

MAGASIN

Centre National d'Art Contemporain

PRESSION
LIBERTÉ
EXPRESSION

DAN PERJOVSCHI

10/04 - 26/07/2015

Opening on Thursday 9 April 2015 at 6 pm

Open days, Saturday, April 11 th & Sunday, April 12 th, 2015 from 2 pm to 7 pm

Guest curator : Hilde Teerlinck

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PRESS RELEASE

Dan Perjovschi, born in 1961 in Sibiu (Romania), is one of the major international artists working today. He represented his home country at the International Biennale of Venice in 1999 and has had exhibitions at the Tate Modern (2005), MoMA (2006), WIELS (2007) and the Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration in Paris (2014). His work belongs to important public collections such as CNAP, MoMA, Museum Ludwig...



After studying art he began his career as a newspaper illustrator, making editorial drawings for independent newspapers such as *Revista 22*, where he is still an active contributor. In parallel he created free publications, in the post-Communist environment of Romanian intellectuals.



Perjovschi saw the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 as a trauma and it pushed him to abandon the limits imposed by the printed media. Suddenly his drawings began to appear on all kind of supports : walls, windows, tables, sidewalks. The artist presents his creations wherever he can draw them.

His work can exist in every given context, and he wants them to be a direct reaction to the environment where they are presented. Interacting with the viewer, to fade away into a mass of images surrounding them, or disappearing under the footsteps of the passer-by who does not even notice them.

Free from any media constraint, he takes the actuality as his source of inspiration. Highlighting selected important issues, he paraphrases global history and everyday life in an ironic way. His site-specific interventions are so powerful, because they're ephemeral – they are a comment on a precise moment. The 'here and now' is Dan Perjovschi's main occupation. His drawings are directly confronted with reality and they are a sweet but often also a bitter comment on the world surrounding us.

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"Reality" is clearly the main theme of Perjovschi's work. The simple and direct lines in his drawings create a space for a satirical approach of the present and of conflicts with a worldwide impact. Socially engaged, he talks to us about capitalism, religion and problems of power and ego where we are confronted with on a daily basis. Some drawings are repeated over and over again to accentuate the fact that certain problems of our post-modern society seem never to be solved. The same questions are asked all the time, and their echo is a sarcastic proof of the "unbearable lightness of being" because it's clear that we're victims of an internal struggle and that we keep turning around. Dan Perjovschi is conscious of this when he cites Cioran, stating that "To be is to be cornered" (Cioran, *écartèlement*, Gallimard, 1979).

Answering the invitation of guest curator Hilde Teerlinck, Dan Perjovschi decided present in MAGASIN past installations (dating from 1991 > 2014), and a site-specific intervention. They take in consideration the specific historical and geographical context of MAGASIN as well as the history of Grenoble as birthplace of the French Revolution. With *PRESSION LIBERTÉ EXPRESSION* Perjovschi introduces a new slogan, his own unique manifesto of artistic values and contemporary creation.

HILDE TEERLINCK

RETURN TO THE STATE OF INNOCENCE



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« Art-speech is the only truth. An artist is usually a damned liar, but his art, if it be art, will tell you the truth of this day. And that is all that matters. Away with eternal truth. »

D.-H. Lawrence, 2003

The first thing we discover as a child is our ability for creative expression : drawing, painting or even dancing. As babies we discover at a very early age that we have a certain skill for communication and that we possess an ability to express our own thoughts and personal opinions in a spontaneous way with a simple pencil. We are able to define our personality quite automatically and become conscious of the power this gift or 'talent' contains.

If we want to compare these first spontaneous actions with the performances or creations of contemporary artists, one must of course immediately think of the surrealists and « l'écriture automatique » or Jackson Pollock's action paintings.

A very good friend of mine, the French artist Joël Bartoloméo managed to analyse this phenomenon in a very precise way in his video-piece full of humour 'A l'âge de 4 ans je peignais comme Picasso', where we discover his twins (daughter and son) exploring free expression, developing art forms that turn at a hilarious tempo from abstraction to expressionism to body-art.

It is clear that in this early stage of our lives we are still completely innocent. We do not pretend to really 'communicate' or to send messages through our creations or our 'art'. We just 'express ourselves' – in a free and authentic way. There is no direct control nor censorship. As children we can draw and paint whatever we want.

Of course, when we grow up we lose this 'state of innocence'. By learning to write and starting to understand the effects or impact of our actions and creations, our words, sentences and images, we become aware of our responsibility. As we get older, the importance what we do, say or show takes more importance.

If we decide as adults to become 'artists' (writers or painters) this has enormous consequences. People expect from us to adapt to a certain (unwritten) 'code'. We have to take the difficult decision whether to be (or not to be) 'politically correct'. We can play the rebels, the so-called 'controversial artists' or follow nicely the flock and only produce artworks that 'please' and are nice and comfortable to look at for the audience.

When considering the art produced by the Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi, I would tend to classify him rather in the 'politically incorrect' category. No doubt this choice was in part the result of the political situation he had to witness in his home country as a young man. Perjovschi grew up under the communist period, which started when the Russians forced King Michael I to abdicate and proclaimed a republic in 1947. The USSR first controlled the country economically and military for about two decades. The new leadership was then taken by the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, who started to pursue a more independent policy. Ceausescu's most ambitious project was to reimburse completely the country's foreign debt. To achieve this goal however, he imposed policies that impoverished Romanians and exhausted the national economy. He extended the authority of a real 'police



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state' and imposed a true cult of personality. This led to a dramatic decrease in his popularity and would culminate with his overthrow and execution in the bloody Romanian revolution of 1989. Since then, Romania has become a democratic republic, made efforts to adapt itself to a free market economy and even joined the European Union. The origin of Perjovschi's art has to be seen with this complex and often tumultuous political situation as a backdrop.

It's safe to say that artists were considered 'suspicious' or even 'guerrilla forces' under the communist regime. So the art world was condemned to turn underground and to invent clever, ingenious ways of expression in order to survive.

As we know that Dan Perjovschi started as a newspaper illustrator in his home country (working for '22' for example), always reacting almost day by day and on the moment to changes in society, it's almost inevitable to write about his work without having a look at the press. So – travelling from Bourges (where I live) to Grenoble (to prepare the exhibition) I decided to buy the French magazine 'L'œil' (march 2015) with the striking title : 'The place of the caricature in France, yesterday & now'.

The article I found is quite interesting: it starts with a historical introduction – « France is conscious of its large tradition of the (political) 'caricature' that accompanied or even founded the Republic» (Bertrand Tillier).

The list of examples is long and impressive: Cham (joking about the impressionists), Honoré Daumier (his splendid 'Gargantua'), Felix Valotton, Sam, Roland Topor, Philippe Vuillemin, even Victor Hugo ... And the article ends by giving the word to contemporary artists and editors of magazines illustrated by drawings instead of photos.

I'd like to evoke one of the most striking answers « The only responsibility of the artist is the fact to be sincere upon his own creation. (...) It's today's society, it's reality that is defying the artist » (Adel Abdessemed).

If Perjovschi has chosen the title "PRESSION LIBERTE EXPRESSION" for his exhibition, he clearly refers to periods (past and present) in which people are confronted with protest and contested art. But of course these words implicate quite a lot of other references. As the exhibition is staged in Grenoble, the slogan-like title immediately brings to mind that this region was the scene of a famous protest (the famous 'Journée des Tuiles' of 7 June 1788) that would later to be considered the (unofficial) start of the French Revolution.

On the other hand the last word 'expression' clearly echoes the discussions that are omnipresent in today's media about 'freedom of speech'. Since the terrorist attack in France against the authors of Charlie Hebdo, satirical journal, and similar attacks in Denmark, this theme is hard to avoid when one is confronted with drawings containing a certain political undertone. The word "freedom" (Liberté) is suddenly immediately associated with the notion of "Freedom of speech".

Perjovschi's drawings are direct and incisive, they consist of quick lines, finished in a moment, like in a hurry. It's his personal way of liberating a thought, putting an exclamation mark or suggesting a new interpretation of the reality that surrounds us.

But it's never a synthesis or a resume of a certain fact or situation. The artist likes the 'open end' of his proposals. That is why his images are so volatile too : they move from one surface to another – walls, windows, floors, newspapers, ... What is surprising is how he masters the economy of means when expressing himself. He never overloads an exhibition or exaggerates his way of presenting things. The chosen materials are cheap and humble : paint and marker pens. By being so anti-commercial, he confers to his art the extra-ordinary force to become an outsider element, free from all laws and rules and thus able to comment freely any political viewpoint, religious belief or economic interest. And as a nomadic artist he is also able to comment any particular context: local, regional, national or international. I'm sure he would like to define himself as » one of the victims of globalisation » - with a ☺ of course.

Hilde Teerlinck, Bourges Mars 2015



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DAN PERJOVSCHI

Dan Perjovschi was born in Sibiu (Romania) in 1961 and lives and works in Bucharest (Romania).

Dan Perjovschi is a visual artist mixing drawing, cartoon and graffiti and commenting on current political, social or cultural issues.

With his long experience gained in the early 1990s in post-Ceausescu Romania as a press artist, Dan Perjovschi brings to this graphic genre a rapid and incisive hand coupled with a dark humour. He has played an active role in the development of the civil society in Romania, through his editorial activity with *Revista 22* cultural magazine in Bucharest, and has stimulated exchange between the Romanian and international contemporary artistic scenes.

For the last 10 years or so, he has ceased to work only on paper, freeing himself to use chalk and marker pen on actual buildings of exhibition spaces, drawing with great freedom, even on floors, walls or windows.

His drawings are covered-over or erased at the end of exhibitions, but continue to circulate and are constantly renewed, mirroring the daily flow of information from which they originate. Perjovschi chooses to play with this process of erasure and recreation, of appearance and disappearance, sometimes involving the gallery visitors, who unbeknownst to them walk across art works, or knowingly draw themselves, even drawing over the artist's own drawings.

His work has been presented during solo shows at and Kunsthalle (Basel, Switzerland) in 2007, MoMA (New York) in 2006, Tate Modern (London) in 2005, CCC (Tours), 2012-2013.

He participates at group shows like Fifth Floor at Tate Liverpool and Sydney Biennial in 2008, The Magelanic Cloud at Centre Georges Pompidou Paris or the 52nd Venice Biennial in 2007.



Dan Perjovschi
The Room Drawing, Tate Modern, London, 2006 - solo show
Courtesy the artist and Michel Rein, Paris/Brussels

HILDE TEERLINCK

Born in 1966 in Brugge – Belgium.
Free-lance art critic and curator.
Curator at large Palais de Tokyo (2015).
Lives in works in Bourges.

After studying Art and Communication in Belgium and Spain, she started working as artistic director of the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona (1992), where she organized site-specific projects with Jeff Wall, Thomas Ruff or Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster.

Afterwards she moved to Perpignan, France, where she founded an Art Center ('Halle au Poissons') linked to the local Art Academy.

In 2002 she became the director of the CRAC Alsace in Altkirch.

From 2006 till 2014 she directed the Frac Nord-Pas de Calais in Dunkirk. Since her arrival she developed a nomadic program and worked on the relocation of the Frac Nord-Pas de Calais : the emblematic building called "AP2", a former shipyard, a site of aprox. 9000 square meters, located in the harbour of Dunkerque that completely was renovated by the architects Lacaton & Vassal (Paris) in order to host both the collection and a space dedicated to temporary exhibitions.

She is President of the Han Nefkens Foundation – Barcelona since 2012.

In 2013 she was named 'Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres' by the Ministry of Culture and Communication.

DAN PERJOVSCHI

PRESSION LIBERTÉ EXPRESSION

For this exhibition, Dan Perjovschi is investing the whole space of MAGASIN.

The “street”, the 900m2 central and atrium-like galleria (70 meters long and 20 meters high) is hosting the *A Transparent Retrospective* piece, produced in 2012 for the need of the CCC show.

This work consists of 23 glass structures on which the artist drew 23 years of artistic practices combined with the last 23 years of recent history. For Magasin, three new structures are added, matching the last three years that have past since the CCC exhibition.

In the other spaces, Dan Perjovschi is using his favorite tools, a marker, some chalk, and his free spirit to intervene on the walls.

He produces his drawings himself : 50% of ancient works reenacted, and 50% of new productions, inspired by the news and local context.

1 - *A transparent retrospective*, 2012

Posca marker on laminated glass, steel welded square tube structures, 26 elements, 208 x 176 x 100 cm (each) / 200 x 170 cm / 6 mm thick (glass)

Unique piece

Courtesy the artist and Michel Rein, Paris/Brussels

2 - *Newspaper anthology 1993-2015*

3 - *exPRESSION*, 2015

Drawing on newspaper.

4 - *Artist book anthology 2003-2014* *Grenoble Postcards Anthology 2015* *Newspapers and books for consultation*

5 - *Connecting*, 2014-2015

6 - *Chalk Reality*, 2015

7 - *Printed media room*, 2015

8 - *Mainstream*, 2009

A film by Anna Marziano, featuring Dan Perjovschi.

Length : 23 minutes 42 secondes

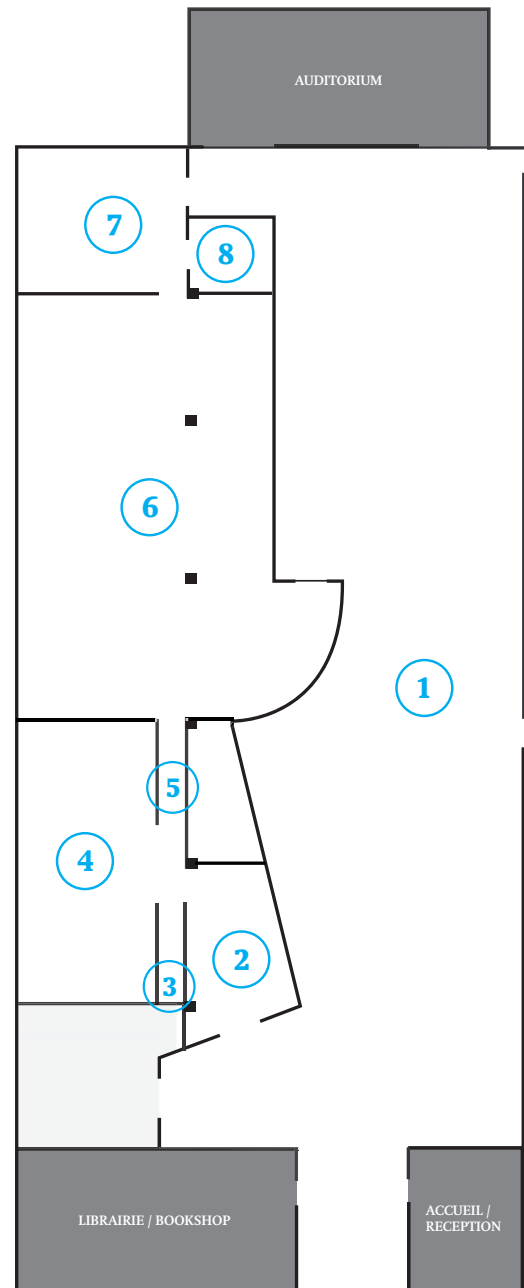
Direction, camera : Anna Marziano

Editing : Mélanie Bénard, Anna Marziano

Sound : Virginie Combet

Prod. Ateliers Varan

France, 2009

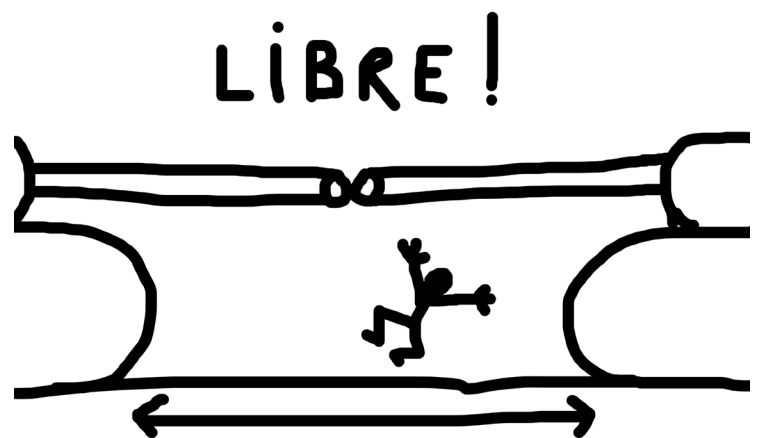


PRESS IMAGES

Dan Perjovschi, *sans titre* (PRESSION LIBERTÉ EXPRESSION), 2014, dessin au feutre noir. © Dan Perjovschi, MAGASIN-CNAC, Grenoble / Courtesy galerie Michel Rein, Paris.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

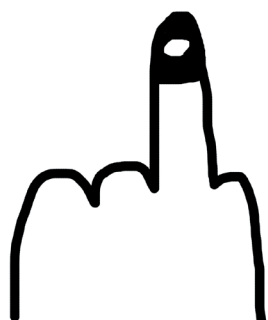
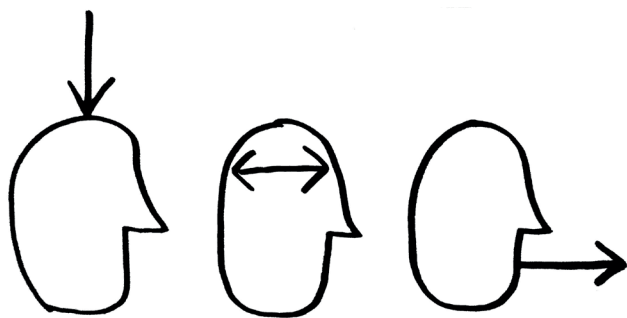
DEMOCRACIES OTHERS



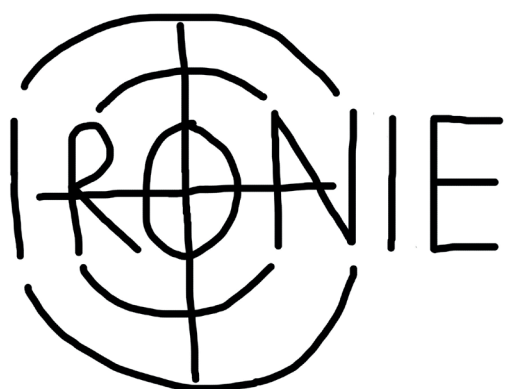
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

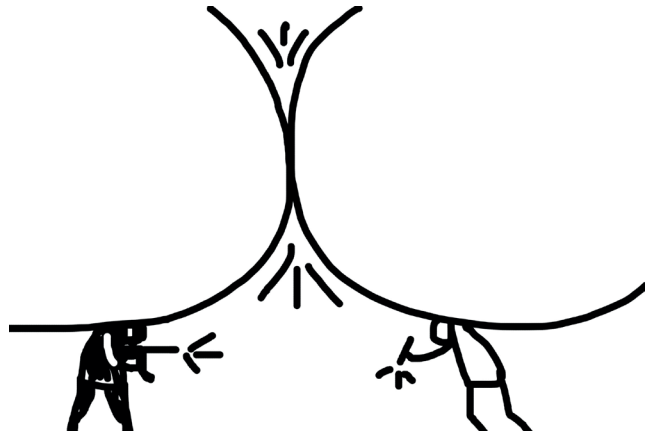
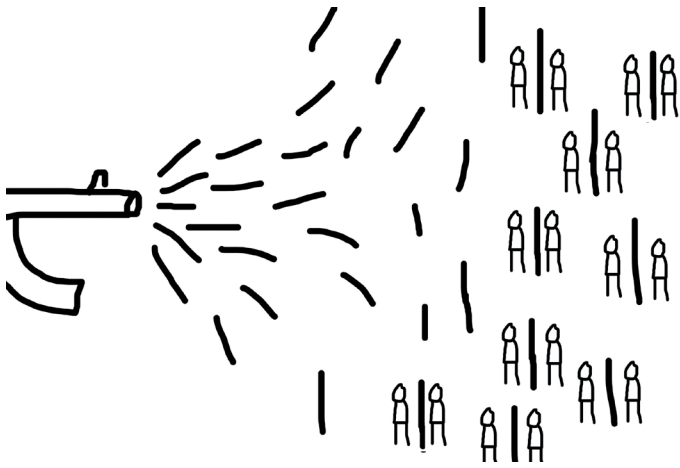
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YOU
ARE
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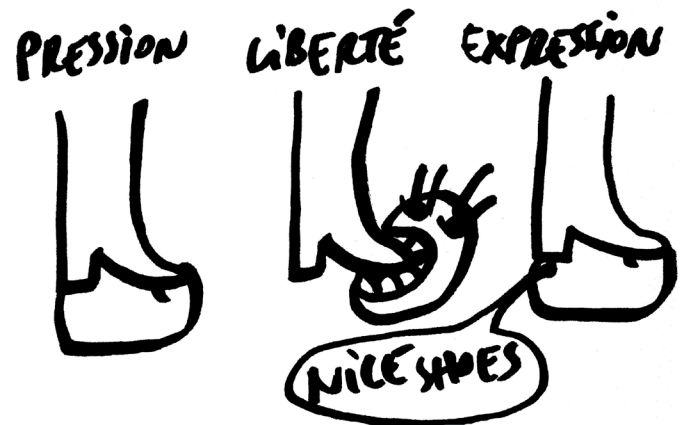


LIBERTÉ^a





HATE SPEECH → FREE SPEECH



RELATED EVENTS: [Lecture by Dan Perjovschi \(in french\)](#)

Tuesday, April 7th, 2015, 6 pm
École Supérieure d'Art et de Design •Grenoble •Valence
25 rue Lesdiguières, Grenoble
Free entrance

[Open days at MAGASIN](#)

Saturday, April 11th & Sunday, April 12th, 2015, from 2 pm to 7 pm
Free entrance
Awakening Itinerary, designed for a young audience (for 6 – 12 year old children)
Guided tours

[Late opening](#)

Wednesday April 29th, 2015,
from 7 pm until 10 pm in partnership with the Cultural & Student
Initiatives department of the GRENOBLE-ALPES UNIVERSITY
Free entrance

[... And coming in June](#) : a choice of artworks by Dan Perjovschi in the Grenoble Museum's collection.

LE MAGASIN

MAGASIN - National Centre for Contemporary Art of Grenoble, one of the first Contemporary Art Centres created in France, opened in April 1986. MAGASIN grows quickly within the contemporary art world and develops partnerships with many similar structures of international audience around the world, especially in Europe and the United States.

The decision of opening MAGASIN in Grenoble in the 80's was initiated by the french Ministry of Culture and The town of Grenoble, followed by the Isère department and Rhône-Alpes region. It is one of the two national centre for contemporary art in France, with Villa Arson in Nice. Its principle is based on the germanic "Kunsthallen", spaces devoted to contemporary art where artists are very implicated, even though MAGASIN carries no proper collection.

Under a historical industrial Hall built in 1900 by the Gustave Eiffel factory, the 2000 square meters of MAGASIN hosts every year three original shows, both monographic or collectives. The central space, an atrium-like galleria called the "street", allows to present huge in situ installations.

Widely opened to contemporary and artistic diversity, MAGASIN tends to favorite protective dimensions creations.

Its main goals are the diffusion of contemporary art by the production of temporary exhibitions and the education of contemporary art professionals within the Magasin school. Magasin also has a book shop specialised in contemporary art and design.

Today, it is more than 500 artists that have been invited to exhibit at MAGASIN.

L'ÉCOLE DU MAGASIN

In 1987 the École du MAGASIN was founded as one of the activities of the art center, MAGASIN in Grenoble. Being the first international curatorial studies program in Europe, it was set up to provide a professional environment for a rigorous combination of research and practice.

By providing the participants with a nine months hands-on experience in organizing a curatorial project, the École du MAGASIN gives a direct approach to curatorial practices. The program presents a wide variety of insights into what curating can be and become in the future through a series of tutorials, workshops, seminars and visits with professionals from different backgrounds. The École is in constant flux, adapting to the necessities of young art professionals today. The program offers devices and experiences to enhance the participant's professional capabilities while enabling also them to strengthen their critical and reflexive point of view.

MAGASIN - Centre National d'Art Contemporain
Site Bouchayer-Viallet, 8 esplanade Andry-Farcy, 38000 Grenoble - France
www.magasin-cnac.org

OPENING HOURS
From Wednesday to Sunday, 2 pm to 7 pm.
(en période d'exposition)

Entrance fees :
Normal 4€
Reduced 2,50€ (unemployed, disabled, senior, art teachers, ...)
Free for children under 10, Amis du Magasin members.

Accessibility for persons with reduced mobility - storey Spaces

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Le MAGASIN est une association loi 1901, présidée par Mme Anne-Marie Charbonneaux, subventionnée par le Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication D.R.A.C Rhône-Alpes, la Région Rhône-Alpes, le Département de l'Isère et la Ville de Grenoble.



MICHEL REIN PARIS/BRUSSELS

centre de création contemporaine olivier debré

