populated by other human beings, plants, animals and the most disparate objects. And these objects are not pieces of expanse: they do not so much occupy a volume as they open it up, make it possible. The bed, the dishes, the table, the computer, the fridge make real a dimension that is otherwise only imaginary and abstract: a pure mental projection in which it is literally forbidden to enter and impossible to inhabit. We only really inhabit things. It is the objects that house our bodies, our gestures, that attract our gaze, that prevent us from colliding with the square, perfect, geometric surface of the house, that protect us from its violence. The house-box is, from a technical point of view, a form of desert, a purely mineral structure.»

Ennanuele Coccia, *Philosophie de la maison, L'espace domestique et le bonheur*, Ed. Rivages, 2021, p.67-68.





«**Prière de laisser cet endroit comme vous désirez le trouver en entrant**», Sculpture for the Thorenc 2022 Prize, installed on the summit of Audibergue. Door and uprights in local pine and larch, hinges to and fro, June 2022.



Good things take time, Jury installation, ERG Brussels, Master 2 PAOC, June 2022, 3 tapestries, bookcase, saloon door, screens, moose fleeces and needlework machine.



Good things take time.

Here, felt tapestries, streaming videos and prototype machines (needleworkers) are mixed together.

This installation includes our third tapestry: Good things take time, in the centre. It is the first tapestry made with wool donated by the Parc Naturel des Deux Ourthes, after it arrived more than 3 months late. It inspired us to choose the image of a landscape mixing domesticity and natural elements, nature/structure/architecture, on an undyed background of black natural wool, Zwartebleess. The long waiting time, the long felting process and the aim to hang it freely in the middle of a space resulted in the first back with a typographic design. Good things take time is also the first tapestry we made in our new studio, with a more professional installation.

On the floor, on the raw fleeces, the videos Gulliver, by Marius (see p.25 and 26) and Matière primaire, by Alexander Marinus, are shown. The latter is a research on the textile industry in Belgium and its different actors, mainly in the sheep's wool, hemp and flax industries.

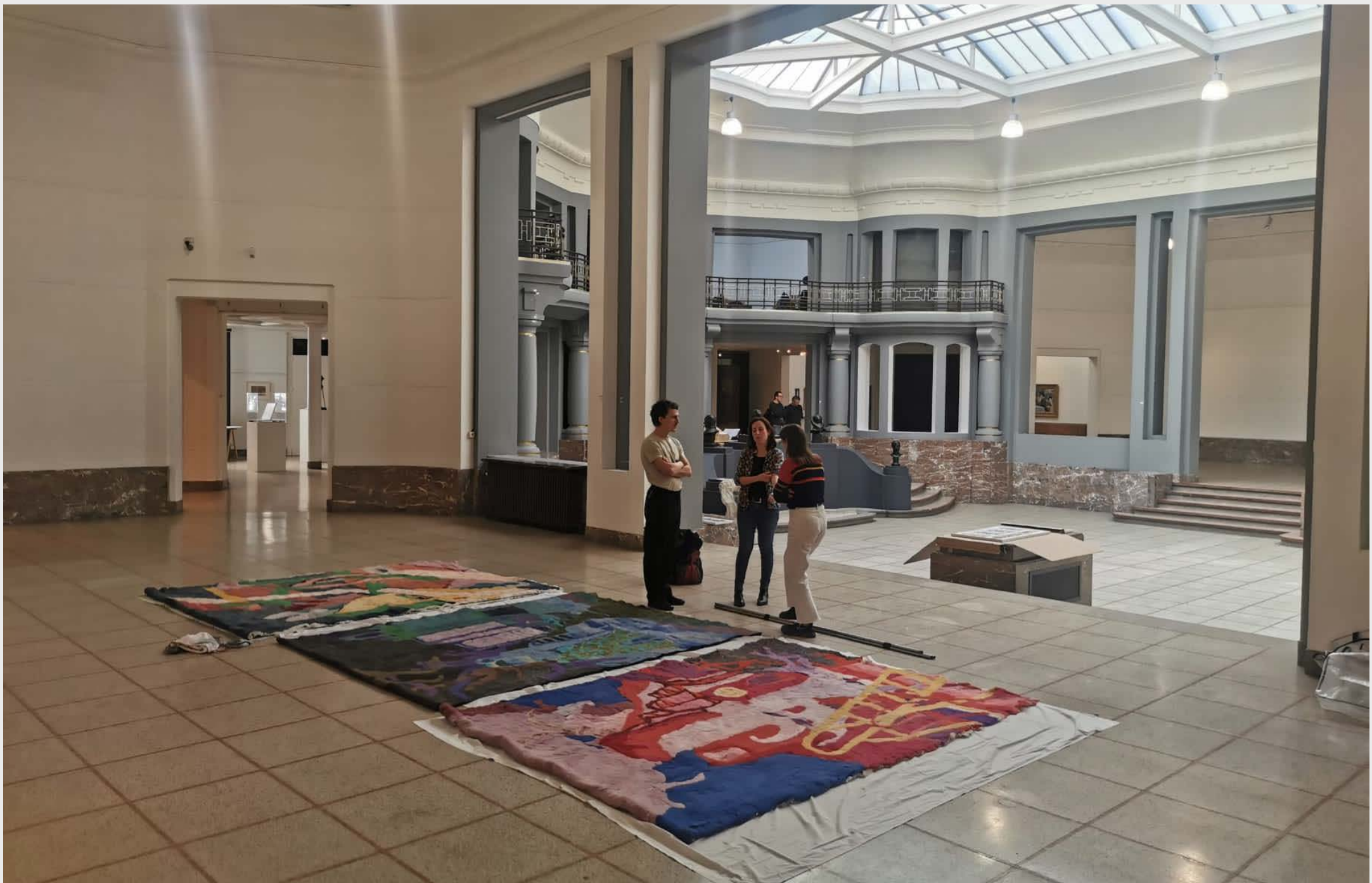




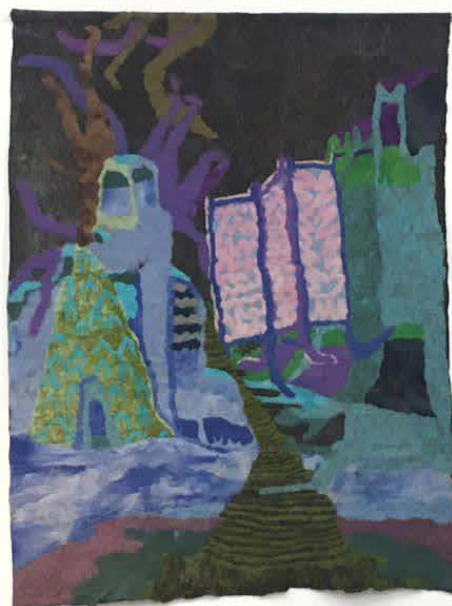
Journées Européennes du patrimoine - Prix Thorenc d'art, Group exhibition of the winners of the Thorenc d'art 2022 prize, Sarah Illouz & Marius Escande, Cesar Audebert and Kevin Delpech, Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-sartoux, 17 & 18 September 2022.







Montage for the **Prix Artistique de Tournai 2022**, Group exhibition of the prize winners, Museum of Fine Arts, Tournai, from 15 October to 20 November 2022.

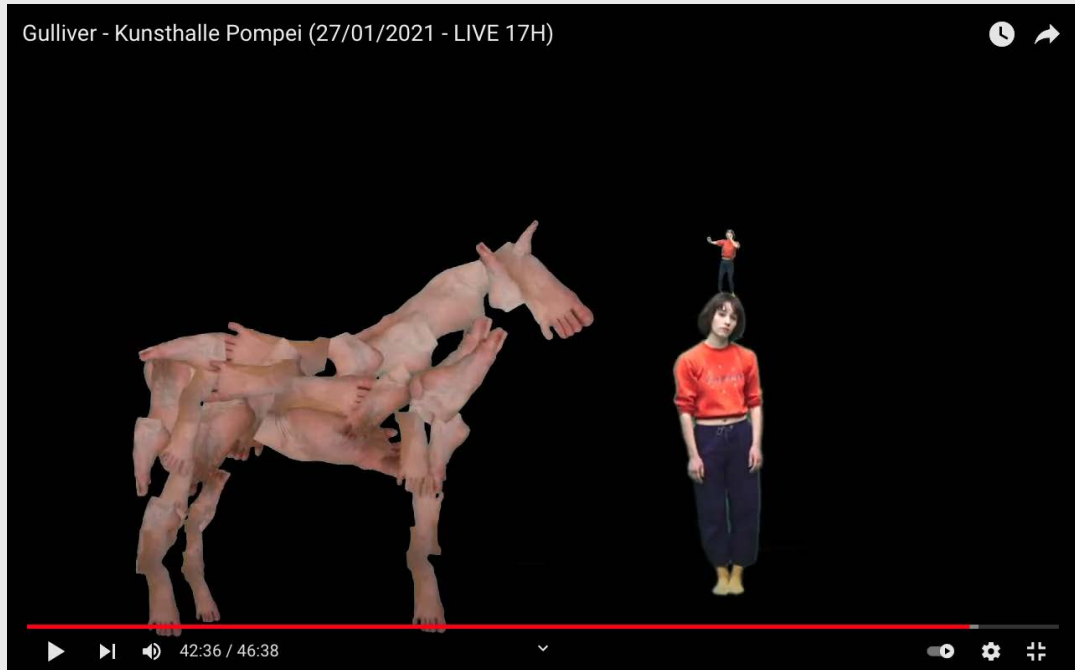
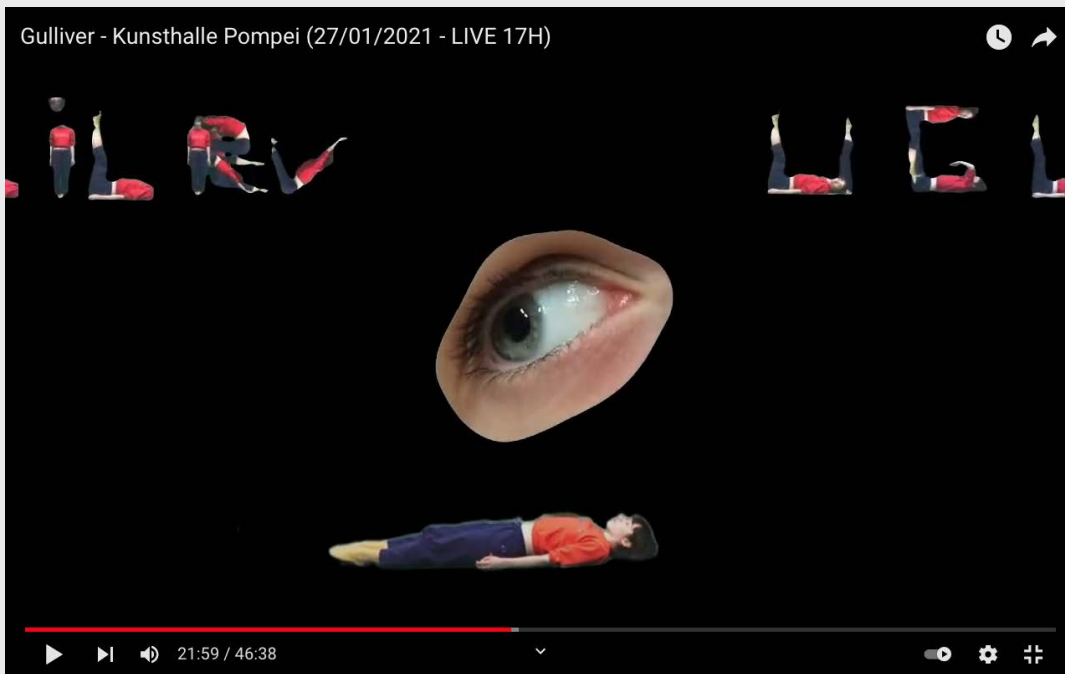


Prix Artistique de Tournai 2022, Group exhibition of the prize winners, Museum of Fine Arts, Tournai, from 15 October to 20 November 2022.



Prix Artistique de Tournai 2022, Group exhibition of the prize winners, Museum of Fine Arts, Tournai, from 15 October to 20 November 2022.





Gulliver, <https://youtu.be/sY7uVlJYVlI?t=2114>, live video, 46:38 min, 27/01/2021, with Jules Beaufiles, Martin Campillo, Garance Debert, Marius Escande, Jules Urban. Musical and choreographic reinterpretation of Gulliver's tale.



Ouverture du festival MAGMA, <https://youtu.be/wN8ZvVFNQUo?t=206>, Collective live stream, jour 2, 2h29, 20 mars 2021, Cajarc, France.



samedi 13 avril 2019



Carrefour 21 décembre, <https://youtu.be/er6dWLWXXsY?t=1468>, Reconstitution of the crossroad «21st décembre, Tirana, Albania» one year later in Brussels, during 58 hours, made from observation one year before (9 to 13 april 2019).
Project by Jules Urban, sound design by Marius Escande.

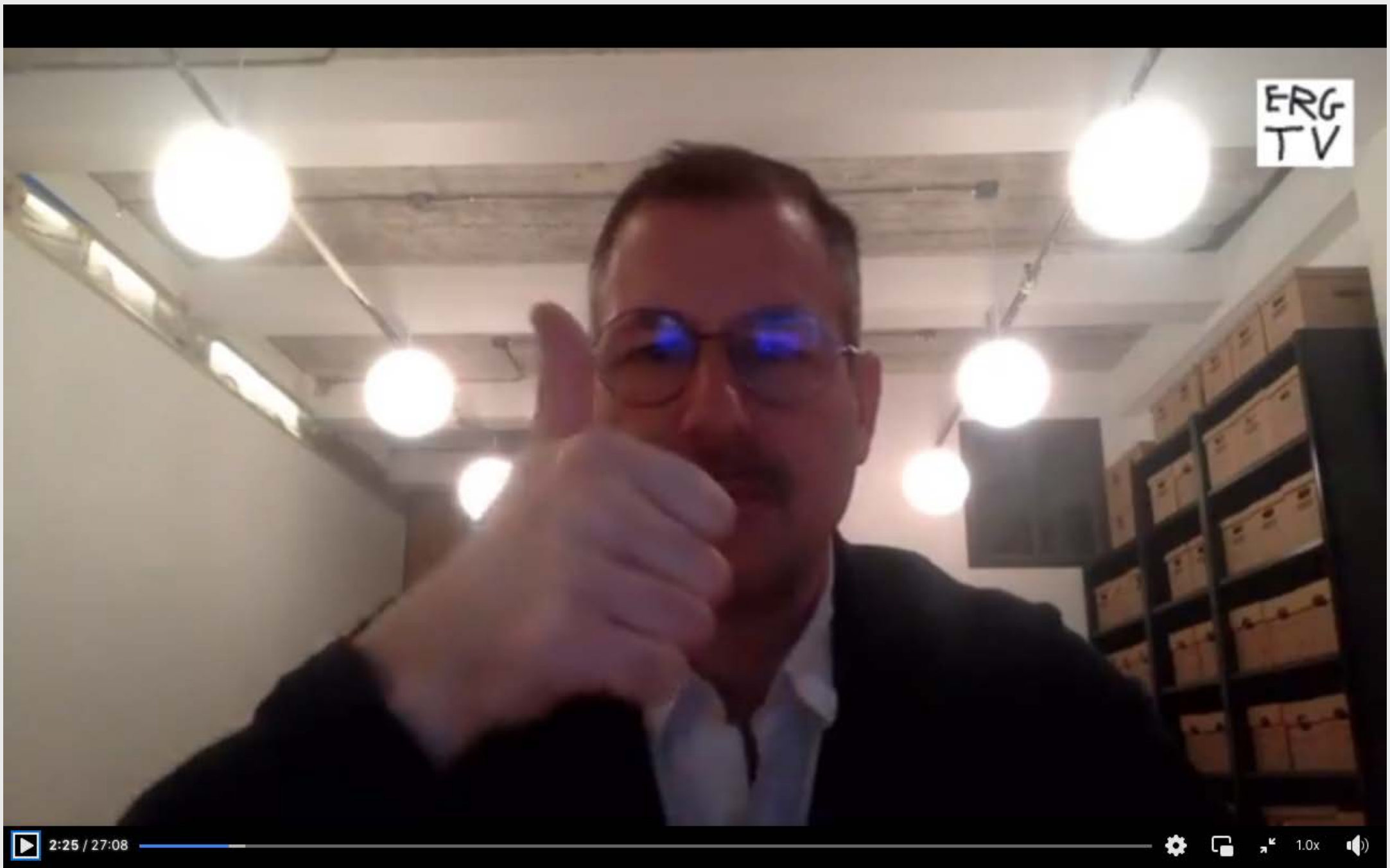




Erg⁵, <https://www.facebook.com/erg.tele/videos/261637985265393>, live stream, 4h10min, 20/06/2020, digital open doors of the ERG, Bruxelles on a private Minecraft server, built for the occasion, reproducing the whole school at 1:1. Produced by ErgTv and ErgoteRadio.



Erg⁵, <https://www.facebook.com/erg.tele/videos/261637985265393>, live stream, 4h10min, 20/06/2020, digital open doors of the ERG, Bruxelles on a private Minecraft server, built for the occasion, reproducing the whole school at 1:1. Produced by ErgTv and ErgoteRadio.



Kenneth Goldsmith for Place magazine x ErgTv, <https://www.facebook.com/erg.tele/videos/190316715730854>, live stream video, 27:08min, 12/03/2020, interview of the founder of Ubu.web, by Laurence Rassel and Gabriel René-Franjou, about copyrighting and web archives.