

Step Inside

ARoS

Det sanselige
som erkendelsesrum

Sensory
stimuli and spaces
of knowledge

sin side, at installationskunsten adskiller sig radikalt fra traditionel billedkunst: *rather than imagining the viewer as a pair of disembodied eyes that survey the work from a distance, installation art presupposes an embodied viewer* (Bishop 2005, p. 6). Med andre ord er immersion kendetegnet ved, at beskueren ikke blot ser, men kropsligt træder ind i værket.

Ifølge Grau bygger de moderne immersive oplevelser på en lang tradition, der går tilbage til Pompejis vægmalerier og renæssancens illusionistiske fresker (Grau 2003, p. 25). I barokken blev kirker og teaterscener iscenesat som sansemættede totalrum, hvor arkitektur, skulptur, maleri og musik smeltede sammen i et dramatisk hele.

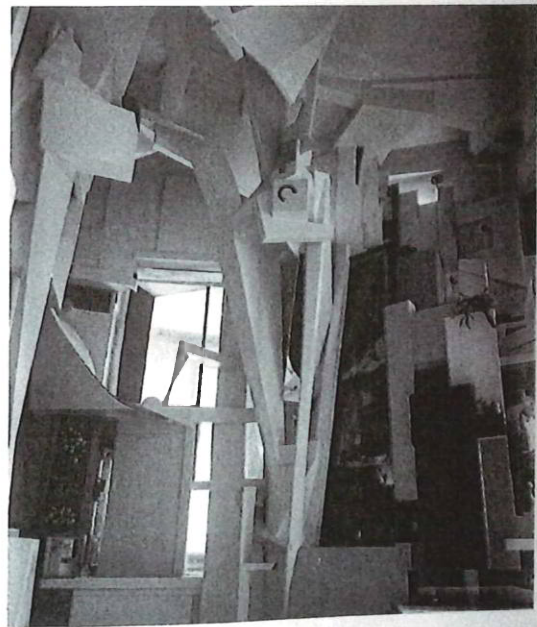
I 1700-tallet fortsatte illusionstraditionen i nye billedformater. Panoramaet, der blev opfundet af Robert Barker i 1787, placerede publikum midt i et 360° lærred og skabte en oplevelse af at være fysisk tilstede i landskaber eller historiske scener. Verdensudstillingerne – ikke mindst Crystal Palace i 1851 – fremstod som gigantiske totalmiljøer, hvor arkitektur og teknologi blev iscenesat som visuelle og kropslige skuer. Samtidig udviklede den tyske komponist Richard Wagner sine tanker om begrebet *Gesamtkunstwerk*, hvor musik, scenografi og fortælling skulle smelte sammen i et altomfattende kunstværk (fx *Die Kunst und die Revolution*, 1849). I sine operaopsætninger lagde han vægt på stemningsskabende greb som mørklagte teatre, lydeffekter og indretning af salen, der samlede publikums opmærksomhed og lod dem blive opslugt af dramaet på scenen.

I det 20. århundrede udviklede avantgarden immersive strategier, der skulle ryste beskueren ud af passiviteten. Dadaismens udstillingsmiljøer, fx *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* i Berlin i 1920, eller Kurt Schwitters' store rumlige installation *Merzbau* (påbegyndt ca. 1924), skabte desorienterende rum, hvor publikum blev trukket ind i et æstetisk kaos. El Lisitskijs *Proun Room* (1923) eller Duchamps *Sixteen Miles of String* (1942) udfordrede aktivt rummets logik og understregede, at perception altid er kropsligt

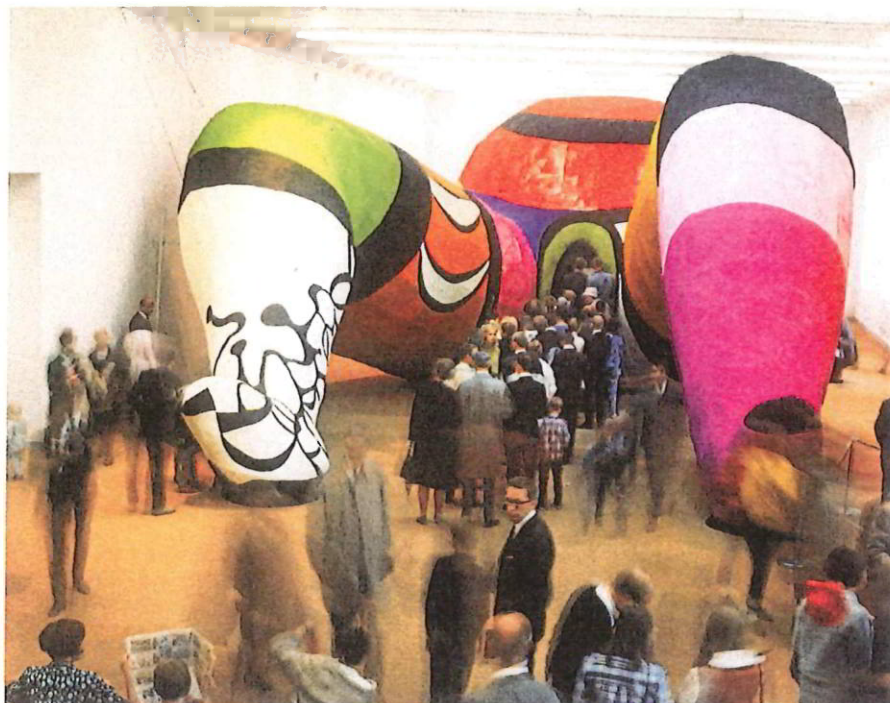
From Illusion to Immersion, Oliver Grau for centuries, sought to dissolve the reality through illusionistic techniques of the pictorial space. Claire Bishop, for installation art differs radically from 'rather than imagining the viewer as a pair of disembodied eyes that survey the work from a distance, installation art presupposes an embodied viewer' (Bishop 2005, p. 6). Immersion is characterised by the viewer not just stepping into the work itself.

According to Grau, modern immersion is based upon a long tradition stretching back to the time of Pompeii and the illusionistic frescoes of the Renaissance (Grau 2003, p. 25). In the Baroque period, churches and theatre scenes were conceived as sensorially saturated total environments in which architecture, sculpture, painting and music formed a dramatic whole.

In the eighteenth century, the total environment was a new form. The panorama, invented by Philip James de Witte, placed the audience at the centre of a 360° view of a scene, a notion of being physically present with the scene depicted there. The various environments of the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851 – appeared as monumental total environments in which architecture and technology were staged as both part of the environment. Around the same time, the German composer Richard Wagner developed his notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* – in which music, scenography and drama formed an all-encompassing artistic experience (Wagner 1849). In his opera productions, he employed atmospheric devices such as lighting effects, and seating arrangements designed to attract attention and allow them to be fully absorbed in the unfolding on stage.



Kurt Schwitters, *Der Merzbau, Hannover (Blaue Fenster)*, 1933.
©bpk, Sprengel Museum Hannover, Wilhelm Redemann



Niki de Saint Phalle, *HON*, 1966, Moderna Museet, Photo: Hans Hammarskiöld ©Hans Hammarskiöld Heritage

forankret (Merleau-Ponty 1945, p. 162). Efter 1950 blev selve rummet et centralt medium; som eksempler kan nævnes Allan Kaprows environments og happenings, Yayoi Kusamas *Infinity Rooms* og Niki de Saint Phalle og Jean Tinguely's *HON – en katedral* på Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1966. Edward Kienholz skabte med værker som *Five Car Stud* (1969-1972) livagtige tableauer og miljøer, der var tænkt til at fremkalde stærke følelsesmæssige og intellektuelle reaktioner – ofte med kritisk blik på det amerikanske samfunds sociale problemer – og banede derved vejen for mere konfronterende installationskunst. I 1980'erne og 1990'erne konsoliderede installationskunsten sig som musealt format med værker som Ilya og Emilia Kabakovs narrative totalrum eller Jeffrey Shaws virtuelle *The Legible City* (1989).

Med digitale teknologier er immersion i det 21. århundrede blevet endnu mere opsigtsvækkende og allestedsnærværende. Kunstnere som ex Olafur Eliasson, Tomás Saraceno og teamLab skaber multisensoriske rum, hvor publikum omsluttes af lys, lyd, bevægelse og interaktiv teknologi. I samme periode er en bølge af franchiseudstillinger vokset frem, hvor klassiske kunstnere transformeres til spektakulære totaloplevelser. Van Gogh var først i rækken i 2010'erne, og succesen blev hurtigt fulgt op af Frida Kahlo, Monet, Klimt, Picasso og Dalí, præsenteret som multisensoriske shows i storbyer verden over. teamLab placerer sig i et krydsfelt mellem samtidskunst og oplevelsesindustri: Deres digitale universer fungerer både som refleksion over teknologiens æstetik og som spektakulær, publikumsdrevet oplevelse.

Hvor kunstnere som Eliasson eller Saraceno ofte bruger sansedragelsen til at åbne for miljømæssige, filosofiske eller politiske refleksioner, prioriterer de kommercielle shows publikums følelsesmæssige indlevelse frem for kritisk refleksion. Alligevel vidner deres enorme popularitet om, at også de kommercielle formater imødekommer et udbredt behov for fælles sanselighed og kropslig

In the twentieth century, the avant-garde developed immersive strategies intended to jolt the viewer out of passivity. Dadaist exhibition environments, such as the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* in Berlin in 1920, or Kurt Schwitters' large-scale spatial installation *Merzbau* (begun c. 1924), created disorienting environments in which audiences were drawn into an aesthetic chaos. El Lissitzky's *Proun Room* (1923) and Duchamp's *Sixteen Miles of String* (1942) actively challenged the logic of space and underscored the idea that perception is always grounded in the body (Merleau-Ponty 1945, p. 162). After 1950, space itself became a central medium. Examples include Allan Kaprow's environment and happenings, Yayoi Kusama's *Infinity Rooms*, and Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely's *SHE – A Cathedral* (Moderna Museet Stockholm, 1966). With works such as *Five Car Stud* (1969–1972), Edward Kienholz created lifelike tableaux and environments intended to provoke intense emotional and intellectual responses – often offering a critical view of American social issues – thereby paving the way for more confrontational forms of installation art. During the 1980s and 1990s, installation art consolidated its position as a recognised museum format, as exemplified by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov's narrative total environments or Jeffrey Shaw's virtual *The Legible City* (1989).

With the advent of digital technologies, immersion has become even more spectacular and ubiquitous in the twenty-first century. Artists such as Olafur Eliasson, Tomás Saraceno and teamLab create multisensory spaces that envelop audiences in light, sound, movement and interactive technology. The same period has seen the emergence of a wave of franchise exhibitions that transform works by canonical artists into large-scale, spectacular total experiences. Van Gogh was the first to be given this treatment in the 2010s, a success that was swiftly followed by Frida Kahlo, Monet, Klimt, Picasso and Dalí, all presented as multisensory shows in



Digital Art Museum, Epson Team Lab Borderless, Odaiba Island, Tokyo, Japan
 ©Fabian von Poser, imageBROKER, Shutterstock

forankring i en digital tid. Dermed er grænsen mellem æstetisk og kommerciel immersion ikke absolut, men kompleks og flydende, hvor oplevelsens formål – erkendelse, nydelse, deltagelse – forskydes mellem forskellige institutionelle og kulturelle kontekster.

Dermed viser franchiseudstillingerne en konsekvens af de immersive formaters mangefacetterede potentiale. Som Grau understreger, indebærer immersion altid en transformation – *Immersion can be an intellectually stimulating process; however ... in most cases immersion is mentally absorbing and a process, a change, a passage from one mental state to another. It is characterized by diminishing critical distance to what is shown and increasing emotional involvement in what is happening* (Grau 2003, p. 13). Netop denne mindskede kritiske distance er central: I kunstneriske sammenhænge kan den åbne for nye erkendelser, men i de kommercielle shows kanaliseres den øgede følelsesmæssige involvering ind i publikums rolle som forbrugere. Her bliver transformationen ikke et middel til refleksion, men et greb til at fastholde opmærksomhed og skabe intensitet, der kan omsættes til profit. Publikum er ikke blot deltagere i en oplevelse; de bliver selve varen, hvis begejstring og digitale deling cirkuleres i oplevelsesøkonomiens logikker. Som Emily Lawhead og Kate Mondloch (2025) påpeger, knytter dette felt sig direkte til den såkaldte opmærksomhedsøkonomi: Udstillinger som *Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience* er skabt til at indfange, fastholde og udnytte publikums opmærksomhed som en central ressource i et globalt kredsløb af branding, billetsalg og indhold på de sociale medier.

Nyere publikumsforskning viser, at immersion ikke alene fungerer som æstetisk strategi, men også som en sanselig mekanisme, der i sig selv virker tilfredsstillende. Dan Luo et al. (Luo et al., 2025) påviser, at sensorisk intensitet øger publikums opmærksomhed og oplevelsesmæssige engagement, hvilket direkte fører til en højere grad af tilfredshed – uanset om formålet er læring, reflek-

major cities across the globe. teamLab occupies a position where contemporary art and the experience industry intersect; its function partly as reflections on the aesthetic, partly as spectacular, audience-driven experience.

Whereas artists such as Eliasson or Saraceno often use immersive engagement to pave the way for environmental, political or political reflection, the commercial shows prioritise immersion over critical thought. Yet their immense popularity suggests that these commercial formats also accommodate a widespread need for shared sensory experience and bodily engagement in a digital age. Thus, the boundary between aesthetic and immersion is not absolute nor fixed, but complex and fluid. The purpose of the experience, whether knowledge, pleasure or participation, shifts across different institutional and cultural contexts.

The franchise exhibitions thus reveal a key consequence of the immersive format's multifaceted potential. As Grau argues, immersion always entails a transformation: *'Immersion is an intellectually stimulating process; however ... in most cases immersion is mentally absorbing and a process, a change, a passage from one mental state to another. It is characterized by diminishing critical distance to what is shown and increasing emotional involvement in what is happening'* (Grau 2003, p. 13). This diminishing critical distance is crucial. In artistic contexts, it can open pathways to new forms of understanding; in commercial shows, however, the heightened emotional involvement is channelled into the audience's role as consumers. Here, transformation becomes not a means of reflection, but a mechanism for capturing attention and generating intensity that can be converted into profit. The audience are not merely participants in an experience; they become a commodity as their enthusiasm and digital engagement circulate within the logic of the experience economy. Lawhead and Kate Mondloch (2025) note, this field is

sion eller underholdning. Ud over den æstetisk-refleksive dimension og den emotionelle effekt, som ofte ses i populærkulturelle formater, findes ifølge Luo en tredje måde at forstå immersion på – som en tilstand, der genererer tilfredshed gennem sansemæssig intensitet og opmærksomhed. Denne tredelte forståelse viser, at immersion kan producere forskellige reaktioner: kropslig erkendelse, følelsesmæssig involvering eller en oplevelse af tilfredshed.

Denne indsigt peger på, at forskellen mellem kunstneriske og populærkulturelle immersive formater ikke nødvendigvis ligger i oplevelsens form, men i dens intention og retning: Hvor den populærkulturelle immersion søger følelsesmæssig indlevelse og sanselig mæthed, anvendes samtidskunstens immersive formater til at aktivere kritisk refleksion gennem kroppen.

Grænsen mellem forskellige former for immersion er derfor ikke absolut, men kan forstås som et spektrum af oplevelser, hvor formål og betydning forskydes afhængigt af institution, kontekst og intention. Nutidens immersive kunst repræsenterer ikke et brud med traditionen, men fortsætter århundreders arbejde med at overskride grænsen mellem værk og beskuer. Det nye er, at digitale teknologier og globale kommunikationsnetværk anvender immersion som en skalerbar ressource – en oplevelse, der både kan fremme intimitet, fællesskab og refleksion, samtidig med at publikums tilstedeværelse og engagement kan omsættes i opmærksomhedsøkonomiens logikker.

IMMERSION SOM MUSEAL OG KROPSLIG STRATEGI

ARoS blev fra begyndelsen tænkt som et museum for kunst i stor skala og på tværs af medier. Siden åbningen i 2004 har installationskunst været en integreret del af huset, med en hel etage dedikeret til mediet og markante præsentationer af kunstnere som Pipilotti Rist, James Turrell og Bill Viola, senere suppleret af Anri Sala, Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller, og Jonah Freeman

linked to the so-called attention economy: exhibition *Gogh: The Immersive Experience* are designed to capture and monetise the viewer's attention as a central resource in a global circuit of branding, ticket sales and social media.

Recent studies on audience responses show that immersion functions not only as an aesthetic strategy, but also as a sensory mechanism that in itself produces satisfaction. Recent studies (e.g. Alami et al. (2025)) demonstrate that sensory intensity enhances attention and engagement, directly leading to greater satisfaction – regardless of whether the purpose is learning or entertainment. Beyond the aesthetic-reflective dimension, the emotional effect often seen in popular cultural formats identifies a third way of understanding immersion: immersion generates fulfilment through sensory intensity and a sense of presence. This tripartite understanding suggests that immersion elicits different responses: bodily insight, emotional involvement and intellectual satisfaction.

This insight indicates that the difference between popular-cultural immersive formats does not necessarily lie in the format of the experience, but in its intention: whereas popular-cultural immersion strives for emotional gratification and sensory satiety, contemporary art employs immersive formats to activate critical reflection through the body.

The boundary between different forms of immersion is therefore not absolute but can be understood as a spectrum of experiences in which purpose and meaning shift according to context and intention. Contemporary immersive art does not represent a rupture with tradition; rather, it continues an artistic endeavour to transcend the boundary between viewer and artwork. What is new is that digital technologies and communication networks employ immersion as a scalable experience that can foster intimacy, community and engagement while at the same time utilising audience presence as a resource within the logic of the attention economy.



China Shanghai World Expo Museum Night Opening 2023,
© CHINE NOUVELLE, SIPA, Shutterstock

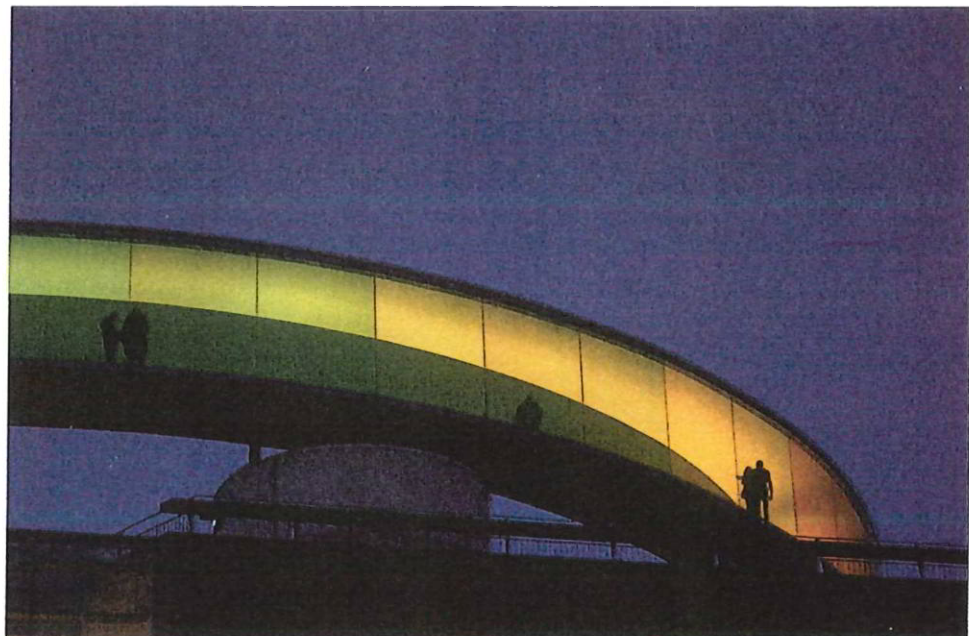
& Justin Lowe. Med Olafur Eliassons *Your rainbow panorama* (2011) blev grænsen mellem arkitektur og kunstværk bogstaveligt talt opløst, og værket står som et symbol på museets langsigtede satsning på immersiv lys- og installationskunst. Denne linje kulminerer i 2026, når museet udvider sine fysiske rammer med James Turrells monumentale *As Seen Below — The Dome, a Skyspace* by James Turrell.

Affektteorien giver redskaber til at analysere, hvordan kunst virker kropsligt og sanseligt – ikke kun hvad den betyder. Det er især relevant for installationer, performancekunst og immersive formater, hvor man ikke bare “ser på” et værk, men bliver omsluttet eller påvirket fysisk. Filosofen Brian Massumi peger på, at affekter virker, før de bliver til bevidste følelser, og dermed unddrager sig det intellektuelle og sproglige domæne (Massumi 2002, p. 28). Kulturteoretikeren Sara Ahmed viser, hvordan følelser ikke blot er private, men cirkulerer mellem kroppe og rum og derved skaber bestemte stemninger og fællesskaber (Ahmed 2004, p. 25). Hun understreger, at følelser “klistrer” til objekter og personer og dermed påvirker, hvordan vi forholder os til verden og hinanden. I en museal kontekst betyder det, at immersive installationer ikke alene omslutter publikum sanseligt, men også iscenesætter relationer mellem kroppe, rum og institution. De skaber affektive infrastrukturer, hvor publikum formes af både værkets æstetik og de stemninger, der binder dem sammen som et midlertidigt fællesskab. Denne kropslige forankring af erkendelsen spejles i Maurice Merleau-Pontys fænomenologi, hvor perception ikke forstås som en passiv registrering af sanseindtryk, men som en aktiv og kropsligt forankret måde at være i verden på. Ifølge Merleau-Ponty er kroppen ikke blot et redskab, vi sanser gennem, men det sted, hvor verden viser sig for os. Vores erfaringer formes altid i et samspil mellem sanser, bevægelse og rumlighed – vi “er” i verden gennem kroppen, og vi forstår verden ved at være kropsligt indlejret i den (Merleau-Ponty 1945, p. 20).

Når man træder ind i *Your rainbow panorama*, ændres per-

From the outset, ARoS was conceived as a museum for art grand scale, cutting across different media. Since its opening in 2004, installation art has been an integral part of the institution with an entire floor dedicated to the medium and landmark installations of artists such as Pipilotti Rist, James Turrell and Viola, later joined by Anri Sala, Janet Cardiff & George B. Miller, and Jonah Freeman & Justin Lowe. With Olafur Eliassons *Your rainbow panorama* (2011), the boundary between architecture and artwork was quite literally dissolved, and the work stands as a symbol of the museum’s long-term commitment to installation art. This trajectory will culminate in 2026 when the museum expands its physical space with James Turrell’s monumental *As Seen Below — The Dome, a Skyspace* by James

Affect theory offers tools for analysing how art operates on a bodily and sensory level – not just what it means. This is especially relevant for installation art, performance art and immersive art where one does not simply ‘look at’ a work but becomes emotionally or physically affected by it. Philosopher Brian Massumi argues that affects act before they become conscious emotions, thus eluding the intellectual and linguistic domain (Massumi 2002, p. 28). Cultural theorist Sara Ahmed demonstrates how feelings are not private phenomena but circulate between bodies and spaces, thereby generating particular atmospheres and forms of togetherness (Ahmed 2004, p. 25). She emphasises that emotions ‘stick’ to objects and people, shaping how we relate to the world and to one another. In a museum context, this means that immersive installations do not merely envelop audiences sensorially; they also create relationships between body, space and institution. They are affective infrastructures in which visitors are shaped by both the aesthetic of the work and the atmospheres that bind them together in temporary communities. This bodily grounding of know-



Olafur Eliasson, *Your rainbow panorama*, 2011 © ARoS, Lise Balsby

ceptionen øjeblikkeligt: Kroppen oversvømmes af farvemættet lys, som indskrives sig direkte i huden og omgivelserne. Her bliver man mindet om, at perception ikke er en intellektuel proces alene, men en sanselig forhandling mellem krop og rum.

As Seen Below er et altomsluttende kunstværk: Et kuppelformet rum, der strækker sig 16 meter i højden og 40 meter i diameter. Værket er en sanselig installation, der omslutter publikum og tilbyder et meditativt, foranderligt rum og et nyt perspektiv på himlen over os. Her bliver perceptionen selve værkets indhold. Når publikum træder ind i det farvemættede rum, opløses skellet mellem betragter og værk; sanserne bliver mediet.

STEP INSIDE

Udstillingen *Step Inside* indgår i ARoS' langsigtede satsning på immersive og installationsbaserede praksisser. På tværs af medier og materialer udforsker udstillingens kunstnere, hvordan menneskets oplevelse af verden – vores krop, sanser og identitet – formes og forandres i samspil med teknologiske systemer, biologiske processer og kulturelle fortællinger. ARoS ønsker med udstillingen at fremhæve samtidskunstens evne til ikke blot at skabe oplevelse, men også indsigt – en erkendelse, der opstår i mødet mellem krop, sansning og bevidsthed.

Pamela Rosenkranz:
She Has No Mouth, 2017

Den schweiziske kunstner Pamela Rosenkranz (f. 1979) arbejder i krydsfeltet mellem biologi, teknologi og kultur.

I *She Has No Mouth* tager Rosenkranz udgangspunkt i parasitten *Toxoplasma gondii*, som lever i katte og kan overføres til mennesker. Forskning har vist, at parasitten kan ændre risikovillighed, angstniveau og følelsesmæssige bånd, og at op mod en tredjedel af verdens befolkning er bærere. Med dette som bagtæppe udfolder

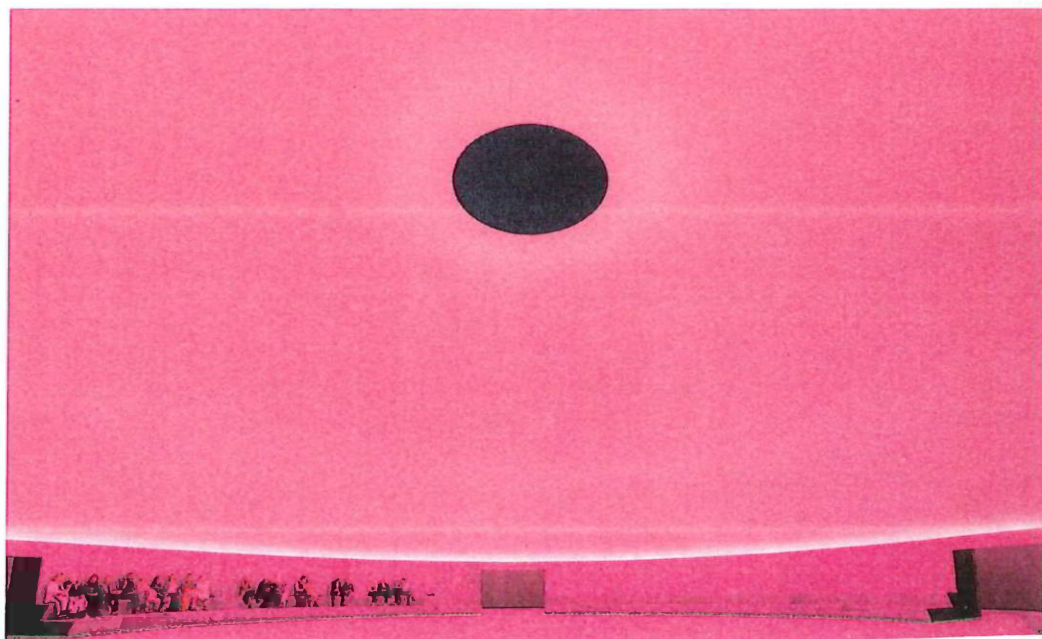
finds resonance in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology which perception is not understood as a passive reception of sensory data but as an active, embodied way of being in the world. According to Merleau-Ponty, the body is not merely the object which we perceive, but the very site where the world opens up to us. Our experiences are always formed in an interplay between the senses, movement and spatiality – we are in the world through the body, and we understand the world by being embodied within it (Merleau-Ponty 1945, p. 20).

When you enter *Your rainbow panorama*, you are immediately transformed: the body is flooded with saturated light that inscribes itself upon your skin and senses. Here you are reminded that perception is not a neutral process, but a sensuous negotiation between body and world.

As Seen Below is an all-encompassing artwork: rising 16 metres high and spanning 40 metres in diameter, this installation envelops the viewer in a meditative, ever-changing environment and a new perspective on the sky above. Here, perception becomes the content of the experience; visitors step into the colour-infused space, the distinction between viewer and artwork dissolves; the senses become the medium.

STEP INSIDE

The exhibition *Step Inside* forms part of ARoS' long-term commitment to immersive and installation-based practices. Through the use of media and materials, the participating artists explore how our bodies, senses and identities are transformed in an ongoing interplay with technology, biological processes and cultural narratives. With *As Seen Below*, ARoS seeks to highlight contemporary art's capacity to offer not only experiences, but also insight – an understanding of the meeting of body, sensation and consciousness.



James Turrell - *As Seen Below* - The Dome, a Skyspace by James Turrell.
Photo: Mads Smidstrup © ARoS, 2025. Taken on the occasion of James Turrell's visit in *As Seen Below*, June 2025

installationen en undersøgelse af, hvordan biologiske og immaterielle kræfter præger både individ og kultur.

Det første rum domineres af blå LED-lys, der forskyder perceptionen og gør synet til en kropslig erfaring: Lyset lægger sig på huden, ikke blot på nethinden. Denne optiske forstyrrelse knyttes både til øjets evolutionære udvikling, hvor tidlige organismer kun registrerede blå, og til nutidens digitale skærmlys.

Duften civetone, en syntetisk variant af et feromon fra store kattedyr, mætter rummet med en stærk, animalsk aroma. Duftens evne til at aktivere vores drifter står i kontrast til kunstinstitutionens forventede neutralitet. Samtidig indgår referencen til Hello Kitty – et globalt populærkulturelt ikon uden mund, skabt til at være genstand for følelsesmæssig projektion – som en kulturel parallel.

She Has No Mouth peger på, hvordan menneskelig perception formes af usynlige systemer – hormonelle signaler, mikrobiologiske processer og kulturelle symboler – og hvordan disse påvirkninger sætter sig direkte i kroppen.

Laure Prouvost:

Every Sunday, Grandma. Above Front Tears, 2022

Den franske kunstner Laure Prouvost (f. 1978) skaber installationer, hvor virkelighed, drøm og fiktion smelter sammen i sanselige totalværker. Med humor og poesi destabiliserer hun konventionelle hierarkier og balancerer mellem det groteske og det lyriske, det legende og det alvorlige.

Et stort vævet tæppe med svævende nymfer markerer indgangen til installationen. Glasfugle er opstillet i ildevarslende oliepytter i et univers omgivet af både teknologiske hverdagsobjekter og elementer fra naturen. I en monumental videoinstallation bliver Prouvosts tilbagevendende karakter 'Bedstemor' – et alter ego og symbolsk figur – forvandlet til en menneskelig fugl. Bedstemors drømme og visioner bliver afsat for en visuel og sanselig fortælling, der konfronterer publikum med samtidens presserende spørgsmål om klimaforandringer, migration (af både mennesker og fugle) og vores relation til jorden og hinanden.

Samlet fremmaner værket en medfølelse, håbefuldt fremtid, hvor mennesker lever i tæt forbindelse med naturen frem for i opposition til den. Hvert element – stort som småt, naturligt som menneskeskabt – inviterer publikum til ikke blot at betragte, men til at indtræde som medrejsende og forestille sig andre måder at være i verden på.

Anicka Yi:

Each Branch of Coral Holds Up the Light of the Moon, 2024

Den koreansk-amerikanske kunstner Anicka Yi (f. 1971) kombinerer videnskab, teknologi og sanselighed i værker, der undersøger forholdet mellem menneske, natur og maskine. Hendes praksis insisterer på at krydse grænser mellem faglige og sanselige domæner og udfordrer forestillinger om, hvad kunst er og kan være.

I *Each Branch of Coral Holds Up the Light of the Moon* præsenterer Yi et meditativt videoværk skabt i samarbejde med kunstig intelligens. På en buet vægskærm udfolder sig en kontinuerlig strøm af former og figurer i forvandling, skabt ud fra billedmateriale og begreber fra kunstnerens egen praksis. De flydende, næsten organiske billeder bevæger sig mellem det genkendelige

Pamela Rosenkranz:
She Has No Mouth, 2017

Swiss artist Pamela Rosenkranz (b. 1979) works in the field where biology, technology and culture intersect.

In *She Has No Mouth*, Rosenkranz takes as her starting point the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*, which lives in cats and can be transmitted to humans. Research has shown that the parasite may alter the behaviour of those infected, affecting their risk-taking, anxiety levels, and emotional bonds, and that as much as one third of the world's population carries it. Against this backdrop, the installation unfolds an investigation into how biological and immaterial forces shape us as individuals and our culture at large.

The first room is dominated by blue LED light that causes a shift in perception and turns sight into a more directly physical, bodily experience: the light settles on the skin as much as on the retina. This optical disturbance refers both to the evolutionary development of the eye – early organisms could only register blue – and to the glow of digital screens today.

The scent known as civetone, a synthetic variant of a pheromone from large felines, saturates the space with a strong, animal sensuality. Its capacity to activate instinctual drives contrasts sharply with the neutrality one expects of the art institution. At the same time, the reference to Hello Kitty – a global pop-culture icon without a mouth, designed as a blank surface for emotional projection – introduces a cultural parallel.

She Has No Mouth points to how human perception is formed by invisible systems – hormonal signals, microbiological processes and cultural symbols – and how these forces inscribe themselves directly into the body.

Laure Prouvost:

Every Sunday, Grandma. Above Front Tears, 2022

The French artist Laure Prouvost (b. 1978) creates installations where reality, dream and fiction merge into sensuous total environments. Her witty and poetic works destabilise conventional hierarchies and are poised between the grotesque and the lyrical, the playful and the profound.

Visitors are guided into the work by a large tapestry depicting floating nymphs. They are welcomed by an effervescent indoor fountain as they step inside Prouvost's poetic, richly imaginative universe where video, text and tactile materials intertwine. In a monumental video installation, Prouvost's recurring character 'Grandma' – both alter ego and symbolic figure – transforms into a human bird. Grandma's dreams and visions become the point of departure for a visual and strongly engaging narrative that confronts viewers with some of today's most urgent concerns: climate change, migration (of both people and birds), and our relationships with the earth and with one another.

Taken as a whole, the work conjures up a compassionate, hopeful vision of the future, one in which humans live in a state of close connection with nature rather than in opposition to it. Every element, large or small, natural or man-made, invites the audience not merely to observe but to enter the work as fellow travellers, imagining alternative ways of being in the world.

og det fremmede og skaber landskaber, der synes både jordiske og kosmiske.

Værket er første kapitel i Yis projekt *Emptiness*, hvor en AI-algoritme, der er trænet på værker fra Anicka Yi Studio, fungerer som en digital samarbejdspartner. Hermed stilles det eksistentielle spørgsmål: Kan en kunstnerisk praksis fortsætte efter kunstnerens fysiske død?

Videoværket akkompagneres af gong-gonger og klokker samt en diskret duftkomposition af Barnabé Fillion, der væver sig ind i det visuelle udtryk. Yi understreger dermed, at kunstoplevelsen er helhedsorienteret og kropslig, og minder os om vores sanselige forbundethed med hinanden og andre livsformer.

Philippe Parreno:

Quasi Objects: My Room is a Fish Bowl, AC/DC Snakes, Happy Ending, Il Tempo del Postino, Opalescent Acrylic Glass Podium, Disklavier Piano, 2014-2022

Udlånt af Pinault Collection

Den franske kunstner Philippe Parreno (f. 1964) har siden 1990'erne gentænkt udstillingsformatet som en koreograferet oplevelse frem for en fast struktur. Her aktiveres publikum som medskabere.

I *Quasi Objects...* omslutes man af et iscenesat miljø, hvor der på et transparent podium af opaliserende akrylglas står et Yamaha Disklavier-klaver, en Arne Jacobsen-lampe og små samlinger af adaptere og natlamper. Ovenover svæver heliumfyldte ballonfisk: De er lette og bevæges på uregerlig vis af luftstrømmene og publikums tilstedeværelse. Det automatiske klaver spiller Franz Liszts *Nuages gris* (1881), og alle elementerne – lyd, lys, bevægelse – styres af en algoritme, der er udviklet af kunstneren selv. Hvor mekanikken skaber et kontrolleret system, tilføjer de svævende fisk et uforudsigeligt element, der hele tiden forskyder oplevelsen.

Quasi Objects... er et sanseligt miljø, hvor tid, rum og perception opløses og gendannes i et kontinuerligt samspil. Værket viser Parrenos evne til at udvide kunstens rum – ikke kun som tanke, men som fysisk erfaring i kroppen.

SANSELIG FORDYBELSE OG KRITISK ERKENDELSE

Immersion er ikke blot et æstetisk greb – det er en kulturel og institutionel strategi med dybe historiske rødder og komplekse nutidige implikationer. I en tid præget af digital opmærksomhedsøkonomi, klimakrise og konstante superstimuli tilbyder *Step Inside* en mulighed for både sanselig fordybelse og kritisk erkendelse.

Kunstoplevelsen skaber her ikke alene intens sanselighed, men åbner for refleksion over sociale, kulturelle og kropslige vilkår. Publikum aktiveres som kropsligt og perceptuelt deltagende, men også som tænkende og reflekterende. Denne dobbelthed viser, at immersion ikke kan opdeles entydigt i det "æstetiske" og det "kommercielle", men eksisterer på et spektrum af oplevelser, hvor betydning og formål forskydes afhængigt af kontekst, intention og institutionel ramme.

Step Inside demonstrerer dette gennem værker, der arbejder med kroppen som resonansrum: Pamela Rosenkranz undersøger usynlige biologiske og kulturelle systemer; Laure Prouvost skaber

Anicka Yi:

Each Branch of Coral Holds Up the Light of the

Korean-American artist Anicka Yi (b. 1971) combines technology and sensory experience in works that explore relationships between humankind, nature and machines. She insists on cutting across boundaries between intellectual and social domains, challenging our assumptions about what it can be.

In *Each Branch of Coral Holds Up the Light of the* Yi presents a meditative video work created with the help of artificial intelligence. Projected onto a curved wall, a stream of morphing forms and figures unfolds, generated on the basis of visual material and concepts drawn from her artistic practice. The flowing, almost organic imagery oscillates between the familiar and the alien, creating landscapes that are both terrestrial and cosmic.

The work forms the first chapter of Yi's ongoing project *Emptiness*, in which an AI algorithm trained on works from Yi Studio acts as a digital counterpart for the artist. It poses an existential question: can an artistic practice continue after an artist's physical death?

The video is accompanied by the resonant sound of bells and by a subtle scent composition by Barnabé Fillion. The latter weaves through the visual texture. With this move, Yi connects to the fact that the experience of art is holistic, reminding us of our interconnection with one another and other forms of life.

Philippe Parreno:

Quasi Objects: My Room is a Fish Bowl, AC/DC Snakes, Happy Ending, Il Tempo del Postino, Opalescent Acrylic Glass Podium, Disklavier Piano, 2014-2022

Courtesy of the Pinault Collection

Since the 1990s, the French artist Philippe Parreno has reimagined the exhibition format as a choreographed performance rather than a fixed structure. Here, audiences become co-creators.

In *Quasi Objects...*, the viewer is enveloped by a dynamic environment: on a transparent podium of opalescent acrylic glass stands a Yamaha Disklavier piano, an Arne Jacobsen lamp, and twisted AC/DC neon lights. Above them, helium-filled balloons drift and sway, light and unpredictable, animated by the movement of visitors. The automated piano plays Liszt's *Nuages gris* (1881). All the elements – sound, light, movement – are controlled by an algorithm developed by the artist himself. The mechanics establish a system of order, while the floating fish introduce an element of unpredictability.

Quasi Objects... forms a densely sensuous environment in which time, space and perception dissolve and reconstitute themselves in a continuous interplay. The work exemplifies the artist's ability to expand the space of art, reaching beyond the boundaries of a lived experience that embeds itself in the body.

SENSORY IMMERSION AND CRITICAL REFLECTION

poetiske, sanselige rum for klimatiske og sociale fællesskaber; Anicka Yi udfordrer forholdet mellem menneske, teknologi og natur; og Philippe Parreno koreograferer relationen mellem det kontrollerede og det uforudsigelige. Alle værkerne tilbyder sanselig immersion, men inviterer samtidig til refleksion over vores relation til krop, natur, teknologi og hinanden.

Set i lyset af vores samtidige overstimulering bliver *Step Inside* dermed et modbillede til de kommercielle oplevelsesformater, der søger at mætte sanserne uden at engagere erkendelsen. Udstillingen viser, at kunsten fortsat kan generobre det sanselige som et rum for opmærksomhed, nærvær og tanke – et sted, hvor kroppen bliver en vej til indsigts snarere end blot et redskab for forførelse.

ARoS' praksis understreger, at samtidskunstens brug af immersion kan aktivere både sanser og bevidsthed. Museet placerer sig i en kunsthistorisk tradition, hvor immersion, lige fra antikkens vægmalerier til samtidskunstens affektive infrastrukturer, fungerer som et redskab til at forbinde sanselig intensitet med kritisk erkendelse og nye måder at erfare verden på.

Immersion is more than an aesthetic device: it is a cultural and institutional strategy with deep historical roots and complex implications in our present day. In an era defined by the digital attention economy, climate crisis and constant superstimuli, *Step Inside* offers a space for both sensory immersion and critical reflection.

Here, the experience of art not only generates moments of intense sensorial engagement – it also invites reflection on social and bodily conditions. Audiences are activated physically and perceptually, but also as thinking, reflective subjects. This duality demonstrates that immersion cannot be neatly divided into 'aesthetic' and 'commercial' categories, but exists along a spectrum of experiences in which meaning and purpose shift according to context, intention and institutional framework.

Step Inside demonstrates this through works that use the body as a sounding board and resonant space: Pamela Rosenkranz investigates invisible biological and cultural systems; Laure Prouvo creates poetic, sensuous environments for climatic and social existence; Anicka Yi challenges the relationship between humans, technology and nature; and Philippe Parreno choreographs the tension between control and unpredictability. Each work offers sensory immersion while simultaneously inviting reflection on the relationship with the body, nature, technology and one another.

Against the backdrop of our overstimulated present, *Step Inside* becomes a counterpoint to the commercial experience formats that seek to sate the senses without engaging thought. The exhibition demonstrates that art can still reclaim the sensory realm as a space for attention, presence and contemplation – a place where the body becomes a pathway to insight rather than merely an instrument of seduction.

The practice adopted by AROS underscores how contemporary art's use of immersion can activate our senses and intellect alike. The museum situates itself within a long art-historical tradition in which immersion, from ancient murals to the affective infrastructures of contemporary art, serves as a means of connecting sensory intensity with critical reflection, and of discovering new ways of perceiving the world.