

In this document, you will find some useful information about *What can't be seen*, an exhibition devoted to the work of Jean Sabrier. The exhibition will be on view from April 7, 2023 to April 28, 2024, on the 2nd floor of the museum, in the Ferrère gallery.

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You will learn more from Alice Cavender, the curator of the exhibition, in the following pages.

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07.04.2023 – 28.04.2024

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Press kit

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Also on view

Until May 14th, 2023
Barbe à Papa
Curator: Cedric Fauq
Nave

From April 7th to September 3rd, 2023
Antefuture
Curator: Sandra Patron
Galleries, ground floor

From April 7th, 2023 to January 5th, 2025
Systemic Love
Curator: Cédric Fauq
Gallery Foy, 2nd floor

From April 7th, 2023 – ongoing
Videodrame
Installation by Aria Dean
Curator: Cédric Fauq

From April 7th to September 17th, 2023
Cold Case 01: Arsen Savadov
Curators: Sasha Pevak and Anne Cadenet

Jean Sabrier (1951 Cestas – 2020 Bordeaux) was a self-taught and multifaceted artist; for five decades, he developed a protean body of work that stands at the crossroads of art history. His poetic and subtle pieces blend rigour with humour, creating sensory experiences that both enchant and unsettle the viewer. Helped by guiding figures with whom he remained in constant dialogue – such as great Renaissance masters of perspective Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello, the unclassifiable Marcel Duchamp, or his British counterpart, visual artist Richard Hamilton – , he experimented with the limits of our field of vision, constantly forcing our gaze into unexpected détournements

His works in sculpture, installation, photography and painting all elaborate upon the core concepts of movement and time. Through his experience with diverse media, he worked out a nuanced and grounded reflection on the very meaning of art and the status of artist. As a publisher, he interrogated the handicraft process of collation and bookbinding – with each publication being conceived, laid out and assembled from A to Z by himself alone. These publications also allowed him to painstakingly document his artistic process, inclusive as they were of his correspondence, notes and work methods... ultimately, of everything that had contributed towards creation.

This approach of the artwork as a “total” and connected experience culminated in the animated films developed by the artist during the last twenty years of his life, as metaphorical, overarching insets of his own theoretical investigations and artistic concerns.

With his production, Jean Sabrier constantly pushes us to question what we see and shift the focus of our gaze: What is it that we see? What is it that is seen? What *can* be seen? In his form-shaping laboratory, this tinkerer-craftsman-scientist-erudite-scholar-poet-artist proposes to the world a mischievous and seductive body of work, “visual pieces that would not be seen”, confirming what his friend Bernard Noël so aptly wrote him: *“when it is well directed, perception can go further than sight, and there, in an extremity of rapture, blossom into a feeling that sees.”*

Curator: Alice Cavender

Alice Cavender is head of the exhibition centre at the Capc Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux.

Her Master's thesis was about Jean Sabrier, whose work she has been following for nearly twenty years. She is one of the co-founders of the non-profit organisation "Les Amis de Jean Sabrier," created in 2021 after the artist's passing, to preserve, promote, and disseminate his work.

Jean Sabrier was born on July 10th, 1951, in Cestas, France, to working-class parents. After earning a vocational certificate in mechanics, he quickly turned to the world of art, particularly painting, which he only knew from reproductions in books or newspaper articles. As a teenager, some pivotal encounters with poets, including Jean-Pierre Rouquier, Bernard Noël, and Henri Michaux, allowed him to get a foothold into the worlds of literature and art. All his artistic production would be characterised by an interest in words and writing. Trips to England (where he discovered Hans Holbein at the National Gallery) and Italy (where he discovered Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello, among others) confirmed him in his passion and desire for experimentation with the medium of painting.

The 1970s were formative years for his personal practice; of particular significance, his encounter with the work of Marcel Duchamp, who would become a kind of invisible mentor, and a guiding thread throughout his work, giving him the courage to break free from the constraints of the canvas and to explore other artistic techniques.

In 1994, an artistic and intellectual love affair began between Jean Sabrier and British artist Richard Hamilton – both of whom had been invited to an exhibition proposed by the École des Beaux-Arts in Rouen as a tribute to Duchamp. Decades of friendship, correspondence, and written exchanges, as well as shared travel experiences, confirm the great interest they had for each other's work, transcending geographical borders and language barriers (Richard did not speak French and Jean did not speak English).

With the late 1980s and the democratisation of computers came a turning point in Sabrier's practice, allowing him to fulfill Marcel Duchamp's wish of bringing works of art to life. A desire for animation and movement would carry on haunting him, leading him to spend the last twenty years of his life behind his computer screen creating animation films, each more referential than the last, demonstrating Jean Sabrier's incredible ability to produce works that pushed at the limits of artistic creation; making him a "complete" artist whose atypical career led to create a body of work encompassing the vastness and complexity of a self-contained world, behind a voluntary façade of simplicity.

He was the subject of several solo exhibitions, including *Notes pour un chapeau qui serait portrait* [*Notes for a Hat that would also be a Portrait*] (Jacques Donguy Gallery, Bordeaux, 1980); *Le musée n'expose que le musée* [*The Museum Shows the Museum Only*] (La Roche-sur-Yon Museum, 1983); *Jean Sabrier* (Périgueux Museum, 1994);

Jean Sabrier (Bonnat Museum, Bayonne, 1996). He inaugurated the Jean Cocteau Museum in Menton (designed by Rudy Ricciotti) in 2011 with a major solo exhibition. His work was shown in France and abroad as part of group exhibitions (MUHKA Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen; Abbaye de Ste Croix Museum, Les Sables d'Olonne; École des Beaux-Arts, Rouen; Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam; Francis M Naumann Fine Art, LLC, New York, among others). He contributed to numerous publications as a writer, editor, and graphic designer; in particular for *Étant donné*, a publication devoted to the work of Marcel Duchamp.

Jean Sabrier passed away on February 25th, 2020.

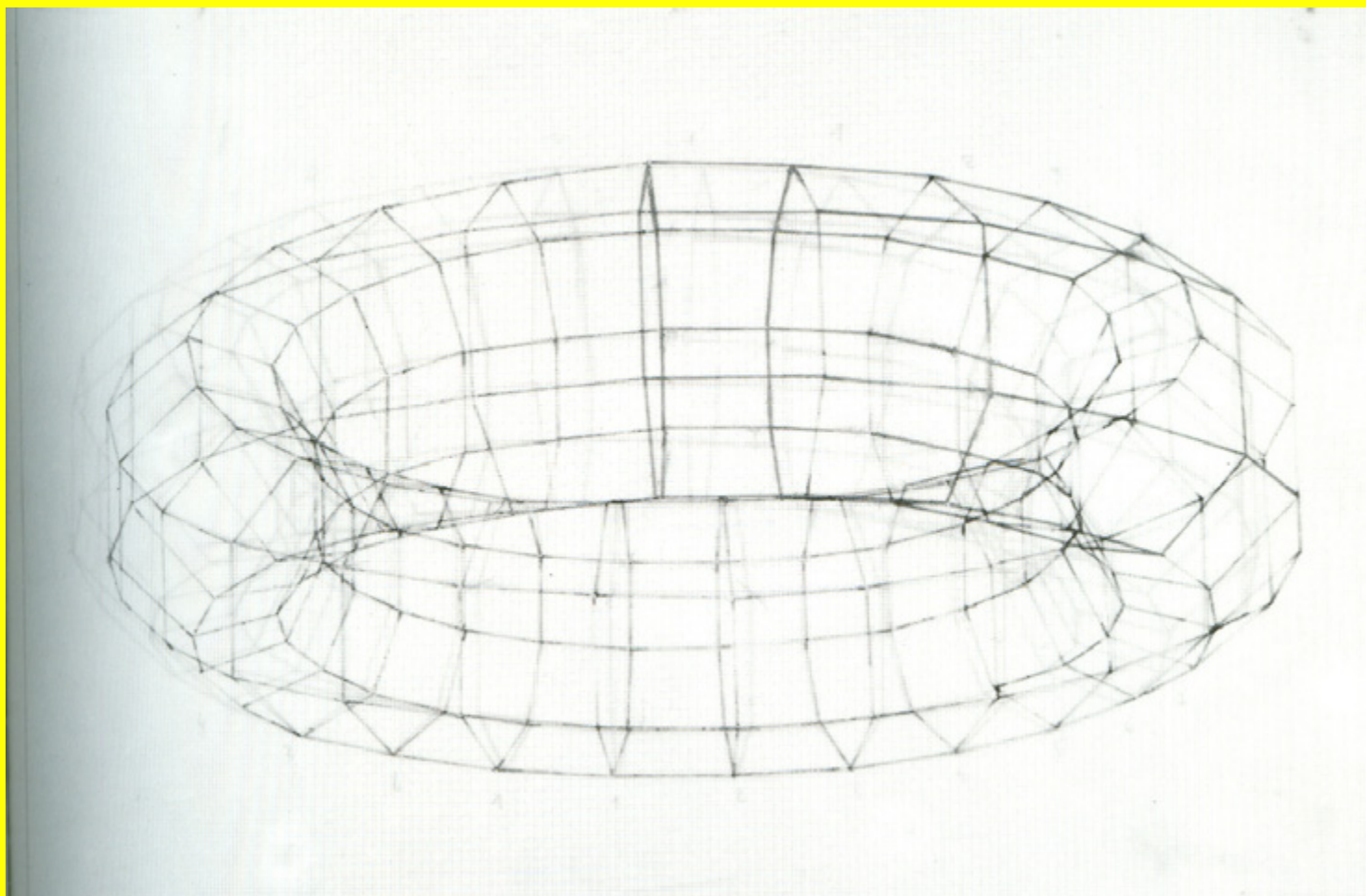
Richard Hamilton
Jean Sabrier 3.8.98, 1998
Polaroid



Jean Sabrier
L'Emprise de la Lumière [*The Hold of Light*], 1972
Acrylic on canvas
130 x 195 cm
Private Collection



Jean Sabrier
Mazzocchio anaglyphe [Anaglyph Mazzocchio],
1980
Ink and pencil on tracing paper
21 x 29.7 cm
Collection Pierre Lawton



Jean Sabrier
Maquette Vitrail [Stained-glass Model], 1982-1986
Ink/tracing paper, altuglas, rhodoid, magnetic
tape and speaker
50 x 65 cm
Collection Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA



Jean Sabrier
Coffrets *Liard* 1 & 2-3 [*Liard* Box Set 1 & 2-3], 1991-
1993-1995
Artist's books and objects created for *Liard* n° 1,
Institut Français d'Athènes, 1990; *Liard* n° 2-3,
Collège Marcel Duchamp / Musée de Périgueux,
1993-1995. Variable dimensions



Jean Sabrier
Broyeuse au Zodiaque [Grinder with Zodiac], 2007
Lifochrome, diasec montage on dibond
50 x 60 cm
Aurélie and Sébastien Richter Collection



Jean Sabrier
FURINOIR N°2 (detail) [FURINAL N°2 (detail)],
2010
'Fountain' reflecting 'The Battle of San Romano' in
front of 'Warriors' by Marsden Hartley



This exhibition is considered of national relevance. As such, it received a grant from the Ministère de la Culture / Direction régionale des Affaires culturelles de Nouvelle-Aquitaine

Exposition
d'intérêt
national

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Practical information

Museum and Shop

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

From 11 am to 8 pm, the 2nd Wednesday of the month

Closed on Monday and Public holidays except July 14th and August 15th

+ 33 (0)5 56 00 81 50

Shop: +33 (0)5 56 00 81 69

Café du Musée

Restaurant, noon to 2.30 pm

Coffee, tea, refreshments, until 5.30 pm and the 2nd Wednesday of the month until 7 pm.

+ 33 (0)5 56 06 35 70

Library

Consultation on site and only by appointment

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Admission fee

8€ full rate; 4.50€ reduced rate

6€ full rate; 3.50€ reduced rate (applicable fee when no exhibition in the nave)

2€ for Students

Free for members of the carte Jeune Bordeaux Métropole and the pass Musées Bordeaux.

Reduced rate and other free access subject to conditions, see on the website, www.capc-bordeaux.fr

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

Getting here

Tramway

Line B, Stop Capc

Line C, Stop Jardin public

Line D, Stop Quinconces

Bus

Lines 4, 5N, 6, 15 et 29, Stop Jardin public

V3 - 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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