

# METAMORPHOSES

From 4 April 2023 to 24 November 2024  
at the Cit  des sciences et de l'industrie

"Following on from *Cabanes* (Cabins), *Contraires* (Opposites) and *Fragile!*, the fourth exhibition in the Cit  des sciences et de l'industrie's "Petits Curieux" ("Curious Kids") programme tackles the subject of Metamorphoses. A concept central to childhood, the age of all transformations – and also to its narrative worlds, from traditional tales to video games and through ancient myths – metamorphosis invites us to reflect on existence and its relation to time. Offering children aged 6 to 11 the chance to explore transformations at work in the living world, this new exhibition serves to guide their questioning and their exploration of all that is possible. Incorporating participatory approach into its design, Metamorphoses has benefited from the creativity of a group of twelve children who helped bring a very personal touch to this exhibition. A chance for visitors to relive with them the joys of the first discoveries and their wonder."

Bruno Maquart, chairman of Universcience

"I wonder if I've been changed in the night. Let me think. Was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is 'Who in the world am I?' Ah! That's the great puzzle!"

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*.

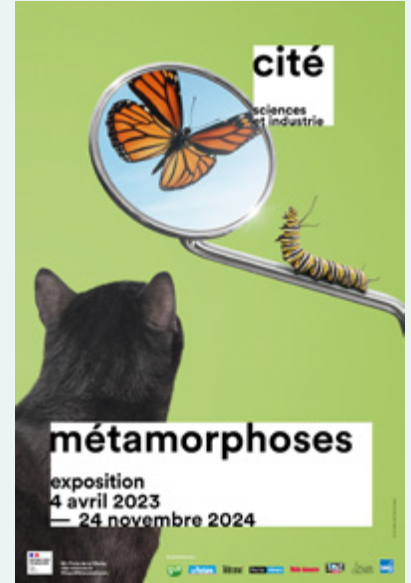
From 4 April 2023 to 24 November 2024, the Cit  des sciences et de l'industrie will be staging *Metamorphoses*, its new temporary exhibition for children aged 6 to 11. Like Alice, children grow, evolve and reflect on their own transformations and those of the world around them. The exhibition offers them a chance to explore various metamorphoses – natural, amazing and also personal – by bringing together science and imagination. It also introduces the basis of a scientific approach by encouraging children of all ages to observe, be amazed and question – whilst stimulating their imagination. Whether they are the sources of fascination or apprehension, metamorphoses open up new possibilities.

## THE WAY AROUND THE EXHIBITION

*Metamorphoses* is divided into five areas: *La for t merveilleuse* (The Amazing Forest), *Mon beau miroir* (Mirror, Mirror on the Wall), *Le monde des ombres* (The World of Shadows), *Mille et un regards* (A Thousand and One Eyes) and *La f te foraine* (The Funfair). At every turn, the scenography, intentionally evocative rather than figurative, plunges visitors into a unique immersive universe. Metamorphosis personified, narrates the exhibition and speaks to the children. The exhibition's itinerary is free and intuitive; it invites children to move from one world to another as they wish.

### ■ La for t merveilleuse (The Amazing Forest):

a field of study for scientists, a place to live, a thoroughfare, a magical or imaginary place: the forest is filled with secrets. It helps develop children's spontaneous curiosity and it is the setting for numerous tales and myths. Here, visitors actively observe, compare, associate,



In French, English and Spanish.  
Accessible to all audiences

### An exhibition designed for children 6 to 11

The *Metamorphoses* exhibition is the fourth part of the "Petits curieux" (Curious Kids) editorial line, following on from *Cabanes* (Cabins) (2019), *Contraires* (Opposites) (2020) and *Fragile!* (2022). This line of programming comprises exhibitions aimed at children aged 2 to 12, and offers a range of contemplative, interactive, collective and participative experiences... developing children's natural curiosity in the world around them using methods that take benefit from the latest advances in educational science.



ponder, listen to stories, etc. Animal metamorphoses and plant transformations... both natural and imaginary are on the Menu!

### ■ **Mon beau miroir (Mirror, Mirror on the Wall):**

numerous magic mirrors are featured throughout literature, tales, films, etc. They reveal invisible truths and the deepest wishes, allow us to see the future or revisit the past. Mirrors also allow people to see themselves growing up, changing and growing old, but also developing or "adopting a persona". Within this space, children and parents are the subjects or protagonists of transformations, whether real or imaginary.

### ■ **Le monde des ombres (The World of Shadows):**

humans are complex beings. Their emotions, moods and thoughts vary throughout the course of a day, a week, the years and the different phases of their lives. In a large shadow theatre, children can play around with their bodies and props to transform their shadows into monsters, thereby revealing perhaps some darker facets of their personalities.

### ■ **Mille et un regards (A Thousand and One Eyes):**

this area invites us to step aside, to change perspective. Children put on different pairs of goggles and explore a setting. Distortions, shifts, coloured filters inviting them to look at the world differently and realise that we don't all see it the same way.

### ■ **La fête foraine (The Funfair):**

the itinerary ends at a funfair – the most amazing place to explore devoted to transformations of matter. Originally, funfairs were bubbling laboratories where artists and scholars, physicists and magicians, chemists and jugglers mingled. Here, science becomes entertainment!

## AROUND THE EXHIBITION

### ■ **Demonstrations for school groups**

#### **Arctic Mission**

Ages 10 to 13 | From 7 May 2023 | Duration: 60 mins

The polar regions are the scene of many changes. A number of clues suggest that this is due to climate change. In small groups, pupils explore these little-known areas of the world, assess their transformations and learn about their consequences at various levels, by experimenting with certain physical principles.

#### **Growing up: the great upheaval!**

Ages 7 to 10 | From 9 May 2023 | Duration: 60 mins

Our bodies are continually evolving in order to best adapt to the various phases of our lives. Big or small, let's discover together what these transformations consist of and their purpose, using models, games and images from science...

#### **Body transformations**

Ages 11 to 13 | from 17 October 2023 | Duration: 60 mins

The body bears witness: growing from a child into an adult constitutes a major phase in our lives. Similar or different, according to the sexes, from the most obvious to the most subtle, children have fun learning about such future transformations and their roles, smoothly preparing themselves for puberty.

#### **The Metamorphoses of Living Things**

Ages 7 to 12 | From 23 May 2023 | Duration 90 mins

A workshop at the Cite des sciences et de l'industrie Library designed around exploring the metamorphoses of living things using information resources. Pupils call to their creativity to represent the phases of metamorphoses in small collaborative notebooks.

### ■ **Conferences**

A series of lectures on the theme of *Métamorphoses : quelles dynamiques ?* (Metamorphoses: what are the dynamics?) is scheduled from February to June 2023, including a lecture for children, *Grandir, vieillir... notre corps se transforme* (Growing up and growing old ... our bodies evolve). Watch it [here](#).

### ■ **Activity Book, the "Les petits curieux à la Cité" ("Curious Kids at the Cité") series**

This booklet presents ten examples of natural, mythological and fanciful metamorphoses. Children learn about them by following suggestions for observation games, scientific experiments and manual activities.

From age 6 | Texts: Cécile Jugla; illustrations: Tristan Maillet | 24 pages, format 18 x 23 cm, price: €4.95. On sale in April 2023.

### A participatory approach central to the exhibition's design:

For this exhibition the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie set up a participatory initiative with children; it was called Graines de musée, a residency hosted at the Living-lab of the Carrefour numérique<sup>2</sup> (Digital Hub<sup>2</sup>).

The project's first phase consisted of interviewing children about their perception and understanding of the words "metamorphosis" and "transformation". This revealed that children were quite familiar with the notion of metamorphosis due to popular culture. They associated it with the living world, magic and physical transformations.

The second phase, and the core of the project, consisted in setting up workshops with a group of twelve children, with the aim of collectively imagining what the exhibition could look like. Their creative exchanges allowed the design team to immerse themselves in the children's culture, and permeated the entire project.



## ■ Augmented masks

To take the exhibition further and bring it home, enhanced masks are on sale at the shop of the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie. These paper masks depicting animals and fantasy creatures are designed to be customised using the various stickers provided. With a special app some of their features will appear in augmented reality, kids will love it!

## ■ Online interactive storytelling

Axel, a young axolotl, sets off to meet a number of creatures who metamorphose and transform. An interactive story for children aged 6+ to help them understand change.

From age 6, duration: 60 mins | Compatibility: computer, tablet, smartphone.

## ■ A book for children, *L'Axolotl. Les secrets d'une métamorphose* (*The Axolotl. The secrets of a metamorphosis*)

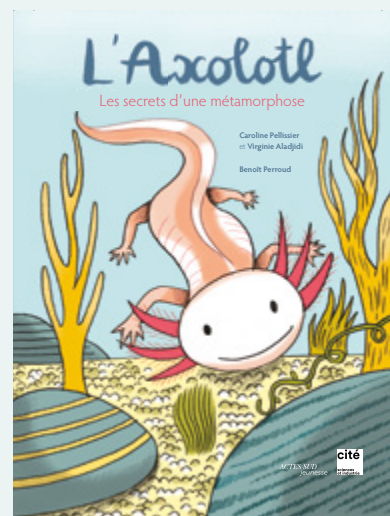
by Virginie Aladjidi and Caroline Pelissier. Illustration: Benoît Perroud.  
Jointly published by Éditions Actes Sud Jeunesse and the Cité des sciences et de l'industrie.

It is difficult to define the axolotl, a little animal that only lives in certain cold lakes in the high plateaus near Mexico City. This endemic species is an amphibian, a sort of salamander that remains as a tadpole throughout its life, never becoming an "adult" but still able to reproduce. And yet when subjected to stress, should the water in an aquarium drop beyond a certain level or should its temperature exceed 22°C, the axolotl metamorphoses! It loses its gills, changes its skin, leaves the water and loses its ability to swim.

Scientists are also interested in this animal's ability to regenerate. In particular, it is being studied for the purposes of cancer research and female infertility. The axolotl still has many secrets to reveal!

Children are mainly familiar with this animal through the Pokemon character Wooper, live axolotls will be displayed in a large aquarium within La Forêt enchantée (The Enchanted Forest) section of the Metamorphoses exhibition.

Hardback, 40 pages, format 17 x 22 cm, price: €16.90. On sale in bookshops from 22 March 2023.



### Informations pratiques

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#### Opening times

Open every day except Mondays, from 10 am to 6 pm, and until 7 pm on Sundays.  
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