

Immersive Art

Getting Into It

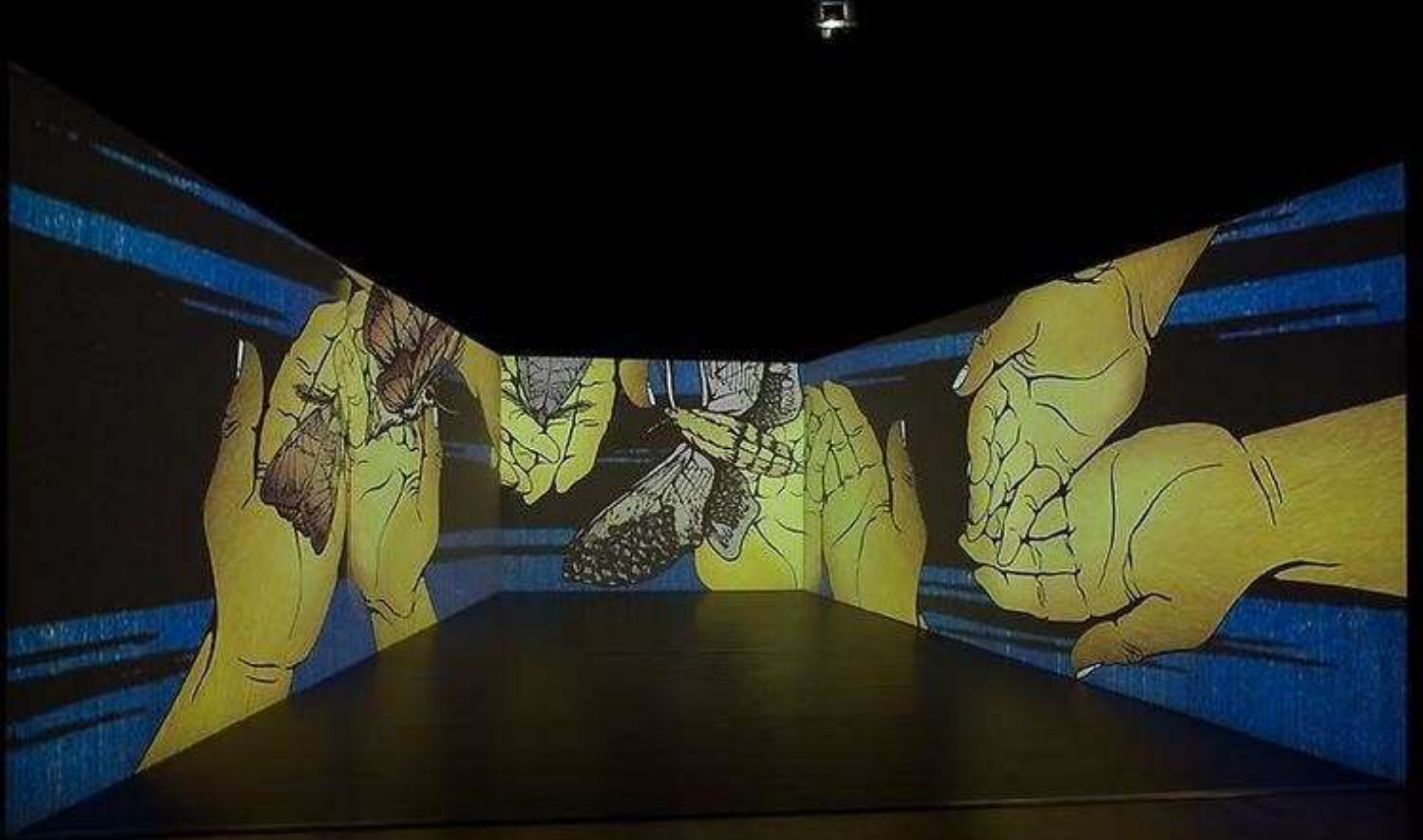
Definition

Immersion is the act of being totally involved in something. When it comes to immersive art experiences, this includes [activating all our senses](#). Such art pieces engage our sight, touch, and sometimes even smell. Using new media like video mapping, AR, VR, [AI](#), sound technologies, and light shows, artists can create surroundings that suck in the viewer into their worlds. This way, one has the feeling of being part of the artwork.

Tabaimo

Ayako Tabata (born 1975), also known under her artist name **Tabaimo**, is a contemporary [Japanese](#) artist. She combines hand-drawn images and digital manipulation to create large scale animations which evoke traditional Japanese woodblock prints ([ukiyo-e](#)) while presenting a pointed, complex view of Japanese society

- [Tabaimo in “Boundaries” \(SEGMENT\) | Art21](#)





James Turrell

In the Ganzfeld series, the artist is on a mission to manipulate the viewer's perception and experience by just using light. Never known as one to hurry in person or work, Turrell even describes himself as a tortoise as opposed to considering himself as a hare.

- [Introduction to James Turrell \(youtube.com\)](#)





Henrique Oliveira

Rather than open with the stereotypical “once upon a time,” *Fairy Tales* ushers viewers into a sinuous labyrinth of rupturing trees. The latest work of [Henrique Oliveira \(previously\)](#), the undulating installation is titled “Corupira” and establishes a winding pathway through the gallery. “I’ve tried to create an environment that you have a different relationship with the space and somehow you are back to watch(ing) out. If you don’t look up, you’re gonna hit your head on a branch,” he says in [a video](#) about the project. “Get back to your senses. I think that’s something the world misses today.”

“Corupira” twists the Tupi-Guarani myth of the demonic [curupira](#), a redheaded creature with the power to ignite. Originating in the Brazilian Amazon, the legend says that the monster’s feet were backward, so that those brave enough to enter the forest would be confused by which direction it was traveling if they attempted to follow its tracks.

[Henrique Oliveira transforms the ‘Fairy Tales’ entrance at GOMA \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Henrique Oliveira \(youtube.com\)](#)







Clare Celeste Börsch

Lush layers of flora and fauna sprout in alcoves and crawl across gallery walls in the works of [Clare Celeste Börsch \(previously\)](#). The Berlin-based artist continues her ecological studies as she entangles paper cutouts into immersive ecosystems in which butterflies, birds, plants, and fungi coexist.

Börsch's most recent work, "Phoenix," takes its name from the mythological bird at its center. Emerging from an explosive volcano, the creature signals rebirth, a symbol that emerged following the trauma of the last few years and her own health issues. "In a world marked by change and uncertainty, we can find solace in the cycles of nature," the artist says. "It is my hope that 'Phoenix' serves as a visual metaphor for our shared capacity to rise anew."

[More Than Just Beautiful Dance \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Clare Celeste Börsch - Berliner Künstlerinnen / female artists of Berlin - in English \(youtube.com\)](#)









Assim Waqif

In his monumental, swirling structures, Delhi-based artist [Asim Waqif](#) merges tenets of architecture and sculpture into sweeping site-specific compositions. Using natural materials like bamboo and [pandanus](#) leaves, he often incorporates found objects, scaffolding, sound elements, cloth, and rope.

Waqif draws on his studies in architecture and experience in film and TV art direction, considering location, material, and the experience of moving around or through the work. Building each installation involves complex “manual processes that are deliberately painstaking and laborious, while the products themselves are often temporary and sometimes even designed to decay,” he says.

[Asim Waqif: ‘Touch is really important in experiencing any art work’ | Hayward Gallery \(youtube.com\)](#)

[2024 Asia Arts Game Changer Awards India: Asim Waqif, Asia Arts Pathbreaker Awardee \(youtube.com\)](#)











Firelei Báez

Abstraction, for [Firelei Báez](#), is like a map legend, a system designed to help the viewer navigate the worlds she envisions. Her works, heavy with drips, splatters, and lively explosions of color, emerge from what she refers to as “the mirage,” the place where the colonial narratives that tangle fact and fiction begin to unravel.

Born and raised in the Dominican Republic before moving to New York as a young adult, Báez frequently returns to the histories, myths, and linguistic traditions of the Caribbean. Books, maps, blueprints, and other materials removed from libraries and museums are her preferred substrates because they offer an opportunity to reshape the dubious scientific methods and discriminatory systems they express. She invokes figures like Swedish biologist [Carl Linnaeus](#), for example, who developed one of the first taxonomies and laid the foundation for what became widespread scientific racism.

[Artist Firelei Báez: I Consider Myself a Filter | Louisiana Channel \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Introduction to Firelei Báez. \(youtube.com\)](#)







Guadalupe Maravilla

Chrome plating, fringe made of humble kitchen cutlery, illuminated chandeliers, and symbolic sculptures of flora and fauna adorn a school bus parked at the [ICA Watershed](#) in the Boston Harbor Shipyard. The elaborately retrofitted vehicle is the largest project to-date by [Guadalupe Maravilla](#) and the latest addition to his *Disease Thrower* series.

Born out of the artist's traumatic experience immigrating as an unaccompanied minor and suffering from colon cancer as an adult, the ongoing body of work evinces the healing power of sound and vibration. Titled "Mariposa Relámpago," or lightning butterfly, the new work has had several lives before making its way to Boston: the bus was first used for transporting students in the U.S., then sent to the artist's native El Salvador, and finally ended up in his studio where it underwent its current transformation.

[Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago at the ICA Watershed \(youtube.com\)](#)









Barbara Earl Thomas

Each iteration of “The Transformation Room” has been different, with children helping to cut additional panels of white Tyvek in Wichita. When the exhibition opens this week at Arthur Ross Gallery, the piece will include color and a sculptural addition. The space also has gothic windows into which Thomas has fitted cuttings, allowing natural light to combine with the artificial to illuminate the suspended sheets of material.

Casting elegant shadows throughout the gallery, the installation invites viewers to reflect and see themselves and each other anew. The artist intends to “create a community gathering experience where my vision is filtered through sound and light, while being anchored in the historic familiar, poised for transformation.”

[ResqueStick US V12 16x9 VO2 \(youtube.com\)](#)

[North High students create artwork for Wichita Art Museum exhibition \(kwch.com\)](#)







Isaiah Zagar

When mosaic artist [Isaiah Zagar](#) moved to Philadelphia's South Street in the 1960s, he saw an opportunity to not only revitalize a neglected area but transform it into a haven for creatives. He established his studio there and was joined by a community of artists and activists who saw potential and wanted it to thrive, even preventing a major highway construction project that would have obliterated the neighborhood.

In 1991, Zagar began to work in a couple of vacant lots adjacent to his studio, initially coating the walls of the buildings on either side in colorful tesserae, then sculpting partitions and passageways through the center and creating an immersive art environment. But in 2004, the landowner decided to sell the property and called for the artwork to be dismantled.

The local community hastened to Zagar's aid, helping to purchase the land. Soon, [Philadelphia's Magic Gardens](#) was incorporated as a nonprofit with a mission to preserve the existing work for all to enjoy while allowing the artist to continue develop even more grottos, paths, and tunnels. "It's incredible to see what one man's mind created," says preservation manager Stacey Holder. She continues.

[Afternoons with the Artist // Isaiah Zagar \(youtube.com\)](#) (5 mins)

[Video Tour the Philadelphia Magic Gardens - ABC News \(go.com\)](#)—13 mins



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Levi van Veluw

Combining translucent polymer clay with saturated pigments or carving delicate ridges from tulipwood, [Levi van Veluw](#) constructs enigmatic, immersive narratives. The Dutch artist has been fascinated by symbols and rituals since childhood, spurred by an upbringing in a religious household. The complexity and conviction of faith and “the stark visual language of its practice made him sensitive to the visual vernacular of religious seduction,” reads a statement for the artist’s series *Beyond Matter*.

Memory, architecture, and storytelling manifests in *Beyond Matter* through the portrayal of naves or chapel-like spaces, altars, and mandalas redolent of rose windows. Geometry and repetition interact with light and shadow in meditative patterns, exploring the parallels of spiritual experience and viewing art. Van Veluw prompts questions about what and how we see and our role in completing the picture.

[Levi van Veluw - Mini Docu \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Bing Videos](#)

[Levi van Veluw / Family / Origin of the Beginning \(youtube.com\)](#)









John Grade

Through his large-scale installations and site-specific works, John Grade (American, b. 1970) explores issues of irrevocable change and natural disintegration. He is recognized for his use of organic motifs and materials in artworks that seek to understand the intrinsic language of nature. Middle Fork continues the artist's exploration of natural deterioration in a new work created from the casting of a 100 ft tall live old-growth tree. A shell of the tree has been assembled from ¼ inch perforated cedar, which is suspended horizontally in the gallery. From its 10 ft diameter trunk, 12 – 15 ft limbs fork from the trunk offering a new perspective about trees, their relationship to humans, and the relationship of the sculpture to its original source in the landscape. Middle Fork includes additional smaller works by Grade.

[John Grade: Middle Fork \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)















Joana Vasconcelos

Nearly five years in the making, a 12-meter-high confectionary has emerged on the grounds of the sprawling [Waddesdon Manor](#) in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Portuguese artist [Joana Vasconcelos](#) designed an enormous “Wedding Cake” pavilion to sit near the 19th-century Dairy, which was built by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild to entertain guests, drawing on the location’s history of charming visitors and providing an architectural focal point within the expansive parkland.

“Wedding Cake” playfully avails itself of the architectural legacy of follies, a type of building constructed primarily for decoration, with famous examples like Marie Antoinette’s hamlet at [Versailles](#) or the [Dunmore Pineapple](#) in Scotland. Vasconcelos’ design was inspired by Baroque style, Waddesdon Manor’s reputation for events and hospitality, and the symbolism and traditions of the sweet treat through time.

- [An Insight into Joana Vasconcelos: Wedding Cake \(youtube.com\)](#)











Chiharu Shiota

In *Signs of Life*, a dense installation of knotted and wound string fills much of [Galerie Templon](#)'s New York space. The work of Japanese artist [Chiharu Shiota \(previously\)](#), the solo show transforms the gallery into a monochromatic labyrinth of intricate mesh that ascends from floor to ceiling. Shiota considers the multivalent meaning of the web, from the structure of neural networks within the human brain to the digital realm today's world relies on.

One of the works features bulging cylinders and dangling threads in red, while another white structure traps numerous book pages within its midst. Created during a two-week period, Shiota envisions the installation as connecting personal memory and the collection of knowledge. "I always thought that if death took my body, I wouldn't exist anymore," she says. "I'm now convinced that my spirit will continue to exist because there is more to me than a body. My consciousness is connected to everything around me, and my art unfolds by way of people's memory." The show also includes previously unseen drawings and sculptures, many of which contain quotidian objects that prompt questions about how items become meaningful, sentimental, and precious with use.

[Hammer Projects: Chiharu Shiota \(youtube.com\)](#)







Rebecca Louise Law

For millennia, dried flowers have been prepared for a vast array of uses ranging from decoration and fragrance to pigments and medicine. British artist [Rebecca Louise Law](#) taps into our perennial fascination with florals for her monumental, immersive [installations](#). Exploring our relationship with the natural environment and the way blooms and botanicals have influenced cultures throughout history, her reinterpretations of existing architecture encourage the viewer to move around the space in a new way.

In Parma, she draws inspiration from the city's culinary and medicinal history for "Florilegum," and in Brittany, France, she was invited to reimagine the Château de la Roche-Jagu's grand banquet hall. For "The Womb," visitors walked inside a room delineated by delicate strands of flowers and approached a cocoon-like form in the center, suggesting a space that is simultaneously protective, potent, and fragile. By hand-sewing stems and fronds together and wrapping them carefully in thin wire, she constructs lengthy ribbons of foliage that can be draped from a framework to create long, curtain-like expanses or colorful volumes at various heights.

[The Biggest Beauty Mistake - Jones Road - Miracle Balm \(youtube.com\)](#)







Assignment Suggestions...

- Use a box to create an artwork with different levels (like stage set backgrounds layered)
- Create an artwork that draws you in.