

# ROSA MENKMAN

23.2.—17.3.  
2024

In a not-too-distant future, a media archaeologist has tasked herself with compiling an atlas dedicated to lost or unknown ways of seeing. During this mission she finds herself captivated by a Neon Rainbow Fairy Light, an object seemingly plucked from a child's bedroom. The archeologist proclaims the fairy light to be a quintessential artifact that encapsulates the entire history of the decline of nature's original "glitch"—the atmospheric rainbow.

Proper observation of rainbows has become rare due to a double process of pollution. On the one hand, climate change, environmental degradation, and light pollution have dulled atmospheric rainbows' brilliance, making their occurrence increasingly unusual and their sightings more precious. On the other hand, within the realms of image processing, digital pollution has corrupted and distorted the representation of rainbows even more: as generative artificial intelligence struggles to differentiate between symbolic representations—the rainbow-alike—and actual depictions of natural phenomena, images of authentic rainbows have become anomalous.

Punctuated by crafted translucent sigils and informed by practical and speculative dialogues with computer and environmental scientists at EPFL, *A Spectrum of Lost and Unnamed Colours* is a mesmerizing mixed-media installation that takes us on a journey while calling for a holistic categorization of various types of color loss.

Rosa Menkman is a Dutch artist and researcher. Her work focuses on noise artifacts that result from accidents in analogue and digital media, artifacts that can offer precious insights into the otherwise obscure alchemy of standardization and resolution-setting. Menkman's *Glitch Moment/um* (inc, 2011) is a little book on the exploitation and popularization of glitch artifacts that acts as a compendium to her research. A second book, *Beyond Resolution* (i.R.D., 2020), further develops and highlights

## ENTER THE HYPER- SCIENTIFIC

### A SPECTRUM OF LOST AND UNNAMED COLOURS

the politics of resolution-setting; it shows how the standardization of resolutions generally promotes efficiency, order, and functionality in our technologies but has the side effect of compromising and obfuscating alternative possibilities.

In 2019 Menkman was awarded the Collide, Arts at CERN Barcelona residency, which inspired her recent research into what makes things im/possible, including im/possible images. In this new line of research, she aims to find new ways to understand, use, and perceive through interaction with technologies.

- [beyondresolution.info](http://beyondresolution.info)
- [epfl.ch/schools/cdh/rosa-menkman-im-possible-rainbows-and-unnamed-colours/](http://epfl.ch/schools/cdh/rosa-menkman-im-possible-rainbows-and-unnamed-colours/)

Rosa Menkman, *A Spectrum of Lost and Unnamed Colours*, 2024  
Mixed-media installation: sigils, rainbow generator, and video  
Commissioned and produced in the framework of EPFL – CDH  
Artist in Residence Program 2023, Enter the Hyper-Scientific  
Partners: EPFL Center for Imaging, Edward Andò, CLIMACT Center  
for Climate Impact and Action UNIL & EPFL  
Credits: Rosa Menkman  
Sound: Debit  
With support from: Lotte Menkman, Herman Hermsen, and So Kanno  
Curator: Giulia Bini  
Graphic design and Identity: Lamm & Kirch

## ENTER THE HYPER-SCIENTIFIC

Initiated by the EPFL College of Humanities (CDH), amplified by EPFL Pavilions, and in partnership with the City of Lausanne, the EPFL – CDH Artist-in-Residence (AiR) Program Enter the Hyper-Scientific reflects the CDH mission of fostering transdisciplinary encounters and collaborations between artists and EPFL's scientific community. The program invites professional Swiss and international artists for three-month residencies to realize innovative and visionary projects at the intersection of art, science, and advanced technologies.

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