

VolMeur exhibition

BREAKING THE MOULD

8 November 2018 - 7 December 2018
12, Grand-Rue, 1204 Genève

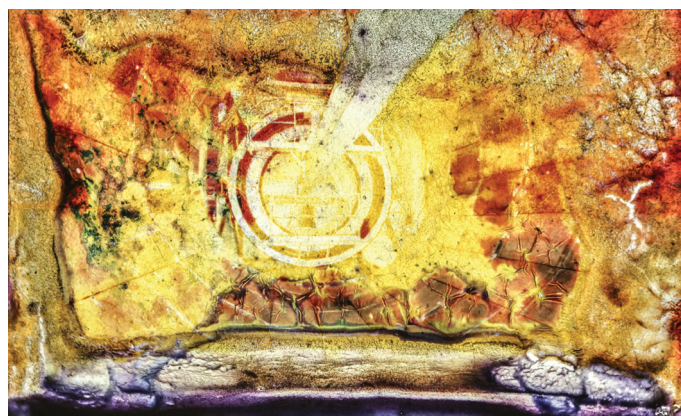
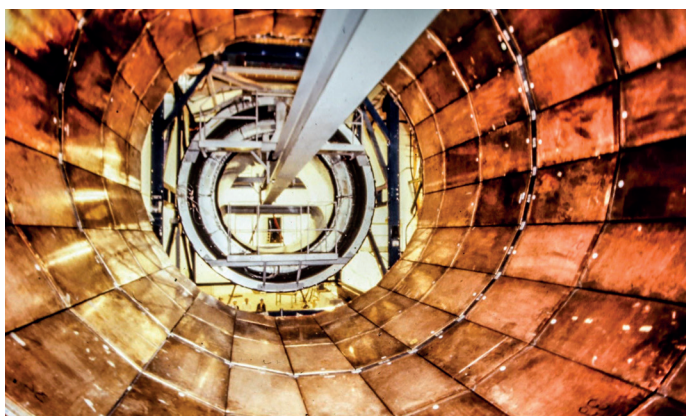
Press pack

FROM SCIENCE TO ART

CERN is one of the largest and most prestigious scientific laboratories in the world. Its vocation is fundamental physics, the discovery of the constituent parts and laws of the universe. It uses accelerators and detectors to probe the fundamental particles, the ultimate constituents of matter. By studying what happens when these particles collide, physicists can gain a deeper understanding of the laws of nature.

Founded in 1954, CERN is located on both sides of the Franco-Swiss border near Geneva. It was one of the first organisations on a European scale and now has 22 Member States. The digitisation of its important audio-visual and photographic heritage began in 2016.

The drawers where the abandoned slides were found



The work of time

The first CERN exhibition



Alongside around 450 000 perfectly preserved photographic snapshots, a few hundred slides illustrating the remarkable construction of the electron-positron collider (LEP) had been forgotten. Poorly preserved, they had been deteriorating for thirty years before being found as part of CERN's Digital Memory project.

After they were cleaned and scanned, these "disintegrated slides" turned out to be incredible artistic images. They are now the VolMeur collection, which is being exhibited outside CERN for the first time, in the old town of Geneva.

"TIME-BASED" ART

Microorganisms have proliferated by slowly feeding on the protein gelatin covering the plasticized surface of the films (collagen). On some images, traces of the original photography remained visible while on a majority of them the shapes and colors were altered in a chaotic, spectacular, artistic way. A biological remix.



A limited edition of 30 copies of each image is being offered for sale to the public. This CERN Art Collection is printed on Chromaluxe® aluminium plate, using the Subligravure® process. A special press at 6 bar allows the materials to be brought to a temperature of 200°C to sublimate the inks in the metal. Guaranteed for 200 years.

The eye

*Double page in the New Scientist
24 Mars 2018*

APERTURE



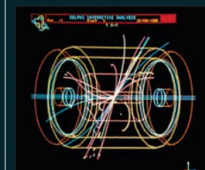
Breaking the mould

AT THE Large Hadron Collider near Geneva, Switzerland, physicists are used to looking for signs of particle decay in the detectors. But as they were digitising archival photos of particle collisions, Matteo Volpi and Jean-Yves LeMeur came across a different kind of decay: mould.

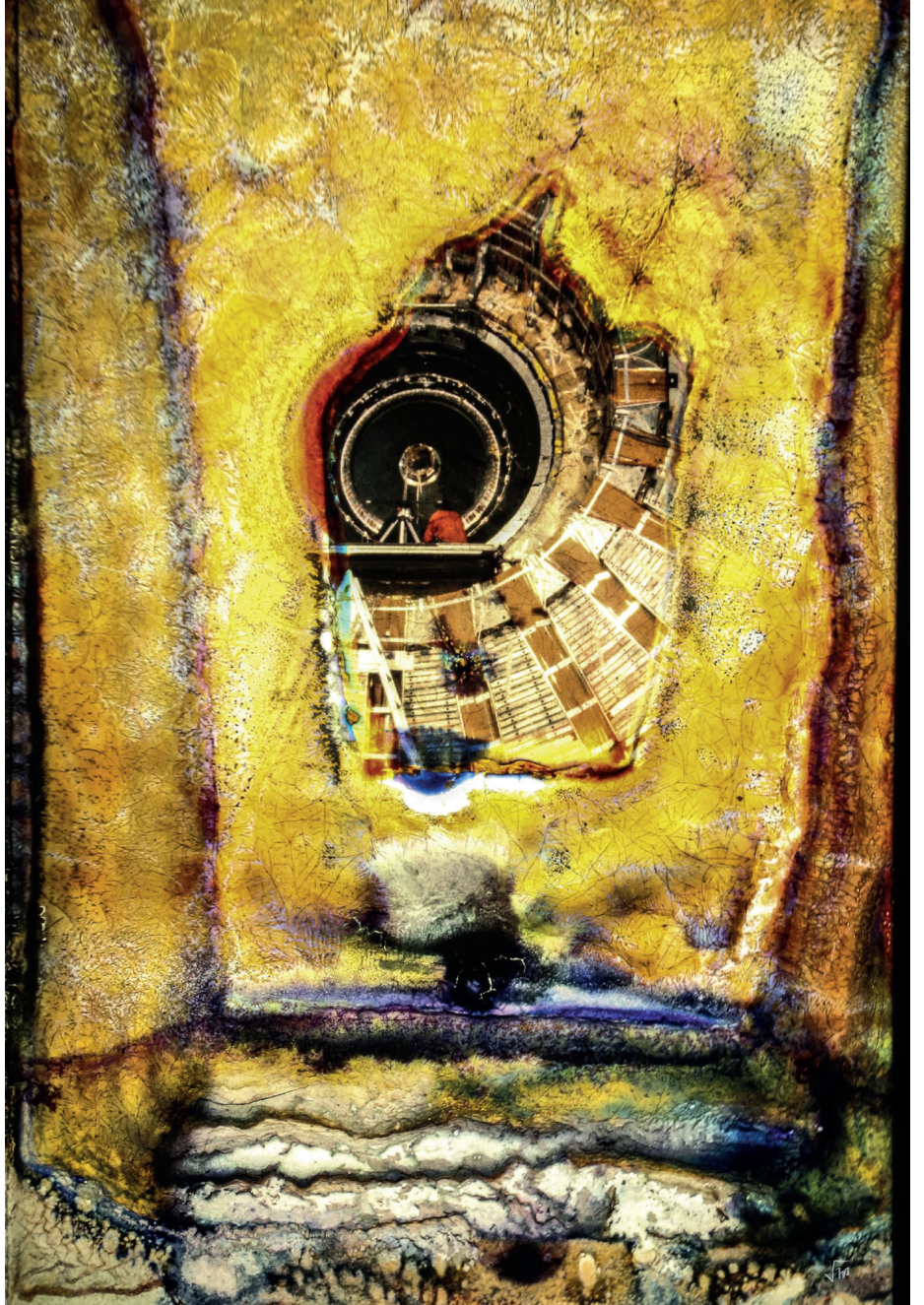
For 30 years, this slide was exposed to a mould that marched across the image, eating through the protein in the gelatin-based emulsion. The resulting chemical reactions left a chaotic swirl of colours and textures reminiscent of an abstract painting. To save the corroded image as it is now, Volpi and LeMeur shone a light through the slide and then photographed the projection.

Volpi is a photographer himself, and has tried to recreate the effect. "I've tried burning and freezing, and I use yeast and beer to create mould, it makes a nice effect, but I can't reproduce these colours and textures. I don't have 30 years to wait, like this mould did."

The slide was unearthed in a dusty desk drawer in a corridor of the experimental physics department at CERN. Like its better-preserved companion slide below, it showed a simulation of an electron-positron collision at DELPHI, one of four detectors at the LHC's predecessor, the Large Electron-Positron Collider. The blue horizontal lines represent the beams of particles that meet head on in the detector's cylindrical cavity, and the spray of arcs extending from the middle track the particles born in the smash-up. *Chebaa Whyte*



Photographer
Volmeur © 2017 CERN



DELPHI detector under construction

PROGRAMME: 8 NOVEMBER-7 DECEMBER

PREVIEW AND CLOSING EVENT START AT 5.30 P.M.

OTHER EVENTS FROM 6.00 P.M. TO 9.00 P.M.

Thirty-five previously unseen works will be revealed at the *Galerie Image de Marque* from 8 November to 7 December 2018. Visitors to the exhibition will be able to participate in various creative experiences, mixing science and art, as well as the programme of events below.

- 8 Nov. :** Preview with projection of "Treasures of the memory of CERN" by Jean-Yves Le Meur and Matteo Volpi (alias **VolMeur**)
- 14 Nov. :** "The Story Behind the Works, CERN in the late 1980s" by Horst Wenninger, former Director of CERN's Accelerators Department
- 21 Nov. :** "Materials for the Arts and the Art of Materials" by John Cloud Kaiser, Director of Education, Materials for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
- 28 Nov. :** "Understanding VolMeur artwork with Electron Microscopy" by Elisa Garcia-Tabares Valdivieso, CERN R&D Engineer in material analysis
- 7 Dec. :** Closing event with "meta-physical reflections on perishable works" by Rosario Principe, Project Engineer in Superconducting Magnet group



Matteo Volpi & Jean-Yves Le Meur

Photo M. Hoch