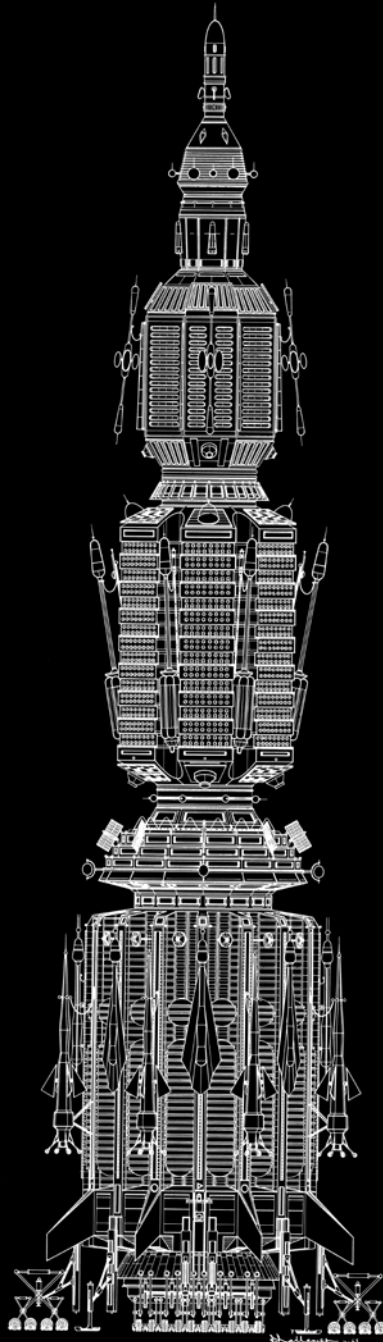


**FRANÇOIS
DALLEGRET
BEYOND THE
BUBBLE
2023**



François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023
Organized by Justin Beal and Kara Hamilton

January 12–May 27, 2023
Yale School of Architecture Gallery

Our opportunity to feature the work of François Dallegret here at the Yale School of Architecture is due entirely to Justin Beal and Kara Hamilton, who advocated for it and then took on the mantle of adapting it to our space. A retrospective of Dallegret's work was mounted in 2011 at the Architectural Association in London and then in 2012 at the ETH in Zurich. It then traveled to Paris and Ontario. That exhibition and catalog was curated and edited by Alessandra Ponte, Laurent Stalder, and Thomas Weaver. We are grateful for this major endeavor.

Working with François, Justin has reconceived the presentation and expanded it to include some additional works, most notably the Tubula—a sculpture/prototype vehicle assembled out of tubes and tori. Also on display is a plethora of ephemera that allows us to see deeper into the process of Dallegret's creative output. The resulting exhibition gives a U.S. audience the chance to discover and appreciate Dallegret's prolific and multi-faceted oeuvre. The collection here demonstrates a command performance of architectural creativity in an expanded field.

I would like to thank Dean Deborah Berke for her support in mounting this show. I also thank David Reinfurt and Nina Rappaport for creating this publication. Finally, I am grateful to Alison Walsh, Trueline Productions, and our crew for the assembly required.

Andrew Benner ('03), Director of Exhibitions

We welcome the arrival of François Dallegret's work to our gallery from Canada. Dallegret is a Montreal-based French artist-architect-industrial/product/furniture/graphic designer-draftsman-entrepreneur-bricoleur-provocateur. I love creative people who cannot be defined by simple labels—and the fact that these eleven words don't quite cover all of what he does is itself a perfect description of him and his life's work.

Although not well known, he is seemingly everywhere in avant-garde art and architecture circles of the 1960s and '70s. His associations range from Yves Klein and Andy Warhol to Peter Blake and Frederick Kiesler. Most notably, he is the other figure next to Reyner Banham in the bubble shelter depicted in the famous "A Home is not a House" collage.

Throughout this period, Dallegret seems especially attuned to the sociability of media and space, recognizing its potential for connection and critique. His modus operandi is performance. He enacts his multi-hyphenate roles all the while building a persona, one that is always seriously un-serious. In doing this, he anticipates our contemporary practices of self-construction. We invite you to meet this persona and its wide-ranging production in our gallery.

I am grateful to Justin Beal and Kara Hamilton for bringing François Dallegret's work to our attention and helping us to bring this remarkable exhibition to Yale. I would like to thank Andrew Benner and Alison Walsh and the whole gallery team for shaping it so successfully in our gallery.

Deborah Berke, Dean and J.M. Hoppin
Professor of Architecture



Packaging insert for KiiK, 1968, photograph by Lois Siegel

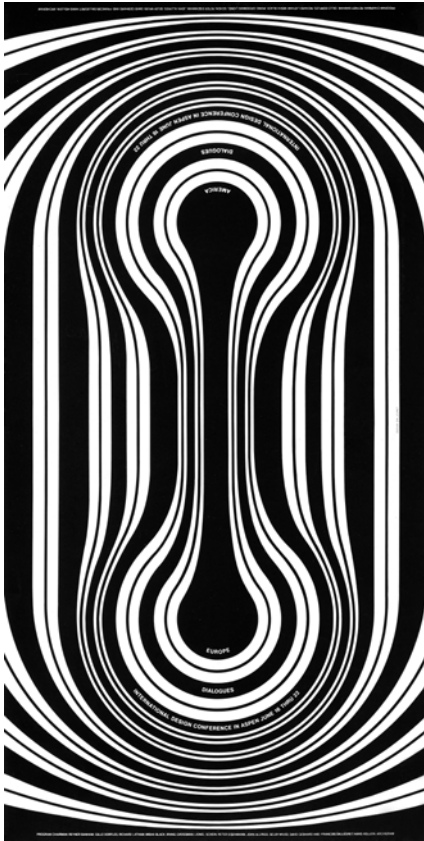
I always wanted a Kiik. Once, you could buy one in the MoMA gift shop, but now they are harder to come by. Finally, last winter I found one that was offered for a fair price by an antique dealer in Mexico City. Several weeks later I arrived at the small shop piled with furniture on the sunny side of Avenida Obregón in Colonia Roma. The Kiik did not have its box or its original certificate of authenticity, but it was otherwise in perfect condition, gleaming from inside a little brown apothecary bottle. Back on the street I took a photograph of it in the palm of my hand and posted it online. Minutes later, Kara Hamilton sent me a text explaining that she had known its designer, the artist and architect François Dallegret, when she was a girl growing up in Toronto. Her father, Canadian architect Peter Hamilton, was a friend of Dallegret's. Kara had been meaning to visit François in Montreal and she proposed that we reach out to him. What followed was the conversation that set this exhibition into motion.



The Kiik is a difficult object to explain. It is a barbell shaped piece of polished stainless steel. It is two inches long, three-quarters of an inch wide, and it weighs about eight ounces (a very satisfying heft for an object of its size). It could be a pacifier or a paperweight, a sex toy or a piece of jewelry. It was a fidget avant la lettre. Dallegret called it a "hand pill" for "breaking bad habits or starting good ones."¹

The Kiik began with Reyner Banham's invitation to Dallegret to participate in the 18th International Design Conference in Aspen in the summer of 1968. In response Dallegret designed a series of posters, envelopes, and folding paper hats with an attenuated barbell shape as their central motif. He then contracted the Montreal Screw Machine Company to

produce that shape as a three-dimensional object, designed and trademarked a logo, and developed a packaging system. In time, the Kiik became a prototype for a lamp, a design for a new U.S. dollar bill in Avant Garde magazine, a fabric pattern for Knoll, and a proposal for a public playground at the University of Chicago.



François Dallegret, Poster for the 18th International Design Conference in Aspen, 1968, 36" x 19"

This is how Dallegret works. An idea becomes first one thing, then another, then yet another—the cycle of production is not a closed loop, but a spiral that churns out variations and multiple forms in a variety of media until that

original idea becomes yet another familiar character in Dallegret's universe. In the 1979 film, La Toile d'Araignée (The Spider's Web) by Jacques Giraldeau for the National Film Board of Canada, Dallegret appears surrounded by a menagerie of his own creations — Kiik, Lit Croix, Super Leo, Atomix — props in a never-ending performance with Dallegret always at the center.



Several months later, on a beautiful June morning, Kara and I arrived at Dallegret's front door. François greeted us with a mischievous smile at the house he has shared with his wife Judith in Montreal's Westmount neighborhood for fifty years. Over the course of the afternoon, we saw nearly everything included in this exhibition—we tested chairs and thumbed through old magazines while François pulled prints and posters, pins and prototypes from small drawers and vitrines and from a basement filled with flat-files packed with thousands of drawings and photographs. When we left, he generously offered me the box my Mexican Kiik was missing.

As its date-stamped title implies, François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023 is comprised primarily of works assembled for the 2011 traveling exhibition GOD & CO: Beyond the Bubble curated by Thomas Weaver, Alessandra Ponte, and Laurent Stalder at the Architectural Association in London (God & Co is the name of a loose architectural collective organized by Dallegret in the 1960s). The show traveled to the ETH in Zurich, the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Kara and I are, in this sense, not so much curators of this show as custodians. We have organized (or re-organized) the existing works for the context of the Yale School of Architecture Gallery with

an emphasis on the publications and supplementary materials that are so essential to understanding Dallegret's emphatically non-hierarchical practice.

To this mix, we have added several pieces not shown in previous versions of the exhibition including the series of stainless steel and acrylic objects called Kubaltos, conceived in collaboration with Walter Netsch of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and the aluminum "automobile immobile" prototype known as the Tubula, which is being shown for the first time as it was originally installed in 1968, hanging from the ceiling of the Saidye Bronfman Center, in Montreal.



François Dallegret, Kubaltos, 1968, acrylic and stainless steel, installation view at Moos Gallery, Toronto, photograph by Robert Tittle



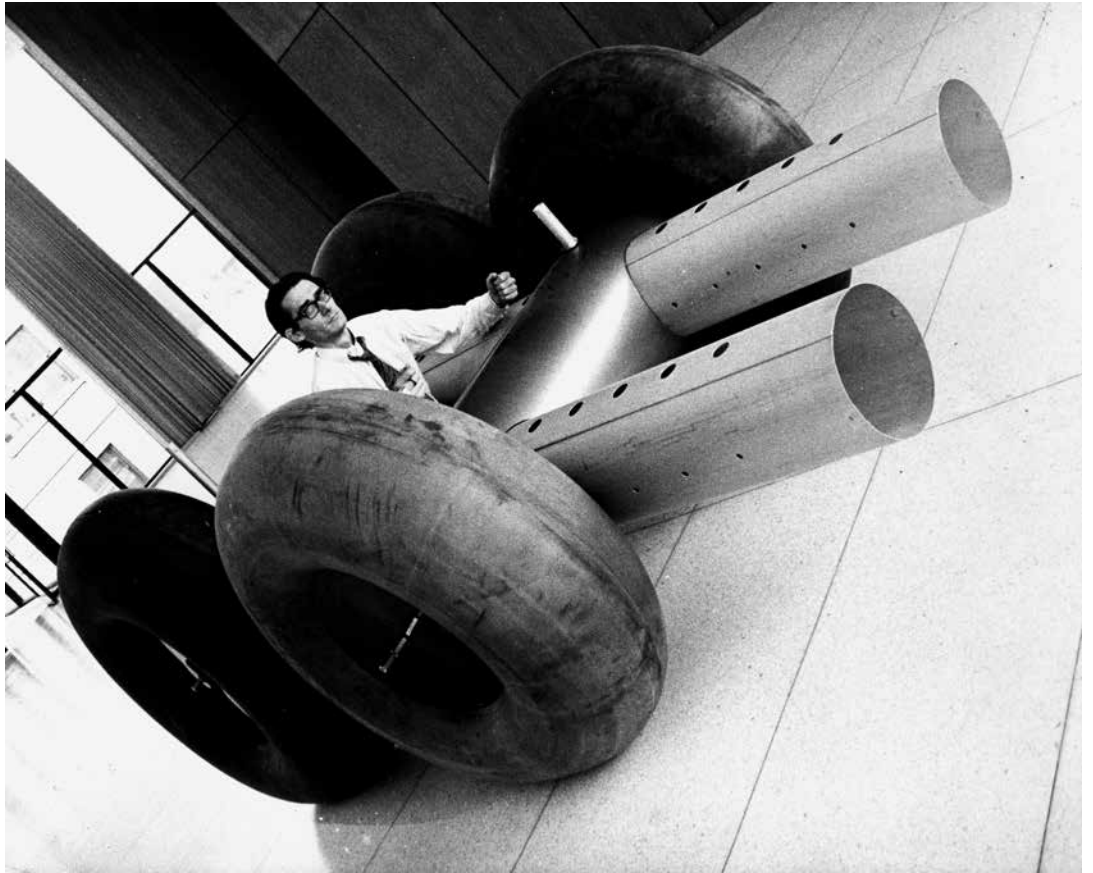
In November, I drove up to help François do a final inventory of this show before its shipment

to Yale. When I arrived, Judith had made me a quiche and a pot of coffee. After lunch and a bit of catching up, François and I put on boots and went out into the back yard to check on the Tubula, which had just received a new set of inner tubes and a light dusting of snow.



Installation view of Tubula, Saidye Bronfman Center, Montreal, 1968, photograph by Richard Nickel

We spent a long time talking that afternoon as I worked on pinning down dates and details of the upwards of two hundred objects and images that comprise this exhibition. Dallegret is known for having a slippery relationship to language and he seems to relish answering straightforward questions with enigmatic answers. In his company, you learn quickly that the harder you press for facts, the more willingly he employs misdirection and while his cunning presents certain curatorial challenges, it also provides a valuable insight into his practice—there is never one right answer to any question his work might pose.



François Dallegret with Tubula, 1967, anodized aluminum, rubber, acrylic and hardware, photograph by Dallegret



François Dallegret in Le Drug, Montreal, 1965, photograph by Marc Lullier

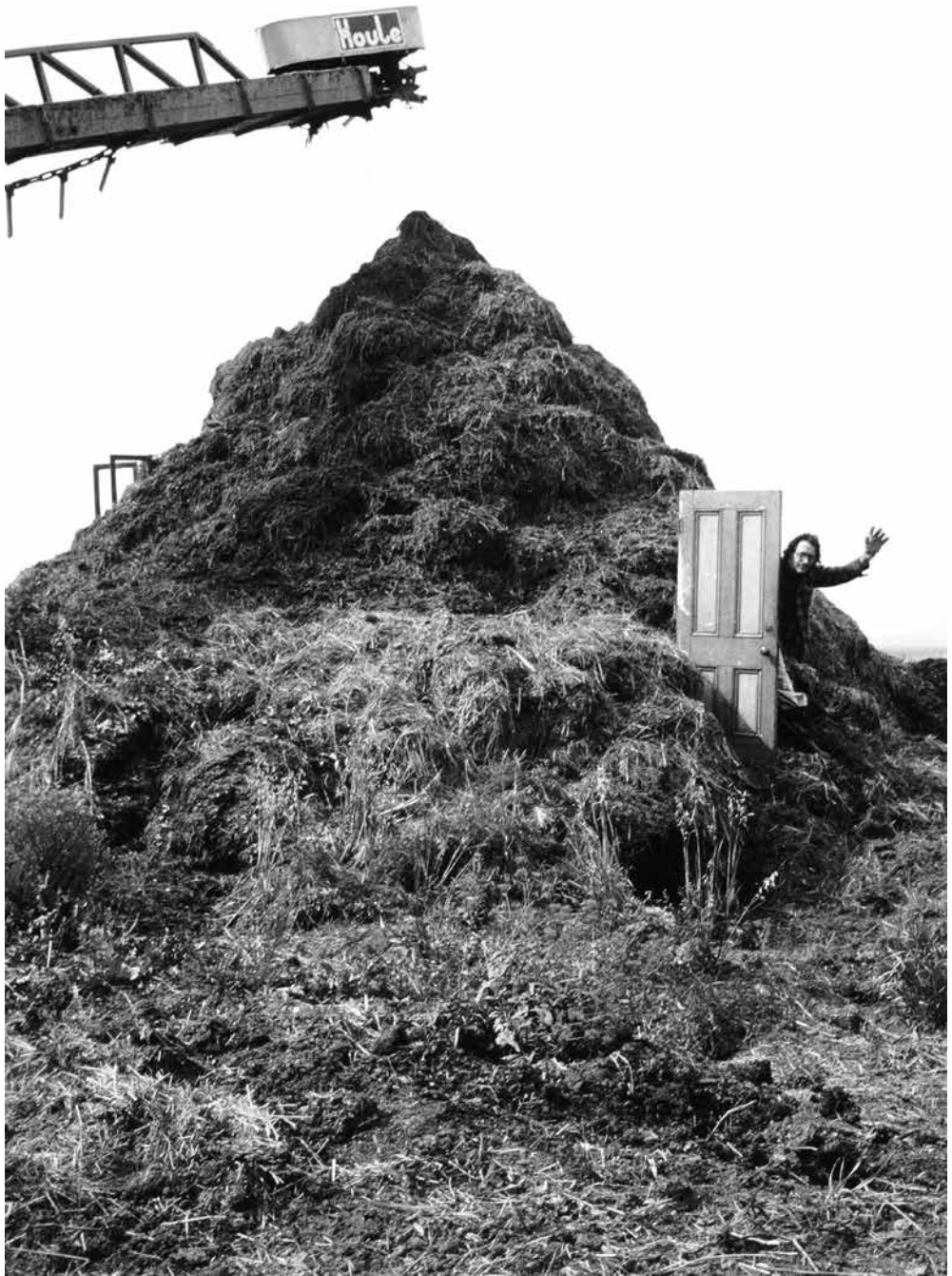




François Dallegret, Kiik, photograph by Shunk-Kender, 1968



François Dallegret, Tas de Fumier, 1982, photograph, 8" x 10"



François Dallegret, Tas de Fumier, 1982, photograph, 63 ¼" x 43 ¼"

Dallegret was born in Morocco in 1937 and received his architectural training at the École de Beaux-Arts. He began his career in Paris with a pair of shows at the legendary Iris Clert gallery that situated his meticulous pen and ink drawings, like Space City Astronef 732 and Litteraturomatic, in a context that included Clert artists Jean Tinguely and Yves Klein (both of whom seem to have made an indelible imprint on Dallegret's idea of the artist as showman). Despite this early success, Dallegret was restless. "Paris and ultimately France," he later recounted to Alessandra Ponte, "just seemed like places to leave."² Dallegret arrived in New York on the SS France in 1963 and took up residence in The Hotel Chelsea. Soon after, he received the commission that would launch his international reputation when Art in America editor Jean Lipman invited him to collaborate with Reyner Banham on the publication of his seminal essay "A Home Is Not a House." It was a brilliant pairing and Dallegret perfectly captured the mechanical systems — the "baroque ensemble of domestic gadgets" — that Banham imagined consuming American architecture from within.³



Le Drug, Montreal, 1965, photograph by Marc Lullier

After less than a year in New York, Dallegret made a second career-defining decision. Lured by the prospect of new design opportunities in the lead up to the Montreal World's Fair — Expo 1967 — Dallegret left for Canada. Reflecting on the move, Dallegret told Time magazine, "New York may be where the action is, but in Montreal you can be a pioneer."⁴ And that is exactly what he did. For the next five years in Montreal, Dallegret produced a prodigious amount of work, establishing himself as a central figure in Canada's architectural avant-garde of the 1960s and '70s.



Le Drug button, Montreal, 1965

Dallegret's first built work was Le Drug, a pharmacy-cum-discotheque in downtown Montreal commissioned by the eccentric pharmacist William Sofin. At street level it was a glimmering geometric pharmacy with an exhibition space — Gallery Labo — where Dallegret showed works by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Paul Thek, and Arman. Downstairs, Le Drug was a clinically white, sensuously sculpted underground nightclub with stalactite-like forms sprayed with cement and white epoxy. As with the Kiik, Dallegret produced a variety of merchandise with his sleek, black and white Le Drug logo — matchbooks, buttons, paper bags and coffee cups — which allowed Le Drug to live on well after its two-year run.

It is tempting to contextualize Dallegret's work in relationship to that of his European contemporaries — Archigram, Cedric Price, Superstudio, Bruno Munari, GRAV (Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel), Hans Hollein, Haus-Rucker-Co, and others — all of whom he was often working in parallel to (if not in advance of), but Dallegret's practice rarely feels derivative or referential. While he collaborated often, Dallegret never wanted to be part of a scene, preferring instead to shift as freely between milieux as he did between media. His tendency to appear at key cultural moments, as Thomas Weaver has put it, like an "architectural Zelig, essential to the art and architectural circles of figures like Yves Klein, Salvador Dalí, Frederick Kiesler, Andy Warhol and Peter Blake," makes Dallegret's work even more difficult to categorize.⁵



Artist at home, 4825 Sainte-Catherine West, Montreal, 1966, photograph by Shunk-Kender

one constant — the photograph of Dallegret himself. It was through these "self-portraits" — many of which were in fact captured by a handful of frequent collaborators, including Jeremy Taylor and the duo Harry Shunk and János Kender (famous for the iconic photograph of Yves Klein leaping into the void in 1960) — that Dallegret carefully constructed his own image. François posing with Super Leo at Iris Clert Gallery (Daniel Frasnay, 1962); François in the bathtub surrounded by wet socks, pin-up girls, and a paper bag from Le Drug (Shunk-Kender, 1966); François posing naked with a discus for the Montreal Olympic Games (Gabor Szilasi, 1976).



Studio shot for "Art Fiction," 1966, photograph by John Max

Taken together, these photographs — often funny, never boring, simultaneously self-deprecating and self-aggrandizing — may well comprise Dallegret's most enduring body of work.

In 1982, Dallegret began Tas de Fumier, a series of photographs of a looming mound of manure near his farm in Québec's Eastern Townships. In each image Dallegret attempts

Despite the various forms that the work has taken over his sixty-year career, there has been

to domesticate the mountain of shit and straw with the addition of a single object — a column, an antenna, an umbrella, a Canadian flag. The image that opens this exhibition is the only color photograph from the Tas de Fumier series. It is a work Dallegret has described variously as a “manure palace” and “a post-modern alternative housing for the average habitant,” a “Villa Ironique” and an “improved Cabane ô Canada,” and at its center, François himself emerges, knee-deep in manure, from an old wooden panel door with the same warmth and élan with which he greeted us when we arrived at his own front door in Montreal.

Justin Beal, 2022



¹ From original Kiik instruction manual, 1968

² “François Dallegret in Conversation with Alessandra Ponte,” in AA Files 58, 2009, pp. 28–41

³ “A Home is Not A House,” Art in America, April, 1965, pp. 70–79

⁴ Geoffrey James, “The Arts: Designer Extraordinary,” Time, October 11, 1968

⁵ Thomas Weaver, preface to God & Co: François Dallegret Beyond the Bubble, (Architectural Association: Exhibition Catalogues), January 1, 2012



Special thanks to François Dallegret and my co-organizer, Kara Hamilton. Thank you also to Thomas Weaver, Alessandra Ponte, Laurent Stalder, Andrew Benner, Alison Walsh, David Reinfurt, Nina Rappaport, AJ Artemel, Judith Dallegret, Deborah Berke, and the late François Perrin.

Exhibition Checklist

All works by
François Dallegret unless
otherwise noted

Super Auto, 1957, pencil
on paper

Astrological Automobiles,
1962, twelve ink drawings
on acetate; Dallegret with
Super Leo at Iris Clert Gallery,
1962, photograph by Daniel
Frasnay; iris.time unlimited,
no. 1 magazine, October 6,
1962; Astrological Auto-
mobiles Calendar, Keuffel &
Esser Company, 1975

Dallegret's Pelikan Graphos

Chambre de Bonne on the
Boulevard St Germain, Paris,
1962, photograph by
André Morain and Gratteur
d'Humanoïde, 1962,
photograph

Anticipations Pyramide, for
Pétrole Progrès magazine,
1962; detail

Cliclacrocotartomatic,
1963, ink on vellum, for the
Encyclopédie des Farces et
Attrapes de François Caradec
(Jean-Jacques Pauvert editor);
detail; studio photograph

Litteraturomatic (Electronic
Literature Machine), 1963,
and Relationpublicomatic,
1963, ink on acetate

l'iNtro/coNvers/oMatic,
1963; ink on vellum,
profile view; frontal view;
copy of Bizarre, 1964,
text by Pierre Saddy

Space City 732 Astronef,
1963, ink on vellum; photo-
graph of Dallegret at work

Fusée courte (Short Flare),
1963, ink on vellum; iris.time
unlimited, no. 5 magazine,
April 1, 1963

Postcard from Salvador Dalí,
1964, and note from
Frederick Kiesler, 1965

Super Sport cutout on Park
Avenue, 1964; photograph of
Peter Blake with Super Sport
cutout, Van Ingen Gallery,
New York, 1964; Super Sport
on the cover of Industrial
Design, January–February,
1968

Uncredited photographs of
Dallegret with Patricia van
Ingen, New York, 1964 and
with Dorothy Herzka's cat at
The Hotel Chelsea, 1964

"A Home is Not a House" for
Art in America (with Reyner
Banham), 1965, six ink
drawings on acetate; two ink
drawings on vellum; photo-
graphs by Marc Lullier; copy
of Art in America, April, 1965

Le Drug, Montreal, 1965,
architectural plans; sketches;
poster, shopping bags, pins,
matchbooks, etc.; photo-
graphs by Marc Lullier and
Bruno Massenet; Galerie
Labo letterhead and artist list;
copies of Architecture Forum,

April, 1965; Domus 438, May, 1966; Architecture Canada, February, 1967; and Other Scenes, July, 1968

"Art Fiction" for Art in America, 1966, eight ink drawings; studio photographs by John Max and Jeremy Taylor; copy of Art in America, March–April, 1966

The New Penelope Cafe, Montreal 1966–1977, photographs by Jeremy Taylor

Atomix, 1966, acrylic and stainless-steel beads; with leaflet and Abstratomix photographs

Le Machine, Waddell Gallery, New York, 1966, press release; photographs by Robert Otter; copy of artscanada, June, 1968

Artist at home 4825 Sainte-Catherine West, 1966, photographs by Shunk-Kender

Tetine and Training for Space Talk, 1966, photographs by Jeremy Taylor

Photographs of Fleurs des Vents, Milk Kiosk, Spirale Éolienne and La Ronde Entrance Plaza for Expo 67, Montreal, 1967

Palais Metro Suitcase #2 (with Joseph Baker), 1967; framed collage, 1967

Positive Cloud for Exposed Trip, from "The Future: Desertomania" in Art in America, July–August, 1967, photograph by Jeremy Taylor; acrylic model

"Super Party" poster, 1967

Tubula prototype, 1967, anodized aluminum, rubber, acrylic and hardware; photographs by Shunk-Kender

Wild Space Shooter, The Wild Oats Inc, 1967; photographs by Marc Lullier; Kilowatt Scott (Gerald Potterton) and Beta Particle (Pamela Andras) in 2020 West, photographs by Jeremy Taylor, 1967; brochure

Chaise Ressort (Spring Chair), 1967/2008, folded aluminum; photographs by Shunk-Kender; copy of Vie Des Arts magazine #68, Autumn, 1972

Kiik, 1968, stainless steel object with packaging; photographs by Shunk-Kender, 1969

Poster from 18th International Design Conference, Aspen Colorado, 1968; print invitation and envelope

U.S. Dollar Bill, silk screen print for Avant-Garde Magazine #3, May, 1968

Ted's Cosmic Opera Suit, 1968, lithograph; studio photographs

Kubaltos, 1968, acrylic and stainless steel; installation view, Gallery Moos, Toronto, 1968, photograph by Robert Title

"Arrogance of Art," artscanada, August, 1968 and "François Dallegret: A Catalog," (with Peter Blake), artscanada, February–March, 1972

Cover of Art Direction magazine, September, 1969

"Soap Dieu et Cie," found object, 1969; Québécoise cigarette package and tobacco box, 1970; God & Co Texaco credit card

Selection of printed matter from God & Co

Lines, fabric sample, Knoll, 1971

Kiss Me Quick, Flickr Book for Alecto Editions, 1972

Art Breaker, 1972, gold and platinum-plated steel object; two plastic prototypes

Reyner Banham Visits GOD & Co., 1973, WideLux photograph

Certificate of Excellence for
God & Co, Franco Maria
Ricci, 1974

“Homme, de la Matière
au Matériau” for Canadian
Architect, 1975

Courbe Française (French
Curve), 1976, stainless steel;
photographs by Karen
Coshof; stamp

Arthlete 76, 1976, photo-
graph by Gabor Szilasi;
Discoboles mini poster
Montreal Museum of Fine
Arts, 1976; “The Billionik
Man,” for artscanada, 1976

Beta furniture system for
Olympic Games, 1976;
photograph of Dallegret in
Olympic Park, 1976

La Machine à Fumer with
Richard Bouchoux, 1976;
digital video, 2011

photographs of Lit Croix
(Cross Bed), 1977; and
Atomiseur, 1977

Logo for the Canadian Center
for Architecture, Montreal,
1980

Tas de Fumier (Manure Pile),
1982, photographs

Villa Ironique (Ironic Villa),
1983, ink on vellum; pencil
sketch

Râpe à Fromage (Cheese
Grater), 1983, photograph;
model

Liberté Bras Cassé (Liberty
Broken Arm), for Expo 86,
Vancouver, 1986; photo-
graph by Lois Siegel, 1984

ASS IS Chair, 2007–17,
anodized aluminum

Yale School of Architecture
© 2023
ISBN 979-8-9867174-3-2

Exhibition Design
and Organization:
Justin Beal with Kara Hamilton

Exhibition Team:
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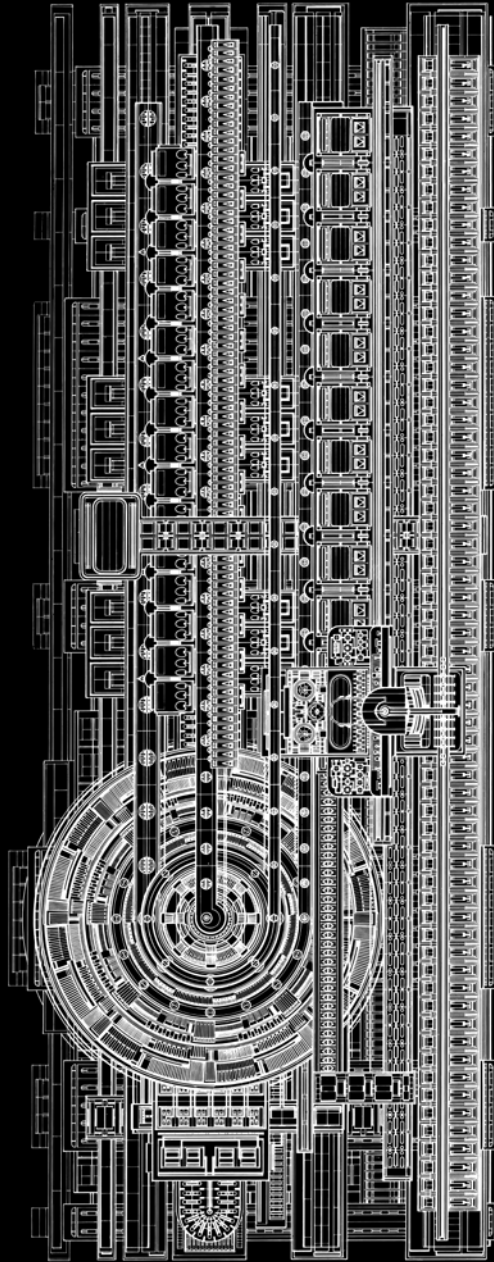
Publications Director:
Nina Rappaport

This is number 73 in
a series of publications.

The Yale School of
Architecture's exhibition
program is supported in part
by the Robert A.M. Stern Fund,
the Pickard Chilton Dean's
Resource Fund, the Nitkin
Family Dean's Discretionary
Fund in Architecture, the Fred
Koetter Exhibitions Fund, the
Kibel Foundation Fund, and
the James Wilder Green
Dean's Resource Fund.

Inside front cover: François Dallegret,
Space City Astronef 732, 1963, ink on
vellum, 43 ¼" x 16 ¾"

Inside back cover: François Dallegret,
Litteraturomatic, 1963, ink on vellum,
19" x 37 ½"



Architectural drawing showing a complex floor plan of a building, likely a school or institutional structure, featuring a large central circular auditorium or theater area, multiple wings of rooms, and a detailed layout of corridors and structural elements.

François Dallegret: Beyond the Bubble 2023
is based on GOD & CO: Beyond the Bubble
curated by Thomas Weaver, Alessandra
Ponte, and Laurent Stalder at the Architectural
Association, London (2011).



Reorganized, ammended, and adjusted
for the Yale School of Architecture Gallery
by Justin Beal and Kara Hamilton