



Realife 1
Haydée Marin & Camille Besson
29/03 – 31/05

Context did equal creation.
Seth Price

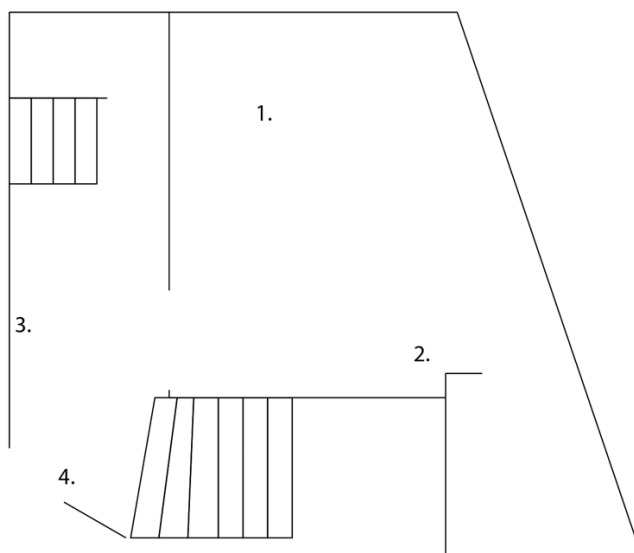
Through the familiar yet meaningful evocation of Marc Camille Chaimowicz and his installation *Celebration? Realife* (1972), the exhibition *Realife 1* by Haydée Marin and Camille Besson narrates the years they have spent in Tonnerre since settling there in 2021 to take over the Café des Glaces. To transform the former 1886 hotel and its sumptuous ballroom, reminiscent of more opulent eras, major renovation work was required. Alongside various *money jobs*, this work has shaped the unseen side of the setting. In Tonnerre, they have developed a growing interest in interior design and architecture, embracing a minimal and stripped-down approach to space—standing in contrast to the original moldings and ornaments of the Café. On the mezzanine, which they specifically chose for its simplicity and spatial constraints, they have carried out several radical interventions. The storage spaces and adjacent bathroom have been exposed for all to see, while a plasterboard wall has been significantly cut open to create a second opening, offering new perspectives on the Café's refined architecture and its many hidden corners, which they have since come to know in great detail.

In this stripped-back room, *Light Therapy and Other Domestic Illusions*, a sketched staircase lined with opaline lamps contrasts with its apparent delicacy, reminiscent of the feminine order of bourgeois interiors, which absolutely rejects "bad taste," as Penny Sparke puts it in her book *As Long as It's Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste*. A symbol of refinement and elegance, staircases receive particular attention from architects, who can demonstrate their talent through this defining element. Stripped of its function, this three-step structure—like an unfinished draft—also reflects a sense of vertigo, perhaps a vertigo of meaning. The paradoxical elegance of plywood, the softness of diffused lighting, also recalls essential oil diffusers and other meditation tools. Within the room's apparent serenity, attention is inevitably drawn to the new maritime pine flooring, which acts like a stage, breaking with the supposedly polished harmony of the Café. Domesticity and its weight resurface, alongside the necessity of volunteer work at the Café des Glaces and sometimes life in Tonnerre—despite the countryside's illusory charm—amounts to a life confined within four walls.

In his book *Fuck Seth Price*, artist Seth Price lists the motivations for wanting to be an artist. He distinguishes between the thirst for freedom, the love of craftsmanship, the lure of money, and the desire to be part of a scene. Both cynical and melodramatic, this outline of our motivations explores a paradoxical era—one in which reality is increasingly lived on Instagram rather than in daily life. The same outline, shaped by *Realife 1*, recounts banal realities, liminal experiences, appearances, and paradoxes that likewise define this world and its ambiguities.

Mathilde Cassan

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1. *Light Therapy, and other domestics illusions*, 2025,
poplar plywood, maritime pine, opaline globes, light bulbs, electric cable, variable dimensions

2. *LI(F)E?*, 2025, tinted mirror, ink, 91x59 cm

3. *Still-life*, 2025, mirror, adhesive, permanent marker, 91x58 cm

4. *Lonely Corners*, 2025, miroir, 91x58 cm

Haydée Marin & Camille Besson (born in France in 1990)

They live between Paris and Tonnerre. They graduated from Head in Geneva, Switzerland. They founded Café des Glaces, an artist-run space in Tonnerre, where they develop a multidisciplinary practice at the intersection of architecture, design, painting and scenography. Their approach also manifests itself in exhibitions, where their curatorial work is an extension of their artistic thinking, turning space and its layout into a medium in its own right. Before collaborating, they developed their respective practices and exhibited individually in various spaces in France: such as Les Tanneries (2020), High Art (2020) FRAC Champagne-Ardenne (2019), Villa Belleville (2019), Gisele (2019), Fondation Ricard (2018), and in Europe: Palazzina, Basel (2020), Forgo, Berlin (2019), Quark, Geneva (2015), Smallville, Neuchâtel (2018), Circuit, Lausanne (2016), LiveInYourHead, Geneva (2015).

Their first duo presentation took place in September 2023 at Systema (Marseille, Palais des Arts).