

Capc  
Musée d'art contemporain  
de Bordeaux

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**In this document, you will find all the useful information concerning *Absalon Absalon*, the exhibition in the nave of the Capc from 24 June 2021 to 2 January 2022. Guillaume Désanges and François Piron, the exhibition curators, tell you more about it on the next page.**

Absalon  
Absalon

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**It is also illustrated with a selection of images of the works and exhibition views will be available soon.**

Exhibition  
24.06.2021 – 02.01.2022

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Press kit

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**Also on view**

**Until 2022**  
*Around the Day in Eighty Worlds*  
Curator: Sandra Patron

**From 24 June 2021 to 2 January 2022**  
Kengné Tégua, *BADABOUM (error system)*  
As part of the Artists' Residency *Les Furtifs*

**From 24 June to 3 October 2021**  
Chiara Camoni, *Deux sœurs*  
Curator: Alice Motard

**Also on view off-site**

**From 10 June to 29 August 2021**  
*Tout doit disparaître*  
Curator: Sandra Patron  
Exhibition organised as part of the *Ressources*,  
Cultural Season Bordeaux 2021

With: Absalon, Alain Buffard, Dora García, Robert Gober, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Marie-Ange Guilleminot, Mona Hatoum, Laura Lamiel, Myriam Mihindou

The group exhibition *Absalon Absalon* takes the prematurely interrupted work of the Franco-Israeli artist Absalon as its starting point and proposes new interpretations via a selection of works by other artists of his generation and a network of conceptual and formal affinities. Best known for his *Cellules (Cells)* – geometric, architectural constructions painted in immaculate white which the artist conceived and constructed to live in – Absalon's practice has often been considered part of a genealogy of avant-gardes, a continuation of abstract radicalism, both generic and idealised, disconnected from worldly contingencies. Without wanting to overlook the harmony between Absalon's work and a certain historic teleology, this exhibition interrogates intent and meaning by proposing a more subjective, political and embodied approach.

From a large selection of his drawings, models, sculptures, maps and built-to-scale prototypes, we attempt to show how Absalon's work – whose linear trajectory ought to have led to a life-long project that would have surpassed the field of art – can be articulated around unique new ways of thinking. In retrospect, beneath the surface-level minimalism of his works, Absalon penetrated a multitude of social, affective and psychological questions all of which concern the emancipation of a physical body from a political body. His *Cellules* are less claustrophobic or deductive than they are built-to-scale mental and physical spaces: both protected and connected. They may almost be seen as bio-parasitical devices that function as a place for living and care in an environment considered by the artist as the sum of various agendas and determinants set by a culture his work would allow him to liberate himself from. They may almost be seen as bio-parasitical devices that function as a place for living and care in an environment considered by the artist as the sum of various agendas and determinants set by a culture his work would allow him to liberate himself from.

As a way of providing comparisons with this concrete utopia, and as part of a logic which is less dialectical than it is an opening of possibilities, we have chosen works by eight artists (Alain Buffard, Dora García, Robert Gober, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Marie-Ange Guilleminot, Mona Hatoum, Laura Lamiel, Myriam Mihindou) that we believe will generate multiple perspectives. Dissimulated amongst Absalon's oeuvre, these works should be viewed as couriers that allow for the transmission of cultural, spiritual, identarian, poetic and sentimental questions that go beyond Absalon's

primary monolithic and often impenetrable approach. This programme places Absalon's searing career retrospectively: not within the hypothetical spirit of his time – the 1990s – but rather as part of a network of political, formal and affective resonances whose echoes can still be heard today.

The reconsideration of Absalon's work almost thirty years after his death necessitates a reflection of his singularity as well as his proximity to a certain generation of artists that emerged onto the international stage at the turn of the nineties. Absalon's work – extended entirely towards a will to live and on his own terms – should be situated with those artists who, particularly in the context of the fight against AIDS, put aside any prevarication which had once separated activism from artistic practice in order to immerse themselves in practices motivated by the urgency and imperative necessity to exist and bear witness to this existence. These are embodied denunciations of mechanisms of oppression and determinism, made into performances and physically "incorporated", that places Absalon's searing career retrospectively: not within the hypothetical spirit of his time – the 1990s – but rather as part of a network of political, formal and affective resonances whose echoes can still be heard today.

Curators: Guillaume Désanges and François Piron

An exhibition co-produced with the Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM).

**Absalon**  
Israeli, 1964-1993.

Meir Eshel was born in Ashdod in Israel in 1964. After resigning from his military service, Meir Eshel settled in Paris in 1987 where, on his uncle's advice, he enrolled with the art critic Jacques Ohayon, in Christian Boltanski's workshop at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The collector and art history teacher Jacques Ohayon was also a flamboyant and subversive figure in Paris nightlife.

That same year, Meir took the name Absalon, inspired by an Old Testament narrative, involving the story of a rebellious son who was eventually vanquished and murdered. So a name associated with the idea of revolt, but also with tragic fate.

When Absalon, encouraged by an ever larger fan club, started to show his work, swiftly enjoying critical acclaim, he was accepted at the Institut des Hautes Etudes en Arts Plastiques, an annual programme run by the former director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Pontus Hulten, and by the artists Daniel Buren and Sarkis. There, Absalon met in particular Michael Asher, who subsequently had a considerable influence on his work.

When he started to work with the Chantal Crousel gallery in Paris in 1990, he moved to a studio in Boulogne, built by Le Corbusier for the artist Jacques Lipchitz in 1924.

In January 1993, he held a major solo exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, organized by Béatrice Parent and Angeline Scherf. In it he showed the prototypes of his *Cellules/Cells*, white constructions built based on the proportions of measurements of the artist's body and designed to be installed in six different cities for living in. Designed as "mental spaces" by Absalon, the *Cells* define a form of life based on resistance, habits, mechanisms and constraints, as forms not of alienation but of emancipation. What was involved, for Absalon, was living on his own terms by shedding assigned identities.

In October 1993, aged 28, Absalon died from the consequences of the Aids virus, before he could complete his project.

**Alain Buffard**  
French, 1960-2013.

Having practiced as an interpretative dancer throughout the 1980s, it was only later that the French choreographer Alain Buffard truly trained himself – next to figures of postmodern American dance including Yvonne Rainer and Anna Halprin, all the while demonstrating an interest in performance artists like Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, Mike Kelley and Chris Burden. He may well have lent them his conscious critique of daily gestures, his resistance to physical and mental determinants, and his minimalist economy of creation.

**Dora García**  
Spanish, born in 1965.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Dora García has been developing conceptual work based around critical approaches to patterns of western thought. Using her knowledge to explore the limits of this thought, her textual and one might even say linguistic work focuses on slippages of meaning, where concepts come face to face with affect; where thought and reason adopt various forms of beliefs and poetics.

**Robert Gober**  
American, born in 1954.

The American sculptor Robert Gober became known in the 1980s for his handcrafted reproductions of everyday objects, which play on a strangeness created by an ambiguity between readymade and representation, decor and functionalism, realism and fiction. These reproductions of banal objects can be located as part of a political process that challenges cultural, social, sexual, religious and educational assignments.

**Felix Gonzalez-Torres**  
American, 1957-1996.

Disease and demise are recurring themes in the work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres. His creations, for the most part ephemeral, often take the form of stacked objects. From sweets to fortune cookies to sheets of paper, these objects (which visitors are invited to handle) are intimately connected to his life and the trials he faced: his status as a Cuban immigrant; his homosexuality; and the AIDS epidemic, which would take his life in 1996. Profoundly engaged, the works of Gonzalez-Torres honour and invite all to partake in the memory of those who died of the disease.

**Marie-Ange Guilleminot**  
French, born in 1960.

The work of Marie-Ange Guilleminot, who was Absalon's partner from 1990 on, maintains, like the latter's work, a relationship to the notion of "inhabiting", which she understands as a precarious and discreet way of living and meeting basic physiological needs, through a form of nomadism. Her works are an interface between her body and the world, revealing a fundamental vulnerability and loneliness.

**Mona Hatoum**  
British, of Palestinian origin, born in 1952.

Mona Hatoum was born in Beirut and exiled to London from 1975 on, when civil war broke out in Lebanon. She began her artistic career in the early 1980s with performance work that responded to political oppression, social conditioning, confinement and state surveillance. Carried out in galleries or in public spaces, these "situations", more symbolic than they are directly linked to current events, metonymically refer to societal fractures and global conflicts, while being located in the England of the 1980s – a country that is "racist, unequal and ignorant of other cultures",

**Laura Lamiel**  
French, born in 1948.

Following on from her pictorial work, Laura Lamiel's pieces gradually developed in space. In the 1990s, they took the form of "cells": inaccessible white spaces where found objects and raw materials, scraps and manufactured products, are staged – rigorously arranged as if being stored, according to a sensitive and sensual order that plays with both emptiness and fullness. Despite being prolific and visually varied, Laura Lamiel's work draws on a deliberately reduced formal repertoire, which recycles objects and materials from one work to the next.

**Myriam Mihindou**  
Franco-Gabonese, born in 1964.

Myriam Mihindou's multifaceted practice could be described as curative and magical, as much as artistic. Her performances are intimate experiences as much as they are performances; rituals as much as they are shows. Her sculptures and drawings are symbolic forms as much as they are objects of transmission, invested with empirical powers. A nomadic artist, she works empathetically with materials but also with specific people and cultural situations, seeking to repair the wounds of bodies and individual and collective psyches caused by different forms of domination, including colonial history.

## Guillaume Désanges

Guillaume Désanges is an art critic and exhibition curator. He runs Work Method, an independent production organization based in Paris.

He coordinated the artistic activities at the Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers (2001-2007). He developed several lecture projects (*The Dark Side of Form, A History of Performance in 20 minutes, Signs and Wonders, Vox Artisti, his master's voice*) and readings. He was the guest curator at the Plateau FRAC Ile-de-France, where he curated the series *Érudition concrète* (2009-2011).

Since 2013 he has been the curator at La Verrière, the Hermès Corporate Foundation in Brussels. Guillaume Désanges has organized several exhibitions in France and other countries, including: *The Enemy of my Enemy* with Neil Beloufa (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2018), *L'esprit français, Contre-cultures, 1969- 1989* with François Piron (la maison rouge - Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris, 2017), *Poésie Balistique* (La Verrière - Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Bruxelles, 2016), *Ma'aminim (the believers)* (Prague transit-display, 2015), *Une exposition universelle (documentary section)* with Michel François (8<sup>th</sup> Biennale d'Art Contemporain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, 2013), *Escape Plans* with Michel François (solo show) (SMAK, Ghent, 2009-2010), *Intouchable* with François Piron (Villa Arson, Nice, 2006 and Museo Patio Herreriano, Valladolid, 2007). He has taught at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris-Cergy, at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Lyon.

## François Piron

François Piron is an art critic and exhibition curator. He is curator at the Palais de Tokyo, and founder of the Paraguay publishing house in Paris.

He ran the international post-graduate programme at the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon from 2012 to 2020, and organized the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennale de Rennes in 2016.

His recent shows include: *Three Moral Tales and Odradek*, Malmö Konsthall, in 2019 and 2018; *Poésie prolétaire*, Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, 2019; with Guillaume Désanges, *Contre-vents*, Le Grand Café, Saint-Nazaire, 2019, and *L'esprit français*, La maison rouge, Paris, 2017.

His latest publications have focused on the works of Katinka Bock (ROMA Publications), Ian Kiaer (Archive Books), Guy Mees (Sternberg Press), Pieter Vermeersch (Ludion Press), Alexandre Estrela (Paraguay), Koenraad Dedobbeleer (Koenig Books) and Guy de Cointet (Paraguay).



Absalon, *Solutions*, 1992.  
Video transferred to DVD  
Colour, sound. 7'25", loop  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal  
Crousel, Paris  
© The Estate of Absalon



Absalon, *Solutions*, 1992  
Video transferred to DVD  
Colour, sound. 7'25", loop  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal  
Crousel, Paris  
© The Estate of Absalon



Absalon, *Bruits*, 1993  
Colour video, UMatric low band PAL, sound  
2' 30". Collection Capc Musée d'art  
contemporain de Bordeaux  
© The Estate Absalon



Absalon, *Untitled*, 1990  
8 drawings series, ball pen, pencil, ink & correction  
pen on bristol paper, framed  
33 x 24,2 x 2 cm (framed).  
Courtesy of Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris  
Photo: Uwe Walter  
Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011



Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011



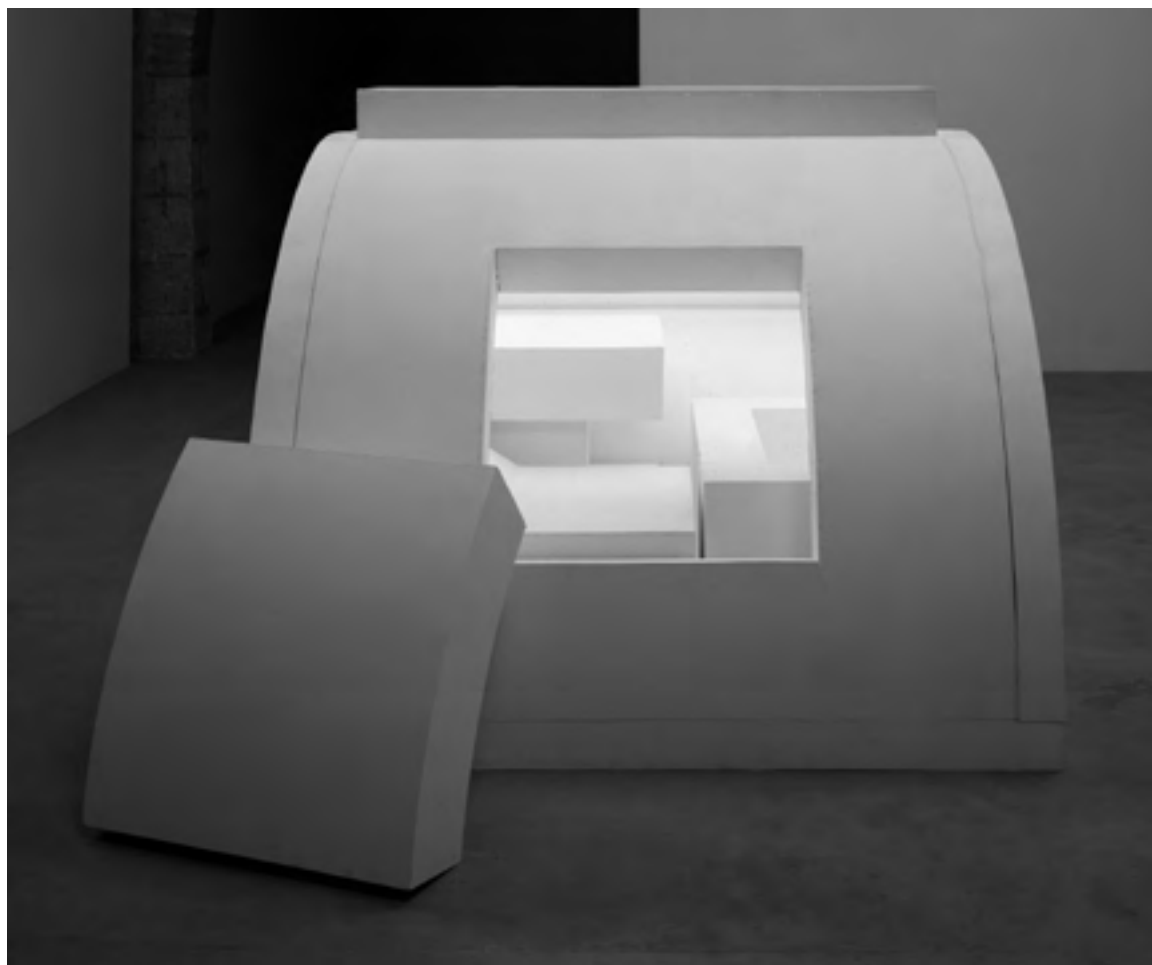
Absalon, *Cellule N°2 (Prototype)*, 1992 (Zurich)  
Wood, cardboard, white dispersion paint, fabrics,  
neon tubes. 224,5 x 430 x 220 cm  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie  
2008 Schenkung der Friedrich Christian Flick  
Collection  
Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011

Absalon, *Cellule N°4 (Prototype)*, 1992 (Tel Aviv)  
Wood, cardboard, white dispersion paint, fabric,  
neon tubes. 244 x 406 x 210,5 cm  
[mac] musée d'art contemporain, Marseille  
Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011

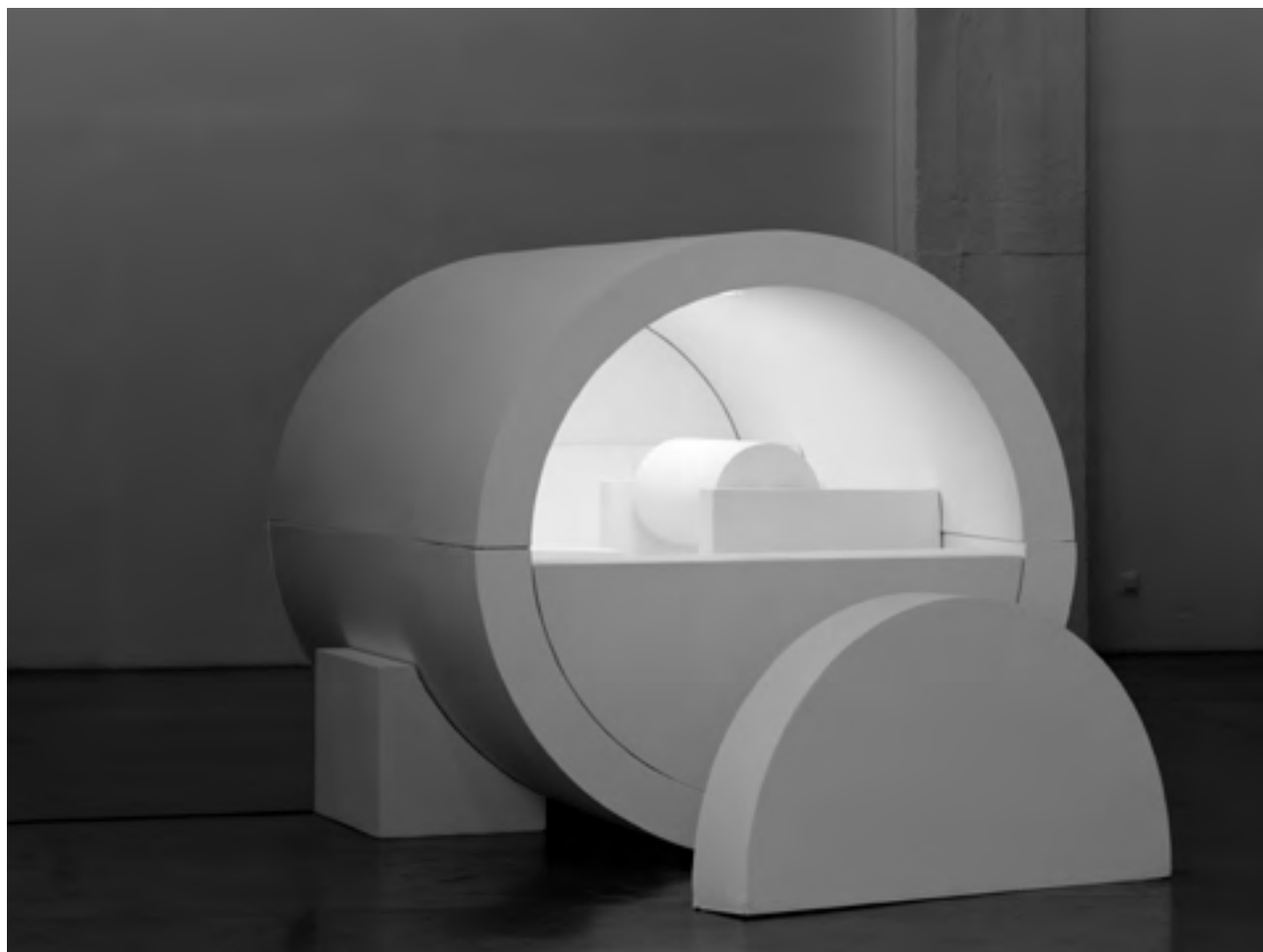


Absalon, *Cellule n°3*, 1991  
Wood, cardboard, Plexiglas, fluorescent tubes  
and lacquer. 133 x 240 x 161 cm  
Collection Capc Musée d'art contemporain,  
Bordeaux. © Estate Absalon  
Photo: Frédéric Delpech

Absalon, *Cellule n°4*, 1991  
Wood, cardboard, Plexiglas, fluorescent tubes  
and lacquer. 147 x 180 x 247 cm  
Door: 78,5 x 74 x 30 cm  
Collection Capc Musée d'art contemporain de  
Bordeaux. © Estate Absalon  
Photo: Frédéric Delpech



Absalon, *Cellule n°2*, 1991  
Collection Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA  
© Estate Absalon  
Photo: Jean-Christophe Garcia

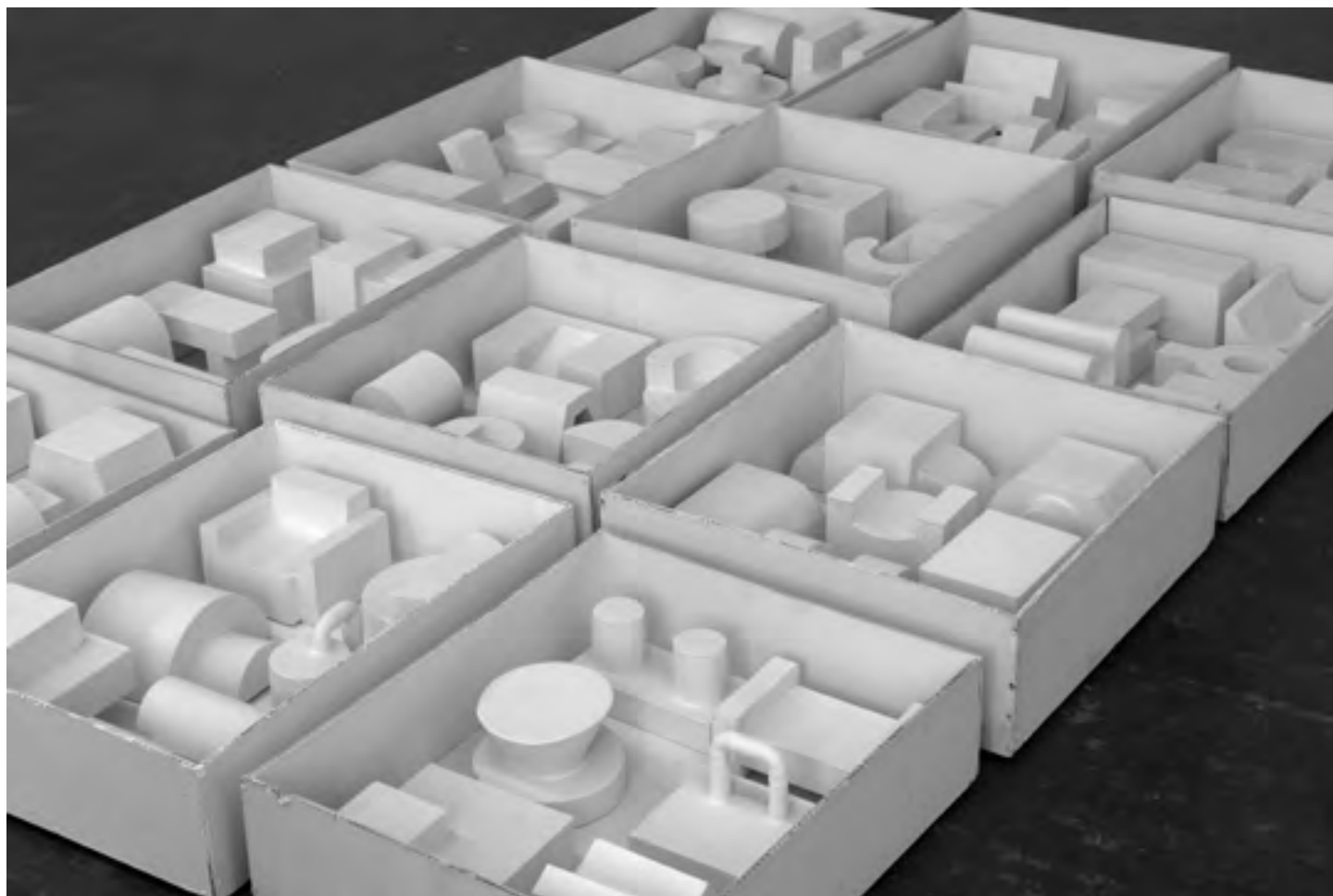




Absalon, *Cellule N°1 (Prototype)*, 1992 (Paris)  
Wood, cardboard, white dispersion paint, fabrics,  
neon tubes. 224,5 x 430 x 220 cm  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie  
2008 Schenkung der Friedrich Christian Flick  
Collection  
Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011



Absalon, *Cellules*, 1991  
12 boxes with 6 elements  
Wood, cardboard, paper, white dispersion paint  
20,5 x 160,5 x 252,5 cm  
Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris  
Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011



Alain Buffard, *Good boy*, 1998  
Video recording of a performance at the  
Serralves Foundation, Porto, 2003.  
Direction: Vasco Riobom. 37'46»  
Collection Estate Alain Buffard  
Centre National de la Danse, Pantin



Dora García, *Il y a d'autres mondes mais ils sont dans celui-ci*, 2018  
Dibond, gold leaf. Variable dimensions  
Collection Cypanga, France  
Photo: IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,  
Generalitat. Juan García Rosell

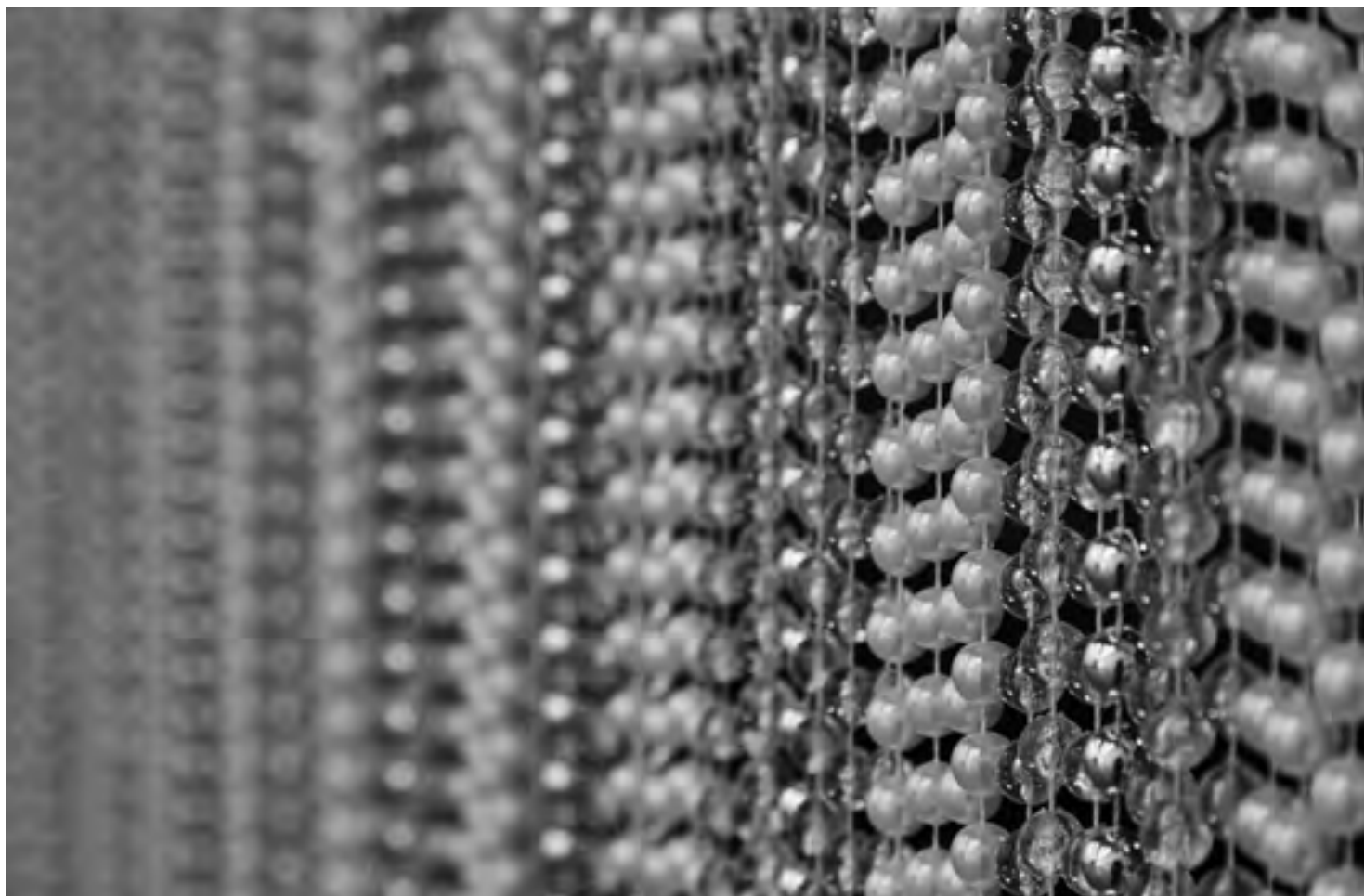


Robert Gober, *Untitled*, 1985  
Plaster, wood, wire, steel and enamel  
Right : 73 x 67,5 x 86 cm  
Left : 69,5 x 67,5 x 82,5 cm  
La Caixa Collection, Contemporary Art



Felix Gonzalez-Torres, «*Untitled*» (*Chemo*), 1991  
Strands of beads and hanging device.  
Dimensions vary with installation  
Installed in Felix Gonzalez-Torres: This Place.  
Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast, Northern  
Ireland, United Kingdom. 30 Oct. 2015 – 24 Jan.  
2016. Cur. Eoin Dara.

Photographer: Simon Mills  
© Felix Gonzalez-Torres  
Courtesy of the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation



Marie-Ange Guilleminot, *L'Oursin*, 1999, Tokyo  
Textile sculpture. ø 4 m  
Collection Marie-Ange Guilleminot



Mona Hatoum, *Performance Documents*, 1980-1987/2013  
10 digital prints and 4 videos. Variable dimensions  
Edition of /de 6 + 1 AP  
Courtesy of the artist, White Cube and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris  
Photo: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd





Laura Lamiel, *Ring*, 2020  
Various elements, wood, enamelled steel,  
fluorescent, cotton, leather. 100 × 350 × 250 cm  
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Marcelle Aïx, Paris  
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat.  
Juan García Rosell



Absalon, *Cellules*, 1991  
12 boxes with 6 elements  
Wood, cardboard, paper, white dispersion paint  
20,5 x 160,5 x 252,5 cm  
Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris Paris  
Exhibition view at KW Berlin, 2011



Exhibition co-produced with



This exhibition is recognized as being of national interest by the Ministry of Culture/Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs. As such, it receives exceptional financial support from the State.



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Exhibition organised as part of *Ressources*,  
Cultural Season Bordeaux 2021



## Practical information

### Museum and shop

Open from Tuesday to Sunday, from 11 am to 6 pm

From 11 am to 8 pm every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month

Closed on Monday and Public holidays, except July 14<sup>th</sup>  
and August 15<sup>th</sup>

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### Café du Musée

The restaurant is temporarily closed

### Library

Consultation on site and only by appointment

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## Admission fee

7€ full rate (5€ applicable fee when no exhibition in the nave)

4€ reduced rate (3€)

Free on certain conditions, more information on the website  
[www.capc-bordeaux.fr](http://www.capc-bordeaux.fr)

Free entrance first Sunday of the month (except in July and August)

## Access

### Tram

Line B, stop Capc

Line C, stop Jardin public

Line D, stop Quinconces

### Bus

Lines 4, 5N, 6, 15 and 29, stop Jardin public

Vcub (bike share service)

3, allées de Chartres

20, quai des Chartrons

Église Saint Louis, rue Notre-Dame

60, cours de Verdun

### Car parks

Quinconces (allées de Chartres)

Cité mondiale (20, quai des Chartrons)

Jean Jaurès (place Jean Jaurès)

La Bourse (quai du Maréchal Lyautey)



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