

**GRAND PALAIS IMMERSIF**  
GRANDPALAIS-IMMERSIF.FR #EXPOLOADING

110 RUE DE LYON  
PARIS 12<sup>E</sup>  
MÉTRO BASTILLE

# LOADING

**STREET ART  
IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

**6 DECEMBER  
- 21 JULY  
2024**



**Grand Palais Immersif**  
**110 rue de Lyon, 75012, Paris**  
**Métro Bastille**

**From 06 December 2023 to 21 July 2024**  
**Mondays to Sundays from 12am to 7pm**  
**Late opening on Fridays until 9pm**  
**Closed on Tuesdays**

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With the support from Google Arts & Culture, Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée and Fondation Desperados pour l'Art Urbain



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Our partners



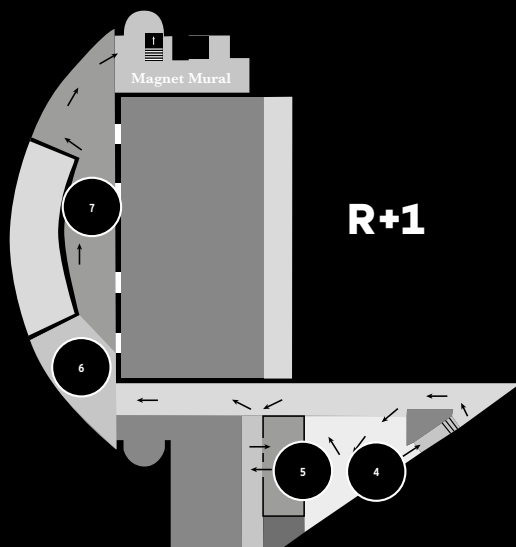
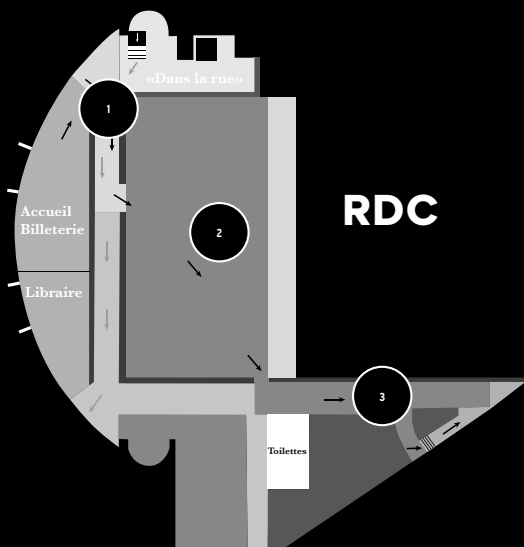
# THE EXHIBITION

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# EXHIBITION MAP

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Loading!*

You will discover an immersive exhibition that looks back on the history of street art.

Here, you will witness artists from all over the world painting over monumental buildings or trains.

But street art is ephemeral, and this exhibition presents works that have now disappeared in their original size and setting thanks a to spectacular display made possible by digital technology.

*Loading* also explores the impact of the digital medium on this artistic phenomenon.

The public space – physical or digital – is a network. One must therefore regard these artists as hackers and whistleblowers. To them, spreading their message is the only thing that matters.

# 1. CALL TO ACTION

The urban space is filled with advertising slogans and political posters chosen by other people. Through their acts, graffiti artists oppose them and invite viewers to react to their message.

Urban art is also an unbridled quest for visibility: getting your name circulated more and better than anyone else, rising to the ranks of king or queen and catching viewers' attention.

In New York circa 1980, those fifteen minutes of fame were within reach for everyone, or nearly everyone. Tagging walls or painting subways could be enough to make a name for yourself, become an artist and live your dream life. But how can you stand out or get your message heard in the era of the Internet and social media?

At the dawn of the new millennium, an initial response was to paint monumental frescoes by the thousand, using cherry pickers. These were made available by a growing network of urban art festivals around the world, from Montreal to New Delhi. Today, drones make it possible to film ever more spectacular acts and images. These tools enable artists to achieve the viral status needed to make their messages heard loud and clear.

## On the nature of images

These days, works of urban art are viewed more through a screen on Instagram, TikTok and Youtube than in the street where they were created.

This development has led artists to become accomplished cameramen: aerial shots filmed with drones, abseiling cameras, night-time timelapses of immense façades... All under the constraints of filming on location, sometimes illegally, leaving little time for a second take. Some of the archive footage finding its way to us is a miracle.

Once these breathtaking images were assembled, all that remained was to tune them together to form an original video-impact experience, the emotional vector of which would be the artists in action, at work sometimes just 20 cm from the surface of the façade of a subject that would be 25 meters high when completed.

This discovery of the genesis, styles and techniques begins as close as possible to the social reality of the street, then rises and changes scale with monumental creations. This will be an opportunity to discover a new form of urban art, engaged in a dialogue with the environment, which has the advantage of being better appreciated in this new exhibition format where you can ideally “travel without moving” (Frank Herbert).

## 2. (IN)VISIBLES

**Present yet long-overlooked, graffiti appears like weeds from cracks in the wall. Yet diverse messages have inhabited the public space ever since the expansion of cities, as early as the 18th century.**

Since 2000, our fascination with urban art has sparked a renewed interest in graffiti. Once disregarded and often erased by public authorities, these now well-identified tokens are making it possible to explore an urban history of art.

### **Lascaux or the birth of art**

**According to some people, urban artists have inherited humankind's innate need to decorate walls. Yet we only began to take notice of the frescoes in prehistoric caves in 1933, when Brassai's (1899-1984) photographs of graffiti on the walls of Paris were published.**

Palaeolithic cave art aroused the interest of intellectuals, artists and publishers, who conducted photography campaigns, including the one at the Lascaux cave complex in around 1950. Once again, this appeal was intrinsically linked to the new passion for street art.



## Kyselak was here

Joseph Kyselak (1798-1831) was a civil servant under the Austrian Empire. Today, however, he is best known as **one of the first taggers**. In 1825, embarking on a journey through his homeland and then onto Slovenia, Italy and Bavaria, he painted and inscribed his surname on hundreds of buildings and hills. He was reprimanded by Emperor Franz I who, legend has it, subsequently found that Kyselak had tagged his desk.

This was a common practice among serving soldiers. The graffiti *Kilroy Was Here* is among the most famous examples. It was left by American troops abroad during the Second World War.

## The « Stone Book »

Fernando Oreste Nannetti (1927-1994) suffered from **schizophrenia**. Having been committed to psychiatric hospital in 1959 in Volterra, Italy, he covered the walls with inscriptions and strange drawings carved with the buckle of his waistcoat. Lacking any artistic training, the artist created a spontaneous art form driven by his illness. The historian Lucienne Peiry refers to his work as a “stone book”. His work persists thanks to the photographs taken in 1979 by Pier Nello Manoni.

## The memory of places

South Korean artist Jazoo Yang (born in 1979) explores the development of towns and the nostalgic poetry that emanates from the disappearance of working-class neighbourhoods.

She began the series *Dots* in 2015 on a former fisherman's house set to be demolished, in Busan. She used her thumb, dipped in ink, to create lines of thumbprints. The practice is a reference to the Korean tradition of “Jijang”, meaning the act of signing contracts using a fingerprint. By marking these buildings, the artist makes an official commitment to keep the memory of these places alive.

## The visible invisible

Mexican artist Said Dokins (Mexico, 1983) practises calligraphy. For his project *Heliographies of Memory*, he worked with the photographer Leonardo Luna and used the technique of “light painting”. Using a torch and dynamic gestures, the artist wrote sentences with light on heritage sites, captured immediately by the photographer.

This project explores citizens' freedom to express themselves in the public space, escaping the control, repression and erasure enacted by the public authorities.

## Sound creation

The music we have paired with the Tunnel spans the period from the early 19th century (echoing the images of Joseph Kyselak), through the discovery of the Lascaux caves, the early 70s (echoing the Oreste Nannetti images) to today, with the work of Jazoo Yang. Designed by Ircam, the sound system extends throughout the corridor, its reverberation creating an immersive effect.

# 3. BOMBING THE METaverse

## Graffer le métavers

From *Street Fighter* (1987) to *Grand Theft Auto III* (2001) and *Marc Eckō's Getting Up* (2006), graffiti has infiltrated the digital realm through video games. The tag-covered walls of these virtual sets represented the first real digitisation campaign for a fleeting art form that can disappear from the streets as quickly as it appears.

A clandestine, often illegal artistic practice, graffiti is as much a pictorial language as it is a form of urban exploration. Graffiti artists infiltrate the fabric of a city, exploring its twists and turns, venturing into its depots and onto the wrong side of the tracks, looking as much for an adrenaline hit as the ideal spot to apply your

moniker. Any surface such as walls, iron curtains, tunnels, underground stations, freight trains, lorries and even airplanes can be used.

Photography – first silver, then digital – has always been used to preserve the memory of graffiti. It freezes the experience of the forbidden in time and documents the evolution of a written art form at a time when our society is forsaking handwriting for computer keyboards.

## **Alex Fakso, Strike a pose**

Alex Fakso made a name for himself as a pioneer of graffiti photography in the 1990s. His photographs defined a new aesthetic, capturing the emotions and emblematic poses of this culture: kneeling under a train in the darkness, or standing in front of a carriage, face hidden by a balaclava, holding a can of spray paint, the smell of fresh paint in the air...

## **Edward Nightingale, shared experiences**

Edward Nightingale (Germany) has been documenting the graffiti scene for nearly twenty years, from Berlin to Yerevan (Armenia). He is interested in photography as a means of capturing moments in life before they disappear. Rather than the general public, his photographs are aimed at a group of insiders with whom Nightingale shares the “mix of adrenaline, fear and entertainment” during his excursions to train depots.

## From graffiti to gif-iti

For a long time, graffiti was a largely male-dominated world. For the past fifteen years, however, a better balance has been struck between the two sexes thanks to the work of women graffiti artists such as Mick La Rock (Netherlands, 1970), Lady K (France, 1978) and Laia (Spain, 1984). Recognised as much for their “bad-girl” attitude as for their references to “girl power”, these artists display an unparalleled command of graffiti lettering, as evident in these gif-itis produced for the exhibition.

This particular genre of graffiti emerged circa 2010 out of the transformation of graffiti painted on the street into .gif (Graphic Interchange Format) files, a digital format developed in 1987 in order to circulate short videos on the Internet. Made from a series of photographs, gif-itis are related to stop-motion videos. One after another, they reveal the different layers of paint that make up a piece of graffiti, showcasing the wealth and complexity of the style developed by each of its artists.

## **Cristobal Diaz, *Loading GraffBox*, 2023**

(3 times 3'57")

In 2015, the artist and director Cristobal Diaz embarked on a project to archive French graffiti. Using an original camera system, he records the creative process of urban artists in real time. All the pieces, copied onto tracing paper and presented in the form of a film, demonstrate the characteristic technique and artistry of a culture that revolves around writing and grants a particular value to the surface itself. For the exhibition *Loading*,

Cristo showcases the work of the women artists whose creations are scattered throughout the public space.

*The film Loading GraffBox was commissioned and produced by the Fondation Desperados pour l'Art Urbain.*

List of artists taking part in the GraffBox for the exhibition (in alphabetical order):

ALISE - ANJUNA - DAWOA - LADY K - MOROZE - OLIVIA DE BONA – PÖ - QLOTE – SHOOK - SIFAT



<https://www.graffbox.com/>

## Gettin' Up

In graffiti culture, the expression “getting up” refers to an artist who paints endless tags and graffiti in the public space to make their mark and lay claim to a given territory. Although this approach is inspired by criminal practices, marking a city is purely symbolic and is part of a game that pits adversaries against one another.

The creation of a virtual world under attack from graffiti artists battling to control it was an obvious inclusion in this exhibition. *Gettin' Up* brings together a group of graffiti artists including Craze, Romain Fuefer, Fuzi, Laia, Lady K, Mister the Bomb Machine, Mick La Rock (Mickey), Nico Funato, Remio, Same and Tripl/Furious. This digital experience transposes their street production into an imaginary virtual world, as if the artists themselves are laying into the servers hosting this fictional realm.

# 4. WORLD WIDE WALLS, CREATED WITH THE SUPPORT OF GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE

Urban art is a global phenomenon today due to the way key figures have been able to use the Internet. In around 2000, urban artists began to realise that posting photographs of their work online was encouraging artists living on the other side of the world to take to the streets themselves. These several thousand street hackers grasped the importance of the first social networks, such as Fotolog and MySpace, even if they were not fully aware of the scope of their community.

Mapping a phenomenon as vast as urban art raises as many identity-based questions as technical issues. What separates what is urban art from what isn't? How can you build a digital platform supple enough to meet such differing needs?

The Google Street Art Project, launched in 2014, offers an initial answer to these questions and demonstrates the scope and vitality of this art form on a daily basis.



<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/street-art>

*Section created with the support of Google Arts & Culture*

## Saint-Denis Festival

Five Google Arts & Culture stories have been created for the *Loading. Street Art in the Digital Age* exhibition. They present the careers of artists Bilel Allem and Seb Toussaint and their outreach activities aimed at young people in Saint-Denis as part of the Histoires d'art à Saint-Denis programme, a cultural twinning between the Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais and the town of Saint-Denis. In autumn 2023, two frescoes will be produced by these artists for the city's hip-hop and urban culture festival, in collaboration with local residents.

Learn more: <https://www.grandpalais.fr/fr/histoires-dart-saint-denis>

## 5. HELLO MY NAME IS...

**Graffiti is a new kind of calligraphy and an art form in itself. Calligraphy subsisted in Western culture until the end of the Middle Ages, when it made way for standardised writing. From the first tags (simple signatures), made with a marker, to *wildstyle* painted with spray paint, there are almost as many ways to write your name as there are graffiti artists.**

In graffiti culture, the choice of a name and the letters that make it up is the first step of defining your place. The second is developing a writing style that showcases your unmatched talent as a calligrapher. In this community,



where being and writing are everything, people do not ask “What’s your name”, but, “What do you write?” The members of this community share and affix “*Hello my name is...*” stickers that they personalise with their tags.

## 6. HACKTIVISM

**Painting in the street does not necessarily imply a commitment to championing a cause. However, a large number of urban artists assume the status of hacktivists, aware that their art and their ability to manipulate the inner workings of the Net will get their messages heard by as many people as possible.**

In recent decades, the story of the Internet has reflected the end of a dream that promised greater transparency and communication; the story of a network once synonymous with absolute freedom, now bound by the rules of a so-called “surveillance” capitalism that submits any individual’s actions to the control of algorithms designed to predict the future.

The first to denounce this hypocrisy were whistleblowers such as Edward Snowden (1983), Julian Assange (1971), Chelsea Manning (1987) and Aaron Swartz (1986-2013), the latter a fervent advocate of free culture. Known as the developer of the website Reddit and the Creative Commons licences, which aim to make scientific and cultural data available to all free of charge, Swartz committed suicide at the age of 26 to escape prosecution by the FBI.

# Kashink, *Fluid*, 2023

6 × 2,20 m

Spray paint on wood panel

The art of Kashink (France, 1981) shakes up the aesthetic codes and norms of the genre. Her installation *Fluid*, made up of a video and an artwork, invites us to consider the artist's body as a creative tool. The video documents the different stages in making a fresco, including the initial layers invisible in the final work. It depicts a figure emblematic of the artist's style, whose work on identity draws inspiration from the tradition of masks and make-up.

## On the other side of the screens

The rise of social media has halted in recent years. The work of Elfo (Italy, 1979) illustrates this evolution in how society views these platforms, while pieces by Biancoshock (Italy, 1982) and Imon Boy (Spain, 1991) transpose the codes and imaginary realm of the Internet into the real world.

It would, however, be a mistake to reduce the importance of these platforms to nothing, because social media enables thousands of artists and content creators to reach the communities who share their passions and values, on a daily basis. To demonstrate the wealth of these exchanges, influencers of different nationalities were invited to select accounts and content that inspire their daily lives for the installation *Real Time*.

# Jérôme G. Demuth

Jérôme G. Demuth

*VousMePlaisé*, 2023

Digigraphy on 350g cotton canvas

Archive photo of a street act from 2002

1,10 x 1,60 m

In the early 2000s, inspired by a photographic printing technique from the Bauhaus movement, Jérôme G. Demuth became the first artist to affix large-format photographs to the streets of Paris. He usually works in disguise so as not to raise suspicion. His urban acts short-circuit the public space and create visual alternatives that highlight political, surrealist or absurd expressions.

*With support from the Fondation Desperados pour l'Art Urbain.*

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Jérôme G. Demuth

*Dans la rue*, 2023

Mixed techniques

2,7 x 10 m

The participative installation *Dans la rue* [In the street] is a kind of decompression chamber before returning to the outside world. Visitors are invited to use the markers provided and take turns writing their names or “monikers” on the surface for urban expression usually “targeted” by taggers. Here, a mise en abyme of two shop roller shutters and a lorry roller shutter is created on a 1:1

scale on a photographic collage, making for entertaining canvases. Made from cardboard mandrels, the roller shutters can be interacted with and, as time and visitors pass by, represent a new kind “guest book 2.0”.

*With support from the Fondation Desperados pour l'Art Urbain.*

*Production partners: Le Rabot Perché, Otrad Services.*

## **Seb Toussaint, *Magnet Mural*, 2023**

Seb Toussaint is a Franco-British muralist known for his Share The Word project, launched in 2013, in which he draws attention to vulnerable communities living in slums or refugee camps around the world.

He creates his works by combining simple geometric shapes. In this installation, he invites the public to pick up magnetised shapes and place them on a magnetic wall to create ephemeral frescoes.

**Digital tools have shaped street aesthetics since 1980.** First they gave artists access to communication networks to disseminate their creations. Then, with the development of the Internet in the 1990s and 2000s, they gave them the means to wage a battle for attention.

Today, social and ecological issues on the one hand, and the spread of new tools, such as artificial intelligence, on the other, are challenging street artists. They are pushing them to redefine the codes of urban art in order to continue to reach their audiences.

This exhibition is coproduced by Grand Palais Immersif (a subsidiary of the Réunion des Musées Nationaux – Grand Palais) in partnership with Atlas V.

**GRAND  
PALAIS  
IMMERSIF**



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**Chief curator :**

Christian Omodeo

**Audiovisual design :**

Mehdi Mejri, Atlas V

**Exhibition conception :**

Christian Omodeo, Mehdi Mejri et Pierre Zandrowicz

**Audiovisual and interactive content production :**

SUPERBIEN STUDIO

**Exhibition design :**

Olivier Palatre

**Visuals :**

Horah, Inc. et Monsieur L'Agent

**Sound design and composition :**

Roque Rivas

**Sound engineering :**

Oscar Ferran

# AROUND THE EXHIBITION

## ENCOUNTERS

Studio Bastille (Opéra Bastille), 6.30 pm

Free upon reservation : [grandpalais-immersif.fr](http://grandpalais-immersif.fr)

**Wednesday 13 December**

**Presentation of the exhibition « *Loading. Street Art in the Digital Age* »**

*By Christian Omodeo, head curator and Mehdi Mejri, founder and director of Atlas V*

*Introduction by Roei Amit, managing director of Grand Palais Immersif*

A two-speakers conference introducing the exhibition's discourse, its itinerary and the digital experiences it offers to visitors.

**Wednesday 24 January**

**Screening of the documentary « *Martha Cooper. A Picture Story* »**

*By Selina Miles, 2019, English with French subtitles, 1h20*

Selina Miles' documentary looks back on the story of a photographer who, as early as the 1970s, saw in graffiti a culture to be preserved. Even today, Martha Cooper remains a major name of street art.

**Wednesday 28 February**  
**Street art, a cultural heritage?**

*Talk with Susana Gállego Cuesta, director of Musée des Beaux-arts de Nancy and Laure Pressac, cultural engineering director for Beaux Arts & Cie*

*Moderated by Cécile Cloutour, general coordinator of the Fédération de l'Art Urbain*

What are the values of street art as a cultural heritage?  
How should we tackle these works and cultures that are often viral, unattributed or misunderstood? What roles could cultural institutions and artists play in their transmission?

*With the support of the Fédération de l'Art Urbain*

**Wednesday 6 March**

**Guest artist: Kashink, street artist and performer**

*Talk led by Emmanuelle Dreyfus, journalist and art critic, writer of L'art clandestin, Anonymat et invisibilité, Du graffiti aux arts numériques (Alternatives)*

Kashink contributed to the exhibition by painting a mural that is representative of her work in the whole world.

During this talk, she reflects on her view on art and her engagement as an artist and an activist.



**Mercredi 24 avril**  
**Street art et musique**

*Talk with Roque Rivas, composer and creator of the exhibition's soundtrack, Reza Pounewatchy, producer, radio programmer and journalist for Radio nova, and Christian Omodeo, head curator.*

Graffiti is not only about hip hop! In this talk with Reza Pounewatchy, Roque Rivas, composer of the exhibition's soundtrack, explains how he approached this mission and what inspired his creative work.

*With the support of Radio Nova and Les Inrocks*

## **LOADING LIVE EVENTS**

**Main hall of the exhibition**

(to be confirmed)

## **GUIDED TOURS**

Saturday and Sunday, 13 January to 4 February,  
2 March to 24 March, 25 May to 7 July

## **TOURS AND CONFERENCES**

General and individual tours (1h30) or family tours (1h)  
with a museum guide from the Rmn-GP

Bookings on [grandpalais-immersif.fr](http://grandpalais-immersif.fr)

# DIGITAL

## THE MOBILE APPLICATION

Find all the content and information on the exhibition on the Grand Palais mobile app!

Free on the AppStore and on Google Play:  
[tinyurl.com/appligrandpalais](https://tinyurl.com/appligrandpalais)

## GRANDPALAIS-IMMERSIF.FR

Plan or prolong your visit and read the latest news on the exhibition *Loading*, as well as all the information on the venue and its touring exhibitions.

## ONLINE COURSE

The Street art MOOC presents this global phenomenon that has enjoyed a widespread popularity since the mid-20th, and is now catching the eye of artistic institutions, media, officials and the art market. The term « street art » hides very diverse cultures and personalities. Who are these artists ? What are their favorite supports, techniques, styles and inspirations ?

Launch day: 20 November 2023  
Register from November 6 on :  
[www.mooc-arturbain.com](http://www.mooc-arturbain.com)

# ON THE GRAND PALAIS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Find all the videos linked to the exhibition.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyAiVPzrW\\_o5PuNI6UH3JNg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyAiVPzrW_o5PuNI6UH3JNg)

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Trailers, interviews with curators, videos, key dates, quizzes and more. Follow us on social media and share your visit

**#ExpoLoading #GrandPalaisImmersif**



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@GrandPalaisImmersif



@GPIimmersif



@GrandPalaisImmersif



@le\_grand\_palais\_immersif

# THE ART OF SURPRISE

With the Sésame Stops Pass, go from Paris to all over France, with plenty of discoveries and surprises! For one year, enjoy unlimited priority admission to *Loading. Street Art in the Digital Age* at Grand Palais Immersif; *Gertrude Stein and Pablo Picasso. Inventing a language and Match. Design & Sport – A Story Looking to the Future* at the Musée du Luxembourg. You can also discover the exhibitions and collections of 15 national museums all around France, including the Musée de Cluny – Musée National du Moyen Âge in central Paris. Last but not least, you will receive reductions for our Histoires d'Art conferences.



**Get on board for a year full of surprises with the Sésame Stops Pass!**

**Young person €25 / Solo €60 / Duo €80**

More info at [grandpalais.fr/pass-sesame-escales](https://grandpalais.fr/pass-sesame-escales)

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