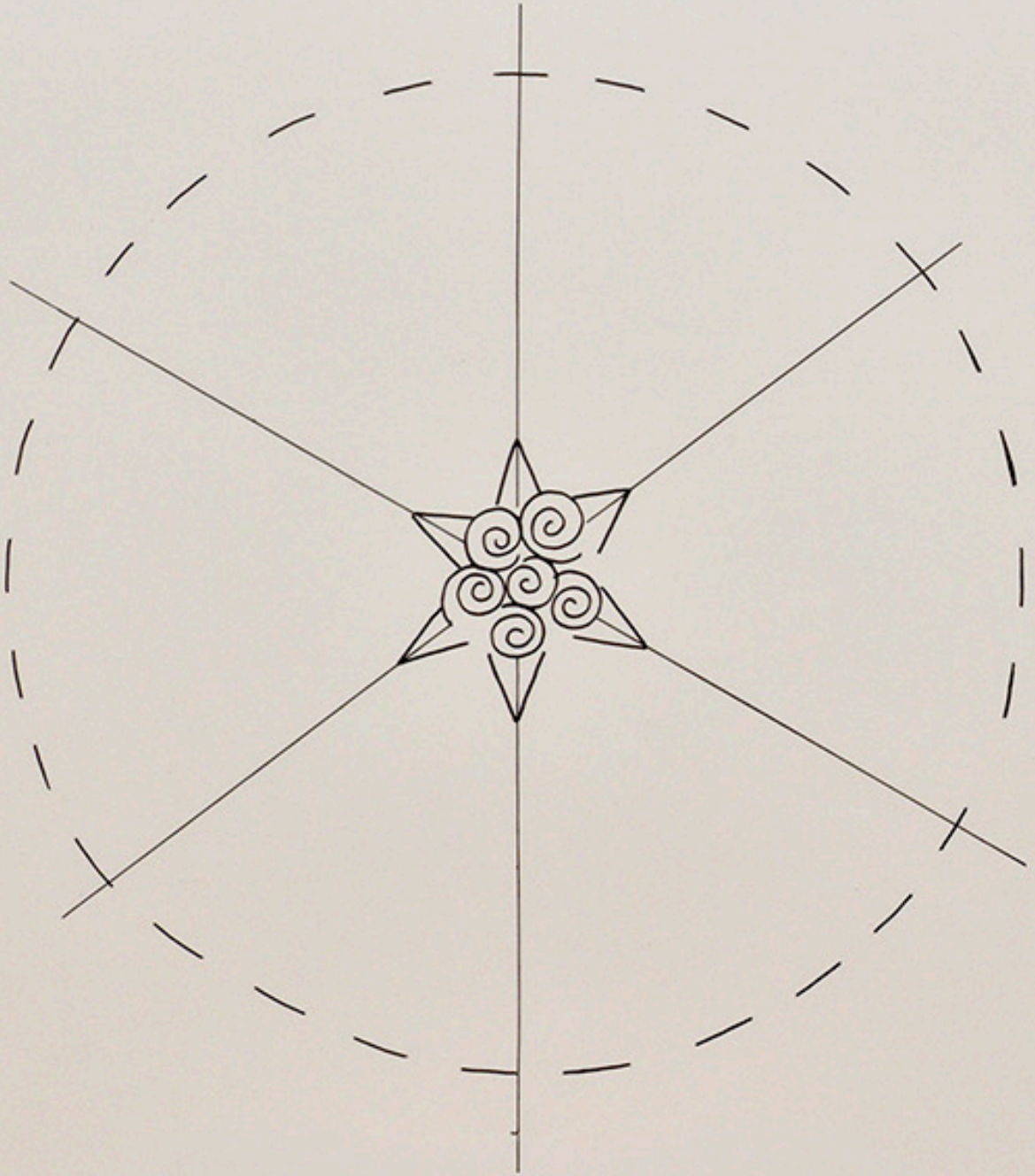


DEMANDE AU VIDE (ASK THE VOID).

DAVID ASKEVOLD HANNE DARBOVEN CHARLOTTE HOUETTE & COOPER JACOBY INÈS KIVIMÄKI BORIS KURDI PHILIPPE PARRENO NAOKI SUTTER-SHUDO

Curated by FRANÇOIS LANCIEN-GUILBERTEAU October 10, 2026–January 23, 2027 Centre d’art contemporain Passages, 9 rue Jeanne d’Arc, Troyes

The range of materials that can serve as vehicles for divinatory techniques is theoretically limitless. To be convinced of this, one need only browse the index of an encyclopedia of divination: anything found in this world—including egg-shells (oomancy), the movement of the eyelids (blepharomancy), the shape of an onion sprout (cromniomancy), the intervals between snowfalls (niphetomancy), and even cheese (the mysterious art of tyromancy)—can be used to predict the future. To become interpretable, a material need only be capable, in the hands of a diviner, of generating chance, lending itself to enumeration, or inducing an altered state of consciousness.

Divination is generally associated with folklore and tradition, but for those who practice it, it is a discipline by no means incompatible with pragmatism. In a relatively recent example, Genesis P-Orridge recommended, in a book devoted to occult techniques, replacing the traditional crystal ball with a television screen, thereby harnessing the hallucinatory potential of cathode-ray static.

There is nothing, then, to prevent an art object from becoming a divinatory tool.

Although the works that make up the exhibition *Demande au vide* (Ask the Void) do not directly refer to divinatory practices, they nevertheless inhabit a similar temporality. This oracular time, described by the musicologist and I Ching practitioner Phil Ford in his essay “Diviner’s Time,” is one of repetition, mirror effects, and meaningful coincidence. To picture it, one need only listen to an opera, where, “as in other works of art, signs throng like shoals of fish, coming together in tight and patterned arrays that would be astonishing if we encountered them in our everyday lives.” Yet, the author tells us, “in divination, we do so encounter them.”

The market realism that largely defines the mindset of the art world tends to make us forget that the exhibition, too, is a temporal medium. But unlike opera, cinema, or theater, where one attends a performance or screening, an exhibition is more like a zone that one passes through.

Since the most recent pandemic, timed-entry tickets have become widespread across museums. But make no mistake: it is the exhibition that adds us to its schedule, not the other way around. Our perception of an exhibition is therefore necessarily fragmentary, despite all the scholarly integrity that may have gone into its making.

If I were to place a work as an epigraph to *Demande au vide*, it would be Marcel Duchamp’s *With Hidden Noise* (*À bruit secret*), first made in 1916. My most recent encounter with *With Hidden Noise*—or at least with one of its replicas—took place during a trip to Los Angeles, in the gallery devoted to early twentieth-century European avant-gardes within LACMA’s permanent collection. There, this simple ball of twine compressed between two brass plates, concealing an unknown object chosen by the collector Walter Arensberg, presided among the Picassos, Arps, and Giacomettis, overlooked by the names of donors adorning the walls. Properly mounted on a plinth and enclosed beneath a Plexiglas cover, the piece made me think, for a brief moment, of a Petri dish containing a virus that had to be kept under strict confinement.

The works that make up *Demande au vide* likewise contain a hidden dimension, a shadowy area that spreads beyond administrative time like ink in water. At times austere, even mute, some of them seem to play with their backs to the audience, at odds with the here and now. Others engage more explicitly with the weird. I have tried to compose the exhibition like a piece of music, in which the works call out to one another across different periods and established lineages, each heralding the others like so many signs asking to be interpreted.

Later in his essay, Phil Ford reverses the analogy between divinatory time and operatic time: “Indeed, it might be that this temporality is musical time, that divination makes of human life a kind of music.”

One might readily extend this idea to visual art, provided one accepts the notion—somewhat heretical in our time—that an encounter with an artwork can enable us to create meaning.

François Lancien-Guilberteau.





François Lancien-Guilberteau, *SALVE*, 2026 – Ghost box, compressor, power amplifier, copper wire, incandescent light bulbs – Dimensions variable – Courtesy the artist – Photo: Aurélien Mole



François Lancien-Guilberteau, *SALVE*, 2026 – Ghost box, compressor, power amplifier, copper wire, incandescent light bulbs – Dimensions variable – Courtesy the artist – Photo: Aurélien Mole


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Inès Kivimäki & François Lancien-Guilberteau, *La Roche aux Folles* (The Madwomen's Rock), 2023 – Full-spectrum video, color, 12'06'' loop – Courtesy the artists – Photo: Aurélien Mole





Naoki Sutter-Shudo, *Bâton* (Stick), 2026 – Jacaranda wood – 175 cm – Courtesy the artist and Galerie Crèvecoeur, Paris – Photo: Aurélien Mole



Naoki Sutter-Shudo, *Bâton* (Stick), 2026 – Jacaranda wood – 175 cm – Courtesy the artist and Galerie Crèvecoeur, Paris – Photo: Aurélien Mole





François Lancien-Guilberteau, *SALVE*, 2026 – Ghost box, compressor, power amplifier, copper wire, incandescent light bulbs – Dimensions variable – Courtesy the artist – Photo: Aurélien Mole

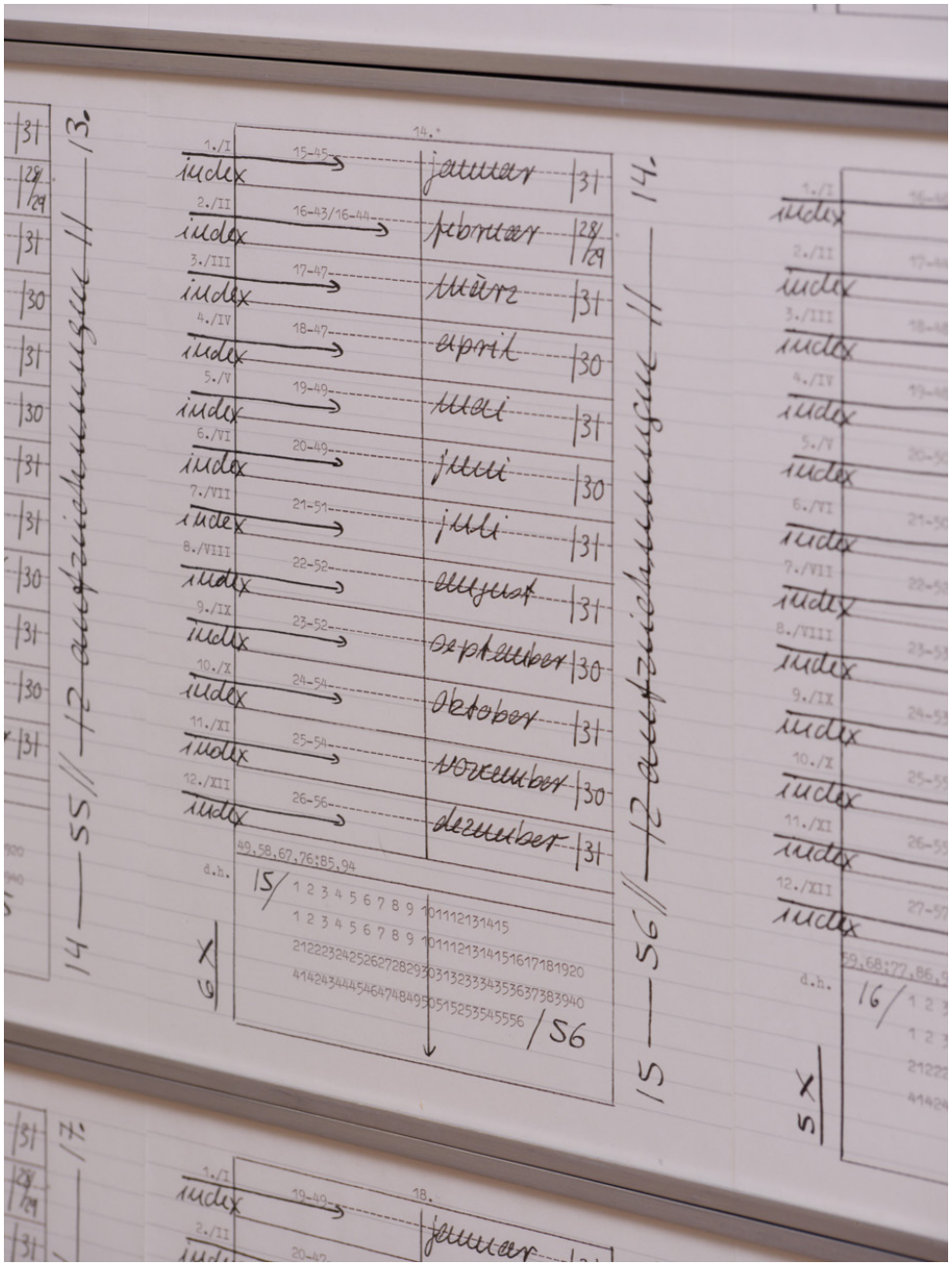




Philippe Parreno, *Cours de dessin : la pierre qui parle* (Drawing Lesson: The Talking Stone), 1994 – “Rocksolid” resin rock fitted with a speaker, amplifier and MP3 player playing a soundtrack restored and remastered by the artist in 2011, stereo sound, 22’ loop – 33 × 58.4 cm – Collection CAPC musée d’art contemporain de Bordeaux – Photo: Aurélien Mole



Hanne Darboven, *Ein Jahrhundert IA* (A Century IA), 1973 – Ink and typewriting on paper – 150 × 507 cm – Courtesy Frac Picardie – Photo: Aurélien Mole





Charlotte Houette & Cooper Jacoby, *Forgetter*, 2026 – Acrylic on canvas, wood, chrome-plated steel, electronics, resin teeth – 171 × 65 × 15.5 cm – Courtesy the artists – Production: Cocotte – Photo: Aurélien Mole




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Boris Kurdi, *Untitled*, 2025 – Graphite, colored pencil and pastel on paper – 75 × 56 cm (unframed) – Courtesy the artist – Photo: Aurélien Mole





Inès Kivimäki, *Free Wine*, 2025–2026 – Mirror, pump, silicone tubing, red wine, iPad, livestream – Dimensions variable – Courtesy the artist – Photo: Aurélien Mole









Naoki Sutter-Shudo, *Bâton* (Stick), 2026 – Courtesy the artist and Galerie Crèvecoeur, Paris – Photo: Aurélien Mole



David Askevold, *Taming Expansion*, 1975 – Photolithograph on coated paper, signed and numbered – 88 × 64 cm – Courtesy Sophie Vinet – Photo: Aurélien Mole





Inès Kivimäki, *Free Wine*, 2025–2026 – Mirror, pump, silicone tubing, red wine, iPad, livestream – Dimensions variable – Courtesy the artist – Photo: Aurélien Mole

DAVID ASKEVOLD



Born in 1940 in Conrad (Montana, USA); died in 2008 in Halifax (Nova Scotia, Canada).

After studying art and anthropology, he joined the faculty of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) in Halifax in 1968, where he taught until 1992. There he set up the Projects Class, an experimental program inviting artists such as Dan Graham, Lawrence Weiner, Robert Smithson, Joseph Kosuth, Mel Bochner and Lucy Lippard to propose protocols that the students were then tasked with carrying out. This experience helped make NSCAD one of the main centers of North American conceptual art.

Askevold developed a practice combining photography, text, video, drawing, sculpture, installation and, later, digital technologies. Drawing on anthropology, myth, dreams, the media and popular music, his work proceeds through unexpected connections and fragmentary narratives, constantly blurring the line between document and fiction.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

Made in 1971, *Taming Expansion* combines photography, text and diagram. The work recounts an attempt by a group of students to film rattlesnakes gathering inside a circle of branches. According to the account, the experiment was cut short when one participant was bitten by a snake and the video recording was accidentally destroyed. The lithograph thus becomes the sole trace of this event, with nothing to confirm whether it really took place.

HANNE DARBOVEN



Born in 1941 in Munich; died in 2009 in Hamburg (Germany).

After studying piano and then fine art in Hamburg, she lived in New York from 1966 to 1968, where she met Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre and Joseph Kosuth. This period proved decisive in the development of her work. Back in Hamburg, the city where she would spend the rest of her life, she developed a body of work based on a daily writing practice that she called *Schreibzeit* (“writing time”).

From the late 1960s onwards, Darboven devised a process of numerical translation based on the calendar. Each day is converted according to a calculation protocol that gives rise to a writing made of numbers, lines and repeated signs. Working several hours a day according to rules she set herself, she built a body of work in which the time of execution matters as much as the result.

Her vast ensembles of framed handwritten sheets are among the most emblematic forms of her work. Alongside these series, she also produced books, musical scores and large installations bringing together photographs, archival documents, objects and other items from her personal collection, making the time of writing, historical time and lived time collide.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

Made in 1973, *Ein Jahrhundert IA* is a series of one hundred and twenty drawings based on the transcription of the calendar of an unspecified century. By applying a system of calculation to each date, Hanne Darboven transforms the calendar into a writing made of numbers, abstract signs and typewritten notations. The century—the conventional frame through which we measure the story of our lives against that of history at large—becomes an expanse to be traveled through. The work thus unsettles the apparent self-evidence of the principles that govern our experience of time.

CHARLOTTE HOUETTE & COOPER JACOBY



Charlotte Houette was born in 1983 in Tours; she lives and works in Rome (Italy).

Winner of the Fondation d'entreprise Pernod Ricard Prize in 2024, Charlotte Houette has notably exhibited at the Centre Pompidou and at High Art gallery. She is a resident at the Villa Médicis for 2026–2027.

Cooper Jacoby (b. 1989, Princeton, New Jersey) lives and works in Paris.

His work has notably been exhibited at the Whitney Biennial 2026, the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, CAPC in Bordeaux, LUMA Westbau in Zurich and Swiss Institute in New York.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

This work is the first collaboration between Charlotte Houette and Cooper Jacoby. Brought together by a shared interest in optical phenomena, technical devices and the forms of attention they involve, the two artists combine their research here within a single apparatus bringing together painting and electronic devices.

In *Forgetter,* an abstract painting houses an alcove containing a motorized weekly pill organizer that releases resin teeth at regular intervals. As they accumulate on the floor, attention gradually shifts between the optical vibration of the painting, the rhythm of the electronic device and the presence of these bodily fragments scattered through the space.

INÈS KIVIMÄKI



Born in 1990 in Les Lilas; lives and works in Los Angeles (California, USA).

Inès Kivimäki's work has notably been shown at Nazarian Curcio, Phase Gallery and Soldes Gallery in Los Angeles and at Tonus and Treignac Projet. She is currently taking part in Counterpublic, the Saint Louis biennial (Missouri). She is also a co-founder of Timeshare, an independent exhibition space in Los Angeles.

Through multimedia installations combining objects, videos, digital technologies and physical phenomena, Inès Kivimäki builds environments in which different regimes of signs coexist. Her work explores the ways in which signs circulate and produce meaning. It brings together systems of interpretation drawn as much from contemporary technologies as from popular narratives, divinatory practices or the sciences, revealing the slippages that occur between them.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

Made in 2025, *FREE WINE* combines a drip of red wine falling from the ceiling onto a circular mirror with the live stream of the Irache wine fountain, on the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. The sound of the drip marks time in the space like a clock, while the video feed brings the time of the exhibition and that of the pilgrimage into contact.

BORIS KURDI



Born in 1990 in Strasbourg; lives and works in Paris.

A graduate of the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, he won the Fondation Pernod Ricard Prize in 2021.

Drawing is central to Boris Kurdi's work. Precision of gesture, reworkings, pentimenti and successive shifts all contribute to the construction of the image. The time of drawing is never linear: each intervention reconfigures those that precede it and opens up new compositional possibilities.

This temporality is reflected in an iconography that draws as much on technical drawing, design and museography as on illustrated books and the graphic world of Claude Ponti. Reintroduced from one work to the next, these motifs are recombined through new juxtapositions.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

The drawing shown in the exhibition belongs to a series devoted to the motif of the vase, which Boris Kurdi has regularly returned to for several years.

PHILIPPE PARRENO



Born in 1964 in Oran (Algeria); lives and works in Paris.

A graduate of the École des beaux-arts de Grenoble and the Institut des hautes études en arts plastiques in Paris, from the early 1990s he developed a practice unfolding through numerous collaborations, notably the project *No Ghost, Just a Shell,* of which he was one of the initiators, and the film *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait,* made with Douglas Gordon in 2006.

For Parreno, the exhibition is a medium in its own right. Films, sculptures, drawings, texts, light, sound and architecture are conceived as elements of a single composition. The exhibition becomes a succession of events, unfolding in time as much as in space, in which visitors experience a dramaturgy rather than a linear route.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

Made in 1994, *Cours de dessin : la pierre qui parle* is a protocol activated through drawing classes held regularly throughout the exhibition. In the space, a resin rock plays a soundtrack in which Philippe Parreno borrows the voice of Jean-Luc Godard, while participants draw to the rhythm of the narration. By giving speech to a stone, Parreno displaces the subject of enunciation and blurs the boundaries between subject, object and narrative.

NAOKI SUTTER-SHUDO



Born in 1990 in Paris; lives and works in Los Angeles (California, USA).

Naoki Sutter-Shudo grew up in Tokyo before returning to France to study at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris. A member of the Paris project space Shanaynay, he moved to Los Angeles in 2015, where the following year he founded Bel Ami, a gallery he still co-directs.

Sutter-Shudo's practice lies at the crossroads of sculpture, photography, writing and design. His work combines particularly meticulous craftsmanship with a marked taste for refined materials and vernacular objects. Forms gradually emerge from juxtapositions of materials, found objects and cultural references, through a slow, intuitive process of assemblage.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

The two works shown in the exhibition belong to a series made from branches found by the artist and patiently polished by hand, in sunlight, in the park next to his studio. The polishing accentuates their ramifications, swellings and irregularities, until they take on an ambiguous presence, wavering between the purity of the branch and the impression of an organic or parasitic outgrowth. This method of making echoes Georges Bataille's reflections in *The Accursed Share* on the sun as the primary source of energy and expenditure.

FRANÇOIS LANCIEN-GUILBERTEAU



Born in Brest in 1985; lives and works in Rome (Italy).

François Lancien-Guilberteau's practice unfolds across a wide range of media, from drawing and sound to video, which he approaches as tools for research and experimentation. It also extends to curating and writing.

His research currently focuses on the contemporary re-emergence of so-called "magical" forms of thought, and other modes of operation situated at the margins of rationality, as indicators of profound political and economic transformations.

His work explores ways of producing meaning and action in a context of global uncertainty.

ABOUT THE WORK ON VIEW

For *Demande au vide*, he presents an installation echoing his previous exhibition at Les Bains Douches contemporary art center in Alençon in 2025. It consists of a *ghost box*—a device used in parapsychology to detect invisible presences—connected to a power amplifier. The sound emitted by the ghost box is converted into an electrical voltage strong enough to light incandescent bulbs, which crackle in response to the variations picked up by the device.