



# *They Dream in My Bones*

( Insempedy II )

IMMERSIVE INSTALLATION In VR 360 Stereoscopic  
by FAYE FORMISANO

Promotion André S.Labarthe

PRODUCTION LE FRESNOY, Studio National des Arts Contemporains et Audiovisuels

CO-PRODUCTION : Caza d'Oro (Ariège) International Center of Contemporary Art.

Production Manager : Estelle Bénazet

Grants : NEUFLIZE OBC.

DOX Leipzig  
Neuland  
2021

 Neuflize OBC  
ABN AMRO

 LE FRESNOY  
STUDIO NATIONAL DES ARTS CONTEMPORAINS

 CAZA  
D'ORO

OFFICIAL SELECTION 2022  
**sundance**  
film festival



*They Dream in My Bones* - Roderick Norman's Laboratory - Opening scene



*They Dream in My Bones* - Textile Installation VR360 stereoscopic :  
-3 light fabric painted by hand 4x4 m held to a circular rail, fabric Sculpture (body lying  
on the floor; spider, threads, 4 Drawings (Led Boxes)  
PANORAMA 23...By the Dream...curated by Olivier Kaepplin  
LE FRESNOY STUDIO NATIONAL, Tourcoing, France, 24.09 to 31.12.2021

# They Dream in My Bones

Insempnedy II.

## TEXTILE IMMERSIVE INSTALLATION

VR 360 stereoscopic  
Oculus Quest 2 (17)

They Dream in My Bones - Insempnedy II is a transfixing meditation and a stirring experiential proposition that explores what fabric might bind the physical and metaphysical, and how to extract dreams from an unknown skeleton. This fictional circumstance tells the story of Roderick Norman, a researcher in onirogenetics – the science he founded – and opens up the intersection of the physical and the dreamworld, of gender and biology, and of an individual body and a symbiotic microbiome.

A dreamy, minimalist scientific fable rendered in black and white, They Dream in My Bones incorporates the viscerality of textile dynamics with 3D drawings and images shot with a traditional camera. The resulting virtual reality film allows us to explore the metamorphosis of a skeleton at the frontier of gender and the human.

(Sundance presentation)

«Dreams.

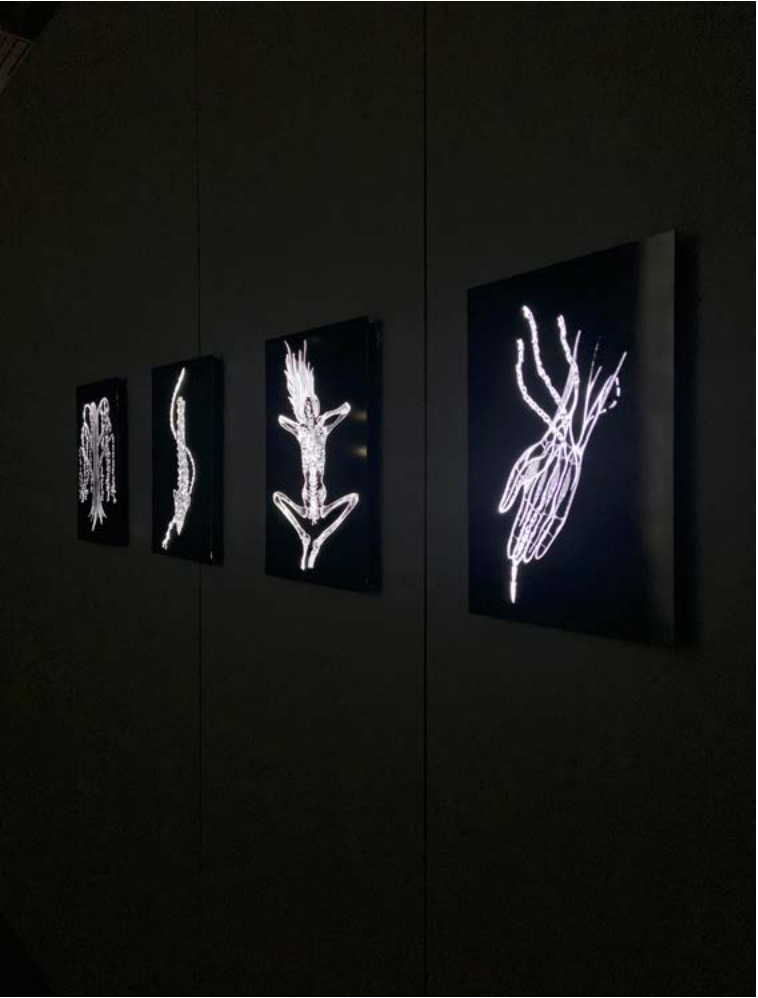
They dream in my bones.  
They dream in your bones.  
They dream in our bones.  
There are visions  
Engraved in me  
Fossilized  
Petrified  
They never stop dreaming.  
Death can't stop visions.

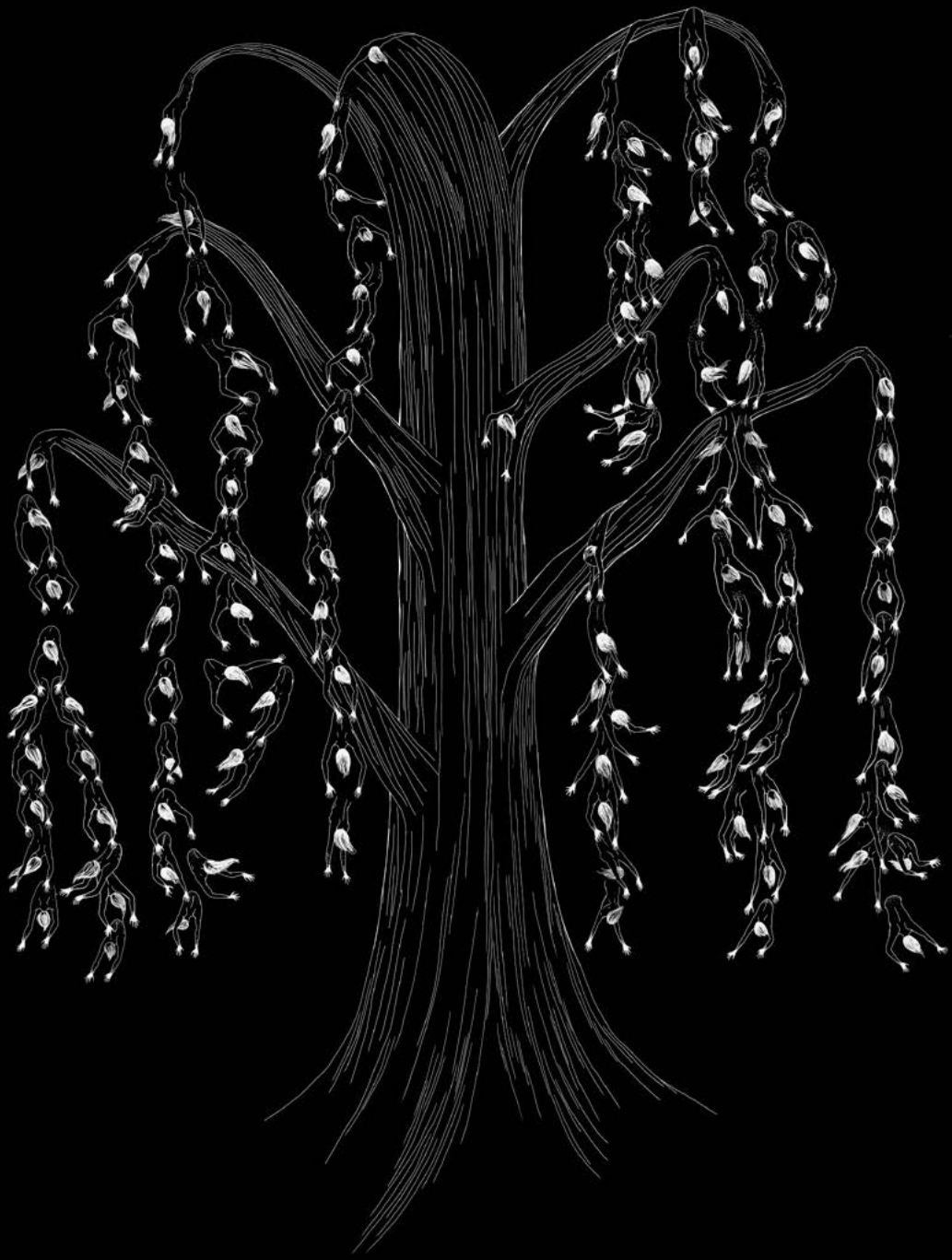
How many dreams are there in me ?  
How many genders are there in me ?  
I used to be a man and a woman, before being born.  
So who am I?  
I used to be a pikaia, a bacteria, so  
How many species are there in me ?»





*They Dream in My Bones*\_Installation immersive VR 360 Stéréoscopique, 16'35







Roderick Norman's voice over :

FR «J'ai toujours cru que nos os avaient bien plus à raconter qu'on ne peut l'imaginer. Les os renferment tous les secrets de notre espèce. Paleogeneticien de formation je travaille avec les membres du comité d'anthropologie évolutionnaire sur la formation et le stockage des rêves dans l'ADN. L'onirogénétique. »

ENG - *«I have always believed that our bones have more to tell us than we can imagine. Bones hold all the secrets of our species. As a trained paleogeneticist I work with the members of the evolutionary anthropology committee on the formation and storage of dreams in DNA. This is the Onirogenetics.»*

FR «Nous travaillons depuis des mois sur le séquençage ADN d'un squelette du type homosapiens sans obtenir la moindre information à son sujet. Le seul moyen possible d'identifier cet individu était alors d'accéder à ses dreamsdata.

ENG *«We have been working for months on the DNA sequencing of PO-47665, an unidentified skeleton. The only way to identify the skeleton was get an access to its dreams data. Our dreams make us, day after day. They have the power to transform us spiritually but also genetically. If epigenetics has taught us that our genome mutates throughout our existence according to our way of life, then our sleeping life, all the events dream at night act just as much as our actions during the day. What takes place in our dreams as the same biological influence than our awake experience ?*

FR « -Dans la fabrication des rêves, la moelle épinière joue un rôle essentiel. Elle est le véhicule qui permet à nos neurones de transmettre les informations oniriques à notre cerveau. Chaque image produite par l'imagination ensommeillée est enregistrée dans nos cellules avant d'être transmise aux neurones conduites par la moelle épinière. Chacune de ces images laisse derrière elle une image fantôme qui se matérialise sous la forme de micro-fossiles gravés dans le tissu osseux, où loge aussi notre ADN. »

ENG *«—The spinal cord plays an essential role in the production of dreams. It is the vehicle that allows our neurons to transmit dream information to our brain. Each image produced by the sleepy imagination is stored in our cells before being transmitted to the neurons driven by the spinal cord. Each of these images leaves behind a ghost image that materialises as micro-fossils etched into the bone tissue, where our DNA is also housed.»*

FR -Accéder aux rêves les plus anciens de notre vie ainsi qu'à ceux de nos morts est désormais possible en prélevant l'ADN-CMDR. En ayant accès au monde onirique des défunts nous pouvons faire revivre, si ce n'est leur corps, leur vision du monde. Quel meilleur visionnaire que celui qui se trouve au seuil de la mort et dont soudain la compréhension de la vie l'éclaire ? Continuons nous de rêver après la mort ? » (1'20)

ENG-*Accessing the oldest dreams of our lives as well as those of our dead is now possible by taking this bone substance. By having access to the dream world of the deceased we can revive, if not their body, their vision of the world. What better visionary than the one who finds himself on the threshold of death and whose understanding of life suddenly enlightens him? A question arises: do we continue to dream after death?*

FR-Pour lire les marqueurs oniriels de P053328-755, nous devons tout d'abord procéder à l'injection de la solution osseuse sur être vivant-dormant pour recevoir et lire les rêves. Une fois le sommeil activé, cette personne reçoit les dreams data et les rêve comme si c'étaient les siens. ce corps devait être le mien.»

ENG -*To read the dreams markers of the skeleton, we had to inject this bone residue into a living person to receive and read the dreams. Once the sleep is activated, this person receives the dream data and dreams normally. When the person wakes up, he or she has to write down as accurately as possible the dreams that were emitted by the skeleton. The more we write down our dreams, the more we remember them, and the more we dream. Having personally practised this regularly, obviously this body would be mine.»*





*They dream in my bones\_ Voice over*

*Skeleton/knight's voice over:*

« *Dreams.*

*They dream in my bones.*

*They dream in your bones.*

*They dream in our bones.*

*There are visions*

*Engraved in me*

*Fossilized*

*Petrified*

*They never stop dreaming. Death can't stop the vision.*

*How many dreams are there in me ?*

*How many genders are there in me ?*

*I used to be a man and a woman, before being born, so who i am ?*

*I used to be a pikaIa, a bacterium.*

*So, How many species are there in me ?*

*What the dead dream about ?*

*Could we see the future in the past ?*

*When do we stop dreaming ? Could we dream after death ?*

*Voix off de l'esprit arachnide :*

« *I am the guardian of the sleeping earth.*

*With dark eyes, I'm fumbling around. Under my needled- fingers, the world appears to me. Like a funambulist I pursue the lines of our tangled threads. If you feel lonely underneath, listen to the vibrations of my strings, here we are. With my silk veil I protect you and give you the power to weave your own thread to create a mirroring dress able to survive among all the living species. Our web is connected to the earth not to the sky. By licking the scars of our holey net with my glue, I repair and reinvent myself day after day. »*

« Je suis la gardienne de la terre endormie. Avec mes yeux sombres, je tâtonne. Grâce à mes doigts fins, le monde semble tondre. Comme un funambule, je poursuis les lignes de nos fils emmêlés. Invertébrés, me voici ! Si vous vous sentez seuls sous terre, écoutez les vibrations de mes cordes, nous sommes là. Avec mon voile je vous protège et vous donne le pouvoir de tisser votre propre soie pour créer une robe miroir capable de survivre parmi toutes les espèces vivantes. Notre toile est née de la terre pas du ciel. En léchant les cicatrices de notre filet troué jour après jour, je me réinvente et me répare moi-même.

-----

*Dear Norman, I hope my skeleton was for you a wonderful wandering place. And also yours.*

*Remember you this caterpillar, this flower, this oak tree. The world is a giant haunted house full of human and non-human entities. All living beings are the ghosts of the future.*

« *Dreams.*

*They dream in my bones.*

*They dream in your bones.*

*They dream in our bones.*

*There are visions*

*Engraved in me*

*Fossilized*

*Petrified*

*They never stop dreaming. Death can't stop visions.*

*How many dreams are there in me ?*

*How many genders are there in me ?*

*I used to be a man and a woman, before being born, so who i am ?*

*I used to be a pikaIa, a bacterium.*

*So, How many species are there in me ?*



## OLD AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

It's important to me to rediscover the experience of the cinema in a 360° universe. By mixing new and old technologies and working in virtual reality, this project posits a new form of cinematic editing. It creates a tunnel of virtual and living screen veils.

The dreams are mapped on 4:3, which reminds us of the beginning of cinema, and are draped in curtains in 16:9. The 3D camera brings movement despite, most of the of the filming happening in a fixed shot.

The transparency of the veils, creates games of superimposed images inspired by expressionist cinema, through which one enters into Roderick's and the skeleton's mind.

The use of black and white and handmade production techniques are mixed with 3D images, blending an avant garde approach with traditional shooting method. Thus it was important for me to link in the same project the different technological processes to create a fanstasmagorical experience.

+ This film resonates with my doctoral project entitled «Draping the picture: Uses and Functions of the veil as a manifestation of troubled Identities in fantasy Cinema.



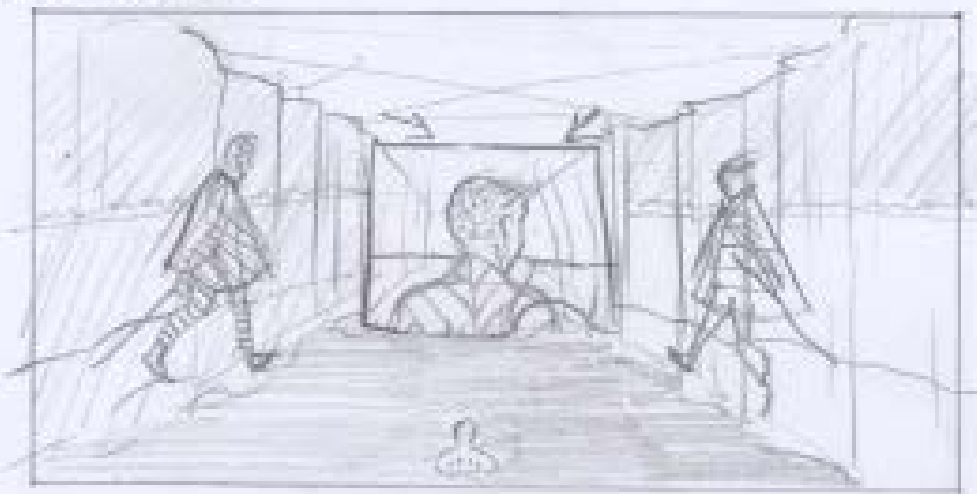






8 SEQ.4 TRAVERSÉE CHAMPS BORDÉS

6.A.+6.B.



6A 4:3. (ZIHVUN)

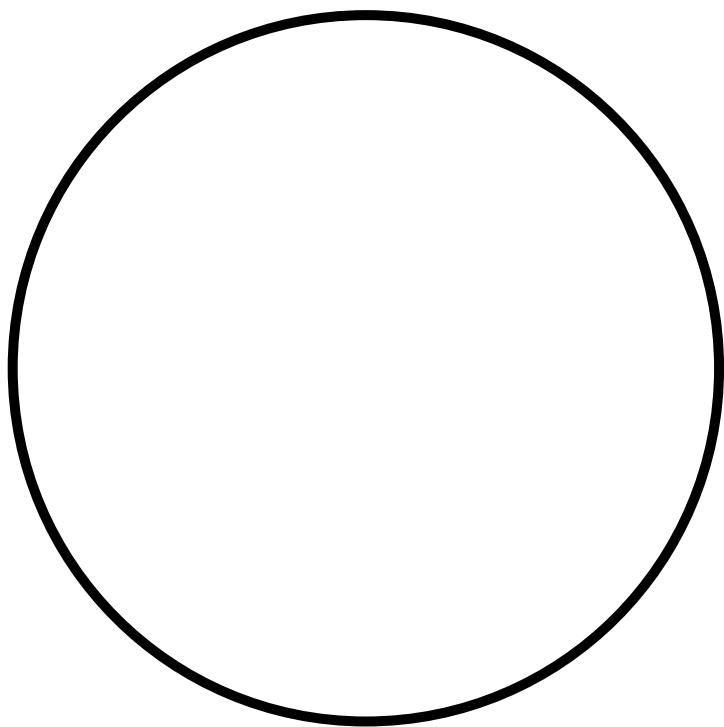


6B 16:9. (ZIHVUN)

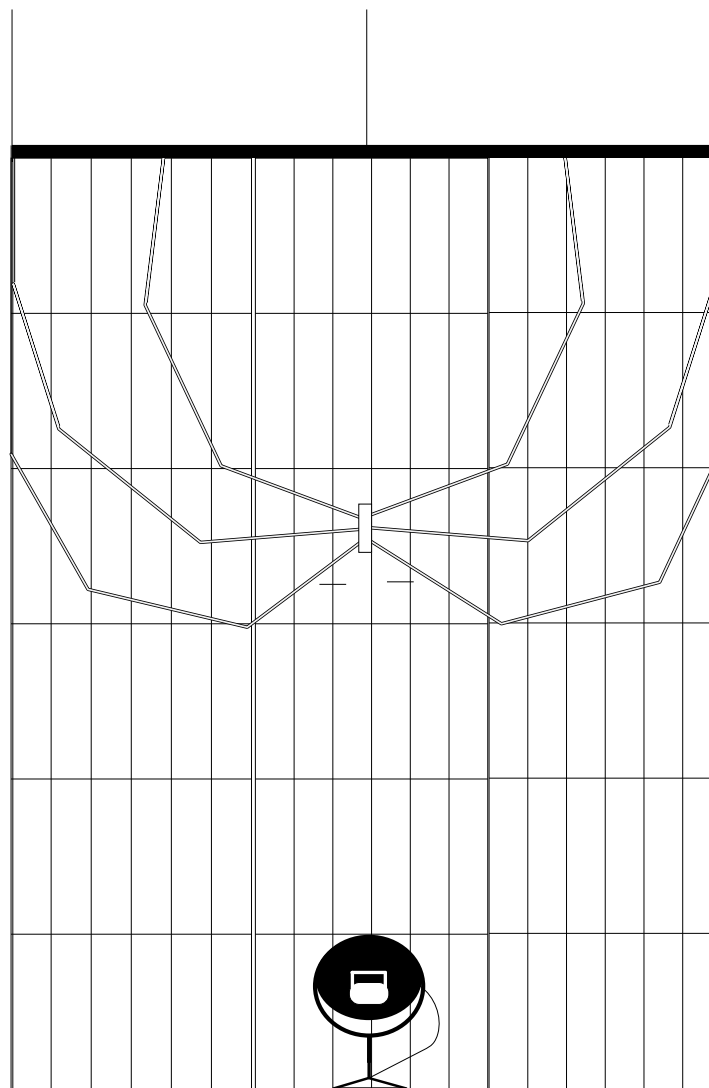
6.C



# FICHE TECHNIQUE



350 CM



350 CM

400 CM



- 1\_ Film VR, 16'35, 360 stéréoscopique son binaural, Casque Oculus Quest 2.  
(3840 x 3840, TOPBOTTOM) Ecouteurs Bionik Mantis , câble usb c-a 5 m
- 2\_ Installation textile composée de 3 panneaux de 4m x 4m (Voiles Tribera CS peints) suspendus à une cerce de 3.50 de diamètre, sculpture tissu au sol, installation filaire, fauteuil pivotant et casque OCULUS QUEST 2.
- 3\_4 dessins gravés sur plexiglas sérigraphié noir rétroéclairé LED, 28x40 cm

# Faye Formisano



## Biography

Artist-Filmmaker-Researcher,  
Born in Toulouse in 1984, lives and works in Paris.

With fabric as her language, dance and music as her influence, drawing as her core practice, and fantasy as her aesthetic, Faye Formisano makes films, VR installations, and performances. Highly inspired by literature and the scientific imagination, most of her stories are fables featuring ghostly figures in our contemporary world to explore the boundaries of gender and the human, all marked by the undone bond, the loss of reference points, and the effects of violence.

After graduating from a master in art and textile design in Paris, she worked as graphic textile designer freelance for fashion during ten years. She also collaborates with choreographers for national stages before directing two live shows (Beach Noise) in France and Spain (El Grito de la Montana) and several dance videos. In 2019, she starts her residency at the Fresnoy and directed her first short film « Insempnopedy I: The Dream of Victor F » with the support of Bela Tarr. In 2021, she creates an immersive textile installation composed of a 360° virtual reality film mixing science and gender : : *They Dream in My Bones - Insempnopedy II*. (Dok Leipzig 2021, Sundance New Frontier 2022). She co-signed « Heaven In Matter » an animated movie based on her drawings mixing 2D and 3D technics with the philosopher Emanuele Coccia.

She presents her work in international galleries and festivals (Etrange Festival 2019, Les Utopiales, FFS Munich, ). In 2020, Faye Formisano began a PHD student with the CEAC laboratory at the University of Lille and Le Fresnoy. The subject of her thesis, «Draping the picture : usages and functions of the veil as a manifestation of troubled identities in fantasy cinema», supervised by Laurent Guido, a film theorist, and co-supervised by the director Bertrand Mandico.



*Insempnopedy 1 : The Dream of Victor F.*, 23' (short film, sci-fi/experimental)  
produced by Le Fresnoy, 2019

# L'étoffe du rêve par Stéphanie Lemoine (The stuff of dreams) L'OEIL n°748, November 1st 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_ Le Fresnoy - Roderick Norman is a researcher in onirogenetics. The aim of this discipline, of which he is the inventor, is to enter a person's dreams via the analysis of their skeleton. With it, genetics intends to explore one of the last virgin lands of research by probing the most elusive and mysterious of human activities. The scientist is a fictional character: he was imagined by Faye Formisano. The artist, researcher and textile designer, has made him the protagonist of *They Dream in My Bones*, which she presents at Le Fresnoy in «... Par le rêve...», the 23rd part of the «Panorama» exhibition series (until 31 December 2021). Seeing this installation made of translucent veils, drawings and a black and white virtual reality (VR) film, one wonders if it didn't inspire Olivier Kaepelin, this year's guest curator, to create the theme of the exhibition. *They Dream in My Bones* is part of a series of films, *Insempnopedy*, which revolve around sleep, the first part of which already explored the relationship between science and dreams. An adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, The Dream of Victor F.* (2019) drew on the grammar of silent and surrealist cinema to capture the vertigo of the scientist who has just given life to his creature. The motif of the veil linked a chain of signifiers, from ghost to fantasy, from fabric to skin, from (psychological) projection to (cinematic) screen. *They Dream in My Bones* begins, in a way, where the first opus left off. The veil becomes a screen once again, in the double sense of the word: it underlines the opacity of the dream, gives rhythm to its labyrinthine progression, and frames

the 360° space that unfolds inside the VR headset. Obviously, Roderick Norman is reminiscent of Victor Frankenstein: he could be the contemporary version, and the choice of a film mixing computer-generated images and live action would underline his contemporaneity. However, through a series of discreet references, *They Dream in My Bones* summons another literary version of the double: Virginia Woolf's Orlando, a character of indeterminate gender, whom sleep metamorphoses into a man and a woman in turn. «How many dreams lie within me? How many genders lie within me?» the film's voice-over repeats. «I was a man and a woman before I was born. I was a pikaia, a bacterium. So how many species lie within me? According to the formula chosen by Olivier Kaepelin, it is thus «by dream», as one would say «by road or by train», that Faye Formisano approaches one of the most debated subjects of the moment: transidentity. In so doing, she is fully in line with the path identified by the exhibition curator, who sees dream activity as a way for artists to think about the world «against the tropisms of the time». Even if it is sometimes still too explicit, *They Dream in My Bones* is exemplary in this respect: from its material - fabric, which has become a veil and a screen - it creates a skein in which technologies and the imaginary are tied together. In this way, it could signal the emergence of a neo-romanticism which, like the literary movement born in the wake of the Enlightenment, would find in dreams, fantasy and the unconscious a counterpoint to the cold progress of science.

**This article was published in L'OEIL n°748, November 1st 2021.**





## Faye Formisano's Sundance-Playing VR Project 'They Dream in My Bones' Is Inspired by Virginia Woolf's 'Orlando', Martin Dale, Variety, 09.01.

France's burgeoning VR sector is exploring the hybrid territory between commercial applications, film festivals and contemporary art museums. French producers and authorities are increasingly interested in VR and extended reality solutions against a backdrop of multiple recent developments – such as Facebook's rebranding as Meta, Sony's next-generation VR headset for PlayStation 5, Disney's patents of "virtual-world simulator" tech, and an estimated \$3 billion of virtual reality headsets sold during COVID-19 lockdowns.

One of the key French hubs for VR production is Plaine Images, a Hauts-de-France innovation park, based in Lille, in Northern France, which houses production companies, research centers, and three schools, including Le Fresnoy – National Studio of Contemporary and Visual Arts. Le Fresnoy produced Faye Formisano's *They Dream in My Bones* – *Insempnedy II*, one of 10 VR projects screening at Sundance 2022, within the fest's New Frontier sidebar. French helmer Bertrand Mandico (*After Blue*) and philosopher Emanuele Coccia (author of the book *The Life of Plants: A Metaphysics of Mixture*) were the project's artistic supervisors.

The VR360 experience is about dream-geneticist Roderick Norman, who extracts dreams from skeletons. It is inspired by Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel *Orlando*, a fantastic historical biography spanning four centuries, that was adapted to the cinema by Sally Potter in 1992. Formisano, whose background includes textile design, dance and film directing, explains that she was attracted to this new project – her first VR experience – as a means of exploring her interest in immersive fantastic environments and creating a more physical viewing experience, compared to traditional cinema.

Variety spoke to Formisano.

What do you like about VR?

Although virtual reality tends to be associated with dematerialization, I think it offers a more physical and tactile experience. It's like a new set of clothes. The viewer puts on a physical headset and moves in a projected 360° space, creating a more immersive sensation of space and

the body's movement. We have to take care to avoid motion sickness. I think VR enables us to recover some of the visual techniques explored in silent cinema, focusing on gestures and expressions.

When did you first become interested in VR?

At the 2019 VR Arles festival where I saw *Gloomy Eyes* narrated by Colin Farrell, which later won Best VR Experience at Annecy. That was the first time I saw the quality and immersive effect you can achieve with a VR project. It starts with a lot of dark space and then we explore different fantasy levels, with a strong narrative and very good voiceover. I also really liked Jan Kounen's VR project *7 Lives*, about a woman who throws herself in front of a metro train. We navigate between the metro and five to six dream spaces, exploring her memories. I realized that VR is a powerful tool to explore the unconscious, which is an area that fascinates me. For example, another key inspiration is the 1950s French TV series *La Clé des songes*, developed by Chris Marker and Alain Resnais, in which viewers sent in descriptions of the dreams that were then recreated as image sequences.

What attracted you to Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*?

In my previous short film, *Insempnedy I – The Dream Of Victor F.*, I was inspired by the work of Mary Shelley. I think that *Frankenstein* and *Orlando* are creatures invented by these two female authors who were great visionaries, in terms of exploring scientific developments and the human/non-human frontier and how these would impact our gender identities. *Orlando* hasn't yet attained the mythic status of *Frankenstein*, but there have been important adaptations, including Sally Potter's film, Bob Wilson's 1993 stage version starring Isabelle Huppert, and the 2019 runway show by *Comme des Garçons*. I wanted to explore the dream trance of *Orlando* as she is visited by the three spirits – Chastity, Modesty and Purity – which are repressive forces who try to stop the transformation.

Did you film with 360° cameras?

No. We shot the images in an underground cave with a small Panasonic GH5 camera and then created the 360° dimension in post-production. The black-and-white 2D images are projected onto suspended textiles which we move through, as if advancing through a timeline. One of the key visual challenges was when we enter the main character's bones, entering a dream tunnel.

What is your next project?

I am now developing an interactive 3D project, using the Unreal Engine real-time 3D tool. The project is inspired by the event in 2018 in which the rain and the river turned red in the small town of Norilsk in Siberia, due to a spillage from Norilsk Nickel. I want to talk about the climate and establish a link with interior rain and the menstrual cycle. I think this subject still has great potential to be explored.

Are you optimistic about the future of VR?

VR is a hybrid experience that can create new connections. It's a wonderful tool but can also be dangerous since it has almost a hypnotic effect.



Le Fresnoy Studio national des arts contemporains  
&  
Caza d'Oro Centre international d'art contemporain  
present

DOX Leipzig  
Neuland  
2021

a VR 360 stereoscopic film

# They Dream in My Bones

## Insempnopy II

written and directed by  
**FAYE FORMISANO**

with

Lilou-Magali ROBERT • Narrated by Julian EGGERICKX et Kendra McLAUGHLIN  
Music by FOU DRE ! • Creative Technologist Ludovic DE OLIVEIRA  
Director of photography Victor ZEBO • Assistant Director Cindy COUTANT  
Sound Editor Jerome PETIT • Voice Synthesis Olivier PASQUET • VR Sound Mixer NEXT SOUND LAB  
Executive Producer Eric PRIGENT

### PROJECT CREDITS

Performer : Lilou-Magali Robert  
Direction, Scenario, VR concept, editing, costume design, drawings:  
Faye Formisano  
Creative technologist/3D Animation : Ludovic De Oliveira  
Director of Photography : Victor Zébo  
Voices over : Julian Eggerickx, Kendra McLaughlin  
Voice Synthesis : Olivier Pasquet (Ircam)  
Assistant Director : Cindy Coutant  
Production and Costume Design Assistant : Alice Goudon  
Music : Foudre ! (Nahal Recordings Label)  
Boom operator : Guillaume LaSalle (Ispra)  
Sound Editor : Jérôme Petit  
Foley : Christophe Burdet  
Sound Mix and Spatialization VR : Thomas  
Rouvillain (Next Sound Lab)  
Sound recordist : Blandine Tourneux  
Scenario consultant : Jean-Claude Taki  
Artistic support : Emanuele Coccia et Bertrand Mandico  
Head of Distribution : Natalia Trebik  
Digital art coordinator : Eric Prigent  
Production Manager : Estelle Bénazet  
Production : Fresnoy, studio national des arts  
contemporains  
Co-production : Caza d'Oro - International  
Contemporary Art Center  
This project was created with the support of Neuflyze OBC.

# *They Dream in My Bones*

( Insempedy II )

INSTALLATION-FICTION IMMERSIVE EN VR 360 stéréoscopique

Un projet de FAYE FORMISANO

Promotion André S.Labarthe

PRODUCTION LE FRESNOY -Studio National des Arts Contemporains et Audiovisuels  
et le Centre international d'Art Contemporain Caza d'Oro.

Chargée de Production du Fresnoy : Estelle Bénazet

Distribution : Natalia Trebik

Projet lauréat de la Bourse NEUFLIZE OBC.

\*\*\*

SUNDANCE PRESENTATION VIDEO

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATgYfarykUA&ab\\_channel=SundanceInstitute](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATgYfarykUA&ab_channel=SundanceInstitute)

\*\*\*

faye.formisano@gmail.com

[www.fayeformisano.com](http://www.fayeformisano.com)

tel : +33(0)6 63 31 85 99

