

Title: The Beauty and The Beast
Period: 27.09.24-31.10.24

The idea of the site-specific at the cinema art space is a project that has the photographs and the video would be installed integrated in the cinema's interiors. They would like to show the video on loop on an old black monitor. It lasts about 30 seconds and it has no sound in loop. In the video you can see a mask of the Beast laying on the floor of a room in Versailles. The camera comes closer and closer, until They pick the mask up.

Besides that, the wish is that the cinema will screen "The Beauty and The Beast" during the exhibition period, and also to have artist talk with a curator or a chosen artist about the topic.

Here a short text about the connection between the movie and the AIDS pandemic:

During the 1990s, the Beast from Disney's "The Beauty and The Beast" emerged as a poignant symbol for the AIDS pandemic and the pervasive stigma associated with it. The character's experiences mirrored the societal rejection and fear faced by individuals living with AIDS. The Beast, feared and attacked by the villagers, was fundamentally seeking love and acceptance, a reflection of the plight of those suffering from the disease.

Howard Ashman, the lyricist for "The Beauty and The Beast," imbued his work with deep personal significance. Diagnosed with AIDS, Ashman saw in the Beast's story a powerful metaphor for his own struggles and the broader AIDS crisis. In particular, the song "Kill the Beast," where Gaston incites an angry mob against the Beast, encapsulates this metaphor. The lyrics, "We don't like what we don't understand, in fact it scares us and this monster is mysterious at least," poignantly highlight the fear and ignorance that fueled the stigma against people with AIDS.

Bill Condon, director of the 2017 live-action adaptation of "Beauty and the Beast," echoed this interpretation. He noted that for Ashman, the character of the Beast was a means to externalize and express his battle with AIDS. The curse that transformed the prince into the Beast brought sorrow to all who loved him, mirroring the devastating impact of AIDS on patients and their loved ones. However, the narrative also offered a glimmer of hope—a chance for a miracle and the lifting of the curse.

Today, despite the availability of antiretroviral therapies that can suppress HIV to undetectable levels and prevent transmission, ignorance and stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS persist. This enduring fear seems to have been passed down through generations. Could this be considered a social and cultural legacy of the queer community?