

selection from portfolio

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the place of light
gilles conan mars 07- dec 10

as a former lighting designer for the theatre and contemporary dance, my natural path of exploration as an artist is the consequence and the extension of my initial centre of interest: working with light.

light, which not only illuminates but also fuels, and so governs the stage settings and structures the physical and temporal space of a performance (and thus of a place).

these same intrinsic and aesthetic qualities lend themselves to an exploration of plasticity where the potentials are magnified and expanded. it is above all the dimension of time which, freed from subjection to the (limiting) format of the stage, is enriched by new possibilities of writing to cognition, of stretching and being stretched, which is to say of compositions approaching a music for the gaze.

i have thus enriched my vocabulary by this progression, this attachment to kinetics that permits me to pursue the massaging of perceptions, already initiated as a lighting designer, as well as to unfold and roll out a dynamic and often hypnotic architecture. many times it is the generative material of light, by its own form or by the particularity of its luminescence that, by placing a certain number of exacting technical constraints into play, paradoxically opens the field of experience where the presence-absence and the pregnant immateriality of light can find its expression. The demands of project specifications or more generally, of a place, a site, or an environment, equally disorient my process toward eventualities that i often would not have accessed in my first approach. this is the case, for example, for the project at the high school charles de gaulle in muret: the building's lack of visibility over the city and the nature of the surrounding urban web pushed me to propose an implantation that was certainly unusual (beneath a footbridge) but most of all, a use for the normally inadequate daylight, recreating a swath of night in full day via an installation at once in symbiosis (powered by solar panels) and in conflict with its environment (variable visibility in consequence of the available sunlight). there, as often with my "turned on/lit up" works, a dose of randomness is introduced into the

magma of the whole, so as to undermine the systematic, to push the over-predominant intentionality of created beauty back to its due portion, to disengage from the gestures of artist-as-demiurge and favour the birth of the unknown.

i frequently play upon these random combinatorial inputs to emphasize the ambivalent opposition between the increasing computerization, digitalization, of the electronic equipment essential to the implementation of a light installation, and the theoretically mechanical result which in fact displays a near organic aspect or appearance, obtained in fine.

this incidental swarming portrays in equal measure my setting aside of a sovereign crystallization of thought that, while at times necessary, is often fossilized. random chance, by introducing ephemerality and motion, returns us to the nature of life itself from which art can only distance itself at the risk of withering, or even mummification.

along these lines, i have often used light sources (analogue and /or digital) suggesting a mythology of the firefly and of the quantum, the smallest quantity, which in a recurrent fashion anchors the cycle of life in my works. i conceive of light as a critical and phenomenological opening into the world. i attempt to mix together concepts, preceptions and affects (cf gilles deleuze).

i grant myself the permanent right to digression, to experimentation and to reflection so as to privilege the force of ideas and not restrain myself to a self-reinitialized and imprisoning plastic process.

in resonance with the symbol of the firefly, the paradox of the globally inappropriate industrial processes currently in common use for the production of light and the issues of urban lighting are exposed both implicitly and to the light of day. these ties to life also commit me to a search for maximal coherence in my process and the technical means i employ, leading me to render these means doubly concrete: in their implementation and in their visibility as the vocabulary of the work. in consequence, my designs orient themselves (in an increasingly accentuated way) along the progressive path of reduction (energetics, luminescence, extinction, inversion, renewable production, compensation, overcompensation, under-powering, reuse, recycling, turned off/dark works, solar panels, etc...) articulated in terms of the notion of "preservative" works (my personal terminology in substitution for 'ecology' or 'sustainable development' which are too often served up every which way by the worst restaurants).

the place and the sacralisation of light in contemporary art (syndrome of works in neon) but also in the 'society of the spectacle' (cf guy debord / syndrome of the museum-city or (euro)disneyfication) is at the same time brought to mind more particularly by works of mirrored 'negative light' (photovoltaic), the series of works 'now' (for 'no watt', relics of non-electrified industrial or domestic materials) where 'the margins determine the page' (cf jean-luc godard).

dispersion

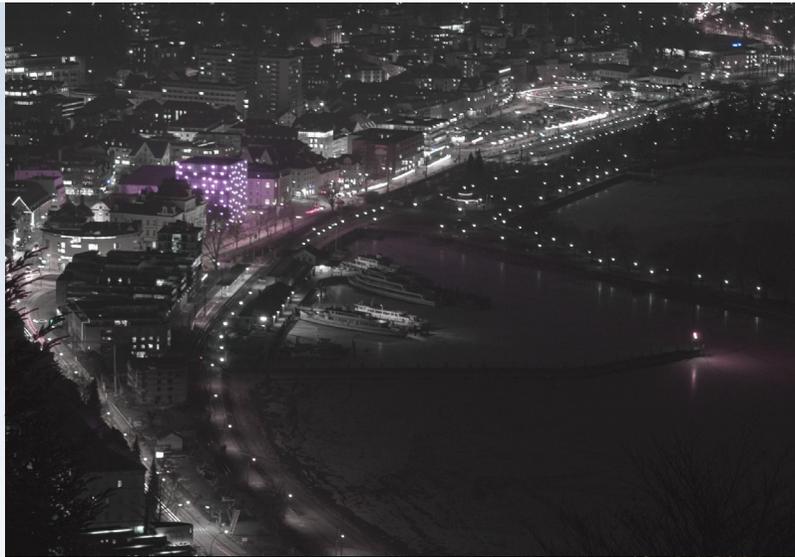
ephemeral installation / kunsthauus bregenz / austria / 2006

two months installation / zumtobel staff sponsorship / co-signature by contract with jean-marc bustamante

200 polycarbonate bowls - theater filters - halogen bulbs - wires - steel cables - generative programming - extinguishing of public lighting - average consumption 500 w/h

installation on the 4 façades displaying a semi-random shifting camaïeu pattern / programming inspired by glow-worms 100% efficient fade-in and fade-outs.

displayed during jean-marc bustamante exhibition –beautifuldays–
60 000 euros budget



mur de pv + fading jenny 0 à 100

permanent diptych installation / roubaix / france / 2008

fading jenny 0-100 _ generative light installation in double-door entrance / leds - aluminium - plexiglas - generative programming - energy compensation by photovoltaic *pv wall* piece/ 120 x 200 cm

mur de pv (pv wall) _ photovoltaic piece made out 24 solar panel displayion a slight camaïeu / photovoltaic panels - steel - current converter - wires - energy compensation for *fading jenny 0_100* light piece / 800 x 300 cm
110 000 euros budget

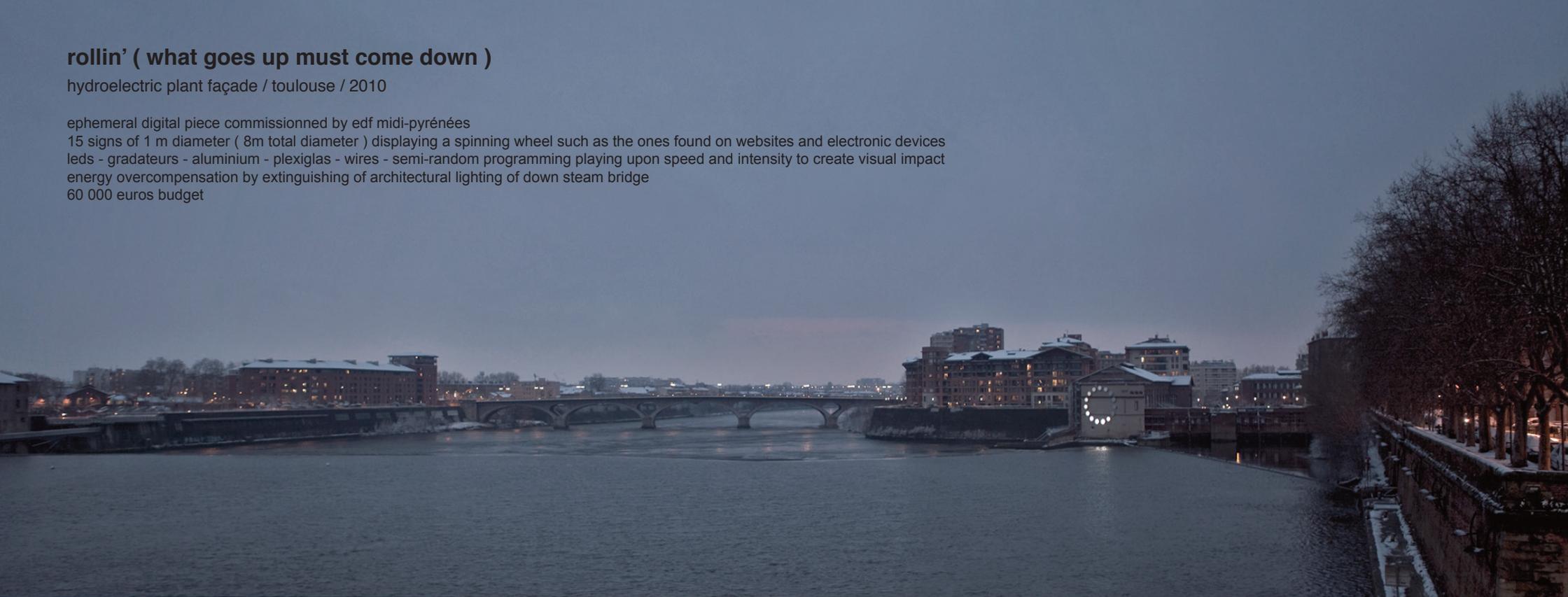


rollin' (what goes up must come down)

hydroelectric plant façade / toulouse / 2010

ephemeral digital piece commissioned by edf midi-pyrénées

15 signs of 1 m diameter (8m total diameter) displaying a spinning wheel such as the ones found on websites and electronic devices
leds - gradateurs - aluminium - plexiglas - wires - semi-random programming playing upon speed and intensity to create visual impact
energy overcompensation by extinguishing of architectural lighting of down steam bridge
60 000 euros budget



untitled (azf memorial)

permanent installation / toulouse / france / 2012

on the location of the catastrophe
commissioned by the city of toulouse
in collaboration with lab[au] (belgium)

*397 poles of 60 mm stainless steel / 60 cm interdistance
minimum height 50 cm in the center and 4m on the outer circle
piece diameter = 13m40 / concrete platform diameter = 30 m
stainless steel, polycarbonate, porous concrete, piezo speakers,
red and white leds, microcontrollers, wires, generative program-
ming, photovoltaic power compensation on nearby building roof*

azf was a phytosanitary factory in a close suburb of toulouse.
one of the storage hangar exploded in september 2001, 10 days
after the terrorist attack on the world trade center in new york.
after a long trial, the explosion was determined as an industrial
catastrophy caused by a chain of negligences.
the memorial was commissioned by the city of toulouse in 2011 to
commemorate the deaths of the 31 victims.

this 'penetrable' piece provides a sound and light environnement
into the environnement.

it creates a moiré effet when moving from distance and to the
piece such as in soto's or other's op-art artists' pieces.

the diameter of the circles of poles correspond to the size of the
first fertilizer granulation tower built on site in the 30's.

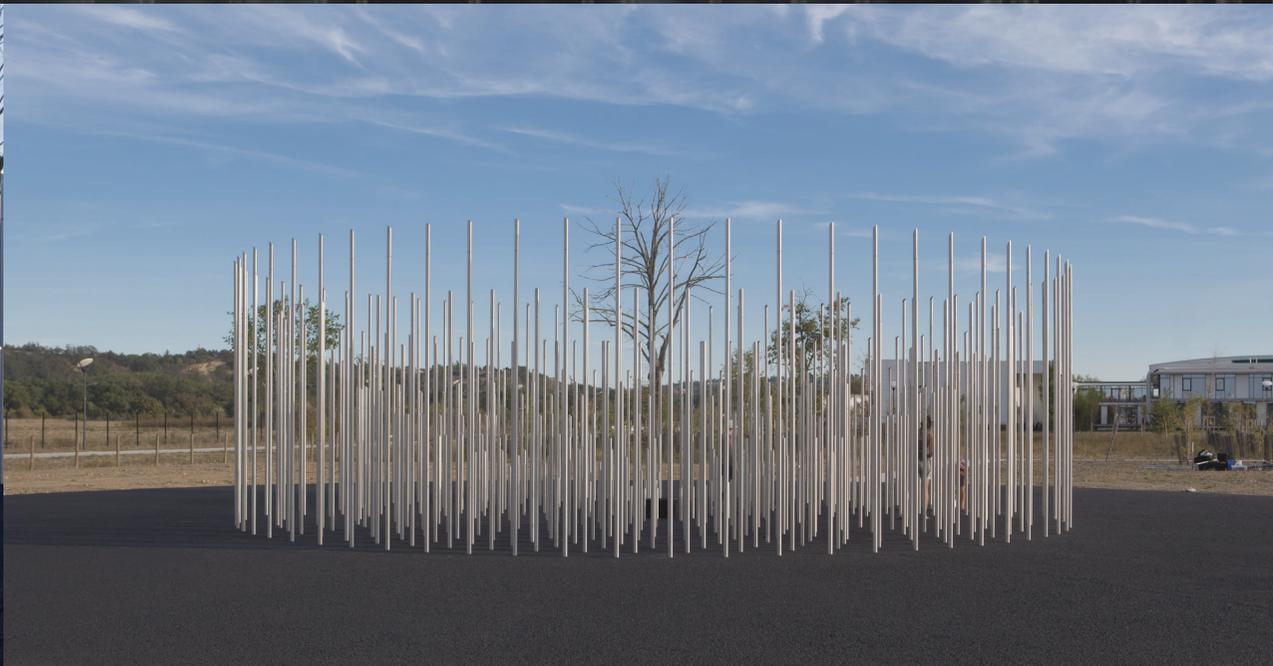
those circles also refer to the propagation of the explosion and to
the scraper blade of that former tower.

the hyperbole formed the poles refers the crater left by the explo-
sion on site.

during day-time, the piece produces generative sound.

at night, it displays generative light programming using only two
colors, white and red, in reference to the main granulation tower
that was the symbol of the factory for the people of toulouse.

180 000 euros budget



carousel 154

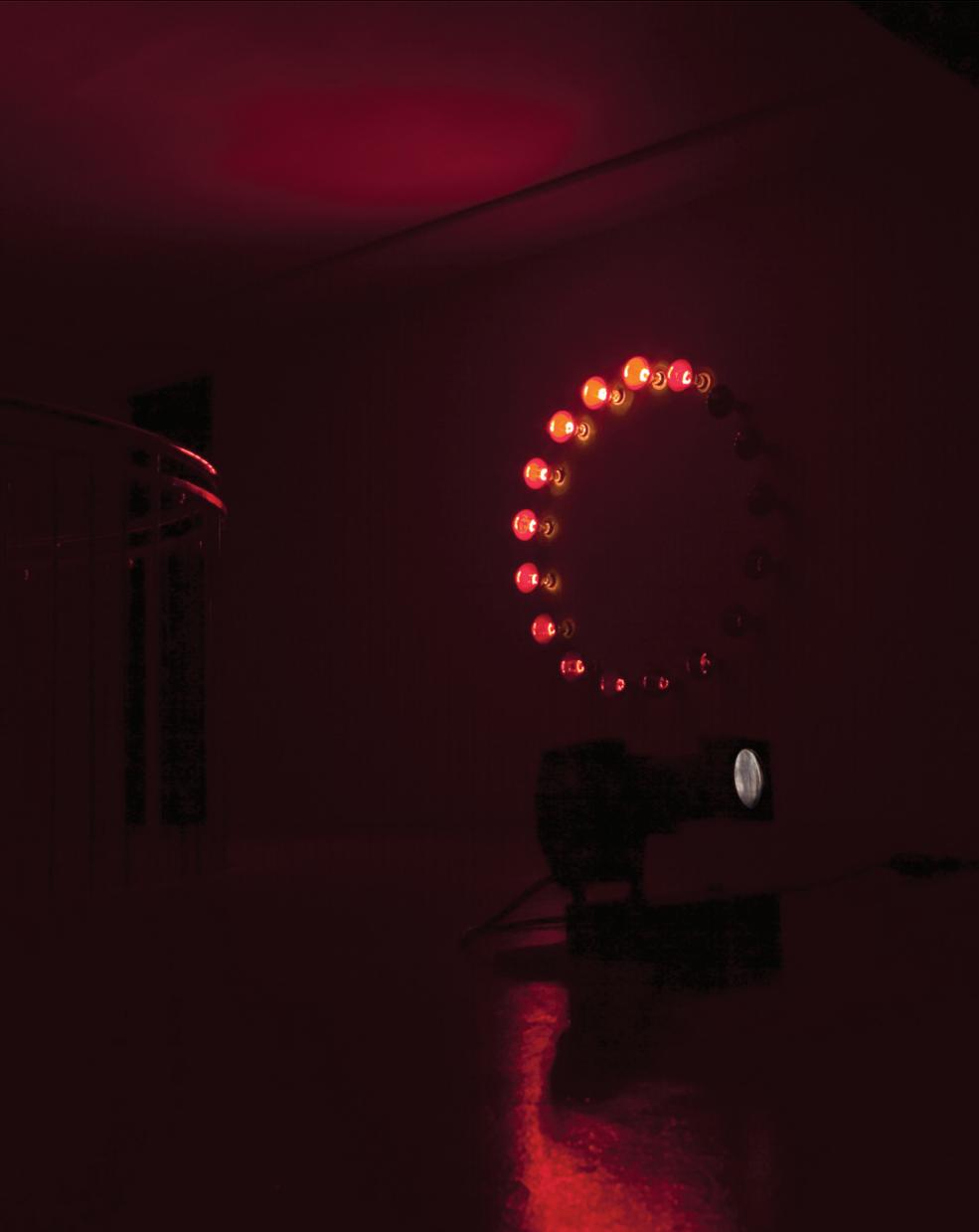
tandem exhibition with julio le parc / toulouse / france / 2010

infrared bulbs - dimmers - semi-random programming - heating turned off / variable dimensions

this piece was displaying a spinning wheel made out infra-red bulbs creating light, heat and sound (resonance bulbs' filaments). it created as well a projection of the turning shadow of the staircase in the opposite wall or of the people entering the space.

3 self-portraits (see following page) was displayed in a other part of room.

julio le parc is a main artist of the op-art and kinetic art mouvement and was showing his work made out light bulbs in the basement floor.





la bath projection (bath meant 'cool' in the 70's french and was pronounced as bat in english)
ephemeral outdoor piece / centre georges pompidou - beaubourg / nuit blanche / paris / france / 2011

self-portraits serie / self-projection of a light bulb from a zoom profile projector modified to create focus on the bulb itself which thus projects its own image
500 w light bulb - zoom profile projector - extinguished public lighting for energetic compensation / variable dimensions

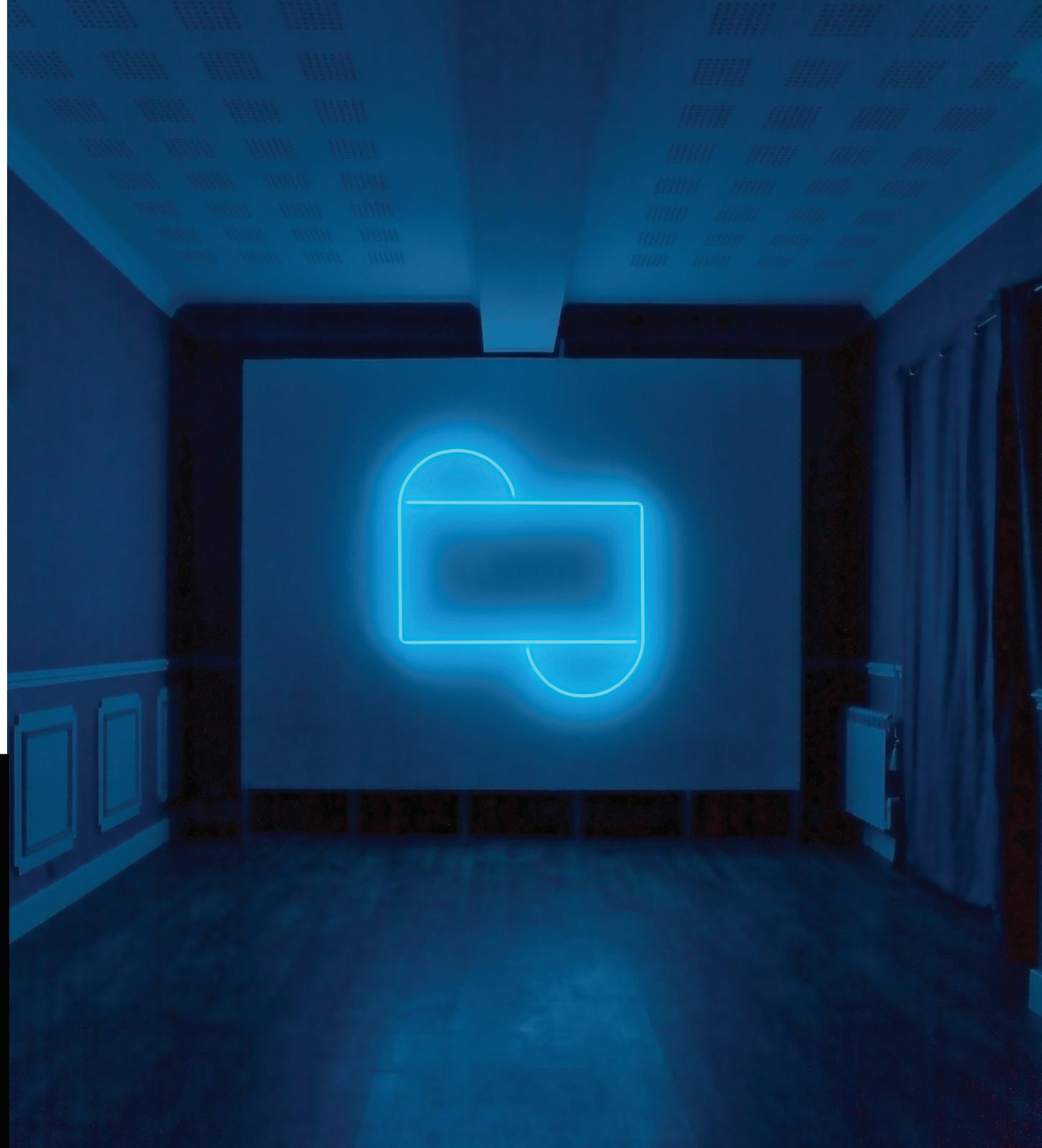
loglo (rr)

exhibition in a castle / fiac / france / 2010

this piece played upon perceptions using two different program phases :

- one based on persistence of vision with 1s at full intensity and 10s in total darkness cycles repeated during 5 mm.
- thus when the room was dark, the tube was really still slightly visible because of light persistence in the inside fluorescent coating of the tubes while the retina and brain of the spectators were creating shifting persistent images.
- the second phase was based on the random non-uniform changing aspect of gas in the tube at constant electrical intensity of 10%. it was as well displayed for 5mm before going back to phase one.

the theme of this exhibition was fantasmagoria which means how to make fantoms appear in latin. the piece was made out of recycled fluorescent tubes from an ephemeral public art project from maurizio nanucci in toulouse so already a 'fantom' of a former piece, playing upon 'fantomatic' perceptions.



photovoltaic projects

unrealized commissions for public space 2012

two examples of photovoltaic projects giving produced energy to buildings :
one 'sign piece' visible from distance and one 'google earth piece' visible only online.
samples pv materials and fixtures.

