

# Rencontres imaginaires

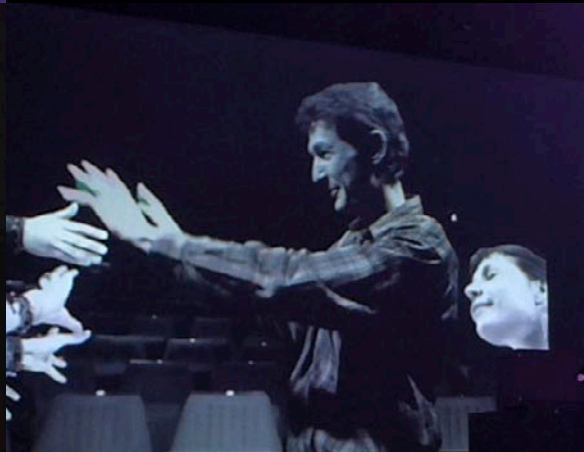
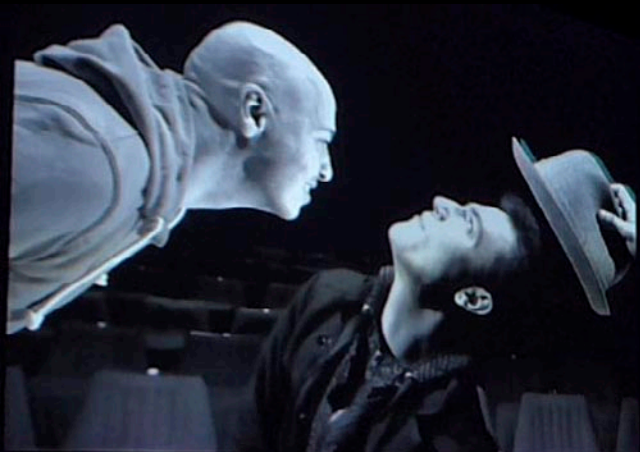
Behavioral interactive videos works

Scenocosme : Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt

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

Scenocosme : Grégory Lasserre / Anaïs met den Ancxt  
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Galerie d'Art contemporain de la ville de Talant - Talant (Fr)  
Espace culturel Georges-Brassens



## **"Rencontres imaginaires" is a series of several behavioral interactive videos works**

The visitor is faced to an interactive mirror screen. This one reflects his body, his face. Virtual hands and faces are trying to touch him, to catch him. These hands and faces have lots of various behaviors and question relationships to the other. The hands and faces feel the presence and move along the face of the viewer. When he goes away, the hands and faces disappear. They will reappear with other behaviors when a new person will come.

In this artwork, we provoke reactions and gestures from the spectators in response to virtual contacts. The audience plays with the hands which scrap the ear, caress the hair, touch the tip of the lips etc.

The contact is virtual but gives strange real feelings for the viewer.

It can be amused, annoyed, or expressed some pleasure.

The virtual hands and faces appear in black and white superimposed with the image of the viewer. This device gives the illusion of a ghostly troubling reality. We use digital technologies but give to see an image that remind the first tricks of cinema beginning such as the illusion technique used by Georges Méliès.

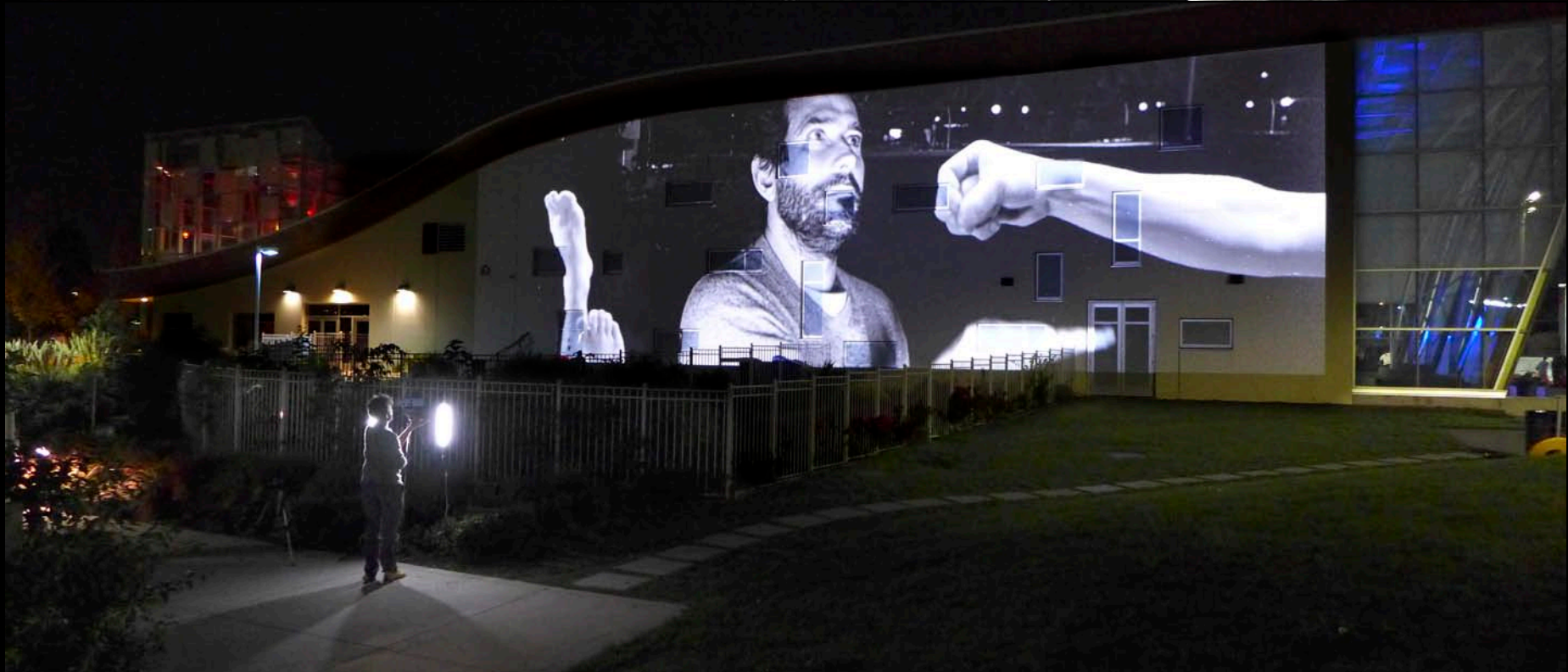
**More information and video :**

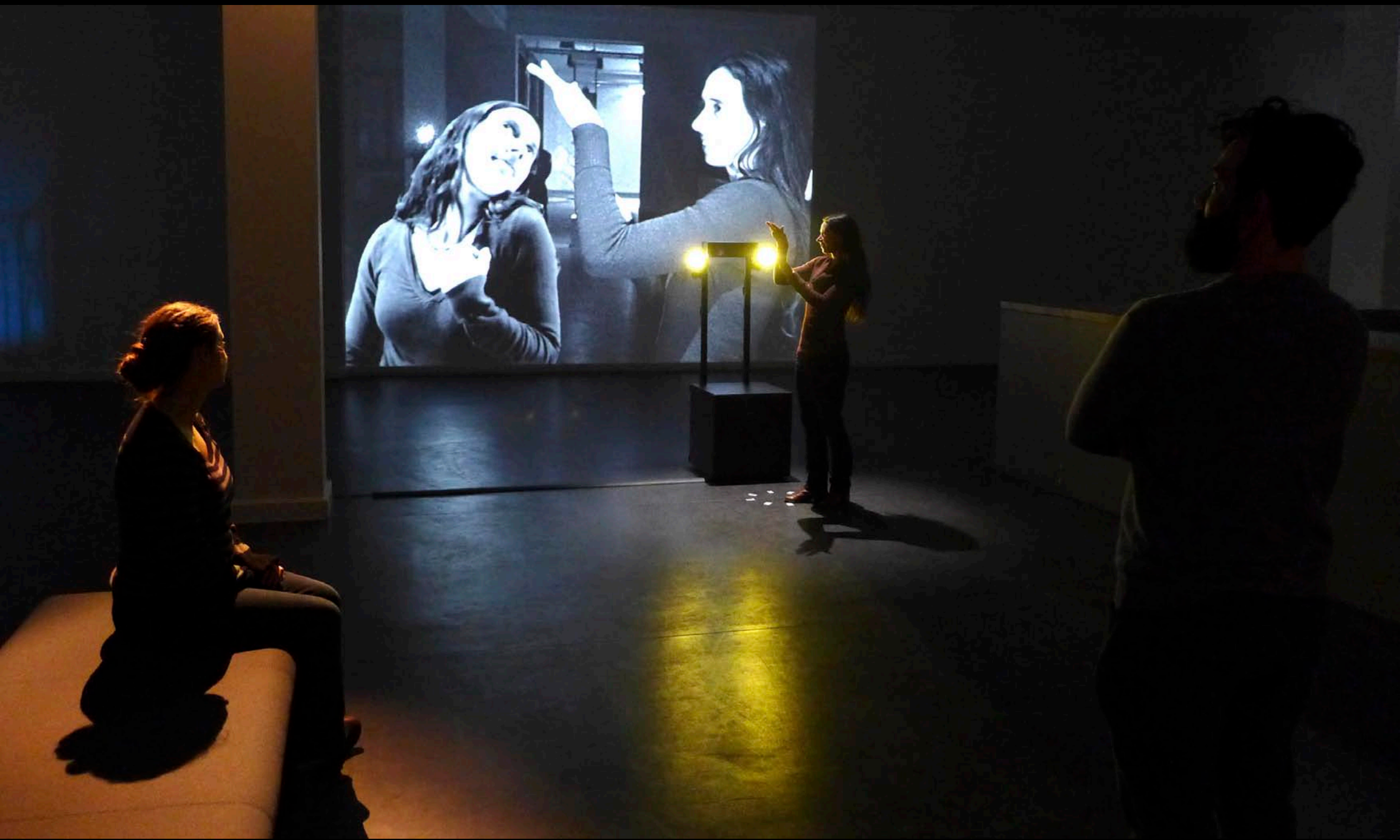
[www.scenocosme.com/rencontres\\_imaginaires\\_e.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/rencontres_imaginaires_e.htm)

**Lauréat de la Bourse en art numérique ICI ARTV CANADA**  
**Soutien et coproduction :** AADN, Salle des Rancy, Institut Français, Ville de Saint Etienne



Dimensions of the interactive projection : 30m x 9m  
Urban Screen / Canada's largest non-commercial outdoor urban  
screen dedicated to presenting digital and interactive art.  
Surrey Art Gallery / Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre - Surrey (Canada)





#### **Rencontres imaginaires 4** : Several behaviors

In this version of the artwork, hands, faces, objects come from movie made before with persons from the audience. It generates several stagings and behaviors. In this version, video from people interaction could be recorded before and integrated into the work video data base.

#### **Rencontres imaginaires 3** : hands and faces

This version of the artwork mixes the version 1 and 2; Hands or faces appear randomly, thus multiplying the choice of interactions and possible encounters.

#### **Rencontres imaginaires 2** : The kisses of the artists

In this version of the artwork, Two faces come closer to the viewer on both sides. These faces are ours: Gregory or Anaïs. We virtually embrace spectators. Our faces can have hundreds of different virtual behaviors: shy, seductive, tender, disgusted, angry etc. They provoke many reactions from the spectator.

#### **Rencontres imaginaires 1** : the curious hands

In this first version, only hands appear.

### **Artistic process: hybridizations between nature and digital technology**

As media artists, Scenocosme: Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt, explore capacities of technologies in order to draw sensitive relationships through specific stagings where senses are augmented. Their works came from possible hybridizations between the living world and technology which meeting points incite them to invent sensitive and poetic languages.

When they create interactive works, Scenocosme invent sonorous or/and visual languages. They translate the exchanges between living beings and between the body and its environment. They suggest interrelations where invisible becomes perceptible. Materialized, our sensations are augmented. Through a poetic interpretation of invisible mechanisms, technologies allow them to draw sensory relationships, and to generate unpredictable living interactions. Their hybrid artworks play with their own augmented senses. They live with technology and have reactions which escape deliberately to their control.

Their attention focuses on spectator's body because it is able to build relationship with others and elements. They use the body itself like a continuous sensorial interface with the world. When they concept our creations, they realize intimist directions that always take into account the place of spectators. In this way, they pay a singular attention to the "règle du jeu" (directions to play) which comes true between spectators and their installations. This direction to play allows the translation of a dialog between human being and objects and between humans too. They focus on relationships that individuals can have between them and we suggest new meeting and relation possibilities. Most of their artworks are kind of «mediators» between spectators in order to gather them, to stimulate relationships, exchanges, beyond a basic connection.

#### **Other interactive artworks**

Metamorphose : [www.scenocosme.com/metamorphose\\_e.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/metamorphose_e.htm)

Maison sensible : [www.scenocosme.com/maison\\_sensible\\_e.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/maison_sensible_e.htm)

SphérAléas : [www.scenocosme.com/spheraleas\\_e.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/spheraleas_e.htm)

Ecorces : [www.scenocosme.com/ecorce\\_e.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/ecorce_e.htm)

Fluides : [www.scenocosme.com/fluides\\_e.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/fluides_e.htm)

Lights Contacts : [www.scenocosme.com/contacts\\_installation\\_en.htm](http://www.scenocosme.com/contacts_installation_en.htm)

## Scenocosme : Grégory Lasserre & Anaïs met den Ancxt : [www.scenocosme.com](http://www.scenocosme.com)

The couple artists Gregory Lasserre and Anaïs met den Ancxt work under the name Scenocosme. They live in the Rhone-Alpes region in France. Their singular artworks use diverse expressions: interactive installations, visual art, digital art, sound art, collective performances etc.... Scenocosme mix art and digital technology to find substances of dreams, poetry, sensitivity and delicacy. These artists overturn various technologies in order to create contemporary artworks. Their works came from possible hybridizations between the technology and living world (plants, stones, water, wood, humans,...) which meeting points incite them to invent sensitive and poetic languages. The most of their interactive artworks feel several various relationships between the body and the environment. They can feel energetic variations of living beings and design interactive stagings in which spectators share extraordinary sensory experiences. Their artworks are exhibited in numerous museums, contemporary art centres and digital art festivals in the world.

They have exhibited their interactive installation artworks at ZKM Karlsruhe Centre for Art and Media (Germany), at Daejeon Museum of Art (Korea), at Museum Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (Canada), at National Centre for Contemporary Arts (Moscow), at Contemporary Art Museum Raleigh (USA), at Bòlit Centre d'Art Contemporani (Girona) and in many international biennals and festivals : Art Center Nabi / INDAF (Seoul), BIACS3 / Biennial International of Contemporary Art of Seville (Spain), Biennial Experimenta (Australia), NAMOC / National Art Museum of China / TransLife / Triennial of Media Art (Beijing), C.O.D.E (Canada), Futuresonic (UK), WRO (Pologne), FAD (Brasil), ISEA / International Symposium on Electronic Art (2009 Belfast, 2011 Istanbul, 2012 Albuquerque, 2013 Sydney), EXIT, VIA, Lille3000, Ososphere, Scopitone, Seconde nature (France)... during important events : World Expo (Shanghai), Nuits Blanches (Toronto, Halifax, Bruxelles, Brighton, Amiens, Segovia, Bucharest), Fête des lumières (Lyon)... and in various art centers : MONA (Australia), MUDAC, Fondation Claude Verdun (Lausanne), Musée Ianchelevici (Belgium), Kibla (Slovenia), Banff Centre (Canada), Villa Romana (Firenze), Utsikten Kunstsenter (Norway), Watermans (UK), Centre des arts d'Enghien-les-Bains, Gaîté Lyrique (Paris) etc.

Full biography : [www.scenocosme.com/PDF/scenocosme\\_BOOK\\_EN.pdf](http://www.scenocosme.com/PDF/scenocosme_BOOK_EN.pdf)

Wikipedia : <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/scenocosme>

### Previous exhibition of "Rencontres imaginaires"

- **Surrey Art Gallery** / Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre - Surrey (Canada)
- **Urban Screen** / Canada's largest non-commercial outdoor urban screen dedicated to digital and interactive art
- **Telfair Museum of Art** / Jepson Center for the Arts - Savannah (USA)
- **New Forms Festival** - Vancouver (Canada)
- **Congrès mondial acadien / Pavillon de la France** - Grand-Falls (Canada)
- **Espace ARTVstudio** | ICI ARTV - Place des Arts - Montreal (Canada)
- **Nocturne Art at Night** - Halifax (Canada)
- **Artengine** / Curator : Remco Volmer - Ottawa (Canada)
- **Culture Night / Embassy of France in Ireland** - Dublin (Ireland)
- **Festival Bonjour India / Pavillon «The Experience»** - India Gate Lawns- New Delhi (India)
- **Festival Bonjour India / Pavillon «The Experience»** - Gateway of India- Mumbai (India)
- **Festival Bonjour India / Pavillon «The Experience»** - Milan MelaK / Book Fair - Kolkata (India)
- **Central House of Artists** - Moscou (Russia)
- **Unpainted / media art fair** - Munich (Germany)
- **Künstlerhaus Mousonturm / Frankfurt buchmess** - Frankfurt (Germany)
- **Festival Stuttgarter Filmwinter** - Festival for Expanded Media - Stuttgart (Germany)
- **Museum of Contemporary Art of Vojvodina / Festival Videomedeja** - Novi Sad (Serbia)
- **HeK (House of electronic Arts)** - Basel (Switzerland)
- **Centre Culturel du Brabant Wallon** / Festival «En l'air» - Court-St.-Étienne (Belgium)
- **Transcultures** - Centre Interdisciplinaire des cultures numériques et sonores
- **Festival Clujotronic** - Cluj-Napoca (Romania)
- **Festival Electrochoc** / Les Abattoirs - Bourgoin-Jallieu (Fr)
- **Festival des arts numériques Pléiades** - Saint-Etienne (Fr)
- **Festival Zéro 1** / arts hybrides et numériques / Galerie des hospices - Limoges (Fr)
- **Festival Videoformes** : arts vidéos et numériques - Clermont-Ferrand (Fr)
- **Espace d'Art Contemporain La Tôlerie** : Curator : Gabriel Soucheyre
- **Festival des arts numériques Trace(s)** - Bagnols-sur-Cèze (Fr)
- **Prieuré Saint-Pierre** / Sillages Numériques : Curator : Cyril Delfosse - Pont-Saint-Esprit (Fr)
- **Festival Minuit avant la Nuit** / Curator : Didier Ringalle - Amiens (Fr)
- **Musée Savoisien** - Chambéry (Fr)
- **Musée de Millau et des Grands Causses** / Scenocosme : Rencontres sensorielles - Millau (Fr)
- **Centre d'Arts Visuels Labanque** / Curator : Philippe Massardier - Béthune (Fr)
- **Centre d'Art Les Églises** - Chelles (Fr)
- **L'arteppes - espace d'art contemporain** - Annecy (Fr)
- **Festival international d'art contemporain A-part / Face2face** - Curator : Ariel Kyrou, Leïla G.Voight - Baux-de-Provence (Fr)
- **Orangerie du château de la Louvière** / Curator : Lucie Bisson - Montluçon (Fr)
- **Abbaye de l'Escaladieu / Festival Horizons numériques** - Bonnemazon (Fr)
- **Château de Saint-Priest** - St-Priest (Fr)
- **Nuit de la création** / Curator : Eve Poinsard - La Motte-Servolex (Fr)
- **Centre d'exposition Les Réservoirs** - Limay (Fr)
- **Centre culturel Odyssud** / Curator : Maud Denjean- Blagnac (Fr)
- **Centre culturel La Passerelle** / Frontières Intimes - Pays de La Gacilly (Fr)
- **Centre culturel Arc-en-ciel** - Liévin (Fr)
- **Centre Montesquieu** - Maisons-Laffitte (Fr)
- **Espace culturel Maison Folie Hospice d'Havré** / Lille 3000 - Tourcoing (Fr)
- **Espace culturel Maison Folie La Ferme d'en Haut** / Curator : Céline Dacquin - Villeneuve-d'Ascq (Fr)
- **Espace culturel ECLA** - Saint-Cloud (Fr)
- **Espace culturel MAIF Social Club** / Curator : Anne-Sophie Berard - Paris (Fr)
- **Espace culturel Puzzle** / DESconnexions / Curators : Charline Roch, Thierry Benoit - Thionville (Fr)
- **Espace d'exposition La Serre** - St Etienne (Fr)
- **Espace d'exposition de la ville de Ploumagoar** (Fr)
- **Espace d'exposition Pavillon Duhamel** - Mantes-la-Jolie (fr)
- **Galerie d'Art contemporain de la ville de Talant** - Talant (Fr)
- **Galerie d'exposition de la Bibliothèque Municipale La Part-Dieu** - Lyon (Fr)
- **Galerie H+** / curateur Olivier Nérot - Lyon (Fr)
- **Département Arts Plastiques** du Lycée de la Cité scolaire Roger Frison-Roche - Chamonix (Fr)
- **Médiathèque François Mitterrand** - Bassens (Fr)
- **Médiathèques du Tampon** / K@ravann Numérik - (Ile de La Réunion)
- **Festival Printemps d'Étoiles** / Médiathèque Max-Pol Fouchet - Givors (Fr)
- **Videoephonic AADN** / Arts et Cultures Numériques - Lyon (Fr)
- **Théâtre Municipal d'Abbeville** - Abbeville (Fr)
- **Scène Nationale de Poitiers TAP** / Curator : Patrick Treguer / Espace Mendès France- Poitiers (FR)
- **MA scène nationale de Montbéliard** (Fr)

## Several examples of installations

### The interactive device

This artwork work in any space (dark or lighten)

A camera is hidden next to the screen. The camera films the spectator and transmits the image to a computer. The image is analyzed and processed in real time by a software that manages the choice and the displacement of hundreds of pre-recorded filmed hands. The real silhouette interacts with virtual hands which have multiple behaviors. Each relationship generates new behaviours and stagings.

### Equipment

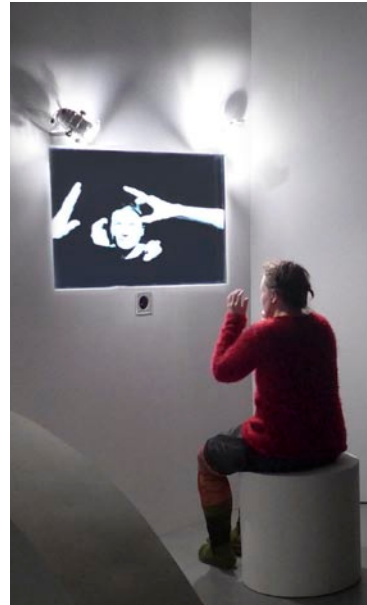
TV HD or Screen (variable size)

HD Camera

Computer with Specific software (real time analysis)

Spots Lights (only if necessary)

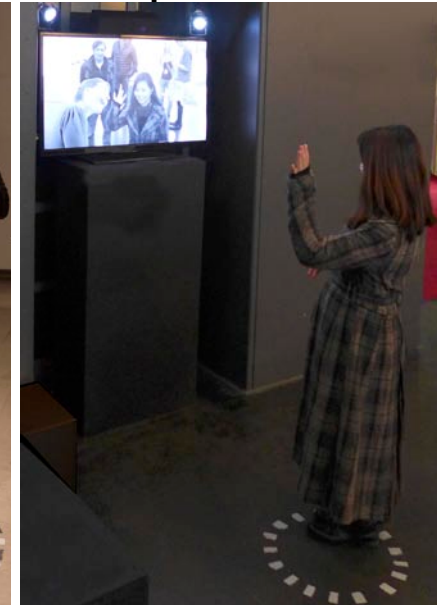
#### TV behind a wall



#### TV hang on a wall



#### TV on a pedestal



#### Large videoprojection



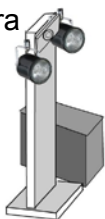
#### Large LED screen in the city



vidéoprojecteur

wall or screen

Camera



computer



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## Critical review from Rhys Edwards about Rencontre imaginaires for the exhibition of the artwork at UrbanScreen at Surrey in Canada in 2016-2017

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### About the Writer

Rhys Edwards is a critic, artist, and curator. He has written for The Capilano Review and BC Studies, along with multiple Vancouver-based art blogs. In 2014 he won the C Magazine New Critics prize. In 2015, he co-founded the Agent C Gallery with artist Debbie Tuepah in the Newton region of Surrey. As a curatorial assistant at the Surrey Art Gallery, he has helped coordinate several exhibitions, and contributed texts and design elements to many others. He also co-authored the City of Surrey's 2015 Surrey Operations and Civic Infrastructure Art Plan with artist Alan Storey, and has published several essays about the City of Surrey's Public Art collection.

### Screen Tearing: Imaginary Encounters in the Real World

Foregrounded within the work of artists Grégory Lasserre and Anaïs met den Ancxt, who collaborate under the name Scenocosme, is technological innovation. However, whereas for other artists technology becomes a principle unto itself, for Scenocosme technology is never more than a means to realize an idea that originates in a dream. In this way, technological innovation is not mere novelty, but required to experience the art.

Scenocosme's practice is always oriented toward the public realm. This is not because of a sense of duty to involve the public in all art-making, which many artists subscribe to, but because the public is itself the perfect medium for artistic experimentation. Scenocosme works for the public because this mode of creation allows for the greatest degree of unpredictability and dynamism in the manifestation of their art.

Many of Scenocosme's previous installations feature formal and experiential elements that only appear upon interacting with the artwork or with other people in its presence. In *SphèrAléas* (2004), for example, a series of hand-operated sensors control a light and sound-emitting half-spherical structure inside of a tent. Groups of people can interact with the sensors to produce a magnificent sensory experience, composed by mutual collaboration. In *Alsos* (2006), a garden immersed in black lighting produces music when a flashlight is shone upon individual plants and flowers, thereby creating an organic symphony of sound.

Rencontres Imaginaires, installed at Surrey UrbanScreen over the fall and winter of 2016, invites visitors to play in a virtual world with a variety of eccentric characters. The artwork utilizes a newly-built digital kiosk system to capture live video footage of its users, and project them onto one of the largest outdoor screens in North America. Their hand movements can then be used to manipulate characters (performed by Surrey residents, whom were previously recorded by the artists in production sessions at the Surrey Art Gallery) that appear upon both lateral edges of the screen. This interaction occurs spontaneously, and different performers are dynamically generated by the artwork's software.

Although the way in which a visitor to the UrbanScreen site can directly manipulate the movement of the on-screen characters is limited either to "pushing" them away with their hands, or to making them appear and disappear by moving to and away from the kiosk, these elementary gestures permit endless variations to the artwork. The software that powers Rencontres Imaginaires complements the basically human tendency to play, and it is playing itself that fosters enduring fascination with the work — both for those who observe it and those who participate in it.

The simplicity of the technology underlying Rencontres Imaginaires ensures that clearly defined parameters for play-making are instantly apparent to anyone who approaches it, regardless of their familiarity with technology. This ease-of-access affects the experience of the work in two ways: first, there is a sort of identity loss, wherein participants adopt universal and playful mannerisms in order to respond to the characters they are presented with, dispensing with the self-consciousness that otherwise characterizes our personal life; second, the simplicity of the work sets us up for surprise. In those moments where our own being and the character we are faced with happen to have a perfectly harmonious interaction — when a frown, a wave, or a smile is met with an immediate and intuitively correct response — we are brought briefly out of ourselves and into the virtual world that we have created. This form of interaction is intrinsically enjoyable and empowering because it happens in a space outside of our own life. We are literally able to witness ourselves — not an avatar — have an impact on another. Such an experience would not be possible if the range of interaction parameters were expanded, since the basic pleasure of playing — playing with no objective in mind — would be lost in the search for the apparently correct way to play.

# Critical review from Rhys Edwards about *Rencontre imaginaires* for the exhibition of the artwork at UrbanScreen at Surrey in Canada in 2016-2017

The sense of universal childhood, and the possibility of surprise, are both united in a state of play. The British psychotherapist Donald Winnicott famously articulated the importance of playing, both for children and adults, by suggesting that it occurs in a world that is halfway between the inner reality of our own selves and the outer reality of the objective world; and that in the process of development, playing is a way to gain control over the world.<sup>1</sup> Critically, for this sense of control to emerge, it must be facilitated by others, whether by a mother or by one's friends. When a subject finds an other entering into their play space and responding to it affirmatively, they are surprised by the recognition of their own agency. In this way, the subject is empowered by play.

Winnicott even goes so far as to suggest that playing is essential to becoming a complete person: "It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self."<sup>2</sup> Individuals who are unable to create in any way are, in one sense, not truly alive.

Opportunities to play are widely available in our current era. They are present not only in the multi-billion dollar gaming industries, or in the fields of sports; they may be witnessed in the widespread gamification of culture, which progressively invokes child-like language and points-based systems to reward travel and consumption,<sup>3</sup> and utilizes graphic design motifs derived from games to market virtually any service or product. Much of this playing occurs at a virtual level, via a screen interface. Access to games is widespread and instantaneous. Although screen technology has firmly cemented the place of social networks in everyday life, the artists of *Scenocosme* note that screens are also a means of alienating users from one another, as they promote interpersonal engagement at a superficial level while discouraging interaction within physical space.

The ethos of *Rencontres Imaginaires* is, in part, remedial — it is an attempt to reframe virtual interface technology as a means of encouraging interpersonal connection. The type of play which this interface enables is not mediated via graphics, avatars, or points. It is direct, manifesting only through the imagination of users, and rewarding them through the use of their imagination. In this way, it is more demonstrative of the variety of play that Winnicott discusses in his work, wherein playing is an extension of an individual's imagination into the tangible world, rather than a foray into a pre-arranged, determinate system. Further, playing within *Rencontres Imaginaires* transcends age, gender, or ethnicity, invoking the most simple and universal user interface in the world: touch. As such, the interactions that transpire during an experience of the artwork permit the generation of connections between individuals who might otherwise never communicate with each other.

*Rencontres Imaginaires* presents an alternative model of socialization, in which technology complements the natural compulsion to play. The latent desire to see oneself communicate, share, and learn from others is universally inherited; the artwork of *Scenocosme* provides a creative avenue for this desire to express itself, while enhancing the dimensions of this expression through virtual space. While virtual reality is in most contexts a means of escapism, it is here a means of connecting to an embodied, real world.

*Rhys Edwards, 2016*

## Notes

1. Donald Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*. (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2005), 55.
2. *Ibid*, 72.
3. For example, the widespread popularity of the apps FourSquare and its follow-up Swarm, as well as the colossal ascension of Pokémon Go.

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## Source and full text

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## About UrbanScreen

Imagined by artists and built by the City, Surrey's UrbanScreen is Canada's largest non-commercial outdoor urban screen dedicated to presenting digital and interactive art. UrbanScreen is an offsite venue of the Surrey Art Gallery and is located on the west wall of Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre in City Centre. The venue can be viewed from SkyTrain, between Gateway and Surrey Central stations. Exhibitions begin 30 minutes after sunset, and end at midnight.



Centre Arc-en-ciel - Liévin (Fr)

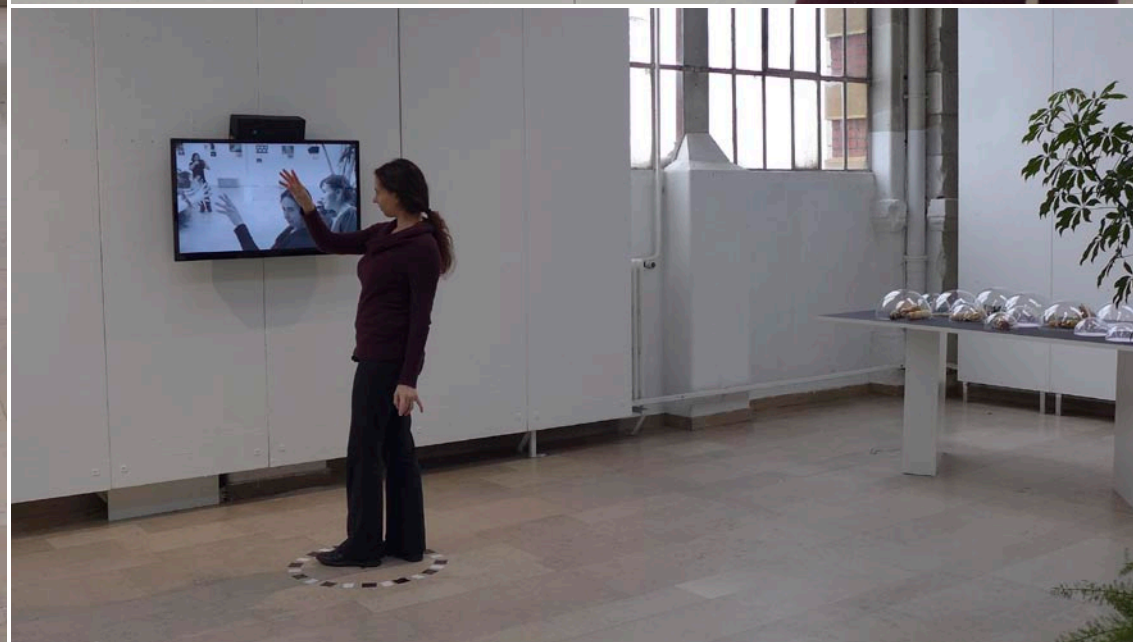
The Central House of Artists - Moscou (Russia)



Musée de Millau et des Grands Causses - Millau (Fr)

La Tôlerie - Espace d'Art Contemporain / Videoformes - Clermont-Ferrand (Fr)





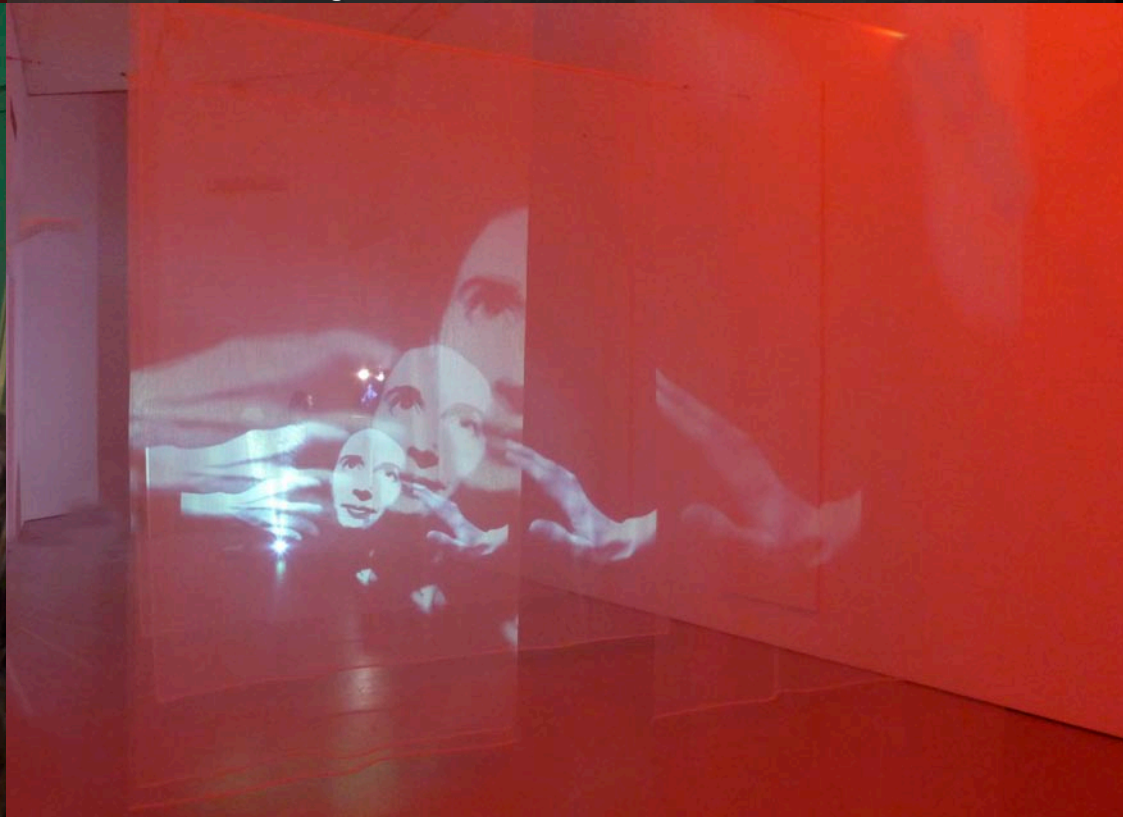
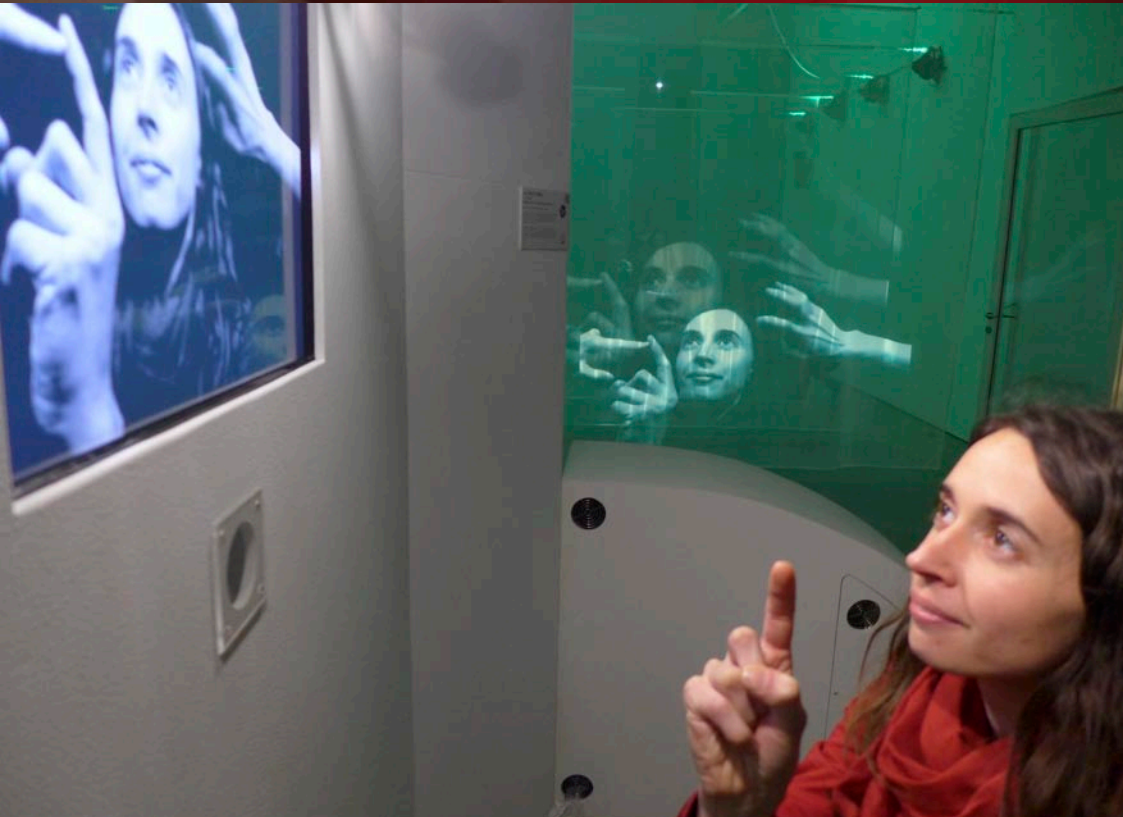








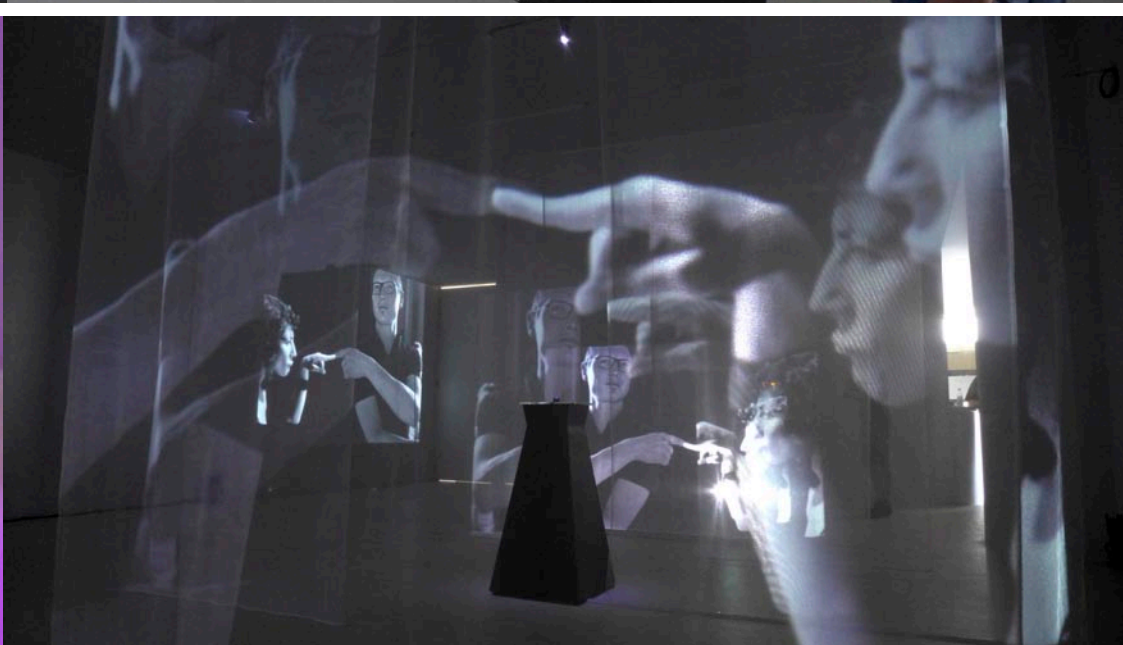
Rencontres réelles et imaginaires







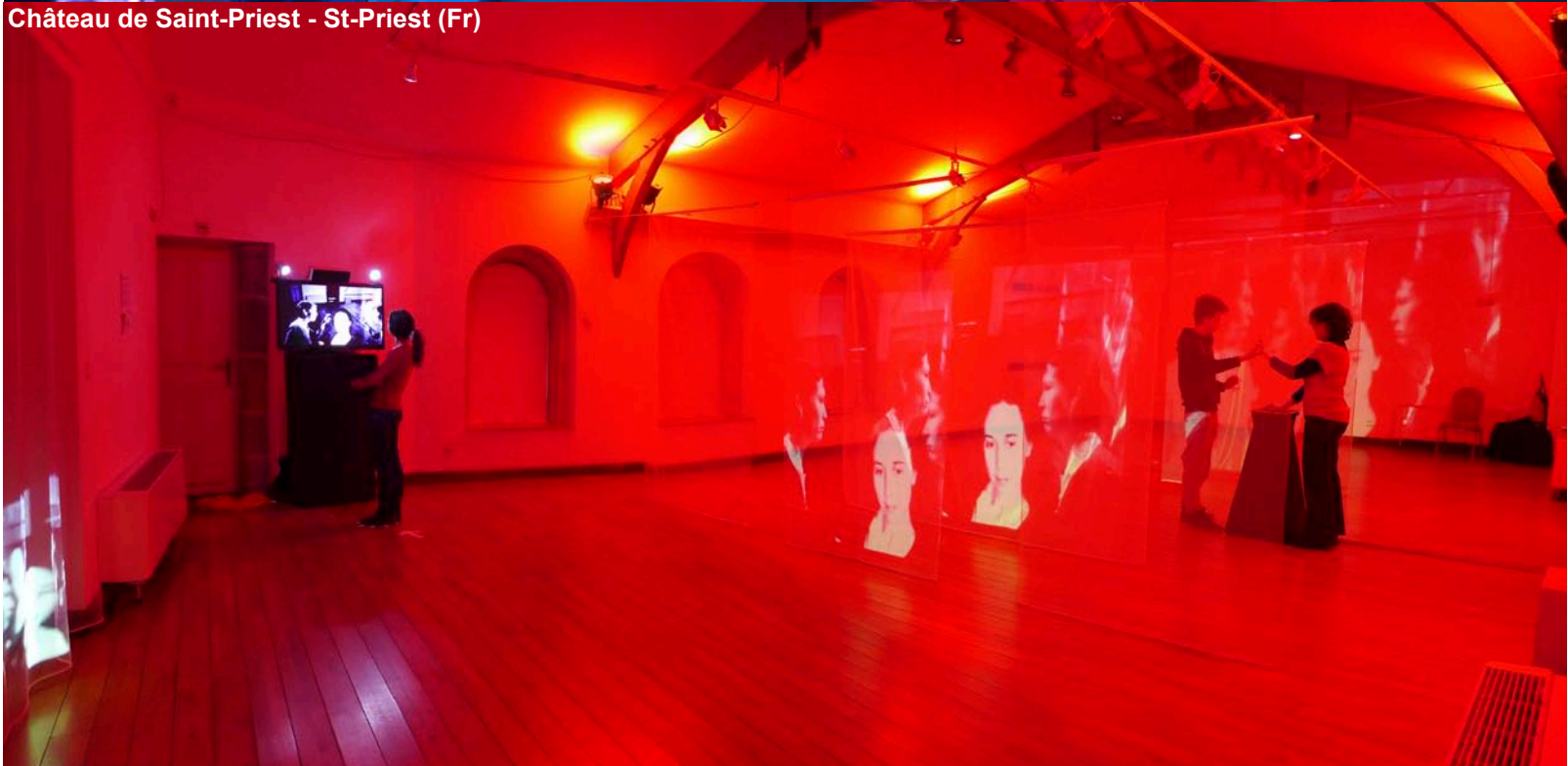
Espace culturel Puzzle - Thionville (Fr)



Espace culturel Puzzle - Thionville (Fr)



Château de Saint-Priest - St-Priest (Fr)





Musée Savoisien / Cloître de l'ancien couvent Franciscains - Chambéry (Fr)

