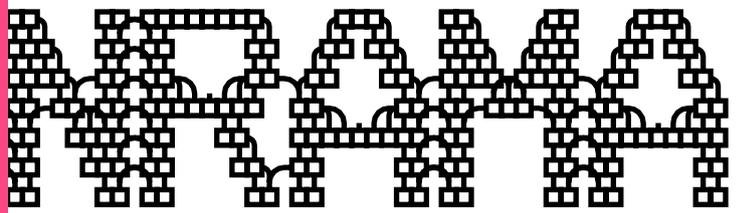
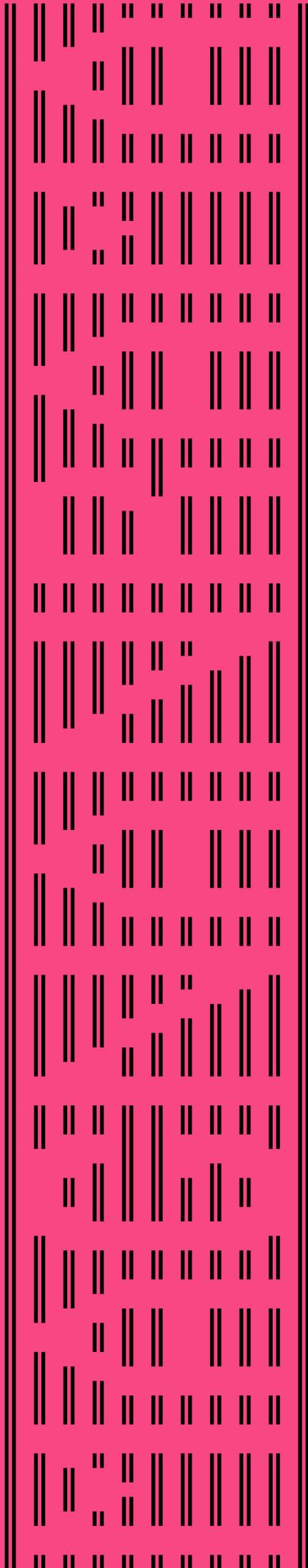


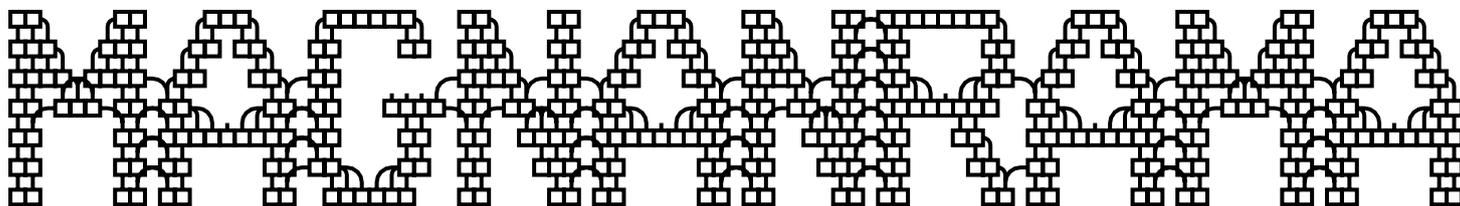
MEDIA



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***Nathalie Magnan with
Shu Lea Cheang,
Cindy Coutant,
Chloé Desmoineaux
with Bobby Brim and
Ada LaNerd,
Guerrilla Girls,
DeeDee Halleck,
Barbara Hammer,
Old Boys Network,
Paper Tiger Television,
Julia Scher,
The Yes Men,
VNS Matrix***

***An exhibition
by Mathilde Belouali,
with scenography
by Cécile Bouffard
and graphic design
by Clara Pasteau***



portraits, networks and

**MAGNANRAMA
PORTRAITS, NETWORKS
AND CONTEMPORARY RESONANCES
OF NATHALIE MAGNAN**

**AN EXHIBITION IN PARTNERSHIP
PRESENTED IN THREE CHAPTERS**

**at the Villa Arson, Nice:
20 February — 31 May 2026**

**at the Centre d'art contemporain
Les Capucins, Ville d'Embrun:
26 June — 23 August 2026**

**at Bétonsalon – centre d'art
et de recherche, Paris:
26 September — 12 December 2026**

**Partners:
Archives de la critique d'art,
Institut national d'histoire de l'art,
Université Rennes 2**

**MAGNANRAMA was created
in collaboration with Reine Prat**

***Nathalie Magnan with
Shu Lea Cheang,
Cindy Coutant,
Chloé Desmoineaux
with Bobby Brim and
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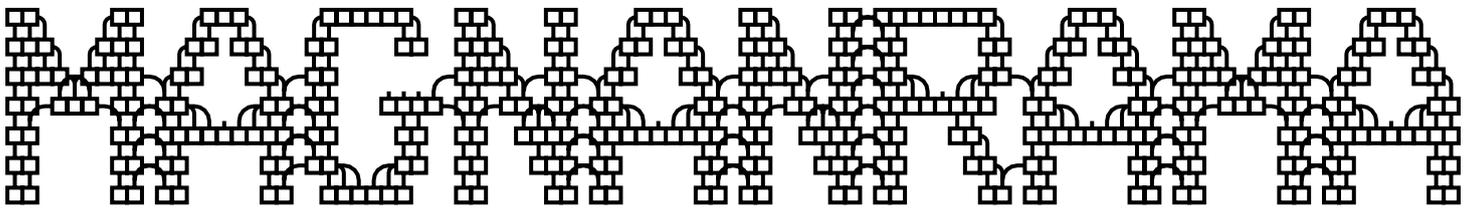
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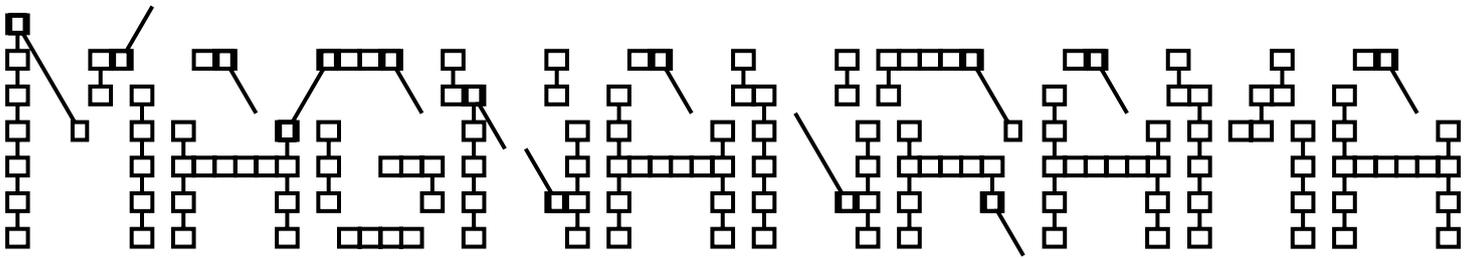


portraits, networks and contemporary resonances of Nathalie Magnan

A media theorist, filmmaker, cyberfeminist and navigator of the internet and the high seas alike, Nathalie Magnan (1956-2016) made a vital and generous interdisciplinary contribution to the history of thought, technology, feminism and LGBTQI+ struggles. An educator, webmistress, hacktivist and – although she never used the term to describe herself – an artist, Magnan acted as a mediator, bringing parallel but disconnected disciplinary fields into dialogue. Pursuing collective approaches and rhizomatic, feminist methodologies where “do-it-yourself” was a contagious incitation to act, throughout her life Magnan worked to facilitate the encounter and the intermixing of images, texts, people, activism and technology.

Whilst a graduate student at the University of California Santa Cruz in the 1980s, Magnan worked as an assistant to the philosopher and historian of science Donna Haraway, whose landmark essay *A Cyborg Manifesto*⁰¹ she translated into French. She also participated in the public-access television collectives Paper Tiger Television and Deep Dish Television. After returning to France in the 1990s, she made several films, including *Lesborama*, which she created for the first edition of the “Nuit Gay” marathon on Canal+ in 1995.

⁰¹ The first translation was carried out with Marie-Hélène Dumas and Charlotte Gould. Nathalie Magnan & Annick Bureau, eds., *Connexions: Arts réseaux médias*, École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 2002.



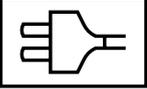
The co-founder of the Paris Gay & Lesbian Film Festival (today Chéri-es Chéris), Magnan regularly contributed to the magazine *Gai Pied*. Later, she taught at national art schools in Dijon and in Bourges. Closely involved in cyberfeminist, tactical media and hacktivist circles, she organised digital counterculture events, moderated feminist mailing lists, coded for internet sites, and wrote, translated and co-ordinated collections of texts. In 2000, when the International Symposium on Electronic Art was organised in Paris with an all-male line-up, she convened a women-only event programme at the Centre d'information et de documentation of the Beaux-Arts de Paris⁰². In 2004 in Finland and in 2005 in the Strait of Gibraltar, she organised two editions of *Sailing for Geeks*, which brought together artists and activists around communication technologies and imagined links between maritime and online navigation.

Nathalie Magnan passed away aged sixty from metastatic breast cancer. She left behind her combats around questions of gender and technology, her incisive interrogation of the ways in which media transform our view of the world, her belief in the agency of every individual to produce their own representations, her participative and investigative methodology and her humour. Many of those who knew her wonder what she would have thought about, written about and made of our era: of the social networks to which we confide our private life and our personal data, of the pandemic which reconfigured our relationships to distance and to vulnerability, of the potential and the danger of artificial intelligence, of media conglomerates concentrated in the hands of the far right and of genocides livestreamed to screens held in the palm of our hands. Many others have discovered Magnan through her archives, which were entrusted to the Archives de la critique d'art in Rennes by her partner, Reine Prat: the collection joyously blur the distinctions between private and professional life, institutional culture and self-organisation, activism and transmission – all the while reconfiguring disciplines, genres, genders and questions of legitimacy.

The exhibition is imagined not only as a portrait and a *femme*, but also as a collective biography that opens onto the present, one in which the ideas, the struggles and the connections that Nathalie Magnan helped to bring about emerge anew in the work of different generations of artists and thinkers. “Magnanrama” brings together her predecessors (Barbara Hammer) with figures and groups that she spent time with (Shu Lea Cheang, Old Boys Network, VNS Matrix, The Yes Men) or which pursued parallel experiments (Guerilla Girls, Julia Scher), as well as those who have followed in her footsteps (Chloé Desmoineaux, Bobby Brim and Ada LaNerd or Cindy Coutant).

⁰² This event was organised at the invitation of Mathilde Ferrer, then head of the Centre d'information et de documentation.

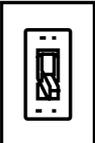
THERE ARE NO DIRECT FLIGHTS BETWEEN MARSEILLE AND NEW YORK:⁰³ THE VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP AT ROCHESTER

 Nathalie Magnan was born into a well-off family in Marseille in 1956. After studying literature at Nanterre, her desire to broaden her horizons and to live out her sexual identity beyond a restrictive family environment led her to apply to several graduate programmes in the United States. In 1979, shortly before her 23rd birthday, she moved to Rochester, a town on the shores of Lake Ontario in upstate New York, to join The Visual Studies Workshop run by SUNY Buffalo. The VSW took an experimental approach to photography, film, media and visual studies through collaborative and interdisciplinary courses. During her time in the VSW, Magnan began to experiment with photography, film, installation and artists' books, creating works that bore the imprint of French culture and references such as Nouvelle Vague films and Marguerite Duras novels with reflexive and critical tools from French Theory and feminist struggles.

It was also in Rochester that she met Catherine Lord, who arrived on campus at the same time as her. Lord remembers an “astonishingly beautiful woman, in an enormous fur coat, carrying an enormous suitcase.” This encounter was the beginning of a love story that lasted several years and a decisive friendship and intellectual bond. Lord would go on to become a renowned art historian and professor, much like Martha Gever, another student in the programme with whom Magnan wrote an early article on lesbian representation published in the VSW's journal, *Afterimage*. Her interest for the representations of identity and how they could be produced by and for those concerned had begun to come into focus.

BICYCLE, NOW/THEN: FILM AND ROLLING PINS

For her graduate project in autumn 1983, Nathalie Magnan created an ambitious installation that was successively entitled *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*⁰⁴ and *Bicycle, Now/Then*. The work was made up of a bicycle mounted on a wooden structure, on which visitors were invited to sit. By pedalling, they could activate a dozens-of-metres-long photographic strip that was suspended by cables and threaded through a series of pulleys and rolling pins inspired by old printing presses. The manual playback of images – moments from everyday life, roadside scenes shot from a moving car, workers on construction sites – reproduced the principle of the cinematographic film strip without the need for projection, placing the spectator's body at the heart of the apparatus for the reproduction and perception of images. A few months prior, Magnan had presented an early version of the installation at the *Rencontres Internationales de la photographie* in Arles.

 At 27, Magnan was already working on the main axes of her future research: inventing and appropriating machines, setting images in motion using the body, and refusing to dissociate technique from content. This installation

⁰³ An homage to the film *There are no Direct Flights between New York and Marseille* (1998) by American director Peter Friedman.

⁰⁴ A reference to the eponymous book by Walter Benjamin (1935).

retrospectively appears as a foundational one, and indeed represented a key prefiguration of her future projects.

Its reactivation in “Magnanrama” has been made possible by Alexandre Capan, registrar at the Villa Arson art centre, who worked from archival photographs, including part of the original photographic strip held in Nathalie Magnan’s papers at the Archives de la critique d’art in Rennes.

HISTORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS: A "GLAMOROUS AND DEVIANT" PROGRAMME⁰⁵

In 1984, Nathalie Magnan moved to California. She first settled in Los Angeles, where she worked for *Umbrella*, a journal dedicated to artists’ books, and participated in the organisation of the third Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Film Festival. The following year, she was accepted into the “History of Consciousness” programme at the University of California Santa Cruz, a course known for its interdisciplinarity and for its groundbreaking and activist approach to human sciences combining feminist studies, the history of art, media and science, semiotics, and critical and literary theory. The programme’s faculty included many key thinkers who were, in the mid-1980s, at decisive moments in their intellectual trajectories. They included Teresa de Lauretis, who a few years later would forge the concept and the term “queer theory”⁰⁶; Vito Russo, author of *The Celluloid Closet* (1981), a groundbreaking text on the representations of homosexuality in Hollywood cinema; and Donna Haraway, a primatologist and biologist who had just published *A Cyborg Manifesto* (1985). Haraway’s essay would become a key text for Magnan’s thought; she translated it into French in 2002. In the manifesto, Haraway calls for a surpassing of the traditional dichotomies that structure gender and nature, and instead proposed hybrid identities blending the human, the animal and the machine. She concludes by stating “I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess”.



At Santa Cruz, Magnan assembled a theoretical approach that would play out over the course of her future work, one which exploded disciplinary categories, wove together feminist methodologies and study, and closely integrated the history of technology, media, and popular culture.

SANTA CRUZ: HIGH TECH GAYS⁰⁷

Written over the course of 1984, *A Cyborg Manifesto* was the first text that Donna Haraway typed out on her computer. In California’s cultural milieu, personal computers had begun to appear in homes and offices, equipped with word processors and other desktop software, as well as the first email systems. With its network of universities, California was becoming the birthplace of the internet, between strategic and military uses on the one hand and, on the other, utopian, community-oriented and even psychedelic visions of information promoted by a technophilic counterculture.

⁰⁵ Title borrowed from an article by Clélia Barbut, “Une trajectoire transatlantique, à la croisée des affects et des idées (1979-1991)”, in Nathalie Magnan, *Textes choisis* (provisional title), *Hystériques & Associés*, forthcoming.

⁰⁶ Queer theory is a critical field which questions gender, sexuality and identity norms, studying their constructed and unstable nature and their imbrication with power relations.

⁰⁷ High Tech Gays was a social and activist LGBT group in Silicon Valley active between 1983 and 1997.

Nathalie Magnan often photographed herself with her TeleVideo 910, and similarly recorded her friends alongside their computers. During her time in California, she traded in her bike for a motorbike, and participated in the gay and queer activist movements in San Francisco, in particular the struggle against the HIV/AIDS crisis and the inaction of Reagan's America. As part of ACT UP and Queer Nation, founded in 1989 and 1990 respectively, she helped to develop direct action tactics that were deployed in tandem with a fearsome visual culture.



Magnan later described this period as the “virulent years”,⁰⁸ a time when computer viruses and HIV/AIDS proliferated in systems and organisms alike.

PAPER TIGER TELEVISION: "DON'T JUST WATCH TV, MAKE IT!"

Paper Tiger Television was a collective founded in New York in 1981 by the filmmaker and activist DeeDee Halleck, and which ultimately counted sixty or so members on the East and West coasts of the United States. The group produced more than five hundred videos and television programmes on alternative and critical approaches to media, with modest budgets offset by an outsize sense of humour. These were broadcast on public-access television, a system of local TV channels that allowed any citizen or group to create and circulate their own programmes. Paper Tiger's videos from the 1980s feature invited speakers who analyse an article, a media or a contemporary issue and unpick its mechanisms and biases, often through intentionally zany and kitsch staging.



Nathalie Magnan participated in the creation of several programmes: in one, artist Martha Rosler denounces the mainstream media's treatment of the case of Mary Beth Whitehead, a surrogate mother who chose not to give up her child at birth; in another, the biologist, philosopher, sociologist, and historian of sciences Donna Haraway dissects the colonial and positivist representation of primates using articles published in *National Geographic*. Magnan co-directed the latter show, and appears on screen with a number of other accomplices.

Later, Magnan and DeeDee Halleck co-authored *The Gringo in Mañanaland* (1995), a film that focused on the representations of Latin Americans in U.S. cinema. The two worked for several years on the film, which incorporated dozens of movie clips dating back to the very beginning of the history of cinema.

HAVE YOU SEEN FRANCE?

In 1990, after twelve years in the United States, Nathalie Magnan returned to France and settled in Paris. This move came with a cultural and technological shock: whereas the internet had been part of her daily life in California, it was almost completely absent from French homes. On the political scene, feminism was marginal, had yet to make inroads in academia, and with her return to France, she had to construct a new affective and professional network.



In 1991, she made two mid-length films, where she developed her trademark mixture of found footage and interviews. *L'Éprouvante éprouvette* [*The Test Tube Ordeal*] gave a platform to seven women who had used IVF as part of fertility therapy, extending

⁰⁸ Nathalie Magnan, “Des années virulentes”, talk at the Gaité Lyrique, Paris, 2012.

Magnan's interest in technology and its links to gender and the body. *Avez-vous vu la guerre?* [*Did You See the War?*] was a collaborative production with Canal Déchaîné, and analysed the media coverage of the Gulf War, which was fought between Iraq and the U.S.-led coalition between 1990 and 1991. Television played a major role in the conflict, broadcasting military operations in near-real time on 24-hour news channels, and framing it as a war that was “clean”, technologically advanced, and therefore acceptable.

It was also in 1990 that Magnan met Reine Prat – then the director of Arcanal, a non-profit organisation focused on the production of films in the cultural sector – who would become her life partner.

Nathalie Magnan participated in the Parisian activist scene, from pride marches to ACT UP actions at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in France, as well as in the Universités d'Été Euroméditerranéennes de l'Homosexualité (UEEH) in Marseille. She was one of only a handful of women to regularly write for the gay weekly magazine *Gai Pied*, contributing articles which proposed “a lesbian take on the news”.⁰⁹

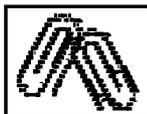
In 1994, along with Yann Beauvais, Philip Brooks, Élisabeth Lebovici and Nicole Fernández Ferrer, she co-founded the Festival de films gays & lesbiens de Paris, and helped organise the first two editions, which were held at the American Center in Paris.

LESBORAMA AND LA NUIT GAY: TELLING STORIES

With no public-access television in France, Nathalie Magnan devised some of her projects with Canal+. A private channel created in 1984, Canal+ offered a reflexive and often parodic mise-en-abyme of French television and its treatment of the news through programs such as *Les Guignols de l'info* or *Le Zapping*, which were both created in 1988 and ran for almost twenty years. Creative visuals that drew on early 3D graphics and a candid, tongue-in-cheek tone stemming in part from the numerous LGBT+ figures working at the channel gave rise to programmes like *L'Œil du cyclone*, dedicated to the new images and alternative art of the 1990s.

It was in this context that Alain Burosse and Joëlle Matos organised the first “Nuit Gay”: eight consecutive hours of television dedicated to homosexuality, its culture and its political struggles that were broadcast overnight on 23 June 1995 on the eve of the annual pride march. A bold new initiative for television in France, the Nuit Gay was highly successful.

Nathalie Magnan's contribution to the Nuit Gay took the form of *Lesborama*. This mid-length film looked at lesbian visual culture, both as it was constructed by Western cinema and media through an interplay of fantasy and repulsion, and as it was imagined and lived by lesbians themselves, who were represented in the film by theorist Jack Halberstam, writer Rita Mae Brown and activist Christine Delphy. *Lesborama* is emblematic of Magnan's deft and rhythmic approach that traverses her films. A landmark work to montage as well as of the humour in her production, it is also an important document of the culture of the 1990s.



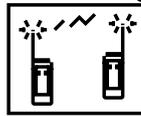
⁰⁹ Catherine Gonnard, “Un regard lesbien sur l'actualité”, in Nathalie Magnan, *Textes choisis*, ibid.

CYBERFEMINISMS: "ONLINE, MEN CAN'T INTERRUPT YOU."

"On the internet, men can't interrupt you. You can always finish your sentence online." Nathalie Magnan liked to quote this saying by Kathy Rae Huffman, which sums up the emancipatory potential that feminists saw in the development of the internet in the early 1990s.

In many countries, feminist artists, researchers and activists took to this new space of expression and sociability to exchange theoretical resources and personal accounts, to gather information and to band together, to contest misogynistic dynamics in their milieus and to create new forms of art and political actions.

In 1996, at a time when the internet had been developing in France in earnest for only a year, Nathalie Magnan made the short documentary *Internautes* for Canal+, which focused on the history of the internet, its functioning and the questions of power that underpinned it. The documentary demonstrates Magnan's detailed knowledge of cyberspace networks as well as of the feminist initiatives at work within it. The era was marked by a major gender disparity: in 2000, women made up just 25% of internet users in Europe.¹⁰



Beyond France, Nathalie Magnan was very active in international cyberfeminist movements, including the Australian collective VNS Matrix and the collective Old Boys Network, based in Germany, which organised three cyberfeminist conferences between 1997 and 2001.

She acted as an intermediary between these international milieus and the French context, on both a theoretical and technical level. Between 2000 and 2003, she created and moderated the forum of the website *Chiennes de garde* [Guard Dogs/Bitches], acting as its webmistress. *Chiennes de garde* was the first "interactive feminist site" in France, and hosted hundreds of testimonies of sexist and sexual harassment and violence, almost twenty years before #MeToo.

In December 2000, Magnan organised a conference entitled "Cyberfemmes" at the *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris*.¹¹ Several dozen women were invited to share their work on media and new communication technologies at this fringe event, which was devised to coincide with the nearby *International Symposium on Electronic Art*, where no women had been invited to speak.

In 1997, Magnan published the book *La vidéo, entre art et communication*, and in 2002 she and Annick Bureau compiled the anthology *Connexions: art, réseaux, média*. These two volumes assembled several dozen texts translated into French for the first time, and constitute a collection of critical reflections on digital technology and its uses that remain highly relevant to this day. *Connexions* also featured the first translation of Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*.

¹⁰ "Toujours peu de femmes connectées", *Les Pénélopes*, agence de presse féministe internationale. <https://web.archive.org/web/20010506052943/http://www.penelopes.org/pages/ntic/1newmed.htm>

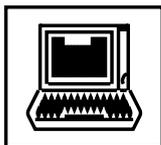
¹¹ Organised at the invitation of Mathilde Ferrer, then head of the Centre d'information et de documentation at the Beaux-Arts.

MEDIA TACTICS: "FREE SOFTWARE, FREE CONTENT AND IT'S NOT ABOUT FREE BEER"¹²

The term “media tactics” was coined in 1996 to describe temporary, localised interventions in the media that exploit their weaknesses using new technologies. It refers to a diverse array of artistic and activist practices that aim to hack, hijack or sabotage dominant political systems and organisations with irony and humour. The figure of the “hacker” is framed in relation to these practices as a creator rather than a destroyer, with “hacktivists” decrypting and thwarting the workings of power through their media actions.

These acts of digital civil disobedience were carried out over the course of a decade in which the internet, not yet dominated by GAFAM,¹³ was seen as a space of freedom and innovation enabling new forms of activism alongside anti-globalisation movements. This period saw the development of free, open-source software, self-coded websites, reflections on copyright and peer-to-peer sharing, all of which were driven by the principle that the tools used by internet users should belong to them.

Nathalie Magnan participated in many of the major meetings dedicated to these digital countercultures, including the Next Five Minutes conferences in Amsterdam from 1993 to 2003 and the Zelig conferences in Paris, which served as European digital counterculture gatherings between 2000 and 2002. She often shook up this milieu and its prevalent sexism by bringing to bear cyberfeminist questions on event programmes and by organising women-only workshops.



During these years, she became close to Jacques Servin, alias Andy Bichlbaum, the cofounder of Yes Men. This collective played up to and subverted the codes of ultra-liberalism by switching the voiceboxes of Barbies and G.I. Joe dolls, editing kissing, underwear-clad men into the SimCopter video game, and creating spoof websites for George W. Bush and the World Trade Organization.

This work around fakes resonated with Nathalie Magnan’s own interest in rumours, which she pursued in a programme she directed for Canal+ in 1996. *Il n’y a pas de fumée sans feu, et en plus c’est vrai!* [*There’s No Smoke Without Fire, and What’s More, It’s True!*] analysed the production of what we now refer to as fake news.

TEACHING: ASSEMBLING THE TOOLBOX

Nathalie Magnan began to teach early on in her career: her first classes, which she gave at UC Santa Cruz in the 1980s whilst still a graduate student, focused on “dominant culture/TV” and the relationships between video, television and mass media.

When she returned to France, she brought with her an approach to teaching shaped by the experimental programmes in which she had participated and by the academic context of the United States, which foregrounded interactivity, made space for students’ discussions and ideas, and promoted the use of a broad theoretical corpus.

Between 1991 and 1999, she taught a media analysis class at Université Paris 8, and subsequently took on a series of teaching roles at Paris 1 and Paris 3. However,

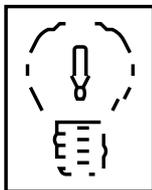
¹² The title of a text by Nathalie Magnan that appeared in *bcubico*, Edson Barrus and Yann Beauvais (eds.), *Texto de cinema*, 2002, p. 258.

¹³ The acronym GAFAM refers to the giants of the internet: Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft.

it was at French art schools that she would develop her truly innovative approach to teaching, combining issues of technology and gender.

She first became involved with the *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts de Paris*, where she organised meetings and workshops at the school's 'Base vidéo' ['Video Base'] and in the 'Salle d'actualités' ['Newsroom'] of the Centre d'information et de documentation that was then directed by Mathilde Ferrer; together, Magnan and Ferrer helped to introduce cultural studies¹⁴ into a school whose approach to teaching was still very traditional.

From 1998 to 2006, she de Dijon, and worked to bring through the Coordination des



taught at the *École nationale supérieure d'art* the internet into art schools, in particular *écoles d'art en réseau (CEDAR)*.

Between 2007 and 2012, she was invited by Paul Devautour to teach a class at the *École nationale supérieure d'art de Bourges* entitled "Réseaux" ["Networks"] on digital cultures and practices. She also transformed the school's approach to questions of gender by creating an ARC¹⁵ entitled "Genres" ["Genders"], through which she invited numerous international figures from queer studies and activism and forged links with Emmetrop, a local artistic non-profit structure that shared her punk and DIY ethos.

Whilst at Bourges, she supported and equipped students who were speaking out against sexual and sexist violence at the school, raised money to organise a joint trip to the desert in the United States with Catherine Lord's art students at the University of California Irvine, and co-ordinated an exchange with the art school of Luang Prabang in Laos. This dedication to travel and to the discovery of other cultural contexts echoes her own transatlantic experience and the importance that she attributed to intersections, the blending different intellectual approaches, and encounters with others.

Her former students remember a teacher who was very different from the rest of the faculty: they recall how Magnan encouraged them to "assemble their toolbox", paid as much attention to theory as to technique, generously shared with them and readily trusted them, and durably shaped many practices and trajectories.

SAILING FOR GEEKS: "YOU DON'T REBOOT A SAILING BOAT LIKE YOU REBOOT A COMPUTER"

Nathalie Magnan learned to sail during her childhood in Marseille, and it remained a lifelong passion, one which she would combine in the 2000s with her interest in technology and the internet through a hybrid project that was at once a voyage, a workshop, a laboratory, an autonomous activist space and a performance.

Sailing for Geeks (S4G) linked online and maritime navigation. It brought together an intentionally slow, unpredictable and uncomfortable mode of transport that demanded significant physical engagement and manual knowledge in a high-risk

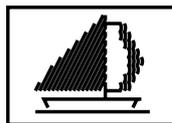
¹⁴ Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field that analyses cultural practices, productions and representations as they relate to power relations, social identities and historical contexts. After emerging in the Anglo-Saxon world in the 1960s and 1970s, they spread to Europe in the 1990s.

¹⁵ ARCs [Ateliers de recherche de creation/Research and Creation Workshops] are an interdisciplinary and participative teaching format that brings at least two teachers and their students together around a specific research topic.

The ARC Genres at ENSBA Bourges was led by Nathalie Magnan with Catherine Fraixe and Karen Hansen, and later with Giovanna Zapperi.

environment with the adaptable, trial-and-error approach of ‘geeks’ active in the world of computers and coding.

Two editions of **S4G** were held. The first alongside the International Symposium on second on the Strait of Gibraltar between



took place in Finland in 2004 Electronic Art (ISEA), and the Tarifa and Tangier as part of a

conference entitled “Fadaiat” that focused on freedom of knowledge and of movement. In both areas, navigation was challenging: the seabed around the Finnish archipelago is notoriously uneven, while the Strait of Gibraltar is traversed by powerful winds.

Nathalie Magnan described the initiative in the following terms: “*Sailing for Geeks* is not a travel agency nor an artists’ residency but a sailing crew [...] that navigates in a ‘free’ spirit towards a collective project, and whose productions are all, it goes without saying, covered by creative commons.”¹⁶

The first edition of **S4G** brought together open internet pioneer Valentin Lacambre, artist Nataen Harran and researcher Frauke Behrendt, and focused on communication technologies: using weather balloons, cameras and wifi, they carried out a series of experiments that blended art, geography and technology.

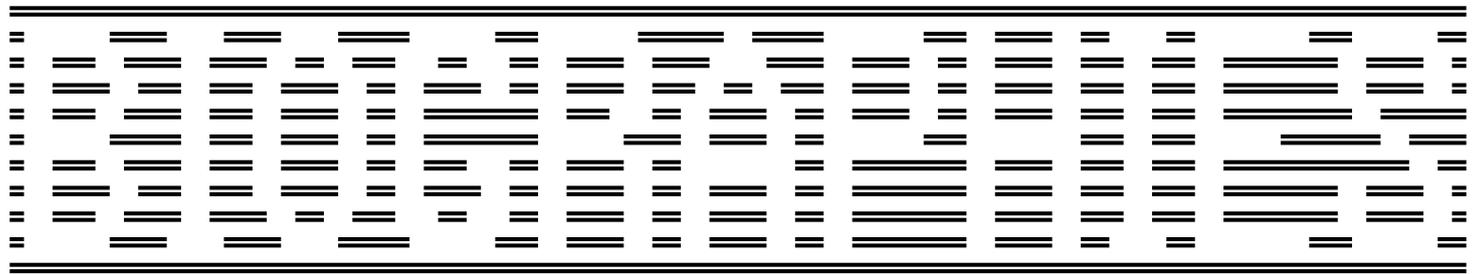
The second crew was made up of researcher Nicola Triscott, activist Jacques Servin, curator and artist Ewen Chardonnet, amongst others, and centred on questions of migration and borders, with the participants meeting activists in their destination of Tangier.

A third, women-only edition of **S4G** was planned, but did not take place after Nathalie Magnan was diagnosed with cancer in 2006.

¹⁶ Creative Commons (CC) licences are a legal tool created in 2002 that grants permission for a work (text, image, music, etc.) to be used and circulated in a variety of ways (copying, distribution, modification and adaptation), whilst remaining compliant with national copyright laws.

PUBLICATION

A publication dedicated to Nathalie Magnan, edited by Mathilde Belouali and Alice Dusapin and designed by Léna Araguas and Alaric Garnier, will be published by the Villa Arson in 2026.



MATHILDE BELOUALI is a curator, critic and art worker. In 2024, she was appointed as director of the Les Capucins Contemporary Art Centre in Embrun in the Alps. After moving to the Hautes-Alpes, she met Reine Prat, Nathalie Magnan's partner. Over the course of their discussions over coffee or on hikes through the mountains, the idea of dedicating an exhibition to Nathalie Magnan gradually took shape.

REINE PRAT is qualified as a literature professor and has held numerous positions within the Ministry of Culture. She has worked as an artistic advisor to the city of Marseille, and has directed the Arcanal non-profit association and the Institut français in Marrakech. She headed a mission on multilingualism in French Guiana before being appointed as the head of the Directrice régionale des affaires culturelles (DRAC) in Martinique. She is known for her ministerial reports on gender equality in the performing arts and for her book, *Exploser le plafond [Shattering the Ceiling]* (Rue de l'échiquier, 2023). She was Nathalie Magnan's life partner for 25 years and is now head of her estate.

CÉCILE BOUFFARD is an artist, and has for the last ten years pursued a sculptural practice deeply rooted in lesbian culture and its representations. Her solo exhibition projects foreground archetypal marginal figures and non-normative ways of inhabiting the world. Her group projects encompass drawing, t-shirt production, cooking, dance, and publishing.

CLARA PASTEAU is a graphic designer and web developer. Her practice combines coding with graphic, material and space design. She is a graduate of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (Amsterdam, 2018), and has worked as a freelancer between France and Belgium since 2020. She is part of the Belgian collective OSP (Open Source Publishing), whose design practice using freely available tools extends the heritage of hacktivism and tactical media.

SHU LEA CHEANG is a Taiwanese-American artist whose work undertakes a radical questioning of the links between digital technologies, the body, sexuality, social control and biopolitics. Through installations, films and networked art, she explores surveillance systems, gender norms and forms of queer resistance in contemporary technological societies. After the two became friends in cyberfeminist circles, Shu Lea Cheang was invited by Magnan to speak at the "Cyberfemmes" day at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 2000, and later at the École nationale supérieure d'art in Bourges.

CINDY COUTANT is an artist and researcher based in Geneva. Her work explores technology's material and libidinal entanglements: its flows and its regimes of penetration, extraction, silencing. In her films, installations and readings, technology reveals itself as drooling, erotic, cannibalistic, excremental, or collapsed. There, gremlins, snails, tardigrades, or soft robots are half-lives or *slimy bads*. They emerge from the underside of the techno-industrial imaginary to accelerate the break with civilisational patriotism.

CHLOÉ DESMOINEAUX is based in Marseille and works as a teacher, digital artist, and curator of experimental and deviant video games, with a focus on autonomous collective practices. In 2021, they opened FluidSpace, a volunteer-run, transfeminist, hacklab. Strongly influenced by the guidance and teaching of Nathalie Magnan ever since their studies at École nationale supérieure d'art de Bourges, Chloé co-organised the *TRANS//BORDER* tribute event at the Mucem in 2018, and has contributed to the promotion of Nathalie Magnan's archives while continuing to cultivate her memory through technofeminist rhizomes.

BOBBY BRIM is a [non-binary] transdisciplinary transmedia artist_performer_choreographer who composts their soul according to the cyborg entities they meet on their way. Pixels, decibels, waves, bodies & collectives are the concrete materials that allow them to probe the transgressive spaces of a post-post-conspiracy world. Alongside their choreographic'n'cross-media work, they develop collaborative-durational research projects and take part of the international transhackfeminist networks. They are currently developing their research in the "exerce" master's programme at the Agora Cité Internationale de la Danse.

Half-body/half-wave, **ADA LANERD** oscillates between performing arts and hacktivism. A radio artist and member of Π -node and systerserver, she has been active since 2013 in Hackstub, a hackerspace in Strasbourg. There, as a hacqueen, she shares a "popular hacking" praxis that brings together cyberfeminism and popular education in a broad invitation to take over technological systems out of everyone's daily experience: operations against oppressions.

GUERRILLA GIRLS are an anonymous feminist collective that was created in New York in 1985. The group is made up of artists and activists who wear gorilla masks. Through posters, performances and public actions that combine objective statistics with provocative humour, they denounce sexism, racism and discrimination in the artistic and cultural spheres.

DEEDEE HALLECK is an American media activist, founder of Paper Tiger Television and Professor Emerita in the Department of Communication at the University of California, San Diego. She is best known for her pioneering work to democratise media production and give a platform to marginalised people. She has been making films since the 1960s and has published several books on community media. Nathalie Magnan was one of her close friends, and the two co-created the film *The Gringo in Mañanaland* (1994).

BARBARA HAMMER (1939-2019) was an American filmmaker, artist, and feminist activist. A pioneer of experimental lesbian cinema, her oeuvre comprises more than 80 films that variously explore the body, desire, memory, and queer history through a combination of performance, documentary, and abstraction. Some of her works combining a deconstruction of media representations and a playful interest in technology anticipate those of Nathalie Magnan.

OLD BOYS NETWORK (OBN) is a cyberfeminist collective and network that was founded in Berlin in 1997 by artists and theorists including Cornelia Sollfrank, Vali Djordjevic and Ellen Nonnenmacher. They organised three international cyberfeminist conferences between 1997 and 2001, in which Nathalie Magnan took part. OBN explore the links between gender, technology and power and promote a critical, non-dogmatic cyberfeminism that foregrounds a multiplicity of points of view.

PAPER TIGER TELEVISION is an American collective that was founded in 1981 by a group of artists, activists and media theorists, including DeeDee Halleck. The collective produces programmes and performances that deconstruct power, popular culture and the ideology of images, favouring DIY approaches, critical pedagogy and collective forms of expression. Nathalie Magnan participated in the production of two films with Paper Tiger Television between 1985 and 1988 when she was living and working in Santa Cruz.

JULIA SCHER is an American artist whose work offers a critical examination of systems of surveillance, security and control in contemporary societies. Through immersive installations that draw on military and institutional aesthetics, she highlights mechanisms of power, fear and submission. She belongs to the same generation as Nathalie Magnan and, although they did not know each other, their practices focus on similar issues.

VNS MATRIX is an Australian cyberpunk feminist art collective founded in 1991 in Adelaide by Josephine Starrs, Julianne Pierce, Francesca da Rimini and Virginia Barratt. Best known for their *Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century*, they use digital art, video games, posters and performances to subvert technology and denounce sexism in computer culture. Their work has left a singular mark on the history of cyberfeminism and digital art. Nathalie Magnan was a friend of the collective, and helped to promote their work in France.

THE YES MEN are an activist and artist collective that was founded in the late 1990s by Andy Bichlbaum (an alias of Jacques Servin) and Mike Bonanno (an alias of Igor Vamos). By posing as representatives of large corporations or institutions, they address the abuses of neoliberal capitalism. Their at-times spectacular pranks have been widely relayed by the media and combine biting humour with performance and political criticism. Nathalie Magnan was friends with Jacques Servin, who participated in *Sailing for Geeks 2* in 2005.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mathilde Belouali, the exhibitions' curator, would like to thank all of the artists and authors involved, as well as the team at the Villa Arson art centre (Marie-Ann Yemsi, Alexia Nicolaïdis, Alexandre Capan, Elodie Mariani, Christelle Alin and Alice Dusapin); the exhibition installation team (Arnaud Biais, Mouna Bakouli, Margot Genevelle, Nicolas Geslin, Lou Girerd-Chambaz, Laurent Le Huan-Cua, Enzo Pagotto, Fanny de Roquefeuil and Camille Thuillier), the mediation team (Charlie Agard, Antoine Bonnaud, Félicie Calloch, Magdalena Galus, Igor Gmeline, Samvel Khetchikian, Ona Kostrizky, Lilou Morin and Fatima-Zahra Triki), the team at the Centre d'art contemporain Les Capucins, ville d'Embrun (Susie Richard, Szymon Kula and Carole Savoy), the team at Bétonsalon - centre d'art et de recherche, Paris (Émilie Renard, Vincent Enjalbert, Elena Lespes Muñoz and Manon Barbe), as well as Clélia Barbut, Magali Le Mens, Sophie Orlando, Vanina Géré and James Horton.

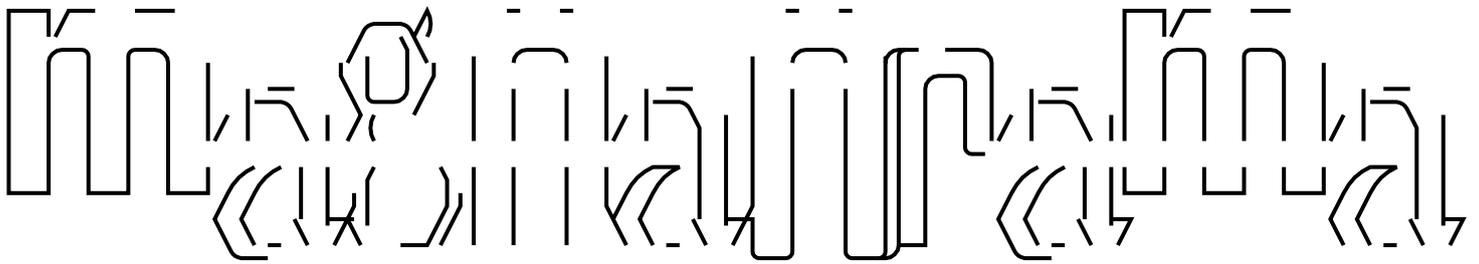
A particular thanks to Laurence Le Poupon, archivist at the Archives de la critique d'art and to Marie Tchernia-Blanchard, the archives' director: their work and their care throughout the project have made these exhibitions possible.

Thanks, too, go to the lenders and facilitators of the exhibition: the FRAC Lorraine and Héléna Griffault, the FRAC Normandie and Fanny Jacquinet, Les Rencontres de la photographie d'Arles and Aurélien Valette, the Bibliothèque de l'École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris and Séverine Forlani, Thierry Destriez and Heure exquise !, Julie Guillaumot and the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Joëlle Palmieri, Marina Galimberti, Patrick Ciercolès, Marie Lechner, Isabelle Massu, Paul-Emmanuel Odin, Peggy Pierrot, Marie-Hélène Dampérat and Françoise Vigna and the non-profit De la Mule au Web.

Our gratitude to all those who agreed to share their memories of Nathalie Magnan: Yann Beauvais, Frauke Behrendt, Baptiste Brévar, Annick Bureaud, Alain Burosse, Isabelle Carlier, Wendy Chapkis, Ewen Chardronnet, Paul Devautour, Ilazki de Portuondo, Guillaume Ettlinger, Mathilde Ferrer, Claire Fristot, Catherine Gonnard, DeeDee Halleck, Nataen Harran, Valentin Lacambre, Elisabeth Lebovici, Marie Lechner, Catherine Lord, Geert Lovinck, Jean-Marc Manach, Joëlle Matos, Joëlle Palmieri, Aris Papatheodorou, Peggy Pierrot, Zahia Rahmani, Philippe Rivière, Jacques Servin, Cornelia Sollfrank, Anne Souyris and Nicola Triscott.

A special thank you, finally, to Reine Prat, for her trust and her accompaniment of these research, exhibition and publication projects, and for all of the invaluable energy, love, respect and perseverance that she contributes in order to preserve Nathalie Magnan's memory.

In accordance with Nathalie Magnan's wish that each presentation of her work include a call for donations in support of maritime rescue, we invite visitors to discover the actions of SOS MEDITERRANEE, which were particularly close to her heart. www.sosmediterranee.fr



OPENING

Thursday 19 February 2026,
6 P.M. to 9 P.M.

EVENTS

Les Rencontres du centre d'art on
the occasion of the Villa Arson open day:
Friday 20 February 2026

6 — 6:30 P.M.: visit of Hito Steyerl's exhibition *Mechanical Kurds* by Marie-Ann Yemsi, curator and director of the Villa Arson art centre (galerie carrée)

6.30 P.M. — 8 P.M.: visit of the exhibition by Mathilde Belouali, curator, in conversation with Peggy Pierrot, intellectual worker and teacher at the École de recherche graphique in Brussels, Chloé Desmoineaux, artist, and Reine Prat, head of Nathalie Magnan's estate (galeries labyrinthiques).

Access the programme of events organised to accompany *Magnanrama: Portraits, réseaux et actualités de Nathalie Magnan* and *Mechanical Kurds* by Hito Steyerl at villa-arson.fr and by signing up to the newsletter at villa-arson.fr/newsletter/.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition from 20 February to 31 May 2026

Open daily, closed Tuesdays.
2 P.M. to 6 P.M.

Closed on 1 May.

Weekend visits

Every Saturday and Sunday at 3 P.M.

A student from Villa Arson and member of the mediation team offers their point of view on the current exhibition.

Free, no booking required.

Meet at the entrance to the art centre.

Point-of-view visits

Students at the Villa Arson mediation team offer guided, and even performed, visits of the exhibitions, drawing on their own interests and points of view to explore the artistic themes of the programme.

Free, no booking required. Programme available at villa-arson.fr

ACCESSIBILITY

The exhibition is made up of 14 galleries over two floors linked by stairs and a lift, with a total surface of 548m². The total duration of the videos is 7 hours 45 minutes. The spaces are accessible to people with reduced mobility, with the exception of one gallery located on a split level between the two floors.

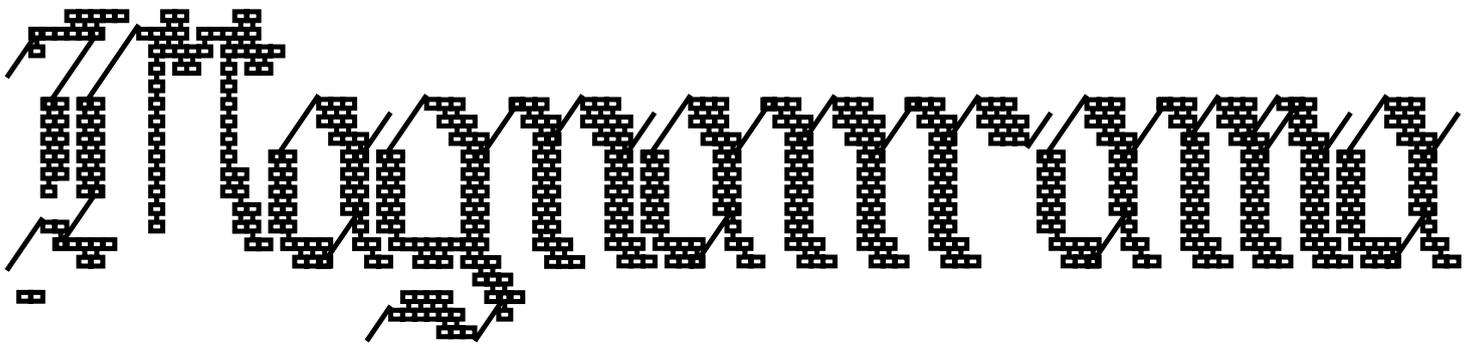
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For communication and partnerships:

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COLOPHON

Editorial and texts

Mathilde Belouali

Proofreading

**The team at the Villa Arson,
Susie Richard, Reine Prat**

Translation

James Horton

Printing

PerfectMix

Media partners

**Projets Média, Mousse Magazine,
Mouvement Magazine, La Strada,
Insert**

Graphic design

Clara Pasteau

Fonts

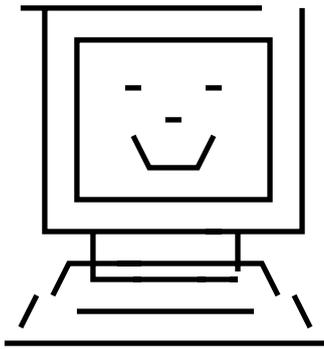
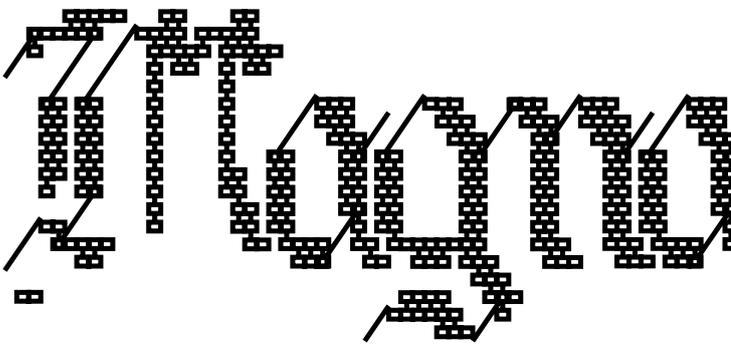
**Archivo black and PubliFluor (designed
during a project led by the Groupe
de recherche Crickx).**

Titles and pictograms

**The titles of *Magnanrama* have been
generated using Figlet fonts and
then transformed with the open source
tool *Cobbled Paths*, developed by
Doriane Timmermans.**

**The Ascii pictograms in the text are from
asciiart.eu modified using *Cobbled Paths*.**

The Villa Arson is a public institution of the Ministère de la Culture and affiliated with the Université Côte d'Azur. It is supported by the Ville de Nice, the Département des Alpes-Maritimes and the Région Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. The Villa Arson is a member of the networks École(s) du Sud, BOTOX(S), Plein Sud, DCA, ANdEA, ELIA Art Schools, BLA! and Côte d'Azur France.



ÉDITION

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