



# **HYPERBOREA**



## INTRODUCTION

The Hyperborea installation draws its inspiration from a text by philosopher and writer Marielle Macé, *Paysages incertains*, from which the following extract is taken:

*To live in this damaged world is to inhabit inherently uncertain landscapes. Not necessarily hostile, not always polluted, rarely even without beauty; but uncertain, ambiguous, unclear, troubled, shady. Environments of increasing instability and precariousness. Great lacerations of life lines and death lines, woven with waste, ghosts, forgetfulness, contamination and danger, but also with dreams, potentialities and surprises. Landscapes that we don't understand, that we misunderstand (intertwining contradictory lines, intertwining times, made of burials and resurgences, with blurred, shifting borders); landscapes of which we don't really know what they're made of, whose components we don't grasp; landscapes of which we don't know if they're viable (healthy, stable, durable); of which we don't know if they're reliable either: we don't know if we'll be able to live in them, we don't know if we can really count on them... And then there are landscapes that don't really know themselves what they are, or where they're going, as if the landscapes also doubted their own fate. Landscapes we don't really know how to describe, or even how to perceive, feel and hold on to. Hybrid, unstable, unreadable, silent, ambiguous, vulnerable, disquieting, unconquerable, contemporary landscapes are a little of all these things. And it's as if we had to learn a new landscape language, for a new sensitive, perceptive, ecological and political experience; not the pastoral, nor the sublime, nor the apocalyptic; but the uncertain.*

## VIDEO EXCERPT

### HYPERBOREA TEASER

<https://vimeo.com/975305838>



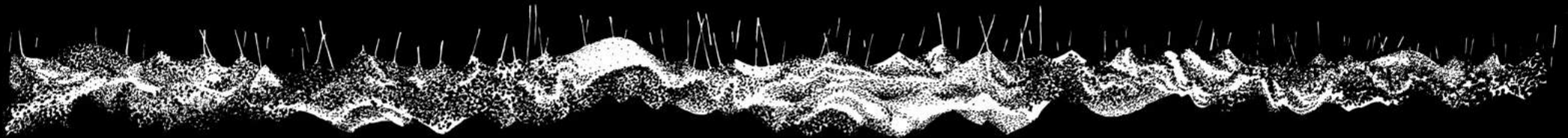
[Clic to go to Hyperborea teaser.](#)

### INSTALLATION VIDEO CAPTURE

<https://vimeo.com/953653079>



[Clic to go to the installation video recording.](#)



## NOTE OF INTENT

According to myth, Hyperborea is a fantastical island on the edge of the world, with an unknown location. It's a place of the imagination, conducive to dreams and fantastical, mystical projections. It is said to be located in the far north, beyond the Arctic Circle, well beyond the reach of the cold Boreas, the north wind. This polar zone is also a perpetually shifting territory, strongly affected by the fluctuations of the living world, a geographical location that unites our artistic and technical interests. There are meteorological phenomena specific to the polar environment that induce a physical and spiritual boundary; between different worlds (the living and the dead), between different materials (water and ice) that we are interested in exploiting.

With this project, we're interested in the notion of metamorphosis as a space of hybridity, as a relationship between the human and the non-human. The living and the inanimate acquire an equivalent status, that of matter «occupied», «inhabited», «infused» or even «haunted» by the spirit of exploration. This spirit takes whatever form we dare to lend it. It's all about the edges, the moving, and moving, lines, that transform a landscape into a character.

Hyperborea would be an exploration of the landscape-character, of the cohabitation of the visible and the invisible. Our aim is to bring to life this metamorphosed in-between, this transitory no-man's-land that reveals the instability of forms.

We have imagined a moving performative installation that assumes an ambiguous temporality, like a strange geological timelapse passing from the water of the deep sea to the millennial ice of the pack ice to the sidereal plasma of the aurora borealis.

This project is in line with our artistic approach, which questions the dialectic between the technical and the organic, craft and technology, illusion and materials on view. With our previous immersive creation *Au Jardin des Potiniers*, we opened up our questioning of a microcosm plagued by drought, an imaginary and allegorical eco-system that questions our relationship with the world, the environment and global warming. Here, the idea is to imagine a «synthetic» object, a modular system referring to a polar landscape in perpetual mutation, a kind of Arctic synecdoche.

*There's nothing more wonderfully beautiful than this Arctic night. It's the land of dreams, colored in the most delicate hues imaginable: it's the unreal color ! No, I could never believe that this world could end in desolation and nothingness. Why, then, all this beauty, if there are no creatures to enjoy it? Now I'm beginning to guess the secret: this is the promised land that unites beauty and death, but for what purpose? Ah, what is the final destiny of all these spheres ?*

Fridtjof Nansen, September 26, 1893,  
from the logbook *Farthest North*



## TECHNICAL NOTE

Hyperborea is a mobile, in the sense that it is suspended in the air, and a puppet, in the sense that it is operated, set in motion and also presented in a «castelet» understood here as a black box.

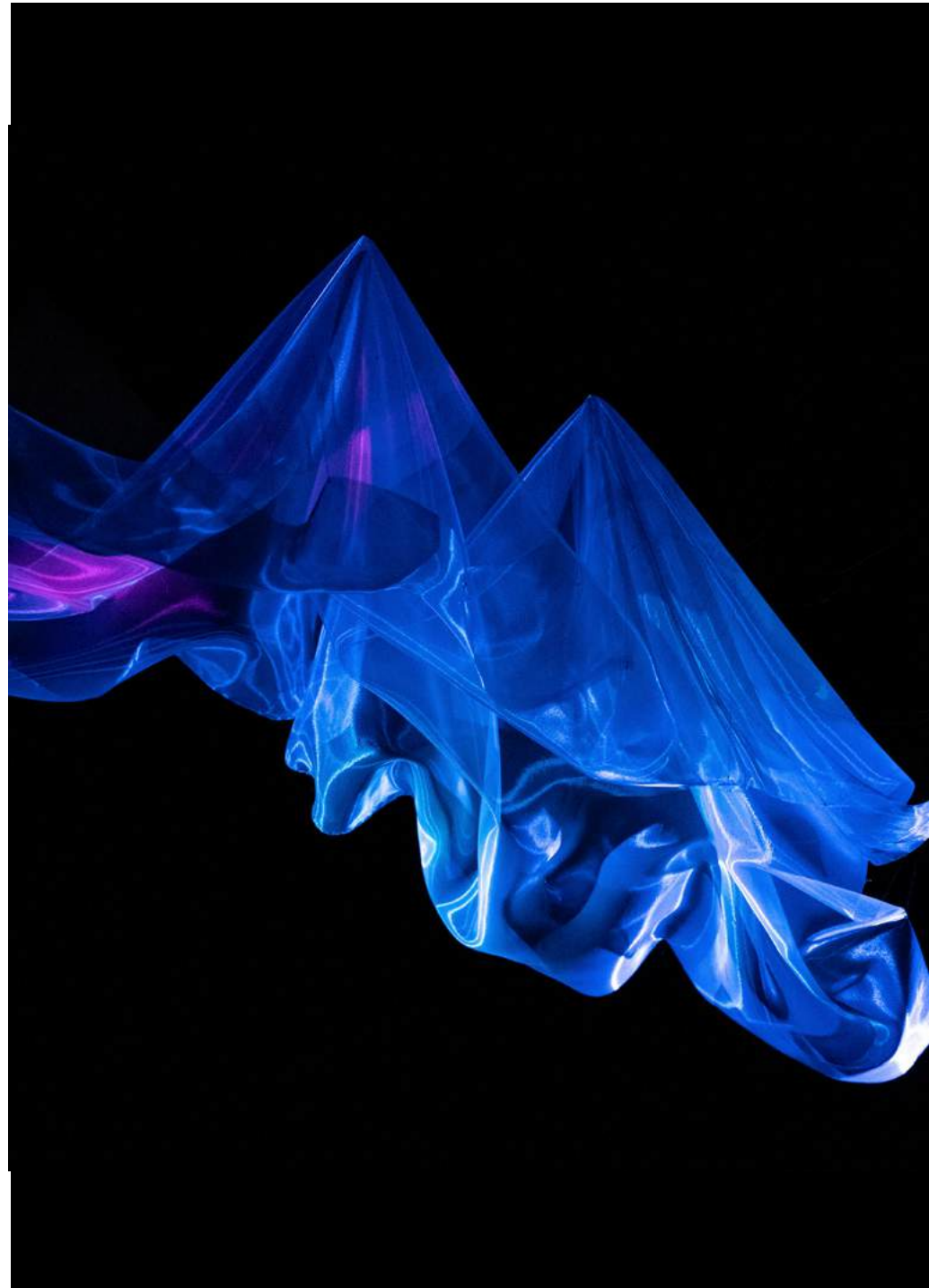
It consists of two main elements: the grid and the fabric, linked together by black sewing threads (quilting). The grid is an aluminium structure to which 27 servo-motors are attached, each connected to a thread, giving 54 points of attachment to the fabric (named « toile laser » in French, we will call it « laser fabric »). The motors follow C++ programs controlled by an Arduino, in order to vary the qualities of movement of the fabric, whose number of attachment points enables precise and subtle manipulation, from swell to rough sea. In addition to these motors, a few wires are connected to a drum motor, enabling a much longer, linear movement to create the asperities of the ice floe. In a third stage, ventilators are activated to make way for the evanescence of the aurora borealis. The suspended grid is also in motion, and is raised and lowered by motorized winches from one state to another: sea in low position, pack ice in intermediary position, aurora in high position.

The light sources, loudspeakers and ventilators will be integrated into the castelet to conceal all sources and provide optimum immersion for the audience.

Depending on its positioning, animation and lighting, this structure suggests different states of matter. The idea is to let visitors experience the uncertainty of a landscape, its organicity, fragility and complexity, using « laser fabric » as the raw material. This fabric is iridescent, very light and light-sensitive. The simplicity of the material is conducive to projection and imagination.

Sound plays as much a role in supporting the gaze (sometimes focusing attention on a particular element, sometimes blurring perspectives of scale, space and distance) as it does in broadening the field of perception, inviting a state of active contemplation.

This structure can be installed in a variety of spaces in close proximity to the public, offering a sensitive experience, a sensory, almost mystical journey.





The installation will feature a sequence lasting around 20 minutes, activated per session or in a loop, depending on the configuration. In the venues where the installation will be set up, spectators will be seen as visitors, explorers; they will compose the shifting landscape with the choice of viewpoint. The public will be free to sit down, approach and wander around the space, allowing them to grasp every detail of the metamorphosis in action. The contemplative experience will thus be shared and felt by a plurality of people in a kind of hallucinatory reverie that brings beings together and suggests to them the ambivalent reflection of beauty and finitude.

## EDITION

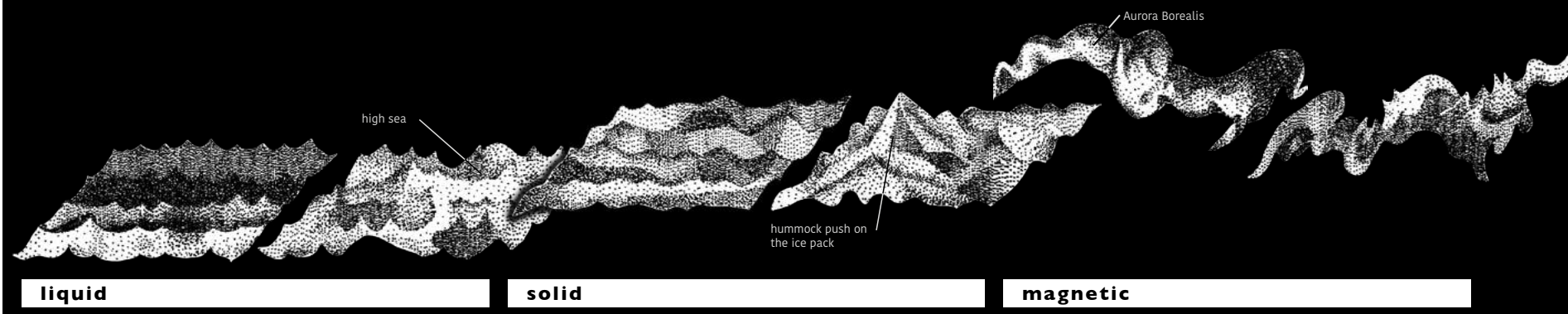
The immersive installation will be accompanied by a published leporello-type object («accordion» folding) that spectators can take away with them as a reminiscence of the experience.



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*Why, then, all this beauty, if there are no creatures to enjoy it? Now I'm beginning to guess the secret: this is the promised land that unites beauty and death, but for what purpose? Ah, what is the final destiny of all these spheres ?*

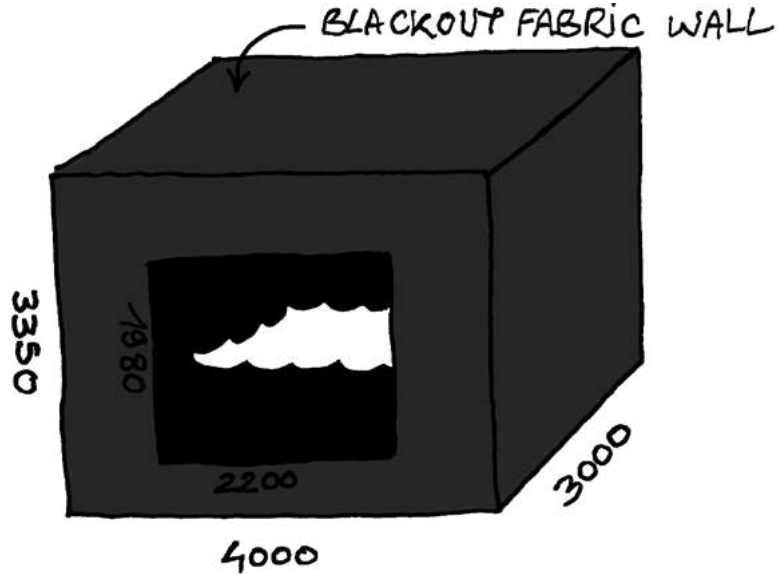
**Fridtjof Nansen, September 26, 1893,  
from the logbook *Farthest North***



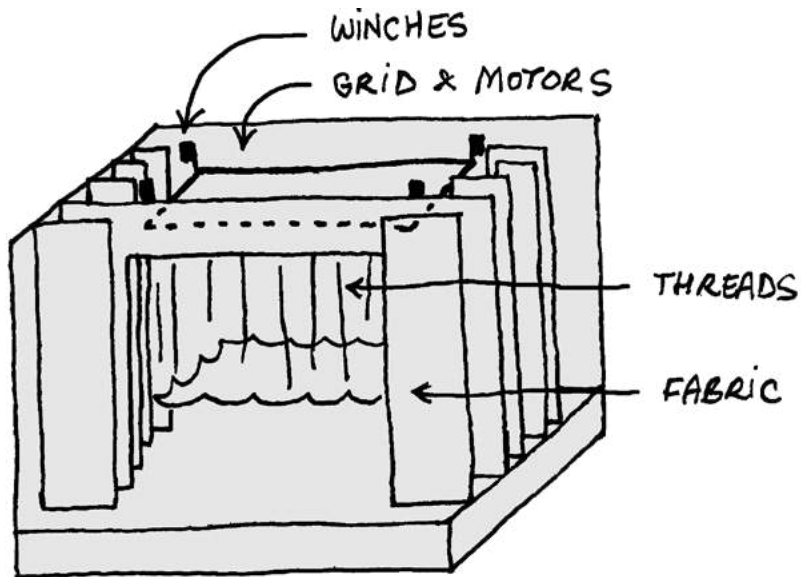
**HYPERBOREA**

*leporello pictured above*

# TECHNICAL OPERATION

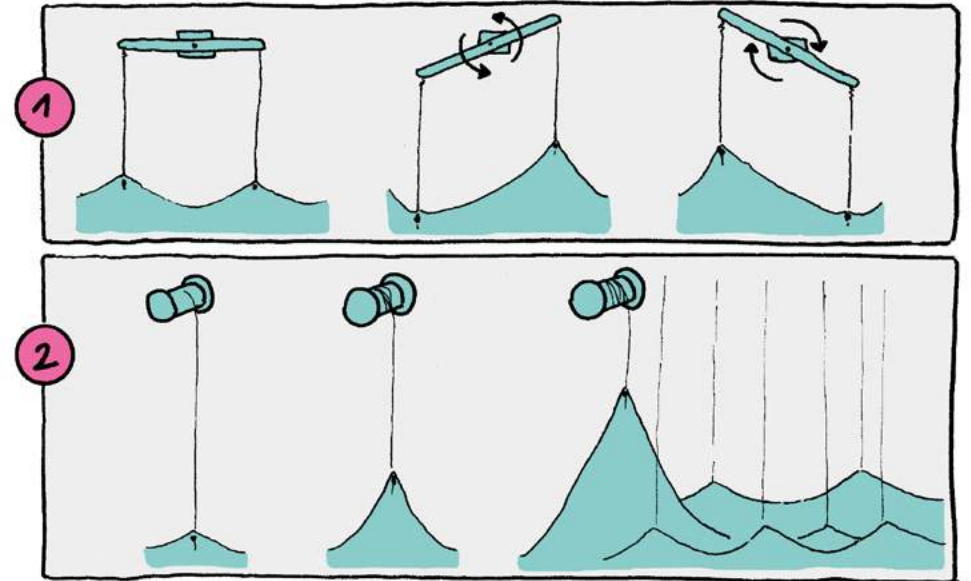
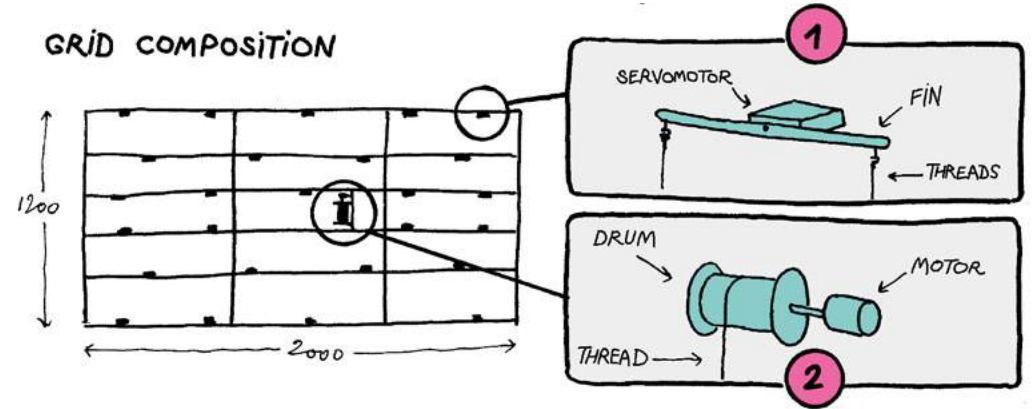


OUTSIDE VIEW ...



... AND INSIDE THE CASTLE

## GRID COMPOSITION



THE DRUM CAN HAVE SEVERAL ATTACHMENT POINTS, FORMING A MULTI-TOPPED VOLUME WITH ITS SINGLE ACTUATION.

Ersatz is made up of Camille Panza, director, Léonard Cornevin, lighting and digital designer, Noam Rzewski, sound designer and Pierre Mercier, illustrator.

Ersatz is a multidisciplinary collaborative project, active in the fields of live art, installation and illustrated publishing. With backgrounds in theater, visual art and illustration, our artistic approach lies at the crossroads of various interconnected media, in a dialectic between illusion and reality. Categories become porous and projects sprawling and protean. Our research focuses on the idea of exploration, whether concrete or abstract. We explore different mediums and new technical means with a view to immersing the spectator in a singular universe.

In 2016, Ersatz created the performance and installation *Jungle Space in America*, loosely inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's *The Quest of Unknown Kaddath* at Les Halles de Schaerbeek in Brussels and Halle Verrière in Meisenthal, France.

They created and presented *Quelques Rêves Oubliés*, an unpublished text by Oriza Hirata in Japan, then performed in Brussels at 140 in January 2018, at the Théâtre de Liège's Emulations festival in March 2019 and at the Toyooka International Festival in Japan in September 2022. This creation was nominated for the Belgian critics' award in the Best Discovery 2018 category.

In 2018, Ersatz created the protean performance *The Blast of the Cave*, a collaboration with Hong Kong dancers Mao Wei and Tracy Wong, at Les Halles de Schaerbeek, Hong Kong Art Center and Macao Arts Festival.

From 2019 to 2021, Ersatz was a research associate of TNG - CDN de Lyon and created an immersive performance for the general public, *Au Jardin des Potiniers*, performed at TNG during the Micromondes festival in November 2021, then at Atelier 210, and continues its tour in France, Belgium and Canada.

In 2023, they created *Tomber du Monde*, performed at Théâtre de Liège and Halles de Schaerbeek.

Camille Panza /ERSATZ is associate artist at Théâtre de Liège from 2024 to 2028.



**ERSATZ**

[ersatzcompagnie@gmail.com](mailto:ersatzcompagnie@gmail.com)

+32 496 295 724

+33 6 32 81 48 65

[www.espacejungle.com](http://www.espacejungle.com)

distribution : Laurence Lang

[laurence.lngz@gmail.com](mailto:laurence.lngz@gmail.com)

+33 6 83 26 63 27

# TECHNICAL RIDER

## TRANSPORT

- transport vehicle LxWxH:  
450 x 170 x 180cm, extended van

## SPACE

- castelet dimensions LxWxH:  
310 x 410 x 335 cm
- minimum volume of space:  
360 x 460 x 350 cm
- possibility of darkening the presentation area
- 15amp electrical outlet

## SET-UP AND DISMANTLING

- set-up time: 8h
- dismantling time: 3h  
(including unloading and loading)

## EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE VENUE

- 1 vacuum cleaner
- 1 ten-steps stepladder (working at 3.35m)
- lighting for public circulation
- flat cable grommet if required
- storage space for the installation's transport elements if the truck does not remain on site (230cm x 170cm x 40cm wooden box, 3 transport crates, 2 speaker boxes and 1 sub speaker box, 7-step stepladder).

## TEAM

- the company requires 4 people for set-up and 3 for dismantling - a stage technician from the venue is needed for set-up and dismantling

## ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (BROUGHT BY THE COMPANY)

- 6 cameo Spot 15w RGBW
- 2 DMX Antarie fans
- 2 Db Opera speakers
- 1 sub Bass Db Opera 10"
- 1 Mac Mini computer with Abelton live and Dlight, keyboard and mouse
- 1 enttec Pro USB/DMX box
- 1 six-channels power supply rack with fuses
- 1 DMX splitter
- 1 HF DMX kit (transmitter and receiver)
- Driver LED Rj45 RGBW
- RGBW LED strip
- 2 Pupitre clamp lamps
- 2 Motor steppers and drivers
- 3 Meanwell electrical transformers (36V, 12V and 5V)
- 2 arduinos with DMX driver
- Hyperborea grid: 1 arduino with DMX-shield, 27 servomotors, 2 PCA9785 drivers, 2 step-down transformers, 1 mini stepper motor. (spare equipment also supplied)

## PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC

The installation is a 20 minutes «show». We propose 1 session every 30 minutes, to facilitate spectators' entry and exit, as well as presentation times.

Once activated, the installation runs in a loop, with a 10 minutes pause between each session (the time between sessions can be adjusted to suit the venue and the pace required). For this purpose :

- a technician at the venue to activate and deactivate the installation using the procedure provided by the company (Instruction sheet).
- one person (technician or volunteer) must be present during the sessions to supervise.

We can also decide, in agreement with the venue, to present a session without automating a loop. In this case, you'll have to launch the session manually.

## CONTACT

Leonard Cornevin  
leonard.cornevin@gmail.com  
+32 4 86 07 49 39



## DISTRIBUTION CALENDAR

### SEASON 2023-2024

May 16th to 26th, 2024:

first presentation, Transfestival Passages in Metz (FR)

### SEASON 2024-2025

November 2nd to 16th, 2024:

Festival IMPACT Théâtre de Liège (BE)

December 6th to 14th, 2024:

Scène Nationale de l'Essonne, Evry (FR)

