

laurent gongora

biography

CV

site-specific installations

commissions

oddities - curiosity cabinet

unidentified objects



## **biographie**

Laurent Gongora is a visual artist born in 1978. He graduated in 2007 at the Strasbourg HEAR school and now works in Paris.

Laurent makes public art. He creates site-specific installations that respond to the characteristics of the landscape and the histories of each site.

Laurent's work deals with a number of subjects using a wide range of materials. He presents reality in new ways, by distorting space and altering objects through minute gestures.

## **bypassing reality**

*Since I was a child, I have been collecting natural objects that I find in my path. Feathers, leaves, bones, branches etc. On finding these trophies, I transform or simply present them ready-made, allowing their ambiguity and the freedom of interpretation about their nature and their source to intrigue the public, like a cabinet of curiosities.*

*My artist's role is sometimes confined to a go-between, but I also make public art, especially for its wow factor, catching people who don't expect to come across art.*

*What interests me about sculpture is its tangibility, an art object can be perceived in the same way as any object. Land Art is born out of the artist's desire to take art out of museums and experiment with new spaces. I believe Land Art and Public Art also create new experiences in the real world.*

*Presentation rather than representation. When I redraw the silhouette of a mountain, when I build a bridge on dry ground, or when I display an army of cuckoo-clocks in a woodland, I want nature's relationship with my art to change the status of the art object. For it to become incongruous to reality itself. Playing between nature and construction, real and fake, tricks, games and make-believe. Yet a sham can only work when rooted to reality.*

*The world is my playground, I am an illusionist and I use humour to open new doors to the strange and interesting objects around us.*



## laurent gongora

12 rue Godefroy Cavaignac  
75011 PARIS  
France

logong@hotmail.fr  
06 64 64 30 00

[www.laurentgongora.com](http://www.laurentgongora.com)

MdA : G298339  
SIRET : 501 784 466 000 36

born the 20th of July 1978

## training

- 2007 MASTER 2 Fine arts, HEAR Strasbourg
- 2006 Erasmus exchange, UDK Berlin
- 2005 MASTER 1 Fine Arts, HEAR Strasbourg
- 2000 MASTER 1 Mechanics, ULP Strasbourg
- 1998 DUT Génie Civil - URS, Strasbourg
- 1996 Baccalauréat S



## collective exhibitions

- 2021 *Vivace et troppo le verre à l'état libre*, Le Garage centre d'art, Amboise, FR, curator Yves Sabourin
- 2021 *On reprendra des couleurs*, MAP Rosa Bonheur, Chevilly-la-Rue, FR, curator Fabienne Leloup
- 2021 *Maison Contemporain*, Bastille Design Center, Paris, FR, curator Romain Tichit
- 2019 *La Bonne Aventure Festival*, Dunkerque, FR, curator Blandine Roselle
- 2018 *Parcours STUWA*, Durmenach, FR, curator C.O.A.L
- 2018 *Pure Waste*, Carreau du Temple, Paris, FR, curator C.O.A.L
- 2017 *Une Île*, Le 6b, Saint-Denis, FR, curator Pauline Lisowski
- 2017 *L'idiote II*, Le 6b, Saint-Denis, FR, curator Eglantine Laval
- 2016 *Opensites Art-Terre*, Comines-Warneton, Belgium (in situ, open call)
- 2015 *Remembrance of Nature*, Centre d'art Yattoo, Gongju, South Korea
- 2015 *Le Domaine de Murmures*, Château d'Avignon, FR, curator Agnès Barrauol
- 2015 *Kayl Biennale*, Luxembourg
- 2015 *Welcome in Joyland*, Kids (Laughter Tracks), Le 6B, Saint-Denis, FR, curator Emilie Schalck
- 2014 *L'art d'en rire*, Poitiers Futuroscope, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2014 *Art, villes et paysage*, Hortillonages, MCA Amiens, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2013 *Couleurs d'Automne*, Annemasse, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2012 *Horizons*, Rencontres Arts-Nature, Besse, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2012 *Mine d'Art en Sentier*, Parc l'Escaut, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2012 *Land Art à Riorges*, Riorges, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2011 *Horizons*, Rencontres Arts-Nature, Mont-Dore, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2008 *Biennale d'art contemporain «Itinéraires»*, Barr, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2008 *Festival international des jardins de Chaumont s/Loire*, FR (in situ, open call)
- 2006 *Planets of Comparison*, La Chaufferie, Strasbourg, FR, commissariat Plamen Dejanoff

## residencies

- 2016 *Voyons Voir*, Art contemporain et territoire, Aix-en-Provence, France
- 2015 *YATOO International Artists In Residence Program*, South-Korea

## commissions

- 2022 *Commande semi-publique - sculpture*, Boost, Saint-Denis
- 2022 *Commande semi-publique - sculpture*, Jardins Saint Honoré, Amiens
- 2021 *Commande publique - mobilier temporaire*, EPA Saclay
- 2020 *Commande publique - Fresque sous le Pont d'Epinay sur Seine (93)*, collab. avec A. Arango.
- 2018 *1% artistique - DAAF Fort-de-France (Martinique)*
- 2017 *Villages Nature Paris - two permanent sculptures*
- 2015 *Reading garden*, media library, Vannes, France (public commission)
- 2013 *Public Sculpture*, city hall, Voreppe, France (public commission)
- 2012 *Public sculpture*, Val d'Ille community focal, Montreuil-Le-Gast, France (public commission)

***temporary site-specific installations***

## ***Vent Debout (Head Wind)*** 2019

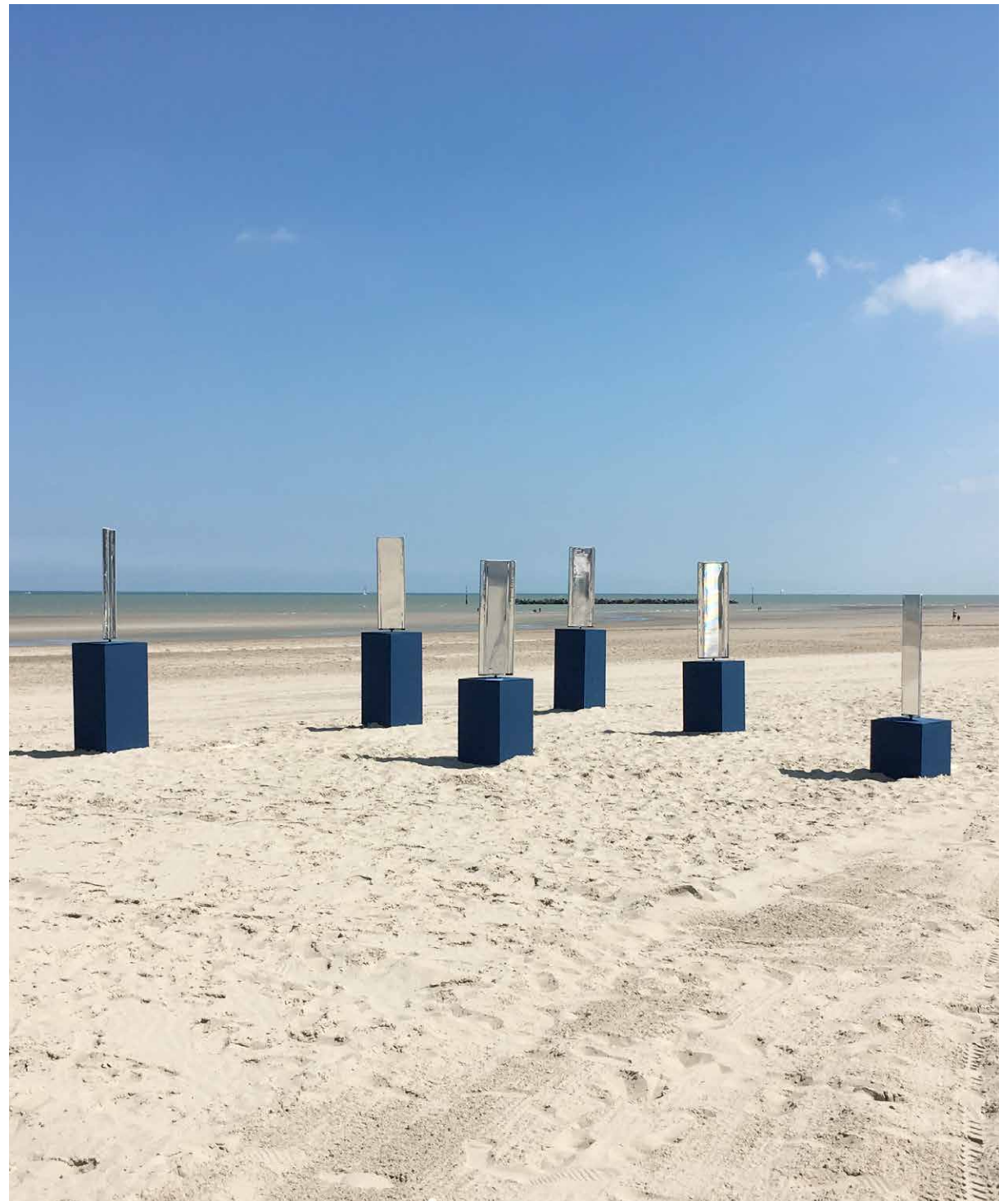
rotating panels, mirror-films.

6 pieces, the biggest ones : 250 x 55 x 55 cm.

Double-faced mirrors turn like vanes in the wind, creating sunlight and reflections of the environment. One can enjoy the installation, whose fleeting rotation creates reflections, from afar or by walking around the mirror gallery.

**video link (day)** <https://youtu.be/8EMkrs7Tdoo>

**video link (night)** [https://youtu.be/ksH9\\_SLyo20](https://youtu.be/ksH9_SLyo20)



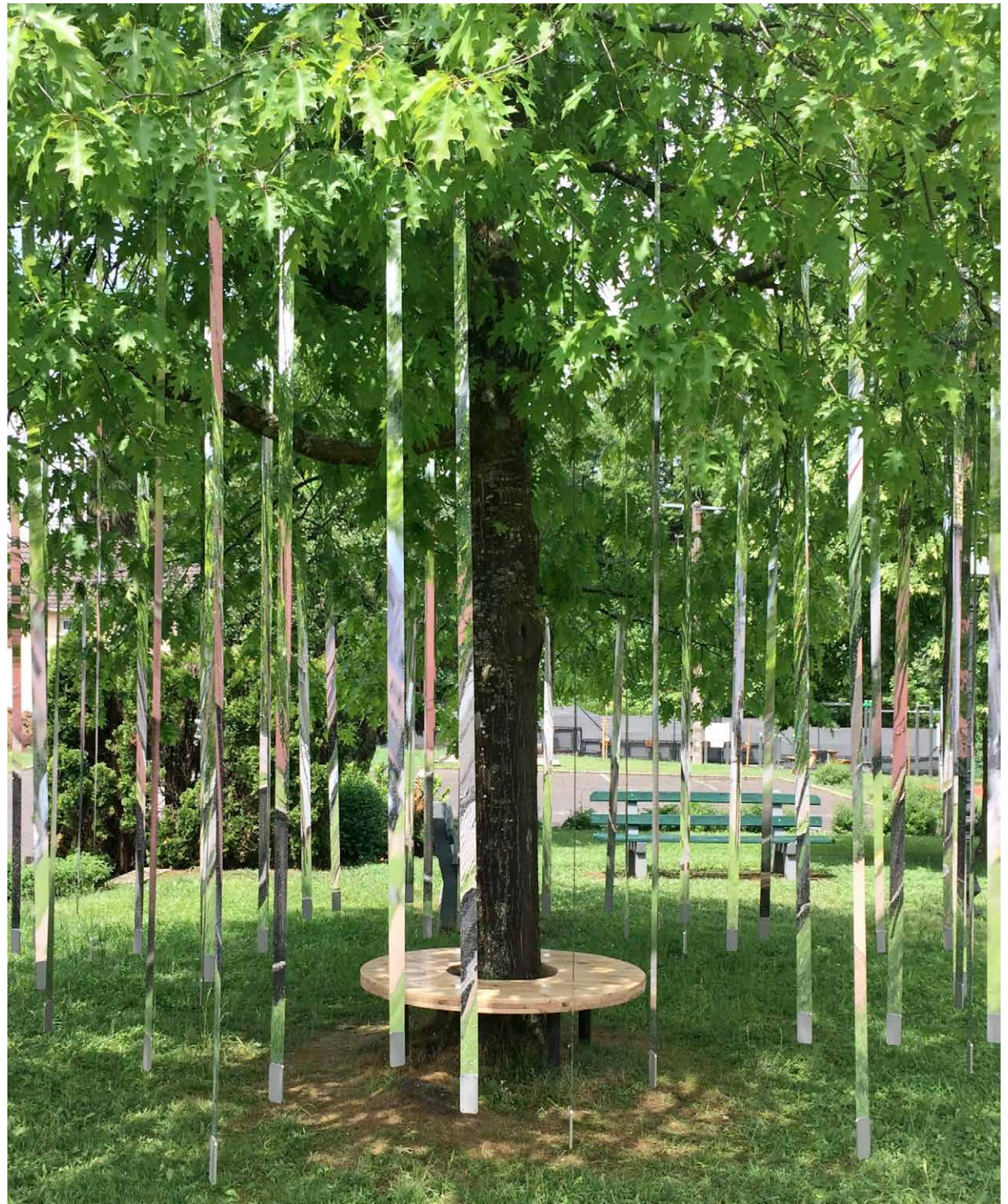


## **Elemental** 2018

stainless Steel, Mirror PET.  
60 pieces, cc. 300 x 6 cm each

Metallic strips swaying in the wind and glittering in the sun.  
Inspired by Renaissance fountains, this hypnotic and enveloping display allows everyone to sit in the tree and enjoy the spectacle of moving strips.

video link <https://youtu.be/31dhlUOIR-s>





## ***Bohemian bourgeois*** 2016

synthetic leather, foam, upholstery nails  
6 items, circa 150 x 80 cm each

Before being a luxury hotel, The Moulin de Vernègues history has been related to the royal way which crosses it for a while. Plane trees are more than three centuries old and their atypical relief looks almost animal. Thinking about all the horses which used this road long ago, one can see here a symbolic print of animal on vegetal. Therefore, like adventurous kids, one can easily imagine oneself settling on these trees as well as riding a horse.

In joining bourgeois comfort to bohemian lifestyle, the artwork offers a mental escape and reveals a paradox of the modern world.





# ***Break on through (to the other side)***

2016

walnut tree recovered, 50T of mud  
diameter 6m x ht. 5m

This evolutive and experimental works shapes the idea of resilience. In terms of Psychology, resilience is the mental ability to recover quickly from illness or misfortune and go ahead. Projected on nature, this idea deals with climate and sustainability matters.

How can nature survive in this endless struggle forced by human activity? How can a tree behave after having been buried? Will it develop new survival mechanisms?





## ***Paradise Lost*** 2014

Cuckoo clocks, electronic coding  
15 pieces, fixed to tree trunks

The expression «Paradise Lost» often comes up in descriptions of the Hortillonnages. My aim was to exacerbate the ambiguity of the man-made site of the Hortillonnages, between its natural appearance and its artificial reality.

Fixed to tree trunks, at the height of four meters, the cuckoo clocks chime twice every minute at unregular intervals. These alarms, although naturally inspired - by the song of the cuckoo - thus take on an urban dimension, through their number, their density and their frenetic rhythm. This variance is a metaphor for the Hortillonnages, a place which appears idyllic and embodies the perfect life for a large section of the population, a stone's throw away from the urban hustle and bustle.

video link (sound on) <http://youtu.be/LkeYkHG7B0>





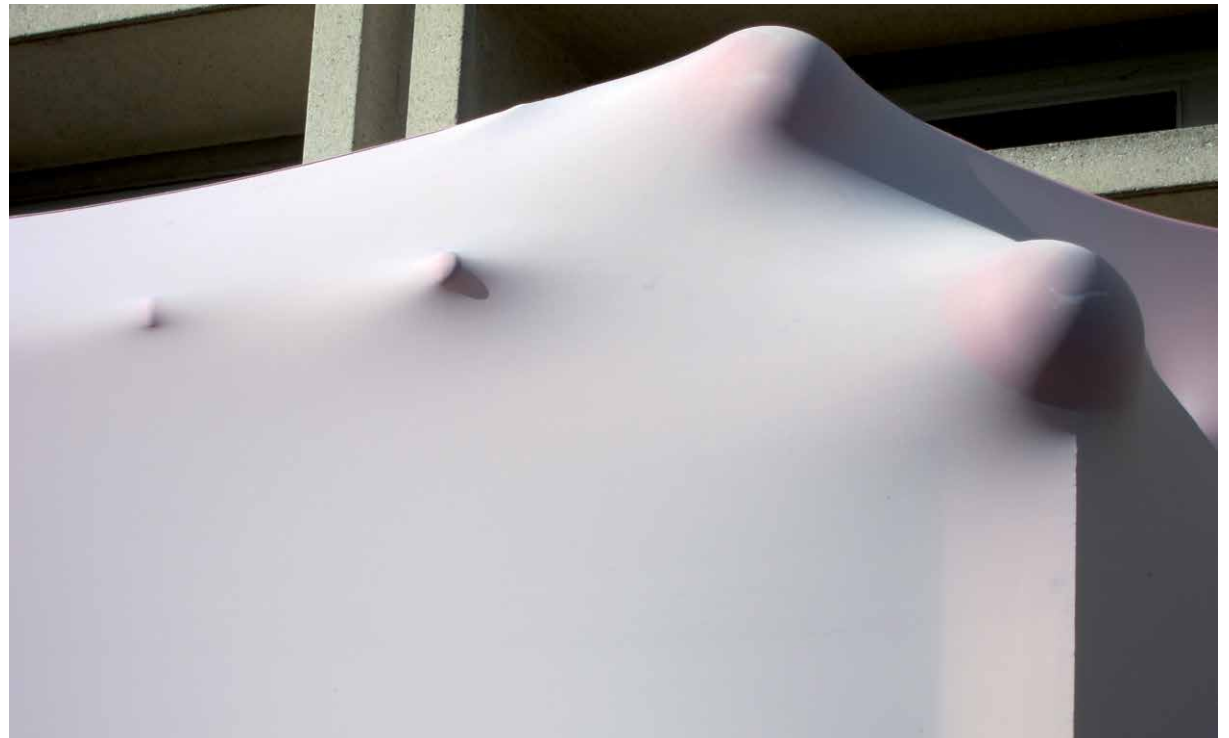
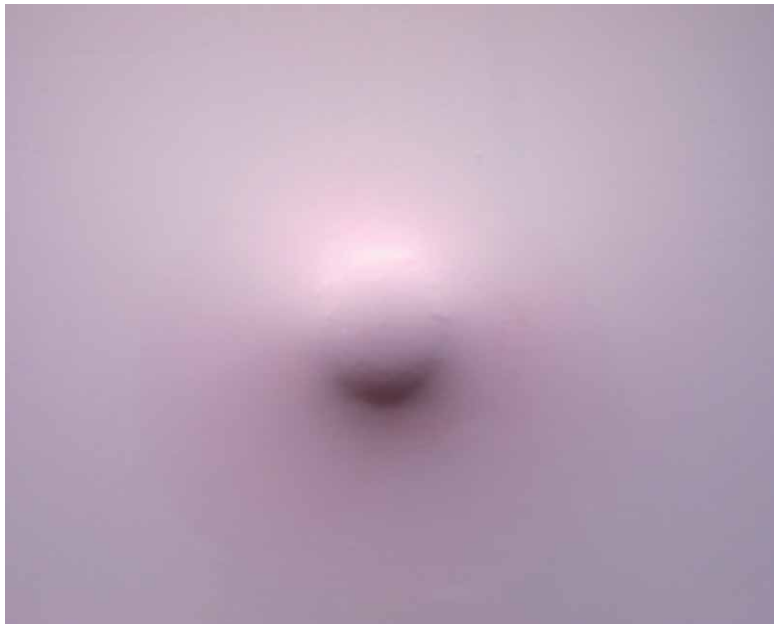
## ***Sex Appeal*** 2015

elasthanne (Lycra®), various rounded objects  
7x5x2m

Settled upon the pediment of the building, Sex Appeal is supposed to tease the visitors. Based on an anthropomorphism between the idea of a skin- tight cloth letting spring some parts of the body, and the idea of the skin, tensed over the muscles and bones.

The hint process between what is hidden and what is visible is made possible thanks to a lycra textile.

This lycra is so tensed allover the pediment that it reveals all its edges. Also, some objects are placed between the lycra and the pediment, in order to increase the erotic dimension of the display.





## ***Delusions of grandeur*** 2015

Painted wood, concrete base  
Each 1,30 x 3 m

Three wooden ladders put on a rounded concrete base. The culbuto effect. Ladders are erected to the sky like allegories of the inebriation linked to the delusion of grandeurs. Climbing it is possible, but not without any risk.





## **Patapont III** 2014

wood, steel, yellow painting  
L. 5,50m x l. 2,50m x H. 3,20m

'Pataphysics (French: 'pataphysique) is a philosophy or media theory dedicated to studying what lies beyond the realm of metaphysics. The concept was coined by French writer Alfred Jarry (1873–1907).

'Pataphysics «the science of the particular», does not, therefore, study the rules governing the general recurrence of a periodic incident (the expected case) so much as study the games governing the special occurrence of a sporadic accident (the excepted case). In a 'Pataphysics mood, the 'Patapont chooses to redefine the territory and to discredit the idea of the obstacle. Inspired by the stunting loop, this bridge approaches with humor the gap between what is allowed and what is possible.

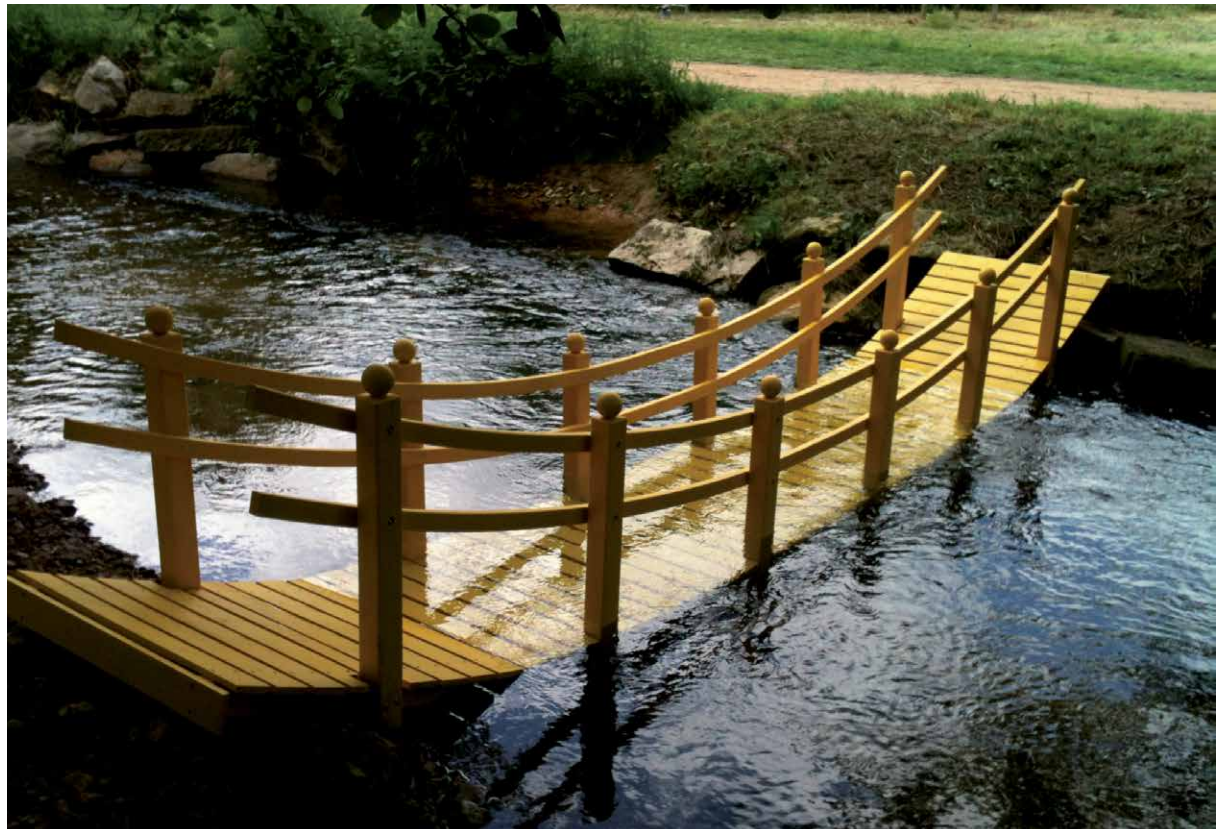
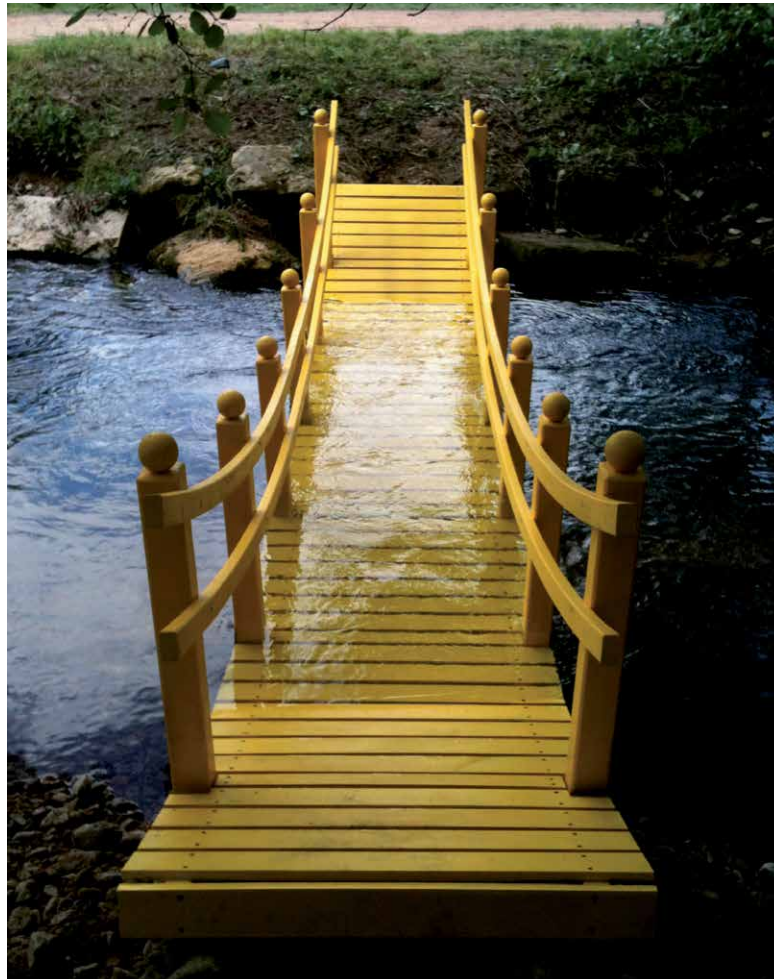




## **Pataponts I, II** 2012, 2013

Industrial wooden bridge, put up upside down yellow painting  
540 x 130 x 146 cm

'Pataphysics «the science of the particular», does not, therefore, study the rules governing the general recurrence of a periodic incident (the expected case) so much as study the games governing the special occurrence of a sporadic accident (the excepted case). In a 'Pataphysics mood, the 'Patapont chooses to redefine the territory and to discredit the idea of the obstacle. This bridge doesn't take the river for an obstacle, Walking on it enables us to enter the river, and feel the stream of it on our feet.



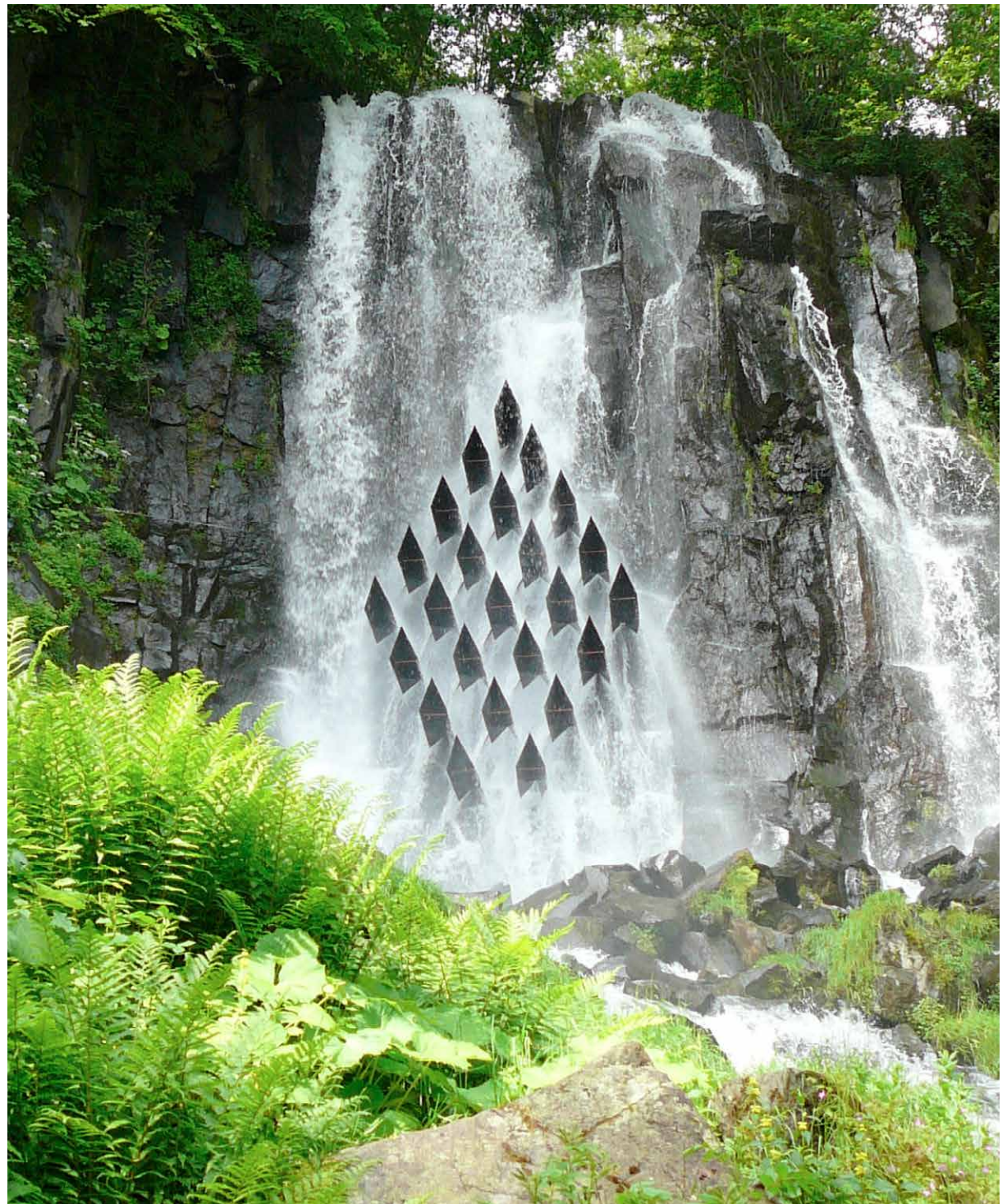
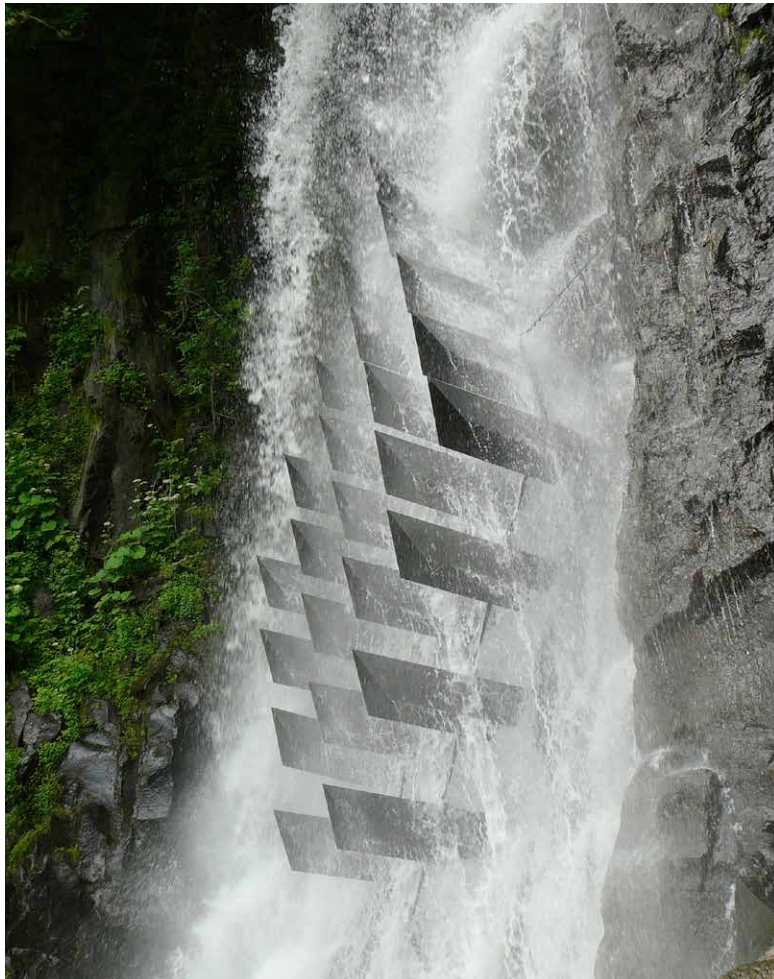


## ***Les cascadeurs (the stuntbirds)*** 2012

raw steel  
dimensions : 8 x 6 x 1 m

Halfway between a stepped cascade and a school game, the installation tries to challenge the natural way of the waterfall. 24 sheet-steel roofs are fixed on a steel baseframe, which is hidden by the water.

For the record, there is a small wooden perch under each roof, in case a «stunt bird» would like to come and shelter. The title «les cascadeurs» means «the stunt men». The word cascade in french language denotes both a stunt and a waterfall.



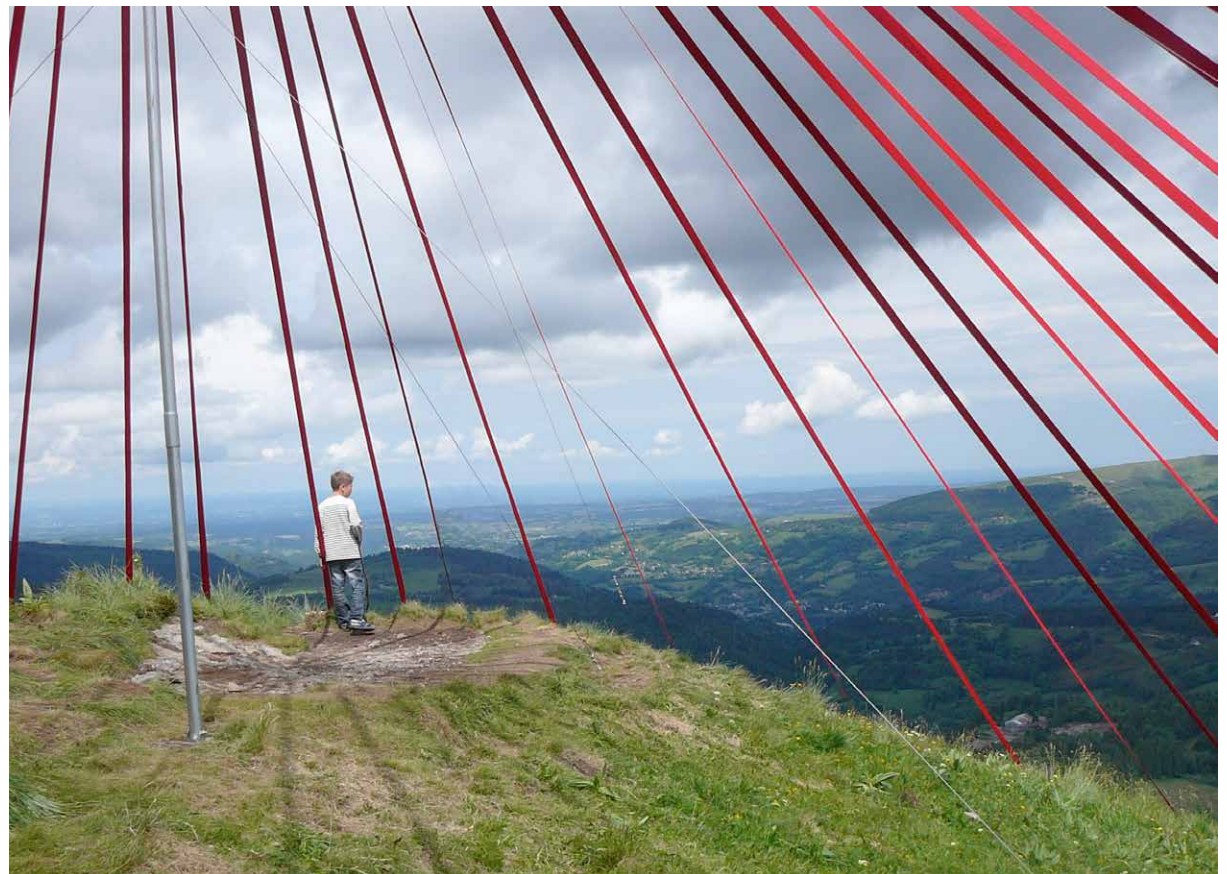


## **Cardinal** 2011

polypropylen straps, steel mast  
D. 25 m x H. 7 m

This basic work consists of extending the lines of the mountain with red straps in order to draw a new silhouette to the peak of the Capucin, so that it can deserve its name of peak.

Viewed from inside the installation, the landscape is cut into many sequences.





# ***Le diamant noir (black diamond)***

2012

pollarded ash tree trunk, punched steel plates  
180 x180 cm

The event takes place in a mineral eld, where nature slowly recovers after the end of the mining activity. Built around a pollarded tree trunk, the evolutive sculpture allows branches from the tree to grow slowly through the holes of the punched steel.

The diamond symbolizes the coal (coal and diamond are both pure carbon) letting itself cover by the nature, which takes its course.





***commissions***



## **Rosace (Rosette)** 2022

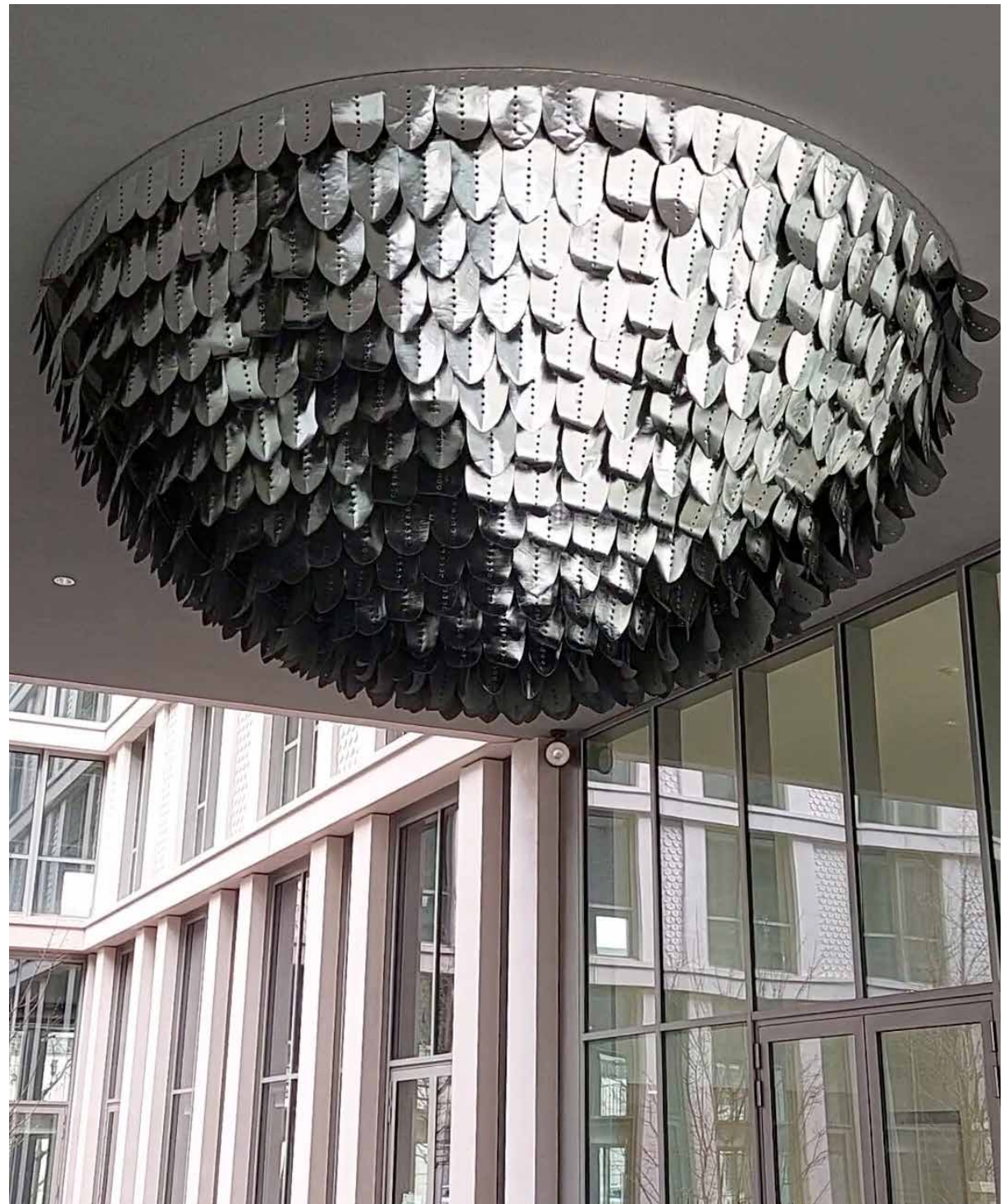
aluminium structure, aluminised technical fabric  
diameter 4,00 m x height 1,80 m

Private commission - PRD office

The sculpture consists of fabric petals with a pattern that echoes the one of the building's façade, which is inspired by an ornament of Saint-Denis Basilique. Linking the history of the city to this new building.

Between the aesthetics of the chandelier and the mirrorball, the huge half-sphere-shaped artwork hangs from the ceiling of the building's atrium. Thanks to the Venturi effect the fabric petals float in the wind.

video link [https://youtu.be/pxHrt96-2\\_M](https://youtu.be/pxHrt96-2_M)





## **Elevation** 2022

bench made of steel and oakwood  
4,00m x 75cm x 135cm

Private commission for public area, Jardins Saint Honoré, Amiens, FR

Planning : Artwork to be installed on the forecourt of a retirement home  
The brief : «imagine children visiting their grandparents».

Project : A long bench playing with the illusion of perspective.  
Beyond its playful design, the bench deals with ideas of growth and intergenerational bonds/ It allows anybody to sit at their preferred height.





# **Onde/Corpuscule** 2021

wood, metal

Public commission, Domaine de Corbeville, Orsay, FR

Temporary urban intervention for 3 years on a public wasteland.  
About science.





## **Couleurs Locales** 2020

Public fresque painting  
Collaboration with Alexandra Arango, visual artist

Public commission, Pont d'Epinay sur Seine, FR

At first sight these birds look exotic, even if they are local birds.  
Using the architecture to our advantage, the feathers of these birds are painted on the vertical lines of the pillars.





## ***Alizés Quartet*** 2018

stainless steel, plants

Public commission, 1% artistique, DAAF de Martinique, Fort-de-France, FR

Public commission for the department of agriculture and forestry of Martinique, Fort de France.

Earth, Fire, Air and Water are gathered in one installation, through plants, sun, wind and the depicted rain.

video link <https://youtu.be/qcrOgWij0uo>





## **Flame-turner** 2017

merry-go-round basis, steel structure, transparent pmma, stickers  
d. 170 x H. 250 cm

Permanent interactive sculpture, realised for Extraordinary Gardens, on the theme of the Four Elements. Villages Nature Paris, FR

Specifically designed for the Fire Garden, this flame-shaped sculpture evokes the fire element as the sunlight dances off the structure. By turning the structure with your hands, the colours blend and their coloured shapes are animated on the ground.

**video link** <https://youtu.be/nLGNzSgZYA>





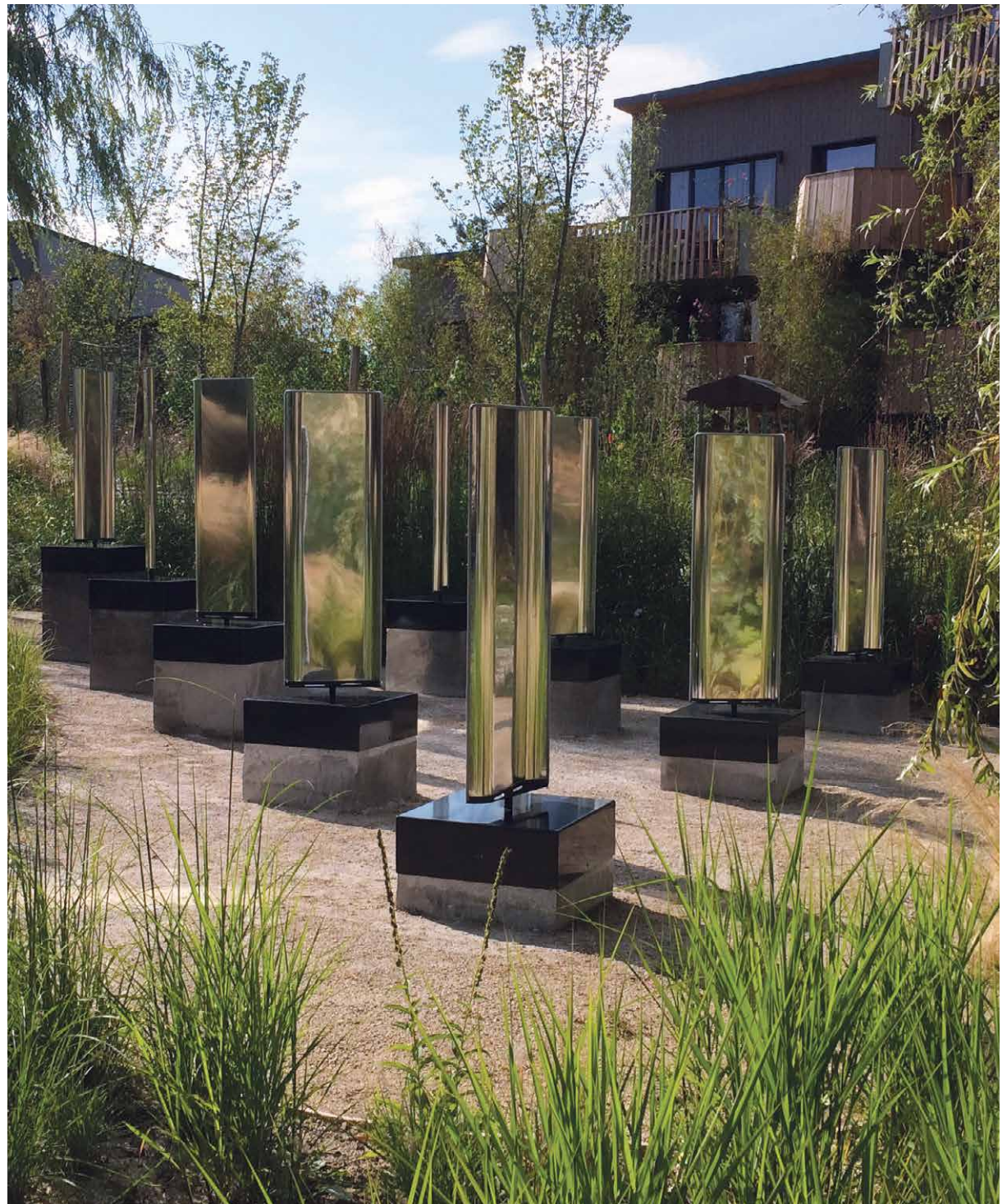
## ***Vent debout (Head wind)*** 2017

rotating panels, mirror-films  
9 pieces, 200 x 50 x 50 cm each

Permanent installation realised for Extraordinary Gardens, on the theme of the Four Elements. Villages Nature Paris, FR

Designed like a gallery of living mirrors, this installation has been specifically designed for the Air Garden. Nine double-faced mirrors turn like vanes in the wind, creating sunlight and reflections of the environment. One can enjoy the installation, whose fleeting rotation creates reflections, from afar or by walking around the mirror gallery.

**video link** <https://youtu.be/2crRLRYdFo0>



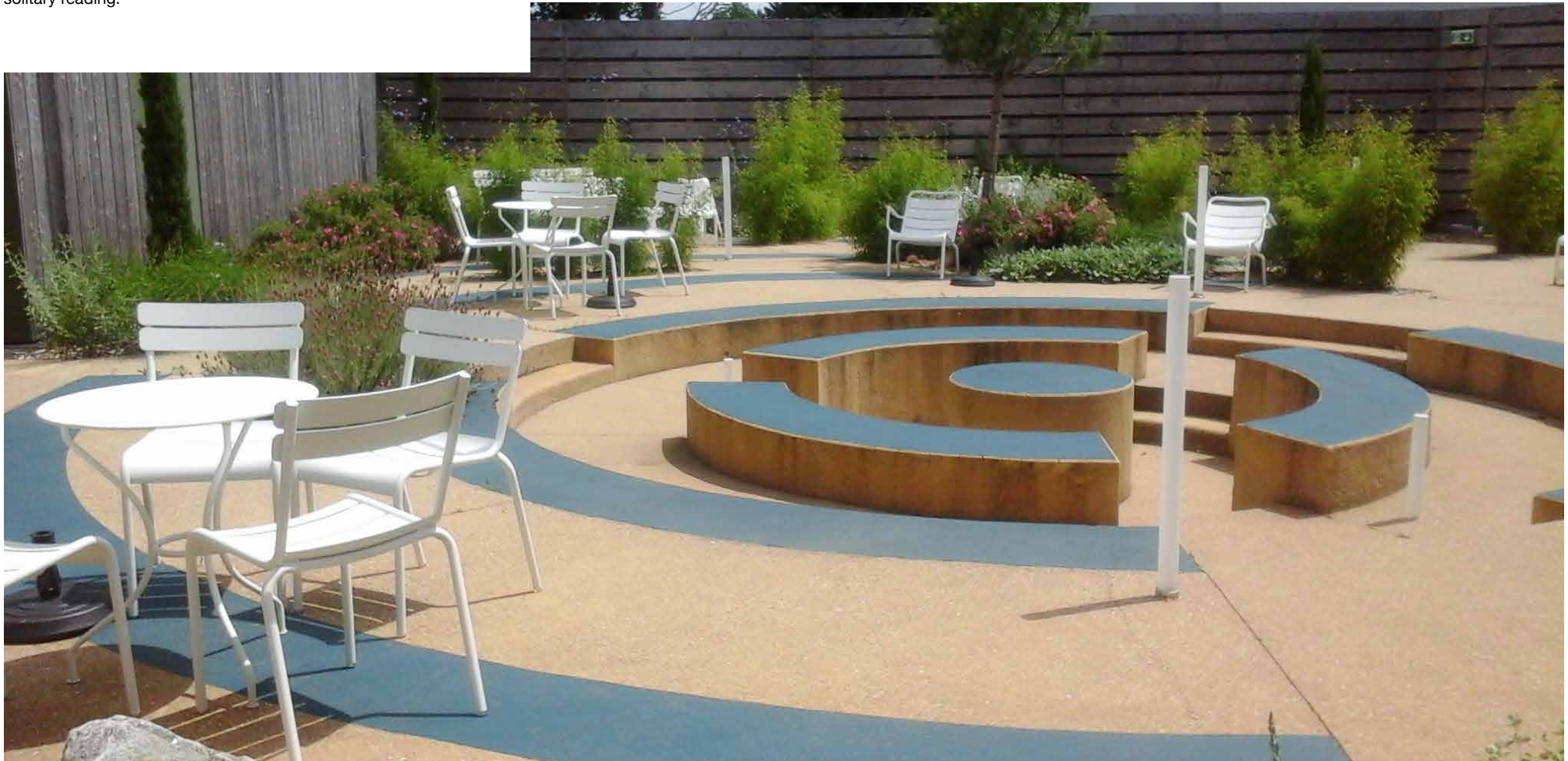


## **Reading garden** 2015

Public commission for a reading garden in a media library, Vannes, FR  
250 sqm.

Planning of the public commission : Beaupré-Tohannic's library aims to promote new medias through digital hardware. In this garden, people can go and settle with a pad and have access to many different digital contents.

Project : Re-materialize the concept of forum (ancient forum / internet forum), et fit the physical space to virtual practice. Inspired by the sylvan theater as a place of exchange and participation, the shape of the garden embodies the wave of transmission of the information. A connected center ideal for direct exchange and a disconnected outskirts suitable to solitary reading.





## ***Supernature*** 2014

Reinforced concrete, mirror-polished cast-iron tiles  
6 x 4 x 0,70 m

Public sculpture for the festival hall of Voreppe, FR

Planning of the public commission : Symbolize the particular presence of water in the area and mark the social cohesion strengthened by the fabric of community life in this new village hall.

Project : It's a user-friendly public furniture, which represents a water drop split on the ground.  
When sparkling like the water, the mirror facets also remind us the famous disco ball.





## **Gloria** 2012

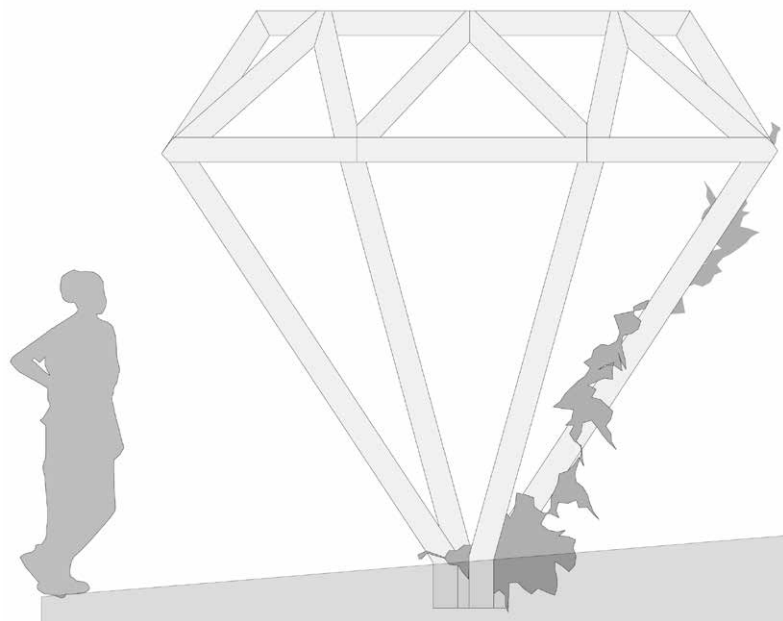
Oakwood, climbing plant (clematis)  
330 x 350 cm

Public sculpture : Montreuil-le-Gast, FR

—

Planning of the Public commission : Deal with the sustainable development questions and highlight the presence of a strong timber-industry in the area.

Project : A signaletic and evolutive wooden sculpture, as a tribute to the wood cycle.  
The sculpture is the support of a climbing plant, whose wood becomes entangled with the oakwood of the sculpture.





***oddities - curiosity cabinet***



## ***Ailanthus capri*** 2021

varnish tree branch, goat hide  
L. 52cm x 25cm x 15cm

Touchable object, that plays with the ambiguity between plants and animals. The resulting work resembles a confusing and unidentified object that could be at home in a curiosity cabinet.





## ***Acer alula*** 2021

transformed maple leaf  
18 x 4 cm

A tree leaf camouflaged as a feather. Playing with the ambiguity between plant and animal kingdoms, in the spirit of a curiosity cabinet.





## ***Prunus alula*** 2020

transformed prunus lusitanica leaf  
12 cm x 5 cm x 1 cm

A tree leaf camouflaged as a feather. Playing with the ambiguity between plant and animal kingdoms, in the spirit of a curiosity cabinet.





## ***Ailanthus tauris*** 2020

varnish tree branch, cowhide  
L. 50cm x 20cm x 10cm

Touchable object, that plays with the ambiguity between plants and animals. The resulting work resembles a confusing and unidentified object that could be at home in a curiosity cabinet.





## ***Ostria clio IV*** 2017

safety glass  
25 cm x 10 cm

Presented in the cabinet of curiosity of the exhibition, Ostria Clio IV is a set of «shells» stemmed from melting of the windshield of a burnt car. The high temperature melted the glass on the dashboard and the paint fumes colored the glass.





## ***Sedimentation*** 2017

expanded polystyrene  
around 5 cm each

Presented in the cabinet of curiosity of the exhibition, these pebbles have been found next to the Seine, on a bank polluted by waste and rubbish. The pebbles are pieces of polystyrene rolled by the surf of the Seine due to the passage of boats.

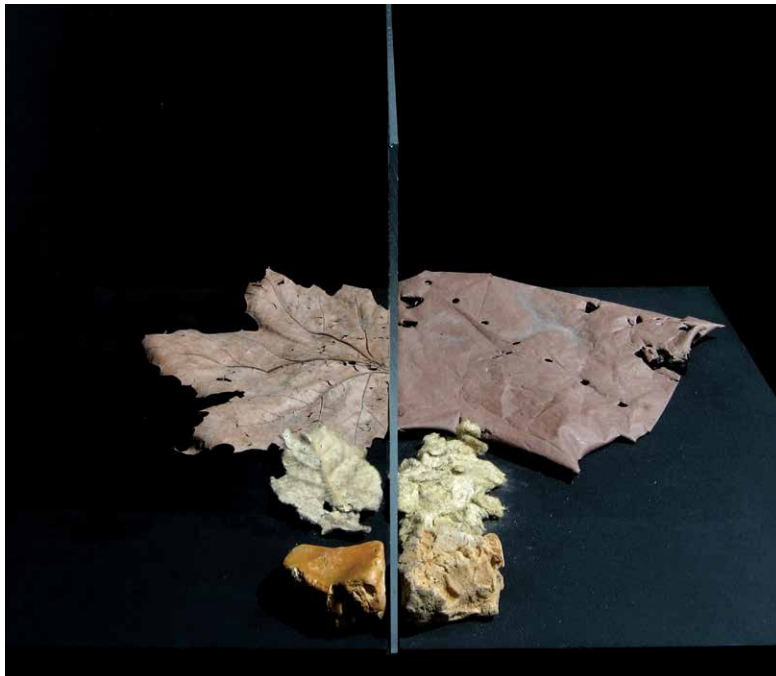




## ***The progress lament*** 2017

plane tree leaf, Verbascum thapsus leaf, flintstone, glass panel,  
synthetic rubbish (polystyren, glass wool, plastic sheet)  
35 x 35 x 35 cm

Waste materials, found within a limited area in a wasteland in the district of Seine-Saint-Denis are displayed, and using a mirror-effect gives the sensation that waste mimics nature.





## ***Equus platanoïdes*** 2016

plane tree trunk segment, cowhide  
H. 200 cm x 130 cm x 80 cm

Looking at a plane tree trunk one can see humps, lumps, cysts, as if an animal would try to extract from the wood. The relationship with animal body is obvious at different scales. The relationship with the sculptures questions too. Because a plane tree trunk is a tense place of bony areas, level breakpoints and undulations of the surface.

By isolating a trunk segment at a human scale I plan to highlight a compilation of inner pressures that come to the surface. The nooks and crannies take on their full importance and reveal their animal side.

By covering this segment with animal skin I play with ambiguity between plant and animal body. The resulting work is as confusing as an unidentified object from a curiosity cabinet.





## ***Castanea kaolinite*** 2015

clay, chestnut burs  
Various sizes - cc. 7 cm

I wanted these items to look like they have been picked up in nature. Forger gave a name to this ambiguous work : *Castanea kaolinite*





## ***In limbo*** 2015

concrete, seashell  
9 x 9 cm

Mysterious object of desire, playing with the ambiguity between nature and artifice, between opacity and obviousness, between brutalism and erotism. The seashell does only show its usually hidden face and the vacuum it creates sucks the eyes up.





## **Fossils** 2015

series of concrete mouldings

left picture : THOMSON Rk100cd : 32 x 25 x 17 cm

below : SINGER confidence7463 : 44 x 32 x 20 cm

These concrete blocks have been directly moulded from household packagings.

Considering the void as a negative mould, the final result is a positive reproduction of the ghost object, on the same principle as the fossilization. The resulting shapes look like micro- architectures, strangely familiar to the strictly technically designed bunkers from the war.





***unidentified objects***



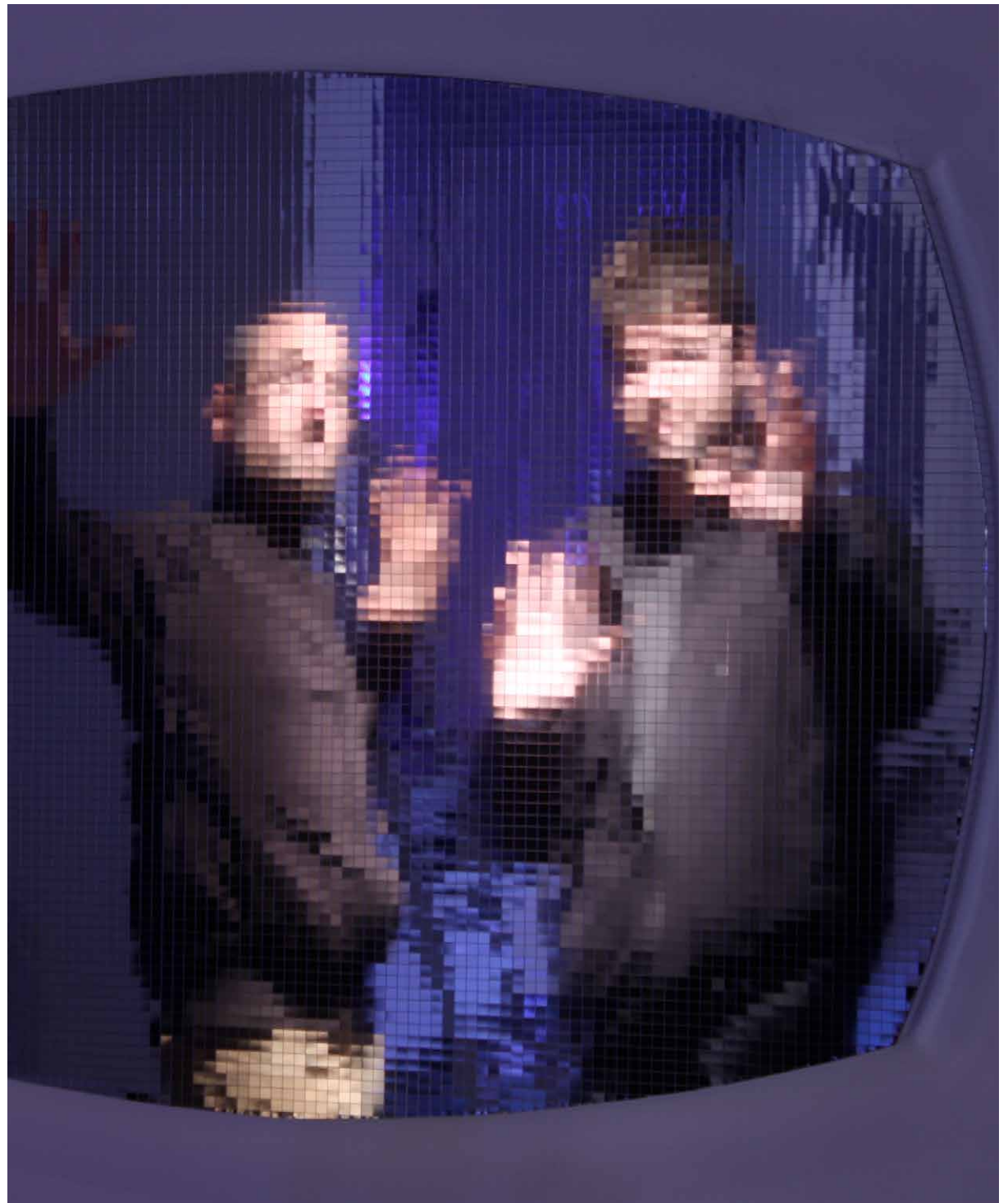
## **Peer-to-peer** 2015

wood, mirror tiles  
120 x 90 x 9 cm

*Welcome in joyland, with or without joystick...*  
*P2P in 8bits VGA.*  
*Welcome within the decaying yourself.*

Reminding the shape of an old cathode-ray tube, this nod to the prehistory of computing and videogames is interactive and allows people to watch their own real-time pixelised image.

**video link** <https://youtu.be/46Q3aE799IA>





**Capital** 2013

steel falsework  
15 x 70 x 91 cm





## Goodminton 2011

cork, peacock feathers  
12 x 7 cm

About sport, competition and the relentless pursuit of performance.

*«Le sport est sorti du sport, il est devenu un état d'esprit, un mode de formation du lien social, du rapport à soi et à autrui pour l'homme compétitif que nous sommes tous enjoint de devenir au sein d'une société de compétition généralisée.»*

Alain Ehrenberg, 'Le culte de la performance'





## ***The promise*** 2012

linoleum  
44 x 39 x 97 cm

This chair has been produced from a linoleum roll. Is this soft and fragile object still a chair or only its representation?





## ***Last-ditch attempt*** 2012

galvanized steel security fence , terracotta bricks  
200 x 40 x 110 cm

The security fence is a familiar object. Light and removable, it places however a limit that one cannot cross. Here lightness is annihilated and one can cross it more easily.





## ***Song to the auvergnats*** 2012

doormat, steel nails  
63 x 38 cm

Reference is made to Georges Brassens' song : «Chanson pour l'auvergnat», which is a tribute to hospitality, and also to the famous sentence of Brice Hortefeux (former french Minister of Interior) about Arabs : «One is ok, problems come when they are numerous». This one defended himself pretending he was talking about the Auvergnats and not the Arabs.





## **MAOA** 2012

Magic lantern, plastic leaf, soundtrack  
18 x 18 x 20 cm

A controversial scientific study from «New Scientist» journal states that male people who have a mutant form of the MAOA gene have twice more chances to become offenders than the sane people.

The magic lantern is diverted from its lullaby role, to finally become a police siren.

**video link** <http://youtu.be/dU9EvuuZONM>





## **Arguably** 2006

printing on T-shirts

The silk-screened logo looks like what one can see in the TV broadcasts, when the brands are blurred in order to avoid free advertising. Are these T-shirts counterfeits? Arguably...

