



## HORIZON OF THE VOID: THE 2023 ARTOCENE FESTIVAL IN CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC

Welcome to the future of art in the age of human impact and environmental awareness. The [Artocene Festival 2023](#) – Artocene being an intended counterpoint to “Anthropocene”, an era marked by significant human influence on climate and environment—draws a rich tapestry of contemporary art and architecture against the backdrop of the magnificent Chamonix-Mont-Blanc landscape.

This year, the festival started on June 10 and extends till July 23, 2023, inviting over 20 artists and architects to engage in the provocative theme, “Horizon of the Void”. As the term Void suggests, the notion is open to interpretation, inviting a dialogue around the physical and philosophical concept of emptiness. The choice of the Void naturally resonates with Chamonix’s extreme verticality, and the existential thrill of exploring the unknown.



Artocène 2023, Angelika Matkul, Marella, 2020 (l) crédit Marc Domage, Centre d'art de Vassivière

The third edition of Artocene will unfold through eight fascinating exhibitions sprawling across nearly 2,000m<sup>2</sup> in the city center, featuring works from an impressive cadre of international artists and architects. The Musée Alpin will play host to the main exhibition, organized in three intriguing sections—“Verticality”, “Vertigo and fall” and “The void as a matrix”—carefully curated in collaboration with renowned scenographer Charlotte Richard, known for her collaborations with the Fondation Cartier and the Palais de Tokyo.



Artocène 2023 - Celine Struger, In Praise of Shadows

But the magic doesn't end there. The festival will spread its charm across the town, inviting visitors to explore the architectural prototype of Yvona Friedman at place du Mont-Blanc, delve into the archival exhibition at the city library, and appreciate Capucine Vever's video art at Les Gourmets hotel, among others. Visitors can also admire Ulla von Brandenburg's indoor installation and Bea Bonafini's outdoor installation at the hotel La Folie Douce, the sound work of Charlotte Charbonnel at the Librairie Sauvage, and Thomas Maillaender's photography in the city centre.

A noteworthy part of this edition is the in-situ works, specially designed to echo the Chamonix valley. Artists like Ulla von Brandenburg, Bea Bonafini, Clément Richem, Kris Martin, Alexandra Leykauf, and Marlon de Azambuja, among others, have painstakingly created these masterpieces to showcase the interplay between art and the natural environment.



left: Artocène 2023, Joan Ayrton, Dam II, 2016-2020, courtesy de l'artiste / right: Proto-Expo, crédits Wald.City

The festival isn't just about the static exhibits—it's a lively celebration of the art world, punctuated with artistic performances, immersive experiences, conferences, meetings, artist video screenings, and more. The festival's commitment to democratizing contemporary art is reflected in its plethora of guided tours, school visits, and art workshops for children.

In a pioneering move, the French Alpine Club (FFCAM) partnered with the festival to invite artists Ulla von Brandenburg and Bea Bonafini for an immersive journey in the Chamonix valley, leading to the creation of artworks that explore the concept of the Void. These creations will be on display during the festival.

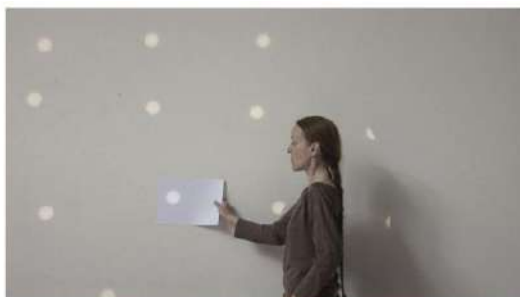


Artocène 2023 – Étienne Klein

The 2023 Artocene festival has the honour of having the noted physicist and philosopher Étienne Klein as its scientific advisor. Klein, the director of research at the CEA and a professor at the Ecole Centrale de Paris, offers profound insights into the concept of the Void. His words powerfully encapsulate the festival's spirit: "Emptiness. It is commonly said, is what remains after everything has been removed. But if absolutely everything were removed, there would be nothing left... at all."

***"Le vide, dit-on ordinairement, est ce qui reste après qu'on a tout enlevé. Mais si l'on retirait absolument tout, il ne resterait plus rien... du tout." – Étienne Klein***

Artocene Festival, in its unique way, captures the zeitgeist of our times—where art, culture, and environmental awareness converge to reshape our understanding of the world. This year's focus on the Void provides a unique platform for artists to explore, express, and engage audiences with this elemental, and paradoxically profound, concept.



Artocène 2023 - Marie Cool & Fabio Dall'ozzi, Untitled, sheet of paper (A4), vanlights, 2006



Artocène 2023, Aïtch Randini, Les métamorphoses, 2017



Artcine 2021, Lesvins Maréchal, crédit Wolf City



Artcine 2023, Ulla von Brandenburg, Das Was ist, crédit David Ertl



Artcine 2023, Soïane Ortolé, Médium vacante



left / right: Ulla von Brandenburg et Ben Bonafini en résidence à Chamoin, crédit Artcine