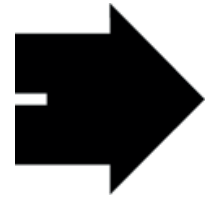


Maison d'Ailleurs – Museum of science fiction, utopia and extraordinary journeys
Place Pestalozzi 14 - 1400 Yverdon-les-Bains – Switzerland
T: + 41 24 425 64 38 – F : + 41 24 425 65 75 – @ : www.ailleurs.ch



(Im)perfect Worlds

and *Les Cités obscures* of Schuiten and Peeters

PRESS KIT / Practical information

Maison d'Ailleurs

Museum of science-fiction,
utopia and extraordinary journeys

Place Pestalozzi 14
CH - 1400 Yverdon-les-Bains
T. : + 41 24 425 64 38
@ : www.ailleurs.ch

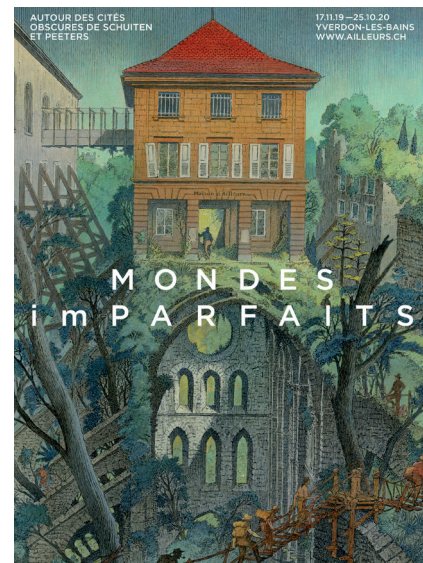
Exhibition open
from November 17, 2019 to October 25, 2020
Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-6 pm

Press conference

Wednesday, November 13, 2019, at 10:30 am

Vernissage

Saturday, November 16, 2019, from 5 pm



© François Schuiten



© François Schuiten

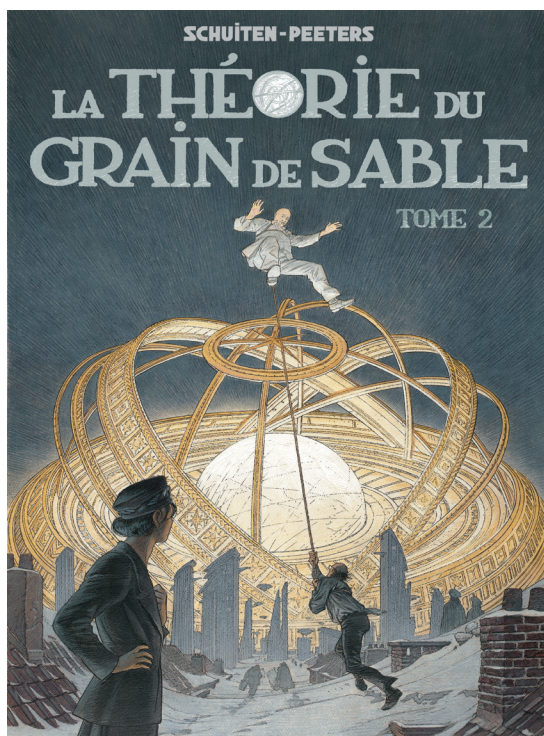
SUMMARY

| | |
|--|------|
| Project abstract | p. 3 |
| Biography of the artists François Schuiten, Benoît Peeters, Sébastien Mettraux, Louis Loup Collet, Thomas Crausaz | p. 4 |
| The exhibition: “(Im)perfect worlds” General concept, Works and objects presented in the exhibition, Catalogue, Thematic booklet, Cultural education programme | p. 5 |
| Programme of the vernissage Programme | p. 8 |
| Partners | p. 9 |

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Utopia's birthplace and origin can be found in the beginning of the sixteenth century, with the publication of *Utopia* (1516) by Thomas More. This literary form always presents a *different* world in which human beings are assumed to be happy, due to an innovative socio-political organisation. Exegetes are right to see in this creative process **a mirror that exaggerates the failings of the society** from which the utopia is imagined, in order to reflect otherwise on these same failings: utopia highlights, due to the rational hypotheses which constitute it, that, when taking the form of our governments, is unfit for human fulfillment. Now, as early as Thomas More's seminal story, utopia exposes its constitutive problems: **once told from within, the perfect city reveals its alienating dimension, it becomes a dystopia**. It would be wrong, however, to place utopias and dystopias in opposition: utopias are always dystopias seen from the outside; dystopias are always utopias seen from within.

It is to further explore these observations that the Maison d'Ailleurs decided to hold a large exhibition – “(Im)perfect worlds and *Les Cités obscures* of Schuiten and Peeters” – in which visitors can discover the beauty of the works of **François Schuiten and Benoît Peeters**, exhibited for the first time in a Swiss museum. The rooms of the museum, transformed into utopian and dystopian “islands”, will establish moreover a dialogue between the works of Schuiten and Peeters, the museum's exceptional collection, the works of three Swiss artists – **Sébastien Mettraux, Louis Loup Collet and Thomas Crausaz** –, and multimedia devices prepared by the HEIG-VD.



© François Schuiten



© Louis Loup Collet



© Thomas Crausaz

BIOGRAPHY OF THE ARTISTS

FRANÇOIS SCHUITEN (B)

François Schuiten was born in Brussels on April 26, 1956, into a family where architecture holds an important place. At the comics division of the Institut Saint-Luc, he met Claude Renard with whom he produced two albums: *Aux médianes de Cymbiola* and *Le Rail*. Since 1980, he has been working with Benoît Peeters on the series *Les Cités obscures*, translated into about fifteen languages. In 2002, he was awarded the Angoulême Grand Prize for his body of work. Author of numerous scenographic productions, he also designed the gigantic Utopia Pavilion at the Hanover World Expo in 2000 which received five million visitors. He is also the scenographer of "Train World" which opened in Brussels in 2014.

BENOÎT PEETERS (F)

Benoît Peeters was born in Paris on August 28, 1956. After publishing two novels, he tried his hand at various genres: essay, biography, illustrated story, photo-novel, cinema, television, radio drama and of course comic books. He is co-author with François Schuiten of the series *Les Cités obscures*, which received the Manga Grand Prize at the Japan Media Arts Festival. Responsible for numerous exhibitions, he collaborated with François Schuiten on the scenic design of the Autrique House in Brussels, the first edifice built by Victor Horta in the Art Nouveau style. Benoît Peeters is a specialist of Hergé, but also author of essays and biographies of Jacques Derrida, Paul Valéry, Jirô Taniguchi and Chris Ware.

SÉBASTIEN METTRAUX (CH)

Sébastien Mettraux was born in 1984 in Vallorbe; he obtained a degree in visual arts from the ECAL, a Master's degree at the HEPL and another at the HEAD – Geneva. This versatile contemporary artist – painting, sculpture, engraving, photography – is certainly one of the most talented Vaudois artists, having received numerous awards, notably that of La Chaux-de-Fonds Biennale of Contemporary Art, the Leenards cultural grant and the Swiss Arts Award.

LOUIS LOUP COLLET (CH)

Born in 1997, Louis Loup Collet had a childhood where both the attraction for science and a passion for literature vied for attention. In 2014, his first major work in visual arts received several awards, and it was ultimately towards art that he turned and in 2017 took up visual arts studies at the ECAL. His interest in both science and fiction, however, remain strong and is still apparent in his unique artistic practice.

THOMAS CRAUSAZ (CH)

Thomas Crausaz was born in Switzerland in 1973. After an early start in Switzerland, he decided to try his luck abroad and joined an English video game company. In 2003, he moved to Nottingham where he spent nearly 10 years. He worked on various video games (*MotoGP*, *Haze*, *Crisis 2*) as Senior 3D artist and Lead. In 2011, he returned to Switzerland to open the GameArt department of the EPAC (Saxon). In 2016, he founded the start-up Adventures-Lab, which specialised in content creation and augmented reality products. When this company folded, he decided to launch his long delayed artistic career by exploring themes close to his heart: science fiction, technology and dystopia.

THE EXHIBITION : “(IM)PERFECT WORLDS”

17.11.2019 – 25.10.2020

GENERAL CONCEPT

“(Im)perfect worlds and *Les Cités obscures* of Schuiten and Peeters” is a major exhibition reflecting on the relationships between utopias and dystopias. To this end, the Maison d’Ailleurs has conceived an ambitious project that combines the works of Schuiten and Peeters – exhibited for the first time in a Swiss museum – with the works of the Swiss artists Sébastien Mettraux, Louis Loup Collet and Thomas Crausaz, as well as multimedia devices created by the HEIG-VD. The museum’s historical collection will shed more light and offer a fascinating historical perspective.

WORKS AND OBJECTS PRESENTED IN THE EXHIBITION

- 70 original plates by François Schuiten and Benoît Peeters, made for the comic book series *Les Cités obscures*.
- 7 antiquated objects from François Schuiten’s personal collection: planetary instrument, telerium, etc.
- A unique watch designed by the Manufacture De Bethune and inspired by a work of François Schuiten.
- A digital installation by Sébastien Mettraux, in dialogue with one of François Schuiten’s original plates.
- 40 original plates by Louis Loup Collet, made for the series “*Le monde de Lector*”.
- 20 reproductions on plexiglass by Thomas Crausaz, made for the series “*Valais noir*”.
- 5 multimedia devices (“*cinémagrammes*”) designed by the HEIG-VD and inspired by five original plates by François Schuiten.
- 4 audio-visual productions created specifically for the exhibition, focusing on the different aspects of the work of François Schuiten and Benoît Peeters.
- 32 utopian or dystopic novels from the Maison d’Ailleurs’ collection.
- 15 dystopic comic books from the museum’s collection.
- 6 posters of dystopic films from the Maison d’Ailleurs’ collection.
- 12 utopian or dystopic American pulp magazines from the museum’s collection.



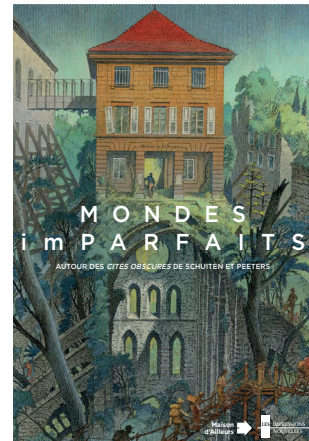
Coll. Maison d’Ailleurs



Coll. Maison d’Ailleurs

CATALOGUE

The catalogue extends the exhibition by going further into the notions of utopia and dystopia. Utopia's birthplace and origin are to be found in the publication in 1516 of *Utopia* by the English humanist Thomas More, which depicts a different world in which human beings are assumed to be happy. But Utopia's last sentence suggests that this city should remain a "wish": as soon as one begins to tell, from within, what is happening in utopia, the supposedly perfect city expresses its alienating dimension and transforms into dystopia. From *Brave New World* and *1984* to *Blade Runner*, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Black Mirror*, the last few decades have seen a proliferation of such stories, in literature, cinema and elsewhere. "(Im)perfect world" offers a solid synthesis of the subject, embellished with numerous documents and drawings, rare or unpublished, from *Les Cités Obscures* of François Schuiten and Benoît Peeters.



Summary:

- "*L'utopie comme Icare*", by François Rosset
- "*Quelques utopies futuristes*", by Marc Atallah & Frédéric Jaccaud
- "*La dystopie ou l'art de raconter nos utopies*", by Marc Atallah
- "*Quelques dystopies cinématographiques*", by Marc Atallah & Frédéric Jaccaud
- "*Entre utopie et dystopie*", interview with François Schuiten and Benoît Peeters, by Marc Atallah

Technical description:

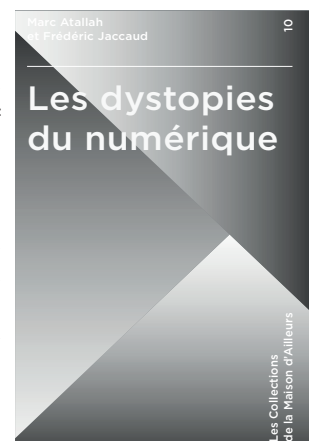
24 x 30 cm / Illustrated book / 128 pages in colour / 166 illustrations
CHF 40.- / 28,50 €

THEMATIC BOOKLET

In order to continue its work on popularising the role of science fiction in today's world, the Maison d'Ailleurs had decided to publish several small essays - "Les Collections de la Maison d'Ailleurs" - which offer several different points of view on the theme of the exhibitions being held at the time, as well as an exceptional iconographic selection. Nine issues have already been published; this is the latest:

N° 10 - Les dystopies du numérique

This volume is a collection of two unpublished essays, which aim to show how science fiction stories problematise the impacts of the digital revolution on our human condition. From the cyberpunk of the 1980s to the extreme contemporary genres, science fiction has always focused somewhat on the journey of atomised individuals in a world that has become rhizomatic. These stories, whose common thread is to superimpose two worlds - one real, the other virtual - are characterised by the creation of original metaphors, one of whose properties is to evoke the transformations experienced by humans in the present world. While digital technology gives rise to many utopias, science fiction rejects the blind faith of chimeric speeches to inspect, aesthetically, the alienation hidden within: this is what numeric dystopias are.



Summary:

- "*Un sourire de photons...*", by Marc Atallah
- "*Raconter l'utopie du numérique ?*", by Marc Atallah
- "*Le simulacre dystopique*", by Frédéric Jaccaud

Technical description:

12 x 17,5 cm / soft binding with square back / 96 pages in colour / 38 illustrations
CHF 9.- / 7,30 €

CULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

- A digital guide to shed light on *Les Cités obscures*

Ask for “The Echo of the Cities” and carry out your investigation on a tablet! This small digital diary invites visitors to the exhibition to explore the fantastic architecture imagined by Schuiten and Peeters, from the Murailles de Samaris to the Urbicande network, as well as the Brüssel skyscrapers. An exclusive report from our special correspondent which reveals the existence of a new obscure city governed by a certain Pestalozzi, and presenting surprising similarities with the city of Yverdon-les-Bains! This interactive tour is available for young visitors (from 8 years old) as well as for adults. It is available in three languages (French, German, English) and can be downloaded from Geologix or made available free of charge on the museum’s iPads.

- A mediation area for young visitors

Located in the heart of the museum, a new mediation area will host numerous creative workshops for young visitors during the school holidays. It will resemble a laboratory during the “Do it yourself” workshops where participants will engage in numerous experiments. The “Slime & Sand” workshop proposes to recreate cult toys with unexpected ingredients. “Insectbots” will invite you to discover the magical world of robotics: mechanical ants, electronic dragonflies, millipedes with thousands of cables – one will be able to recreate the wonders of nature in miniature! Try your hand at designing a comic book under the guidance of a young French-speaking comic book artist or make a short animated film in our mini-studio: these are some of the original activities offered at the museum !

- Refreshing school outings

On non-guided tours, with the activity sheets available at the museum reception desk, young visitors will be able to actively discover the exhibition with their classmates and teachers. A pedagogical file downloadable from the museum’s website will allow teachers to forge links with subjects such as literature, by approaching the issues addressed in the exhibition through prisms of, for example, utopia or the ideal city. During guided tours, school groups will now also be able, in addition to the commented tours of the temporary exhibition, to take part in special “writing workshops”: designed for secondary schools, these workshops will allow them to discover authors through objects such as original books, illustrations or board games inspired by their works.

- Special programme “seniors”: Cultural Ambassadors

Renewed for the second time, the Cultural Ambassadors programme is inspired by the project launched by the Cantonal Museum of Fine Art in Lausanne, which proposes mediation activities for senior citizens. The volunteers become ambassadors of the Maison d’Ailleurs for their guests, and enjoy privileged access to the museum.

- Unmissable rendezvous

Apart from the numerous opportunities to visit the Maison d’Ailleurs for family outings – such as the Mother’s Day “Bricobrunch”, Pakomuzé, or “special family” tours where children can win their passport for *Les Cités obscures* –, we also offer intergenerational workshops, so that grandparents and grandchildren can get together in a friendly environment for an entertaining activity at the museum. And in “after work” fashion, one can also join with friends to discover the games proposed during the Play’num evenings or enjoy our “noodles-manga” gourmet activities, as well as “wine and chocolate” tasting sessions – all combinations are to be savoured! Nourishment of a more intellectual nature will be served at the series of reading conferences on utopia organised in partnership with the University of Lausanne, in the “Cin&blabla” or during the exclusive tour “Treasures of the collection”.

PROGRAMME OF THE VERNISSAGE

The Foundation of the Maison d'Ailleurs, museum of science fiction, utopia and extraordinary journeys, is pleased to invite you to the opening of its new exhibition "(Im)perfect worlds and *Les Cités obscures* of Schuiten and Peeters" **on Saturday, November 16, 2019, at 5 pm in Yverdon-les-Bains**. The museum will officially open the doors of its new exhibition and propose several activities – some already in the morning – to celebrate this exceptional exhibition: workshops for children, game-quiz, autograph session and Silent Disco are on the programme.

All the events related to the vernissage are free of charge.

Programme

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 10 am - 4 pm | Place Pestalozzi Workshops for children and musical entertainment |
| 5 pm | Maison d'Ailleurs Official opening of the exhibition |
| 5 pm - 9 pm | Maison d'Ailleurs Game-quiz for young and old <i>Partner: AMDA</i> |
| 6 pm - 7 pm | Place Pestalozzi Official part |
| 7 pm | Place Pestalozzi Aperitif offered by the Wallonia-Brussels General Delegation, Geneva <i>Partners: Le Trèfle Gourmand La Cave des Viticulteurs de Bonvillars Boxer SA La Semeuse</i> |
| 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm | Place Pestalozzi Autograph session with Schuiten et Peeters |
| 9 pm - 12 am | Place Pestalozzi Silent Disco <i>Partner: Headphone Music</i> |
| 12 am | Maison d'Ailleurs End of vernissage |

--

PARTNERS

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Maison d'Ailleurs

Direction – Curation
Administration
Conservation

Communication, Marketing & Events
Cultural Education
Technic
Reception

Scenography Graphic design

Marc Atallah
Laure Kuenzli
Frédéric Jaccaud
Pauline Rouiller
Danilo Pierotti
Mercedes Gulin Koch
Logan Aeby
Jonathan Malgioglio

Serge Perret
Notter+Vigne

--

PARTNERS OF THE EXHIBITION

Main partners

Ville d'Yverdon-les-Bains
Loterie romande
Université de Lausanne
Travys

Fondation Leenaards
Artgraphic Cavin SA
Payot Libraire
Jouets Davidson
Ted Support

Official partners

Service des affaires culturelles du Canton de Vaud
Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
Banque Cantonale Vaudoise
Retraites Populaires
De Bethune
Arts Visuels Vaud
Casterman
Fondation Jeunesse et Familles
Ernest Gabella SA
ADNV

Supports

Imprimerie Fleury
Cave des Viticulteurs de Bonvillars
Le Trèfle Gourmand
Boxer SA
La Semeuse
AMDA
Enzolocation

Cultural partner

Centre de documentation Pestalozzi

Partners

HEIG-VD
Fondation Ernst Göhner
Fondation Philanthropique Famille Sandoz

Media partners

RTS
Le Matin
La Région
ActuSF

--

CATALOGUE: *MONDES (IM)PARFAITS*

Special thanks to

Les Impressions Nouvelles

--

THEMATIC BOOKLET: *LES DYSTOPIES DU NUMÉRIQUE*

Special thanks to

ActuSF
Ernest Gabella SA
AMDA