Béatrice Lartigue
UNFOLDING ARCHITECTURE

8 September–4 October 2025
artKIT

The exhibition *Unfolding Architecture* presents the projects Invisible Cities and Unfinished City, which form a subtle diptych and a dialog between the past and the potential city, in which architecture is both a carrier of the collective memory of historical architecture and a vision for the urban, speculatively generated form of the future of cities.

Béatrice Lartigue's work is situated in contemporary art practices anchored in interactive installations, generative art and critical ecological contexts. The visual and multimedia artist explores and works at the boundaries between science, technology, natural sciences and art. Her work focuses on the materialization of invisible phenomena, often using interactive generative technologies or generative artificial intelligence to create spaces with definable yet emergent rules. Her poetics are based on the transformation of ephemeral phenomena such as light, sound, air and time into tangible forms of experience that the visitor experiences as part of an imaginary, sensory and projective environment. Béatrice Lartigue constantly strives to create a dialog between media technologies and ecological awareness. She sees technology as a tool for reflection, which appears in her work as an interface that raises questions about the fragility of ecosystems, environmental issues and the possibilities of ethical coexistence between humans and nature. Her works function not only as visual objects, but also as spatio-temporal architectural capsules that confront the viewer with their own perception, physicality and a sense of spatial disorientation. They create an artistic space that becomes a medium for inner reflection. Through the iconography of an invisible and creative topography, the viewer moves through these spaces and can also symbolically lose his way in order to find his way and a new dimension of experience in the aesthetic and mental reflection of modernity.

Invisible Cities is inspired by the literary, philosophical and aesthetic world of the Italian writer and essayist Italo Calvino, which he created in his 1972 novel of the same name. In the literary story, Marco Polo tells Emperor Kublai Khan about cities that exist on the boundary between reality and fiction, as visions that are both architectural and metaphorical projections, either concrete or immaterial, perhaps real or fictional, but in any case constructed and experienced in our minds. This kind of poetics of cities is transformed into digital landscapes of memory. The work is based on a selection of images and photographs of the architecture of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, which are transformed into a 3D modeled point cloud and also using photogrammetry that takes on the expression of visual transparency. This refined model is combined with music in the After Effects program – and the music also becomes the element that determines the movement and animation of the architectural structure in real time. Notre Dame Cathedral does not appear as a complete architecture, but as a fragmented trace, transformed through a digital process into a visual projection that represents a metaphorical and imaginary architecture between the visible and the invisible, the virtual and the real. The 2019 fire has imprinted the cathedral in the collective memory as a vulnerable sign of cultural heritage. In the artist's interpretation, the icon is not shown in its monumentality, but as a digital transcription of memory, in which the loss becomes the starting point for a new visual presence in the digital world. It is thus architecture in its wounded, damaged state, an icon in metamorphosis, a monument to the past and a symbol of loss. The work

has a commemorative and melancholic character, as it shows the viewer the city as a memory of the past, where the monumental meets the fragile.

In Unfinished City, the artist uses artificial intelligence and algorithmic learning to create an urban landscape that defies stability and finality. The city is no longer a linear, completed architectural form, but a process that is constantly evolving, a city that functions like a living, unfinished organism that is constantly changing. The artist takes as her starting point the theoretical considerations of the Australian-American architect and professor William J. Mitchell, who had a futuristic vision of the city as an adaptable and self-regulating system. The artist also refers to the ideas of Metabolism, a Japanese movement from the late 1950s that advocated an understanding of the city as a dynamic system in which architecture can constantly grow and adapt like a living organism. The artist transfers this concept to a digital environment where she uses her own visual data set and algorithmic creations to create imaginary cityscapes that are in a constant process of emergence. She creates a certain number of images, which she transforms into imaginary visions of cities using machine learning. She then processes the generated images with image programs and uses algorithms to transform them into moving sequences of flowing visual landscapes. Cities are not finished architectures, but evolving and changing visions. Thus we see the unfinished city as a self-generating city that emerges, changes and transitions fluidly like a living organism, a city that is in constant process, open and adaptable, a constantly changing symbolic space that transcends purely material reality.

The Unfinished City embodies an organism in constant change, fragmenting, deconstructing and being reborn. In contrast, Invisible Cities shows the fragile imprints of monuments, where absence and memory reshape the contours of reality. The artist speaks her own language, which functions as an aesthetic field of tension between scientific research and poetic sublimation, between the precision of the algorithm and the sensual tangibility of perception. Both projects reveal themselves as a multi-layered structure, as a sequence of meanings in which traces of the past are transferred to the present, while the fleeting and ephemeral is transformed into a new form of presence and perception.

– Nina Šardi, curator

BIOGRAPHY

Website

Since 2008, **Béatrice Lartigue** has been working on projects at the intersection of art, science and technology. Her work explores the materialisation of invisible physical events, by immersing visitors in a space whose rules are partly written and partly in the making. A critical perspective on the utilisation of technology in a fragile environmental context guides her practice.
Her works were exhibited at the Barbican Centre (London), the Miraikan Museum (Tokyo), le Centre Pompidou (Paris), la Gaîté Lyrique (Paris), the DMuseum (Seoul), the Times Art Museum (Beijing), Photo Elysée (Lausanne). Béatrice Lartigue has won several international awards, including from the Sundance Film Festival (New Frontier Selection: Notes on Blindness), the Lumen Prize (Performance Award: Portée/), the GIFF Festival (Philémon). She teaches Media and Interaction Design at Gobelins (Paris) and regularly leads workshops in institutions such as ECAL (Lausanne), Beaux-Arts (Toulouse).

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artKIT, Glavni trg 14, Maribor
Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.