

Digital Abysses 2018 – Miguel Chevalier

Solo show

Bordeaux Submarine Base (France)

From 9th of March to 20th of May 2018

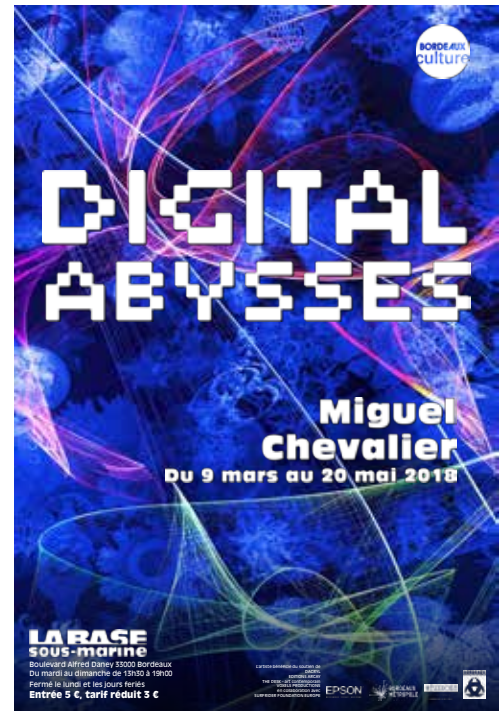
Exhibition in collaboration with Surfrider Foundation Europe,

not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection and enhancement of lakes, rivers, oceans, waves and the coastline.

Technical production : **Voxels Productions**

The artist is supported by **Dacryl, Atelier Arcay,**
and **The Desk - art contemporain -**

Bordeaux Submarine Base
Boulevard Alfred Daney
33300 Bordeaux (France)



With his exhibition entitled *Digital Abysses*, Miguel Chevalier takes over the monumental spaces of the Bordeaux Submarine Base. This exhibition presents, over **3,500 square meters**, **ten monumental installations**, as well as **cabinets of curiosities containing more than 100 new works**.

Chevalier continues here his explorations of nature through the theme of undersea flora and fauna (seaweed, plankton, coral...).

The exhibition offers visitors a stroll between dream and reality, where they can penetrate into the heart of the unknown, just like with the great oceanic depths.

Along the way, they discover various projected interactive digital installations, such as *Liquid Pixels*, *Strange Attractors*, *The Origin of the World*, *New Atlantis* and *Fractal Seaweeds*, *Digital Abysses*.

The exhibition *Digital Abysses* resonates harmoniously with the space, being at once mineral, aquatic, and botanic.

Through the theme of the Abyss, the exhibition explores in a poetical and metaphorical way our relationship with visible and invisible living beings. In investigating the notion of artificial life, these various installations and artworks raise concerns about the fragility of these ecosystems and call out for the need to preserve biodiversity. They seek to recreate the conditions for a symbiotic relationship between man and nature.

Bordeaux Submarine Base

Bordeaux Submarine Base is one of the few bases built on the French Atlantic coast by the German occupation forces during the Second World War. Made up of a reinforced concrete block measuring 245 meters long, 162 meters wide, and 20 meters high, its erection required no less than 600 000 m³ of concrete.

This gigantic bunker serves as an unusual exhibition space, managed by the city of Bordeaux. Among the many exhibitions held at the Base sous-marine, there have been exhibitions by Georges Rousse in 2014, JR in 2016, and Daniel Firman in 2017.

The Base sous-marine values digital technologies via its choice in artistic programming, with its major digital art exhibition every year, and revisited visitor experience that aims to be more interactive and involved with social media.

Installations and artworks of the exhibition Digital Abysses 2018 - Miguel Chevalier

ATLANTIS 2015

Printed canvas - 20 m X 8 m

This monumental work recalls Atlantis, the island between fiction and reality that, as the story would have it, was engulfed during protohistory. This large format recalls the Submarine Base's concrete architecture and provokes a perception of infinity that pulls you towards the depths of the unknown.



RADIOLARIANS 2018

6 gobos - 50 m x 3 m

Credit Photo : Frédéric Deval, Ville de Bordeaux

Set up in the Submarine Base's entrance, this luminescent creation begins by observing microscopic plankton organisms, radiolarians.

Here, Miguel Chevalier transposes the geometry of these extraordinary forms in the digital world. On the door, the length of the hallway, luminescent radiolarians dive into the depths of the ocean.



CABINETS OF CURIOSITIES 2018

Miguel Chevalier revisits 16th and 17th-century cabinets of curiosities Which designated places where one collected and presented a multitude of rare, novel, or strange objects, such as shells, skeletons, herbaria, fossils, or works of art.

Miguel Chevalier proposes four different contemporary cabinets of curiosities, consisting of 3D-printed sculptures, videos, digital prints, Dacryl resin paintings, laser cutting...

These works are inspired by underwater flora and fauna, more specifically coral, jellyfish, and microscopic animal plankton such as radiolarian. Via ultraviolet lighting, these enlarged versions of living organisms become luminescent, just like various species in the ocean's depths. These luminescent works, thrown into obscurity between reality and fiction, create a sort of imaginary travel diary. These "wonders" of all sorts provoke, here, a sense of surprise, fascination and meditation around a world reimagined from scratch.



Box 1 - Radiolarians series

3D printed sculptures, Dacryl resin sculptures, fluorescent pigments, laser cuts, UV neon light.
Variable size



Box 2 - Corals series

Natural corals and shells, 3D printed sculptures, wood, fluorescent pigments, UV neon light.
Variable size



Box 3 - Vortex series

3D printed sculptures, wood, fluorescent pigments, digital prints, UV neon light.
Variable size



Box 4 - Concretions series

Dacryl resin sculptures, wood, fluorescent pigments, UV neon light.
Variable size

KELP FOREST 2018

500 steel micro-structures, UV neon light

Variable size

As light as it is airy, this massive installation suspended from the ceiling resembles a jungle of luminescent kelp seaweed. Created from an assemblage of 500 fluorescent micro-structures linked to one another and lit with ultraviolet lights, the work emerges from the darkness like a rhizome of light.



STRANGE ATTRACTORS 2018

Generative and interactive virtual-reality installation

Software: Cyrille Henry & Antoine Villeret

6,80 x 2,50 m / 22.30 x 8.20 ft

Strange Attractors is composed of wisps of color that track the visitor's movements. Their motion disturbs and interferes with the dancing swirls are reflected on the ground as if on a reflecting pool of water. These fluid forms evoke the lightweightness of seaweed and bioluminescent jellyfish that float in the water. Time seems to be suspended.



THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD 2018

Generative and interactive virtual-reality installation

Software: Cyrille Henry & Antoine Villeret

6,90 m x 2,90 m / 22.63 x 9.51 ft

The Origin of the World is inspired by the world of biology and microorganisms. Cells multiply in abundance, divide, and merge in sometimes slow, sometimes rapid rhythm. These organic universes mingle sometimes with constructivist universes made up of pixels. These unstable, black-and-white megapixel tableaux gradually give way to vivid, color-saturated spirals. When the viewer moves, the trajectory of the cells is disrupted. Sinuously rippling curves bring back to life the artificial paradises of the Nineteen Seventies. They create unprecedented visual experiences that are not unreminiscent of psychedelic universes.



BINARY PARTICLES 2018

200 balloons inflated with helium, 1 Raspberry Pi, 15 motorized lights

Software: Cyrille Henry

Variable size

This installation is composed of metallic-colored 1 and 0s, helium-inflated, floating in the exhibition space. These two digits are the symbolic representation of two logical states regarding the intimacy of machine-computer functionality. These symbols manage millions of pieces of data, follow our environment, and constitute this nebula that we call "information."



LIQUID PIXELS 2018

Generative and interactive virtual-reality installation

Software: Cyrille Henry & Antoine Villeret

13 x 5 m / 42.65 x 16.40 ft

For this virtual reality installation piece, the artist proposes a dynamic generative and interactive painting. This work represents a liquid or gas environment that recalls the streams emitted from hydrothermal vents (geological formations of chimneys in the ocean's depths).

The viewer's movements create a stream of dark color that mixes and fuses with the work before slowly fading until the next visitor's passing. Liquid Pixels 2018 draws from action painting of the 1950s, when artists became one with the canvas.



NEW ATLANTIS 2018

Generative and interactive virtual reality installation

3,60 x 9,50 m / 11.81 x 31.16 ft

Software : Claude Micheli

This installation is evocative of the myth of Atlantis, an island engulfed beneath the waves. It's an imagined city. Its wired buildings continuously evolve and parade by with no beginning or end. New Atlantis telescopes the eras and projects the visitor in a cyberspace architecture that is nothing but an enormous network, impossible to explore nor understand in its entirety.

Via an iPad interface, the visitor can explore different "cities," move side to side, up and down.

Between fiction and reality, this work invites us to see and live the city in an entirely new way thanks to an imagination without limits.



Digital Abysses 2018

Music: Michel Redolfi

Generative and interactive virtual-reality installation

Software: Claude Micheli and Antoine Villeret

5 projections de 5,80 x 3,60 m / 5 projections of 19 x 11.81 ft

Digital Abysses is a totally new work that explores the undersea world in its diversity, particularly some forms of plankton, such as radiolarians. These marvels of nature composed of siliceous skeletons with sharp radially symmetric spines come in a variety of shapes. They fascinated scientists of the nineteenth century, such as Ernst Haeckel, who drew images of quite a number of their species. Chevalier transposes here the geometry of these extraordinary forms into the digital universe. The Digital Abysses installation is composed of several water bubbles around whose surface various radiolarians move. These variously-shaped "living" organisms in luminescent colors move about in real time and react to visitors' movements. They move away beneath visitors' feet, as if to emphasize man's effect on nature.

This installation immerses the visitor in an intriguing universe, amplified by the composer Michel Redolfi's music.

