



Swimming Pool, 1999. Exhibition Leandro Erlich – The Ordinary, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan, 2014. Picture credit © Keizo Kioku, courtesy of the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan



PIERRE DELAVIE

B. 1956

ARTIST, LIVES IN PARIS, FRANCE

PIERREDELAVIE.COM



Turning landmark buildings into monumental optical illusions, or "urban lies", has been Pierre Delavie's artistic signature since he altered the façade of a typical Parisian Haussmann building on Avenue George V in Paris, near Place de l'Étoile, and made it look as if it were melting in the sun. The artist went on reshaping iconic edifices such as the Bourse et Chambre de Commerce on Marseille's main historical artery, La Canebière, in 2013. This time, his installation on the façade – located at the very beginning of the street, near the Old Harbour – created the illusion that the street was duplicated perpendicular to its normal axis, thus "destabilising the real", in the artist's own words.

Delavie's urban lie became the highlight of the city's year as European capital of culture. In 2014, on the occasion of a major retrospective exhibition dedicated to the first Roman Emperor, Augustus (63 BC – 14 AD), the artist transformed the neoclassical, ceremonial entrance to the Grand-Palais in Paris into a romantic ruin, thus stressing the ephemeral and fragile nature of human glory.

Arguably, his most impressive installation to date is *Intrados*, the wrapping of the Royal Chapel at the Palace of Versailles, which he covered with canvases showing the building inside out. The term "intrados" alludes to the inner curve of an arch, and these architectural elements are particularly spotlighted in this trompe-l'oeil work.





Nœud Mécanique + La Verrière (The Glass Roof), 2018. Leandro Erlich Exhibition *Sous Le Ciel* at Bon Marché Rive Gauche, Paris, France, 2018. Picture credit © Gabriel La Chapelle. Courtesy of Leandro Erlich Studio

HAN KYUNG WOO

B. 1979

VISUAL ARTIST, LIVES IN SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

KYUNGWOOHAN.WIXSITE.COM/KYUNGWOOHAN

Distorted objects and optical effects are at the core of Han Kyung Woo's installations, which question our sense of perception and play mind games with the viewers. Han Kyung Woo's work "deals with perceptions and illusions. Everything we see or know is not absolute", as the artist states, "I suggest various ways to perceive things with slightly different perspectives". In *Green House*, the artist constructed a room that seems half-flooded with water: distorted pieces of furniture are half immersed, as if they were floating. A closer look allows us to observe how the artist arranged the various elements to create this illusion: a darker hue of green in the lower part of the room gives the impression of water, "floating" objects are suspended on a wire. The simplicity of the installation is as striking as the optical trick it induces. In another installation, *Projected Specimen* (2014), the artist used stuffed animals, the silhouettes of which were projected onto illuminated screens in a way that made them look like hand shadow plays.

A multidisciplinary artist, Han Kyung Woo studied sculpture at the Seoul National University, then film, video, and new media at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago, before spending a semester as resident artist at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture at Madison, Maine. His oeuvre spans sculpture, photography, video, installations, and the redevelopment of public spaces. Han Kyung Woo teaches fine arts at the National University in Seoul.





TEODOR GEORGIEV

B. 1992

VISUAL DESIGNER, LIVES IN HELSINKI, FINLAND
TEOGEORGIEV.COM

MA student in visual narrative at the Aalto University of Helsinki, graphic designer and illustrator Teodor (Teo) Georgiev defines himself as a "night-time noodler and doodler". The young designer's goal is to explore "the means of illustration and storytelling and how they intersect with graphic design, cultural processes and social phenomena". His work encompasses illustration, murals, industrial and packaging design, branding, and typography.

In *Helvetica Warped* (2013), Georgiev takes the traditional Helvetica Neue font into a new, three-dimensional space, playing with shapes and the impressions of them, and colouring the resulting letters with vivid, yet soft, hues. To achieve the 3D effect, the graphic designer skilfully duplicated the letters: flat letters are painted in plain colours, and their juxtaposed, twisted equivalents are coloured in a nearly pointillist manner, which creates a slight illusion of motion. This combination of letters, however, does not reduce the perfect legibility of the typeface, for which Helvetica is known. The *Helvetica Warped* typeface has been used by graphic designers for creating logos and commercials.

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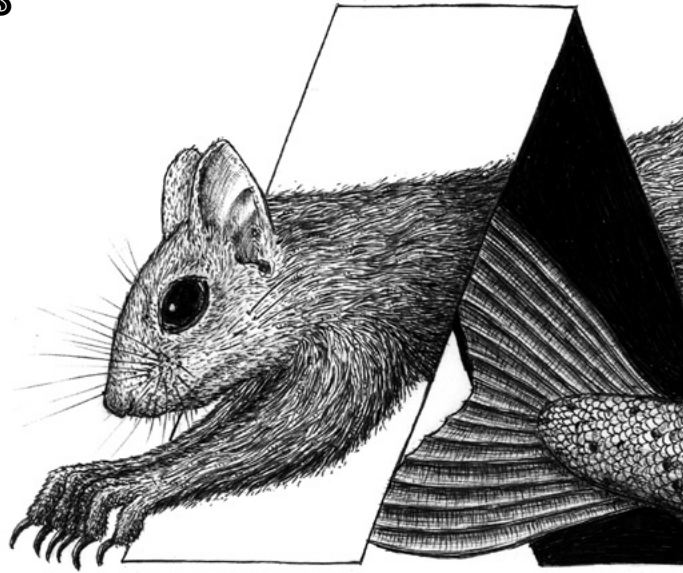
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THOMAS MEDICUS

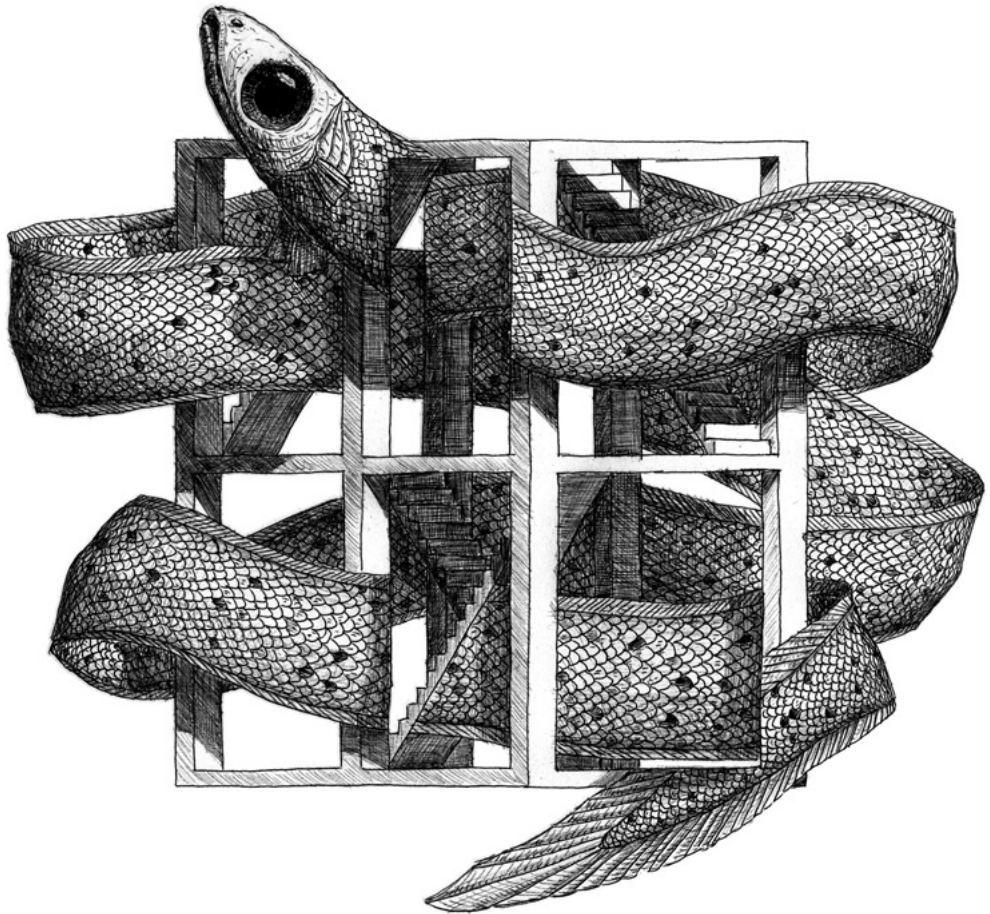
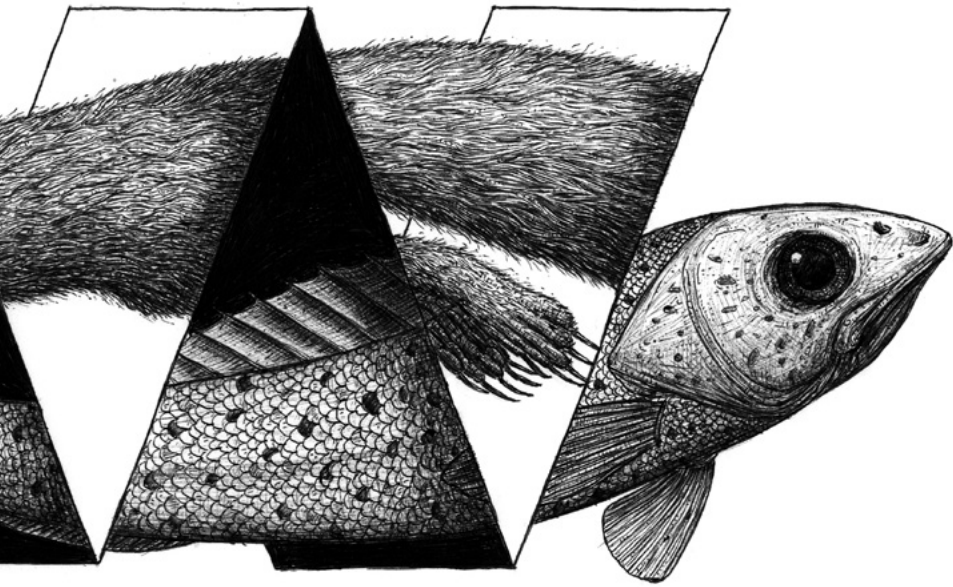
B. 1988

VISUAL ARTIST, LIVES IN
INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA
THOMASMEDICUS.AT



Drawings with three-dimensional effects are only one part of Thomas Medicus' multi-faceted oeuvre, which spans stained glass, installations, digital art and illustration. After studying social work, he joined the glass training college at Kramsach, Austria and became a master glazier. Some of Medicus' glass projects actually play on deception: the *Emergence Lab*, a cube made of 216 acrylic glass strips, shows a different anamorphic painting on each of its sides. Each image is visible from one point only, and the painting on the opposite side fills exactly the same surface.

In his *Holes* series, created in 2014–2015, the artist explores optical effects of void and matter, brightness and darkness, folded and unfolded, using impossible figures to create pieces that challenge our perception of space: not only do the squirrel and the fish escape the paper strip they are drawn on, but parts of their bodies also seem to be hidden by the folding of the strip. Is the tree growing through the holes of the paper sheet? Obviously not, but our eyes see it that way.



ABDALLAH MOHAMMED

B. 1996

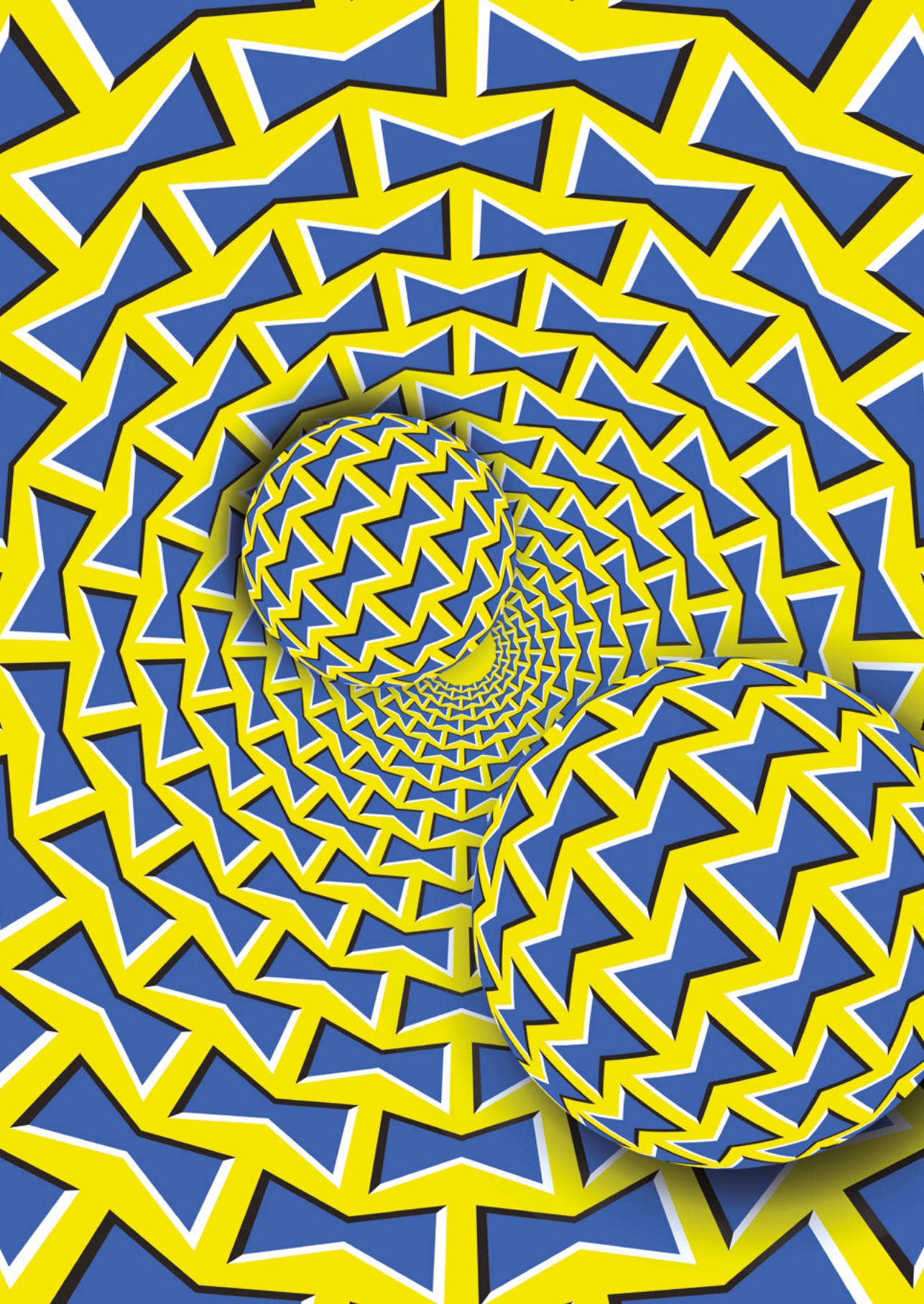
GRAPHIC DESIGNER, LIVES IN CAIRO, EGYPT

BEHANCE.NET/DARKSMILE196D5

Egyptian graphic artist, Abdallah Mohammed, (full name: Abdallah Mohammed Abdul-Halim Wahba Saafan) graduated from the Higher Institute of Applied Art of Cairo in graphic design. For his graduation project, Abdallah Mohammed worked on a series of motion illusion drawings that try to recreate the sense of spinning experienced during headaches. The six graphic artworks he created on this occasion illustrate the different feelings of pain and dizziness caused by migraines.

While this theme is common to all artworks, the colours and shapes used in each of them are different. Also, the motion effect is of variable intensity, just as headaches can fluctuate. The works were then used as promotional posters for Panadol®, a paracetamol medication.

Other graphic works by Abdallah Mohammed include an UNESCO-endorsed poster promoting tolerance *Difference does not mean disagreement*, with a red tomato surrounded by three green ones, various commercial ads for local brands and other institutions.



TIMOTHY BAILEY

B. 1986

PHOTOGRAPHER, LIVES IN LOS ANGELES,
CALIFORNIA, USA
TIMOTHYBAILEYPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

A commercial advertising photographer, Timothy Bailey has made himself famous with his humorous, hyper-realist, and slightly provocative portraits and ads in vivid colours. One of his most intriguing creations to date is a series of portraits experimenting with optical illusion: Bailey photographed numerous fascinating and distinctive faces against a beige, plain background in two modes – *en-face*, and in profile to eventually put them together and create one image. The result is a mind-blowing masterpiece of contemporary digital photography, which totally alters our perception.

The contour on one side of the portrait suggests a profile view, and on the opposite side, a frontal view. Wandering between both, the eyes are absolutely confused as it is difficult to tell which elements belong to each mode. This magical transition between two different perspectives of the human face, emphasized by a neutral background, results in disturbing yet fascinating portraits, as if the photographer wanted to reveal more of his models by showing their likenesses from different angles. Bailey's optical illusion portraits are very sharp and perfectly re-worked, which challenges our perception even more. The photographer plays here with the idea of a portrait as a genre, and turns the common into the curious.



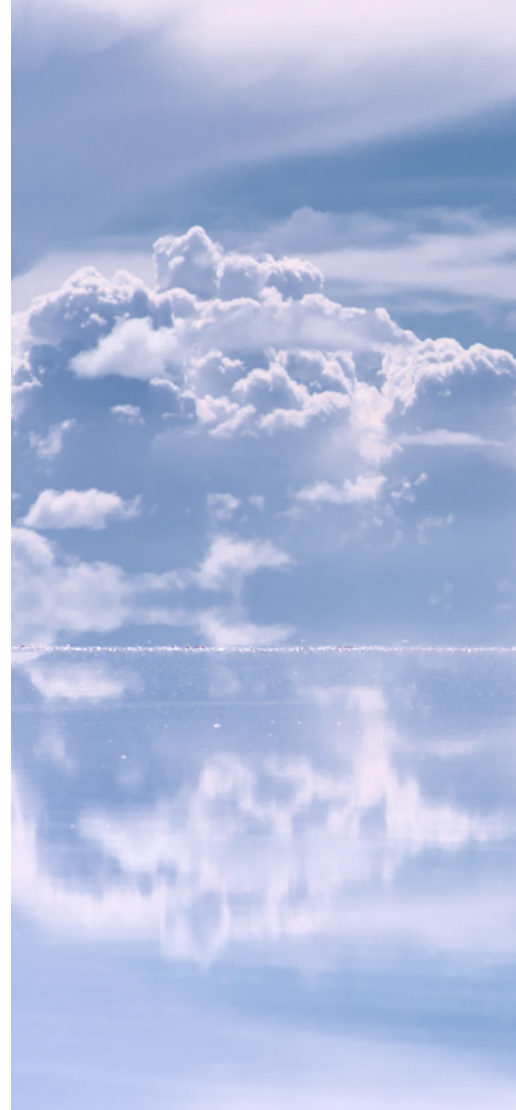
TAKAKI WATANABE

B. 1966

PHOTOGRAPHER, LIVES IN YAMANSHI, JAPAN
TAKAKIWATANABE.COM

Japanese photographer Takaki Watanabe has gained international recognition for his breath-taking pictures of natural landscapes. Whether he photographs Mount Fuji, dunes in the Sahara Desert, or an Arctic iceberg, Watanabe perfectly captures the power and beauty of nature. Some of his most stunning photographs were taken in Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia. The largest salt flat in the world offers an extraordinary experience to its visitors: a mountain sky filled with oceanic clouds that are mirrored on the salt surface, with a barely visible horizon line in-between making this place quite unreal. "The region has been dubbed 'heaven on earth' because of the way people like this appear to be walking in the clouds - just like heaven is portrayed", says the photographer.

Watanabe employs the illusion created by the intense reflection from the shallow surface of the salty water to achieve powerful effects that deceive our senses. In his mesmerizing photographs, people seem to be floating in the air surrounded by fluffy white clouds. One of the most iconic images features a car slitting the surface of the salt flat. Here the contrast between the assumed materiality of the car and its illusionary weightlessness is mind-challenging. These sophisticated, poetic visions play with our perception and boost imagination. Watanabe captures both the splendour of the Bolivian salt flats, and the idea of freedom, unlimited space, and lightness.





Cruising, 2017. 'A SUV driving on a salty lake in the rainy season. It seems to be enjoying cruising on the quiet water surface'. © Takaki Watanabe





Seahorse, 2013. © Gesine Marwedel. Photographed by Thomas van de Wall
opposite: Brain, 2013. © Gesine Marwedel. Photographed by Thomas van de Wall