LAURE PROUVOST
DEEP SEE BLUE
SURROUNDING YOU
VOIS CE BLEU
PROFOND TE FONDRE

CURATED BY
MARTHA KIRSZENBAUM
Pink vapour on the horizon

FLOATING LIGHT BLUE just above us
Every two years, the contemporary art world gathers in Venice for a unique moment of discovery and exchange. Under the leadership of Paolo Barrata, who presides over the Biennale with great panache, artists, spectators and professionals come together to explore the multiple facets of contemporary creation in an atmosphere of fertile cultural dialogue. Ralph Rugoff, the current curator and president of the Hayward Gallery in London, will endeavour to recreate this spirit of openness in his capacity as Artistic Director of this 58th edition.

The Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs is lending its support to this prestigious gathering, which will give the whole world a glimpse of the talent and inventiveness of French artists. Promoting French creation on the international stage is one of our diplomacy’s greatest missions and a source of pride. In close collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and our common operator, the Institut français, we do so by encouraging international artistic exchanges, creator’s travel and residency programmes.

This year, we are very pleased to entrust France’s historical pavilion to Laure Prouvost. Awarded the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in 2011 and the Turner Prize in 2013, she is an inspired artist who likes to combine performance, video and sculpture in pieces that are full of poetry and humour. She reaches her audience through her ability to create intimate and contemporary fables with a universal resonance, using an extremely diverse range of media, from traditional savoir-faire to cutting-edge technologies. Together with the curator Martha Kirszenbaum, she has created an immersive installation at the crossroads between fiction and reality, based on a filmed journey between Paris and Venice. I am sure that the visitors to the French Pavilion will be moved by this work, which bears witness to the great freedom with which Laure Prouvost goes about re-enchanting the world.

I would like to thank everyone who has made this project possible. I am overjoyed that, after Venice, this remarkable work will be presented in France, thanks to the Abattoirs de Toulouse and the LaM of Villeneuve-d’Ascq.

by Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Europe and Foreign affairs
France’s presence at the Venice Biennale, a major contemporary art event, contributes to fostering the influence of the French scene, which is one of the priorities of the Ministry of Culture in terms of the visual arts. Making France a leading force on the contemporary art scene means promoting artists working in France, in State-supported operators and places, and supporting their presence on the international stage.

The nomination of an artist to represent France at the Venice Biennale is an important responsibility. It means entrusting the artist with the national representation, which is a paradox considering the singularity of each artist’s work, background and situation.

Laure Prouvost has accepted the role of ambassador for France for this 58th Venice Biennale. She is the third woman to be chosen for the French pavilion, after Annette Messager in 2005 and Sophie Calle in 2007. She chose to be accompanied in this adventure by the curator Martha Kirszenbaum. Both women share the particularity of having pursued a large part of their careers overseas, which is representative of many artists’ backgrounds and the reality of art which travels the world and feeds off these exchanges.

In the context of the Venice Biennale and the Giardini, where pavilions from all over the world are presented, this international experience, and distance from the French situation, have led Laure Prouvost to question the concept of “national representation”, and more broadly, the question of identity, which is so important and sensitive in our societies today.

Language and translation, relationships between generations, humour, poetry, memory, and fiction, are some of the themes in Laure Prouvost’s work. She creates immersive environments made up of films, objects, sculptures, and all kinds of mediums which generate impressions that are psychological as well as physical, and therefore provide the basis for the visitors/spectators’ experience. But what is striking about Laure Prouvost’s approach, and about her proposal for the Venice Biennale, are the values that she brings into play, based around otherness, benevolence and humanism, and the attention she pays to her environment.

I am convinced that visitors from all over the world who will come to Venice will appreciate the generous, sensitive and dreamlike work presented by the artist.

I would like to thank Laure Prouvost and Martha Kirszenbaum for their unwavering enthusiasm and commitment to the project. My thanks also extend to all of the private and public partners who have contributed to the French pavilion. The 2019 Biennale will mark an important stage in this brilliant artist’s career, and the pavilion project will travel to different national and international institutions.

by Franck Riester,
Minister of Culture
I am delighted to be part of the opening of this 58th edition of the International Venice Biennale, which has a promising and bright future. The last edition, led by the French exhibition curator Christine Macel, from the Musée national d’art moderne–Centre Pompidou, attracted over a 25 per cent more visitors than the year before, meaning that more than 615 000 people were able to discover the international exhibition and the French pavilion. This figure confirms the exceptional importance of this unparalleled international event.

This year, Laure Prouvost was chosen to represent France by the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Culture, on referral from a selection committee. This is a bold choice: that of an artist born in 1978, who left for London in 1999 and who already enjoys significant international visibility thanks to a number of exhibitions of her work around the world. Her profile resonates with that of the pavilion’s curator, Martha Kirszenbaum, with whom the artist has chosen to work: an independent curator born in 1983, she lived and worked in New York from 2006 to 2010, then in Los Angeles from 2014 to 2017.

To represent France, the artist and the curator have developed a project that is closely linked to their backgrounds, their generation, and the modern world. The installation in the French pavilion speaks of us all and of the ties that bind us, in spite of our differences, regardless of our age, languages or origins. The artist invites us on more than a simple road trip: above all, it is an inner journey, where people’s backgrounds and stories intermingle, where natural elements take on a new dimension and where dialogue becomes possible. The strength of the artist’s work lies in this formal language, full of poetry and humour, based on discrepancies and dreams, which allows her to shed light on such contemporary issues as mutual coexistence, identity and the relationship to the other.

We are pleased today to present such an artistic proposal, which perfectly echoes the missions of the Institut français, a public institution in charge of the promotion of French language and culture throughout the world. The Institut français is the mouthpiece of creations which bring unique and essential perspectives to the challenges of the modern world. Now more than ever, we are in need of artists’ perspectives in order to understand our society.

I want to thank Laure Prouvost and Martha Kirszenbaum. My thanks extend to all the creators and actors involved in this beautiful project. I would also like to thank all of the partners who committed to support the project. I now invite you on a journey to discover our world in a different light.

by Pierre Buhler,
President of the Institut français
Laure Prouvost was born in Croix-Lille (France) in 1978, before establishing herself in London, where she studied at Central Saint Martins, and then at Goldsmiths College. The winner of the 2013 Turner Prize, she currently lives and works between London, Antwerp, and a caravan in the Croatian desert.

Using video, drawing, tapestry, ceramics, photography, performance, and above all, language, Laure Prouvost creates immersive installations which plunge the viewer into a state of personal and collective introspection. Words, images, memories, the five senses, everything which appears tangible and reliable is inverted by the fantastical nature of the ambiguous narratives introduced by the artist. Her relationship to language, which is mischievous and full of humour, is informed by her own experience and the gulf between everyday spoken language, in England, and her mother tongue. By means of this back-and-forth, the artist questions our cultural history and what remains of it over the course of movements and generations.

She has already had three solo exhibitions in French institutions: *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing* at the Palais de Tokyo, in Paris (2018); *Dropped here and then, to live, leave it all behind* at the Consortium, Dijon (2016) and *We will go far* at the Musée Départemental d’Art Contemporain de Rochechouart (2015).

Her work has also been shown in France in a number of exhibitions. Some of the most recent ones include: and *You Are My Petrol, My Drive, My Dream, My Exhaust* at the Studio des Acacias, Paris; *Persona Grata* at MAC/VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine, and the Musée national de l’histoire de l’immigration, Paris; *Performance TV* at Maison des Arts Bernard Anthonioz, Nogent-sur-Marne and *Mademoiselle* at Crac Occitanie in 2018.

Abroad, the M HKA in Anvers will present the biggest solo exhibition of her work to date, from the 8th of February to the 19th of May 2019 (*AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON*). Previously, her work has been exhibited individually at the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis and the BASS Museum, Miami, FL in the United States (2017); at SALT Galata, Istanbul, in Turkey (2017); at Fahrenheit, Los Angeles, in the United States (2016); Kunstmuseum Luzern, in Switzerland (2016); Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan, in Italy (2016); Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing, in China (2016); Haus Der Kunst, Munich, in Germany (2015); New Museum, New York, in the United States (2014); Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City, in Mexico (2014); amongst others.

Major exhibitions in which she has participated include *Give Up The Ghost* at Contemporary Art Centre (CAC), Vilnius, in Lithuania on the occasion of the 13th Baltic Biennale; *Speak* at the Serpentine Gallery, London, in the United Kingdom (2017) and *Practising habits of the day* at the ICA, in Singapore (2016).

Laure Prouvost is represented by Galerie Nathalie Obadia (Paris/Brussels), carlier|gebauer (Berlin) and Lisson Gallery (London/New York).
Martha Kirszenbaum (born in 1983 in Vitry-sur-Seine, France) is a curator and writer based in Paris and Los Angeles. She graduated from Sciences-Po in Paris and Columbia University in New York with an M.A. in Political History and Cultural Studies.

Kirszenbaum is the curator for the French Pavilion of the 58th Venice Biennale, represented by Laure Prouvost. She founded and directed Fahrenheit, an exhibition space and residency program in Los Angeles (2014–2017).

She previously acted as the Associate Curator at the Kunsthalle Mulhouse (2014), curator-in-residence at the Belvedere Museum/21er Haus in Vienna, Austria (2012) and at the Centre for Contemporary Art, in Warsaw, Poland (2010). She also worked at the New Museum in New York, USA (2008–2010), at the Photography Department of Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, France (2007) and the Media Department of MoMA in New York, United States (2006–2007). Kirszenbaum has organised exhibitions, screenings, performances and talks at renowned international institutions such as the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, United Kingdom; the Palais de Tokyo, Fondation Ricard and Kadist in Paris, France; the Astrup Fearnley Museet in Oslo and the Kunsthalle Stavanger, in Norway; the Beirut Art Center, in Lebanon; the Pejman Foundation in Tehran, Iran; the Marrakech Biennale, in Morocco; the Istanbul Biennale, in Turkey; LACE in Los Angeles and the Austrian Cultural Forum, New York, in the United States.

She is a regular contributor to Flash Art, Mousse, CURA and Kaleidoscope among other publications, and has led seminars at UCLA, Université Paris VIII, and Parsons in Paris.

She was on the jury for the Estonian Pavilion of the 57th Venice Biennale, for the Zoom Art Award, for the Art Award of the City of Marseille and for the Jan Van Eyck Academie, in Maastricht, Netherlands. She also serves on the selection committee of Art Brussels, in Belgium.

Martha Kirszenbaum is currently in residence at the Cité internationale des arts.
Laure Prouvost’s project for the French Pavilion, entitled *Deep See Blue Surrounding You/Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre*, is structured around three main themes that provide reference points for the exhibition’s development. First of all, there is a reflection surrounding concepts of generations and identities, what links or distances us from each other: the eldest from the youngest, the neighbour from the stranger. Next comes the idea of disconnection, incomprehension and discrepancy, namely by means of an exploration of language and its appropriation, or misappropriation. Finally, tinged with utopia and surrealism, Laure Prouvost’s project is committed to representing an escapist journey, both tangible and imaginary, towards an ideal elsewhere. The exhibition takes the form of an invitation to melt into a liquid and tentacular universe amongst the different unveiled and shared realities, which intermingle here.

The project challenges the idea of the representation of a fluid and globalised world, made of exchanges, connectivity and discrepancies. In the continuation of her artistic practice, which intertwines representations of desire, oneirism, and a fantasised description of nature, Laure Prouvost particularly focuses on language, wordplay and translation. The attention given to her environment and to the natural and human elements that surround her calls to mind the immersive quality of her films, installations, objects, drawings and tapestries. The exhibition echoes the expression of “liquid modernity”, coined by the Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman to define a postmodern world governed by immediacy and communication, which erodes the anchored ties between people and bodies by revealing the fragility of a society based on individualism and constant change.

The corner-stone of Laure Prouvost’s artistic project for the French Pavilion is a fictional film. It takes the form of an initiatory journey, a joyous saga filmed over the course of a road trip through France—from the Parisian suburbs to the north of France, from the Palais du Facteur Cheval to the Mediterranean Sea—and finally to Venice. The film, which is full of dialogue and idioms, is based on a script co-written by the artist and various contributors, in French and English with some Italian, Arabic or Dutch passages. The dialogues are performed by a dozen of characters of different ages and backgrounds, with specific performance skills: magic, dance, music, etc. A sculptural installation *in situ* enriches and develops the themes of the film, inside and outside the pavilion, using typical processes of the artist’s practise, such as leftover objects from the film, resin, clay, glass, plants or water vapour. Performances punctuate the life of the pavilion, interacting with the architecture and objects on display.

The very context of Venice, a floating city built on water and by water, a city of facade and backstage, appears as a source of inspiration for the concept of the project, and can be found at the heart of both the film and the installation.

“A trip to our unconscious. With the help of our brains in our tentacles, we dig tunnels to the past and the future towards Venice. Let’s follow the light.” L.P.
CONVERSATION:
LAURE PROUVOST
AND MARTHA KIRSZENBAUM

How did you imagine the Venetian exhibition, and what were your initial intuitions for this new project?

I had the idea of the octopus as a metaphor for the origins of our planet and, as human beings, for the development of our nervous systems. My project for the French Pavilion offers a metaphorical immersion into the stomach of a kind of an unknown tentacular animal, in order to find out who we are.

Then you laid the foundations for a film, which is at the centre of the final installation?

The initial idea was a journey towards an ideal elsewhere enabling us to learn how to understand ourselves better, as men or women, young or old people, French or foreigners. I therefore brought together a group of a dozen characters sharing one thing in common: being driven by a particular passion or talent. Together, we set off in search of adventure, on an initiatory journey from the outskirts of Paris to Roubaix (where I am from), and then to Marseille, and finally Venice. I gathered different talents (rapper, dancer, flutist, magician) from two generations, in order to conjure up a new “everything”. The characters in the film are, so to speak, like the five fingers of a hand, all useful in their own way, and which, together, explore and discover what surrounds them.

And yet, the final work will not be just a film. How will the installation develop and enrich these ideas?

The film is the central element around which the piece is structured. It is in a way the head of my octopus, which means that the installation is alive because of the film, but not solely. Its tentacles are key because they are the sensory extension of it. Not everything has been finalised yet, but I imagine an installation that would literally stem from the film in the space of the Pavilion, and some exchanges with the public to make it a place of life in the depths of our subconscious. For example, I would like to use a resin that hardens, water that becomes breakable, mineral that becomes liquid. To do so, I would like to work in a glass factory of Murano. It will be a play on the transformation of liquidity and of light.

What effect would you like to produce for the visitors of this project?

I would like for each spectator to feel him/herself becoming a tentacle of the project. For each person with his/her background, feelings, to come and enrich the experience of the work and be able to inhabit it.

What does your work say about the world today?

I like to question what we present and represent, who we are and where we go to, both personally and on the scale of humanity. There is also the idea of melting and mixing into more or less strong visions, which have more to do with sensations.

Your work has often explored word-play and misunderstanding. How is it developed in this project?

In my practice, there’s often the possibility of not understanding something, which gives, I hope, the total possibility of recreating a new vision of what is being said or done. When I moved to London, it was up to me alone to imagine my new life, a new dimension of myself, and this became especially apparent through language. I like the idea that languages are constantly evolving. Like the octopus, they are liquid and can be transferred from one place to another. Their imperfect becoming opens up to new intentions and
ways of being. And it is an extraordinary playground. Idiomatic expressions, once translated, become very strong images, such as “I will tell you loads of salads”! Maybe there was a time when salads were told in the fields? (laughs). All of these expressions come from somewhere, from a culture or from history. I'm as much interested in knowing their context as deconstructing it, because at that moment, language opens up an infinity of surprising possibilities.

How do reality and fiction fit together, and what is the place of “autofiction” (the framing of personal elements) in this new project?

Autofiction and imagination are indeed a big part of my work, because they push up to get past our pretensions of truth and facts. I do not seek to give an answer: I prefer a kind of ambiguity of the real or of the unreal, rather than a fixed truth.

Where do you situate this project in your practice? Is it a turning point, a breakaway, or a kind of continuity?

I would say there is a continuity, because my work is organic and everything is connected in it, whether in the intention or in the form.
A road trip through France—from the Parisian suburbs to the north of France, from the Palais du Facteur Cheval to the Mediterranean Sea—and finally to Venice. L.P.

The places
Cité Pablo Picasso, Nanterre
La Grande Borne, Grigny
Café de l’Opéra, Roubaix
Le Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval, Hauterives
Calanques of the Baie des Singes and Sormiou, Marseille
Glass factory Berengo, Murano
Canals, French Pavilion, Venice

The characters
Françoise, Retired radio producer (F)
Samantha, Dancer (S)
Ramo, Storyteller (R)
Jules, Acrobat (J)
Alexandre, Sensei Karate teacher (A)
Garance, Dancer and smoother (G)
Victor, Retired school teacher (V)
Père Benoit, Priest (PB)
Alma, Flutist (ALM)
Kader, Magician (K)
Bamar, Rapper (B)
Nicolas, Hip Hop dancer (N)

Script (excerpt)

N Look! Here the octopuses are swimming along the walls, and we use their ink to write novels and find flowers growing from cyclists’ buttocks. Each stone was brought by his dog, chewed and spat out when he got to the Palais. Can you imagine, over there will also be an Ideal Pavilion... Birds will swim in untold softness, worms will massage our feet, iPhones will warm up little chicks... Where we’re going, over there, planes will run on potatoes, the floor will be covered with eggshells which we will walk on, they will go crack, crack...

R Dogs will bark salads, and lick you welcome. We will glue cooling systems to birds as they fly. We will dig tunnels... A rain of pomegranate seeds will fall on us, behind every stone there will be a raspberry brought back by fish. This Palais will show us the way as a the light of a boat at night... we follow*. Let’s go... Let’s follow the light...*

J Should we ring the bell?* The old man will be surprised to see is arriving like this. Dear Facteur cheval...

G I feel stark naked here.

J Naked as your habits?

G Naked as a cheese.

F With these stairs and columns that tickle our toes.*

R Does anything happen in this place?*

J Yes, but not where you think.*

N I want to do pure stuff like that too, straight from the earth.

R But in the depth will it be pressing down our neck?*

G No, we will float ...but keep your eyes skinned.*

F That must be from the Middle Ages.

J Pffff nonsense!

[Salads comes out of his mouth*]
I’m dumbfounded... by the submarine that showed us the way through the depths of thought streams.

Always naked... Why don’t you warm up a snake with your breasts?

Because my toes are too cold. And the ground is too soothing.

We should drink honey from the bees' knees.

And wait until chicken have teeth?

[Walk on egg shell*]

Yes let’s be slow slowwww and re find the way...*

Impossible, I have got ants in my pants.*

[Lots of ants in one hand going towards the pants*]

Are you still hungry?

Yes like an anxious pear*, damn.

Birds will miaow as they land. And we will fly on tapestries, we will talk in salads and use postage stamps so as not to kick the bucket.

And we will bring the Palais Idéal with us, to show the world what pure desire can create. We will travel through countries and experiences, exchanges.

And we'll conk out!
“A road trip through France—from the Parisian suburbs to the north of France, from the Palais du Facteur Cheval to the Mediterranean Sea—and finally to Venice.” L.P.
HD video
Courtesy of the artist,
Galerie Nathalie Obadia (Paris–Brussels),
carlier|gebauer (Berlin)
& Lisson Gallery (London–New York)
“A hidden and misty pavilion, made of facade and back-stage, invested by performances carried out by characters of the film.” L.P.
The publishing house Flammarion partners with the French Pavilion of the 58th edition of the Venice Biennale to publish Laure Prouvost's monograph. This book will take the form of an atlas, exploring and deepening her artistic practice by means of the Biennale project and the themes developed in it. Designed as a journey through 33 cities, the publication will make six stops (Venice, London, Rochechouart, Los Angeles, Beijing, Istanbul), for which six international writers will produce original texts, each providing a context for and an entry point into Laure Prouvost's work.

Writers: Ahu Antmen, Andrew Berardini, Yang Beichen, Massimiliano Gioni, Martha Kirszenbaum, Dean Kissick, Annabelle Ténèze.

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21.5 × 28.5 cm
270 Illustrations
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Laure Prouvost's project will resonate in France, through a series of public programs organized during the fall 2019 at Cité internationale des arts where Martha Kirszenbaum is in residency and the Fondation des Artistes, support of the French Pavilion. A cycle of conferences and meetings will take place on both sites of Cité internationale des arts, at Montmartre and Marais and at the Fondation des Artistes in Nogent-sur-Marne. Laure Prouvost’s exhibition at the French Pavilion will also travel in 2020 at Abattoirs, Musée–Frac Occitanie Toulouse and at LaM–Lille Métropole Musée d’art moderne, d’art contemporain et d’art brut in Villeneuve d’Ascq.
58th International Art exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

As part of its French creation promotion policy, the Institut français is supporting the presence of French artists or France-based artists from abroad chosen by curator Ralph Rugoff for the international exhibition _May You Live In Interesting Times_

**French artists**

- Neil Beloufa (born in 1985 in Paris)
- Antoine Catala (born in 1975 in Toulouse)
- Nicole Eisenman (born in 1965 in Verdun)
- Cyprien Gaillard (born in 1980 in Paris)
- Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (born in 1965 in Strasbourg)
- Jean-Luc Moulène (born in 1955 in Reims)
- Tarek Atoui (born in 1980 in Lebanon)
- Ryoji Ikeda (born in 1966 in Japan)
- Cameron Jamie (born in 1969 in the United States, works in Paris and Köln)

**Artists living and working in France**

- Joël Andrianomearisoa (born in 1977 in Madagascar, lives and works between Paris and her hometown)
- Rada Boukova (born in 1973 in Bulgaria, lives and works in France)
- Emmanuel Daydé (born in France)
- Angelica Mesiti (born in 1976 in Australia, works in Paris)
- Vincent Honoré, Program and Exhibitions Director, MoCo–Montpellier Contemporain, is the Curator of the Kosovo Republic Pavilion.
- Alicia Knock, Curator, Acquisitions manager CNAC-Centre Pompidou, is the Curator of the Albanian Pavilion.
- Charlotte Laubard, HEAD-Geneva (Geneva University of Art and Design), Fine Arts Department, Faculty Member, is the Curator of the Swiss Pavilion.

**Artists invited**

- Joël Andrianomearisoa (born in 1977 in Madagascar, lives and works between Paris and her hometown)
- Rada Boukova (born in 1973 in Bulgaria, lives and works in France)
- Emmanuel Daydé (born in France)
- Angelica Mesiti (born in 1976 in Australia, works in Paris)
- Vincent Honoré, Program and Exhibitions Director, MoCo–Montpellier Contemporain, is the Curator of the Kosovo Republic Pavilion.
- Alicia Knock, Curator, Acquisitions manager CNAC-Centre Pompidou, is the Curator of the Albanian Pavilion.
- Charlotte Laubard, HEAD-Geneva (Geneva University of Art and Design), Fine Arts Department, Faculty Member, is the Curator of the Swiss Pavilion.

**French Curators invited in other national pavilions**

- Catherine Crowston, Executive Director of the Art Gallery, Alberta, is the Associate curator of the Canadian Pavilion. She participated to the Focus program in 2017.
- Mary Cremin, Director of Void Gallery, Derry (Ireland), is the Curator of the Irish Pavilion. She participated to the Focus program in 2016.
- Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung, Associate curator of the Finnish Pavilion, will be the next curator of the Bamako Encounters, African Biennale of Photography (2019–2020), organized by the Minister of Culture for Mali, with the support of the Institut français.

This is a non exhaustive-list of projects as of today.
The Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs develops and implements French foreign policy. It promotes a global approach to diplomacy. Global in terms of its geographical scope, the breadth of the policy areas which it covers and the range of tools at its disposal.

It works for peace, security and the respect of human rights within the framework of its bilateral relations and the international organisations of which it is a member. It contributes to managing globalisation in such a way as to ensure sustainable and balanced development for the planet. It supports the promotion of French businesses in external markets, and of the economic appeal of France abroad. Its cultural diplomacy and influence is structured around three core missions:

- the promotion and dissemination of the French language and French teaching abroad, notably through an over-arching plan for French language and plurilingualism.
- the advancement of French artistic and intellectual influence abroad, the dissemination and export of its cultural and creative industries and the promotion of its cultural expertise.
- the development of university and scientific partnerships, and attracting and instructing foreign students in France.

To carry out its missions, the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs relies on its diplomatic and consular network (160 embassies and 16 permanent missions, 112 consular sections and 89 consulates and general consulates), and its varied network of organisations for cooperation and cultural activities, which are active in many different sectors and fields (497 educational institutions, 386 Alliance françaises, 98 French institutes and 27 French research institutes).
The Ministry of Culture (General Directorate of Artistic Creation) contributes to the development of European and international activities in the performing and visual arts sectors. Its activities involve gathering together resources, tools, training programmes and support for the benefit of practitioners of performance and visual arts, thus enabling them to travel for artistic and professional purposes; to expand the reach of their performances and exhibitions; to export know-how, cultural engineering, artistic exchanges, to host programmes, cultural partnerships and cooperation, and to expand on and further integrate existing European and international networks. The Ministry contributes to the international benchmarking of public policies on artistic creation and lends its support to the French Pavilion by contributing to the production of the work displayed there.

The Ministry of Culture contributes to the enhancement of the French scene, to the international promotion of artists and public collections, as well as supports to professionals.

The Ministry of Culture promotes the French scene at an international level through funding from the CNAP (National Centre for the Visual Arts) to ensure the presence of French galleries at fairs abroad, and by means of assistance for collaboration between French and foreign galleries on projects to present French artists’ monographs abroad. It also supports the development of new tools such as Textwork with the Fondation Ricard, a platform which provides critical feedback for artists who are active in the French scene. Whether through the CNAP, the Regional Fund for Contemporary Art (FRAC) or art centres, the General Directorate of Artistic Creation and the Institut français contribute to the co-production of works and exhibitions with foreign institutions.

Finally, the ministry supports the Focus program which are being organised during major events in France, such as the Rencontres de la Photographie in Arles, the Printemps de Septembre in Toulouse, FIAC or Rennes Art Weekend (Rennes Biennale). It also contributes to bilateral funds Étant donnés in the USA, Fluxus in London or Meet up of the Réseau document d’artistes (program of visits to artists’ studios).
The Institut français is in charge of the organisation of the French presence, within the national pavilion, at the International Venice Art and Architecture Biennale, in close collaboration with the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Culture. For the 58th edition of the International Art Exhibition–Biennale di Venezia, Laure Prouvost has been chosen by the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Culture, on referral from a selection committee, to represent France.

The Institut français supports contemporary creation and takes part in the promotion of French artistic scenes throughout the world.

In the field of visual art and architecture, the Institut français works in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture–the General Directorate of Artistic Creation (DGCA), and the General Directorate of Heritage (DGPat), with several shared programmes and actions.

Moreover, the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, together with the Ministry of Culture and the Institut français, has endowed its French cultural network with four representations dedicated to the visual arts, in Berlin, New York, London and Beijing, which have specific means to carry out structuring projects.

The Institut français organises and supports French participation in major international biennales and encourages the mobility of French creators, thanks in part to international residency programmes. In the context of the Focus program, it invites professionals (curators, programmers) each year from different countries to work with them in discovering artistic scenes and identifying partners in France. This translates to a significant number of French artists being invited abroad. Moreover, the Institut français helps with the integration of young French curators and art critics into international professional networks. With the French cultural network abroad, it develops and supports projects with international scope in a number of creative fields. Finally, thanks to the “Africa and the Caribbean in Creation” programme, the Institut français supports visual arts and design practitioners in Africa and in the Caribbean.
The CHANEL Fund for Women in the Arts and Culture is pleased to support Laure Prouvost’s project for the French Pavilion at the Biennale of Art 2019–58th International Art Exhibition in Venice.

The fund, created in 2018, engages with cultural institutions to promote the recognition of women artists, creators and curators by supporting projects in five artistic disciplines—visual arts, performing arts, dance, music and literature. To date, the fund has pledged support for three initiatives, including the Biennale.

In 2018, the CHANEL Fund for Women in the Arts and Culture established its first partnership with the association AWARE (Archives of Women Artists, Research and Exhibitions), which aims to restore the presence of 20th century women artists in the history of art. The second initiative covers two major projects with the Centre Pompidou—the support of the Dora Maar exhibition (June 5th–July 29th, 2019), as well as a 3-year grant for the acquisition of works of art created by women for the Centre Pompidou’s collections.

The multi-disciplinary fund will focus on supporting projects in cultural areas where women are strongly underrepresented. It will work closely with organizations internationally, adopting a holistic approach tackling imbalances at all levels, and support women’s artistic careers to allow them to receive better recognition. The fund aims to support a project in each of the five artistic areas it covers by 2020.

The CHANEL Fund for Women in the Arts and Culture echoes the history of the founder of CHANEL, Gabrielle Chanel, who had deep ties with artists, while being a pioneer as an independent woman supporting the Arts. With the CHANEL Fund for Women in the Arts and Culture, the House of CHANEL extends its deep commitment to empowering women.

The creation of the fund follows the establishment of the Fondation CHANEL in 2011, a corporate foundation with the mission to advance the role of women in society as drivers of positive change in the world.
ARTER, France’s leading artistic production agency, is the Producer of Contemporary Art. Our team accompanies the artists, conducts and implements exhibitions and major events in France and throughout the world. Since its creation in 2004, by its director Renaud Sabari, ARTER has distinguished itself with its high-standards and unrivalled grasp of artistic and technical issues.

We have accompanied and supported the creation of emblematic projects for the Venice Biennale, namely projets Prenez Soin de Vous by Sophie Calle in 2007 and Studio Venezia by Xavier Veilhan in 2017.

For this 58th edition of the Contemporary Art Biennale in Venice, ARTER will be working alongside Laure Prouvost to help carry out her artistic project, from its conception to its realization within the French pavilion. Once again, the agency demonstrates its ability to lead multiform and complex projects, scales and different technologies.

We are proud and very happy to be working alongside Laure Prouvost to bring this incredible project to life.
The Fondation des Artistes (formerly the FNAGP) has been accompanying artists since 1976, from the time when they leave art school until the very end of their activity. Present at the strategic moments in an artist’s life, the Fondation des Artistes supports art schools; awards production grants; guarantees the broadcasting of creations in its centre for contemporary art—the MABA; contributes to showcasing artists internationally; finds them studios and guarantees them accommodation in their old age, at the Maison nationale des artistes. This Foundation, which derives its means from its rental income, donations and bequests, and which is unique in its mission, economic model, and the range of its activities, provides support for artistic creation and makes every effort to enable artists to express themselves and create.

A new institution born out of the fusion of the Musée d’art moderne et contemporain of Toulouse and the Fonds régional d’art contemporain Occitanie, since 2000, the Abattoirs have been holding historic exhibitions and displaying artists’ creations in a 19th century heritage building. The Abattoir has won recognition for its programme, the presence of major artists in its collection, its exchanges with major national and international museums, and the diversity of its social programmes. In 2018, their 66 exhibitions on the Toulouse site and beyond drew in 680 000 visitors. The Abattoirs and its director, Annabelle Ténèze, are delighted to continue their support for artists by accompanying Laure Prouvost’s project for the Venice Biennale, and by hosting its first French installation in 2020.

Situated in Villeneuve d’Ascq, near Lille, at the crossroads of Northern Europe, the LaM is famous for its prestigious collection of major works of modern art (Fernand Léger, Joan Miró, Amedeo Modigliani, Pablo Picasso), contemporary art (Etel Adnan, Christian Boltanski, Zarina Hashmi, Dennis Oppenheim) and art brut (Aloïse Corbaz, Fleury Joseph Crépin, Henry Darger, Adolf Wölfli). Its remarkable architecture (Roland Simounet and Manuelle Gautrand) is nestled in a sculpture park which is unique in France. Thanks to its privileged location, a wide audience benefits from its active policy of temporary exhibitions, but also from its rich cultural programmes and innovative educational activities. The LaM is pleased to host the artistic project of Laure Prouvost, an artist from the north of France with a particular attachment to the museum of her childhood.
In Paris, the Cité internationale des arts will reflect Laure Prouvost’s project for the French Pavilion in Venice. A series of events in the autumn of 2019, curated by Martha Kirszenbaum, a resident of the Cité, will shed light on and develop the artistic themes of the Pavilion. In the image of this collaboration, and since its creation in 1965, the Cité internationale des arts has been pursuing its vocation as a living space open to dialogue between cultures, where artists can meet with their public and with professionals. With its two complementary sites in Paris, the Cité welcomes more than 300 artists in residence each month, from all over the world and from all disciplines.

For 25 years, the Nathalie Obadia Gallery has been working to promote French and international artists in museums and amongst private collectors thanks to its three addresses in Paris and Brussels, its participation in a number of international fairs, and by accompanying artists in their institutional projects. Laure Prouvost joined the Nathalie Obadia Gallery in 2014 for her first solo exhibition in a gallery in France. Since their first successful collaboration, a number of projects have taken place, including her exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo in 2018, at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis in 2017, at the Consortium in Dijon in 2016, and at the Red Brick Art Museum in Beijing in 2016. Her works have been included in prestigious private and public collections including MAC/VAL (France), FRAC Bourgogne (France), Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden at the Smithsonian in Washington (USA), Kunsthalle Luzern (Switzerland), and M-Museum Leuven (Belgium). La Galerie Nathalie Obadia is happy to support the artist by partnering with the French pavilion for the 58th edition of the International Art Exhibition in Venice.

Founded in 1991 and directed with Marie-Blanche Carlier and Ulrich Gebauer the gallery shows international contemporary art and currently represents over 30 international artists in Berlin and Madrid. Laure Prouvost joined the gallery in 2015 with her spectacular first exhibition in Germany Dear dirty dark drink drift down deep droll (in der dole), leading to solo exhibitions at the Haus der Kunst in Munich in 2015, and the MMK in Frankfurt in 2016. The gallery has since placed her works in major private, corporate and institutional collections, such as the Inelcom Collection, Madrid; The Fundacion ARCO Collection, Madrid, Madrid; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Taguchi Art Collection, Tokyo; Zabludowicz Collection, London and the Kunstmuseum Lucerne, amongst others. Furthermore carlier|gebauer has served as production partner for several former and upcoming solo shows, such as her show at Pirelli Hangar Bicocca, Milan, Italy, in 2017, her solo show at Palais de Tokyo in 2018, as well as her exhibition at M HKA, Antwerp, Belgium, in 2019. carlier|gebauer feels very honored to support Laure Prouvost’s contribution for the 58th Venice Biennale. Laure Prouvost’s next solo exhibition at carlier|gebauer, Berlin, is planned for September 2019.

carlier|gebauer
Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery has pioneered the careers of many generations of artists from the Minimal and Conceptual artists, to the British sculptors—including Anish Kapoor, Richard Deacon and Tony Cragg—and now supports a generation of innovators from Laure Prouvost to Ryan Gander, Haroon Mirza and Cory Arcangel. The gallery supports and develops over 60 international artists—from Marina Abramović to Carmen Herrera, Ai Weiwei to John Akomfrah, and most recently Hugh Hayden—across two exhibition spaces in London, two in New York and one in Shanghai. Lisson Gallery started working with Laure Prouvost in 2017 and hosted her first exhibition at Lisson New York in March 2018. Following on from her earlier solo exhibition at the New Museum in New York, Lisson Gallery has brought further focus to Prouvost’s work in the U.S. with support for exhibitions at the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, and the Bass Museum of Art, Miami, as well as across Europe, most notably at the Palais de Tokyo in 2018, and the forthcoming mid-career retrospective at M HKA in February 2019. Lisson Gallery is delighted to represent Laure Prouvost and support her journey to the Venice Biennale 2019, and her exhibition in the French Pavilion.
Laure Prouvost – Deep See Blue Surrounding You/
Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre

Martha Kirszenbaum

The French Pavilion at the 58th International Art
Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia is produced by Institut
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Les Inrocks

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Laure Prouvost, preparatory drawings (2019)
Watercolour and pencil on paper
Courtesy of the artist

Martha Kirszenbaum
Courtesy of Alexandre Guirkinger

Laure Prouvost
Courtesy of Alexandre Guirkinger
Set photographs (2019)
C-prints
Courtesy of Martha Kirszenbaum
Laure Prouvost, film stills (2019)
HD video
Courtesy of the artist,
Galerie Nathalie Obadia (Paris–Brussels),
carlier|gebauer (Berlin) &
Lisson Gallery (London–New York)
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FRENCH PAVILION
58th INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA
PROFESSIONAL DAYS
8–10 MAY 2019

EXHIBITION
11 MAY–24 NOVEMBER 2019