

# Contemporary Talents 7<sup>th</sup> edition

**From 9 February to 21 April 2019**

Contemporary art center of the François Schneider Foundation, Wattwiller (Haut-Rhin), France  
Preview : Friday 8 February 2019 at 6pm

**Edouard Decam • Cristina Escobar • Sara Ferrer • Claire Malrieux • Camille Michel  
Maël Nozahic • Benjamin Rossi • Collectif Sandra & Ricardo**



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They have hiked majestic mountainous, carved sculptures from nature, explored the ocean depths and lived with refugees. They are algorithm designers, ethnological photographers, painters of desolate spaces, or visual artists working with the idea of fragility. The 2017 edition of the Contemporary Talent Prize (Concours Talents Contemporains) saw the following eight winners: Edouard Decam, Cristina Escobar, Sara Ferrer, Claire Malrieux, Camille Michel, Maël Nozahic, Benjamin Rossi, and the Sandra & Ricardo collective.

The Contemporary Talent Prize began in 2011 as part of a philanthropic initiative. It supports the creation of contemporary art and artists from all geographical backgrounds, ages and disciplines. Artists contemplated the theme of water in a multitude of ways to explore environmental, societal, plastic, philosophical and anthropological issues, and an infinite number of topics. Between six and eight winners are selected each year.

Gradually, an original collection took shape, bringing together video, permanent installations, paintings, drawings, sculptures, photographs and digital art. The collection features stowaway sheep, carved fish, crystal tears, and oceans of words. The works travel from Wattwiller to Lisbon via Epinal, Bordeaux or Amsterdam, displaying different points of view and offering a reflection of the modern world.

Artists can accompany us on infinite journeys, inviting introspection or denunciation. They are often thoughtful, and their questioning of the notion of vestige could well be the common thread linking the winners of this 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

Edouard Decam is a tireless surveyor of the remote Pyrenees whose works feature abandoned architecture, including dams with mesmerising structures. Cristina Escobar tells the story of men and women refugees in Italy, tracing their journeys on a map of the Mediterranean. She plots each person's route using 40 marble objects: their "trophies". Sara Ferrer uses a minimalistic installation to condemn the impacts of mass fishing and overconsumption. Camille Michel also questions how modernity and industrialisation induce excess. Her photographs document the metamorphosis of Greenland and the daily lives of the Uummannaq people living in the north-west of the territory. Claire Malrieux's generative work entitled *Waterscape* excavates the idea of the Anthropocene Era and examines the impact of humans on our ecosystem. Benjamin Rossi goes back even further in human history. His field of study is the Forest of Fontainebleau, formerly the Stampian Sea. The artist takes an impression, the blown glass negative of which is used to capture this long-lost era. Inspired by the flow of water in the Coa Valley in Portugal, famous for its Paleolithic rock engravings, the Sandra & Ricardo collective have created a pool using thousands of water-filled sacks, a metaphor for the birth of civilization. And Maël Nozahic's pond reflecting a wolf represents the final traces of life in a world frozen in time.

Each of the works on display bears the mark of man's ambivalence. Our impact on our environment is expressed as a form of lyrical despair. The selection of these artists is a reflection of the increased global concern about ubiquitous ecological disasters.

**Artist list : Edouard Decam, Cristina Escobar, Sara Ferrer, Claire Malrieux, Camille Michel, Maël Nozahic Benjamin Rossi, Collectif Sandra & Ricardo**

## ABOUT THE COMPETITION

The François Schneider Foundation has set itself the goal of discovering, supporting and revealing new talents to the public at large, whilst supporting contemporary art based around the theme of water.

Through the “Contemporary Talents” competition established in 2011, François Schneider wants to support these artists by acquiring their works and showcasing them in the Foundation’s Art Centre by means of an exhibition and the publication of a catalogue.

After around forty finalists are selected by four Expert Committees, an international grand jury composed of recognised figures chooses a maximum of seven prize-winners.

The annual endowment for the competition stands at 300,000 euros. The prize-winners each receive 20,000 euros for the acquisition of their work. A sum of 160,000 euros is allocated for the creation of works submitted in project form, as support for their production.

The Foundation then promotes the artists through artwork loans, travelling exhibitions, participation in festivals and by regularly posting each artist’s news on its social networks.

The International Grand Jury for the 7<sup>th</sup> edition was composed of :

Jean-Noël Jeanneney - President of the Jury ; Daniel Lelong – Galerie Lelong (Paris & New York) ; Rosa Maria Malet – Director of the Joan Miró Foundation (Barcelona) ; Ernest Pignon-Ernest, plastic artist, draughtsman, photographer ; Fabrizio Plessi – Italy’s representative at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Venice Biennale in 1986 ; Roland Wetzel – Director of the Tinguely Museum (Basel, Switzerland).



# ÉDOUARD DECAM



**Édouard Decam, *Landscape Scale*, 2008.** 3 photographs, 100 x 100 cm and 21 silkscreen prints, 30 x 20cm each.

How can we depict a mountainous landscape, establish a profound connection with it and gain an understanding of the relationship we have with it ? The confrontation between the endogenous elements of the landscape and human interventions in a natural setting can help to establish an intimate connection with a place and reveal its key characteristics.

An exploration of water, dams and landscape can help us to understand a natural environment and to perceive its limits. Dams in the mountains are much more than simply an architectural construction. They are an aesthetic form, a boundary, an installation, two independent bodies responding to the rise and fall of the water – the key element – whose volume, mass and force are the essential features of the construction itself. The dam becomes part of the environment and changes our vision of the landscape. Photography allows Édouard Decam to communicate this new vision - a history on various scales - and to grasp and appreciate the limits and the interplay between the dam and its surroundings.

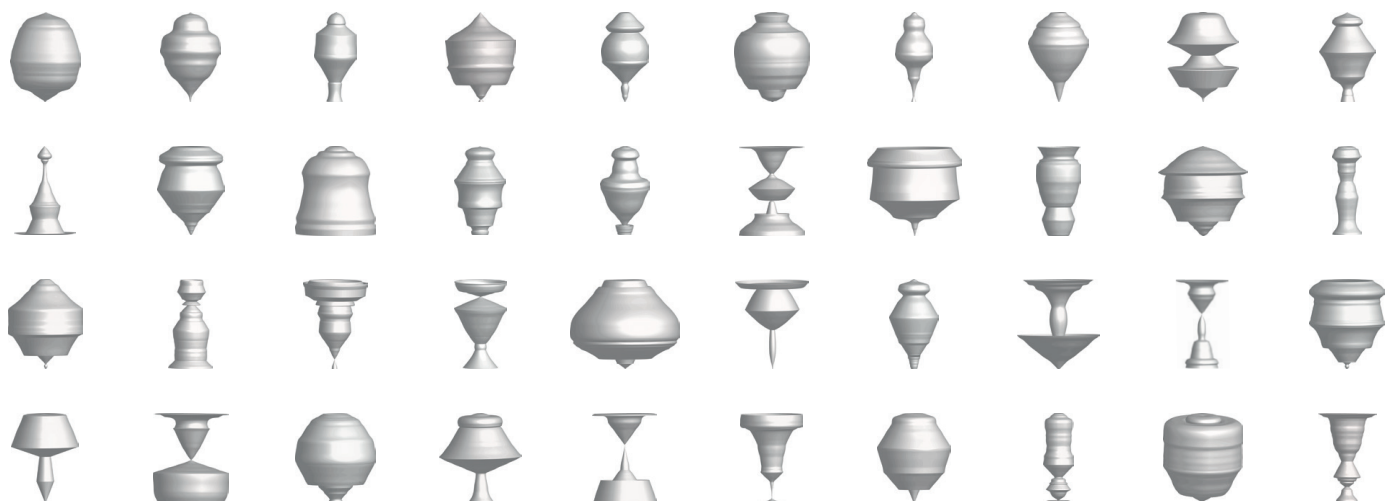
## BIOGRAPHY

**Born in 1978 in Libourne, (France) | Lives and works in Fronsac (France)**

Édouard Decam graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture et de Paysage in Bordeaux (2003). During his studies, he took part in a one-year exchange with the University of Architecture in Santiago, Chile (2002). His works were recently exhibited at the Cent-quatre and l'Espace Electra (Paris), Farenheit – Flax Foundation (Los Angeles), Hangar (Lisbon) and he has held residencies at the Casa de Velazquez (Madrid) and Matadero (Madrid). He also won the LOOP Discover award for his film Volva. His work centres around architecture, usually in extreme environments, and observes the connections and influences that architecture creates with its surroundings. He is particularly interested in the links between science, architecture and landscape.

Artist's website : [edouarddecam.com](http://edouarddecam.com)

# CRISTINA ESCOBAR



**Cristina Escobar, *Trophées*, 2018.** Installation of 40 pieces of Carrara marble.

As part of her a residence with the Mètre Carré association, Cristina Escobar spent three months at a refugee camp in Lucca, Italy. Her work *Trophies*, made of 40 pieces of Carrara marble, recalls the routes of 40 men and women. Each marks their tracks on a map of the Mediterranean, which the artist then uses to create smooth, perfectly formed 3D models – a prize for emerging victorious at the end of a long road... Marble is a weighty material that symbolises beauty and purity. It evidences the hardship of a journey such as this, while also alluding to the tomb.

Cristina's work is often linked to travel, to the voyage – perhaps as a result of her own insular situation as one born in Cuba and then exiled to France. Confinement and the circle are recurrent formal and conceptual themes, and her near-perfect minimalist aesthetic is supported by a choice of materials that includes wood, glass and copper. Her academic training shines through in her mastery of drawing and forms, particularly in her larger-scale work. Her attention to a particular aesthetic is a counterbalance to her politically committed, often denunciatory statements: the ostensible perfection masks the brutality of the topics she addresses. Cristina Escobar thus plays on the multiple ways that viewers can perceive an object, and the difficulties aroused by these images of plastic beauty.

With *Trophies*, 40 objects are meticulously arranged on the ground: an inventory of perfect, clinical forms that the artist uses to confront us with a sad, topical issue and address societal concerns – a central theme of her work.

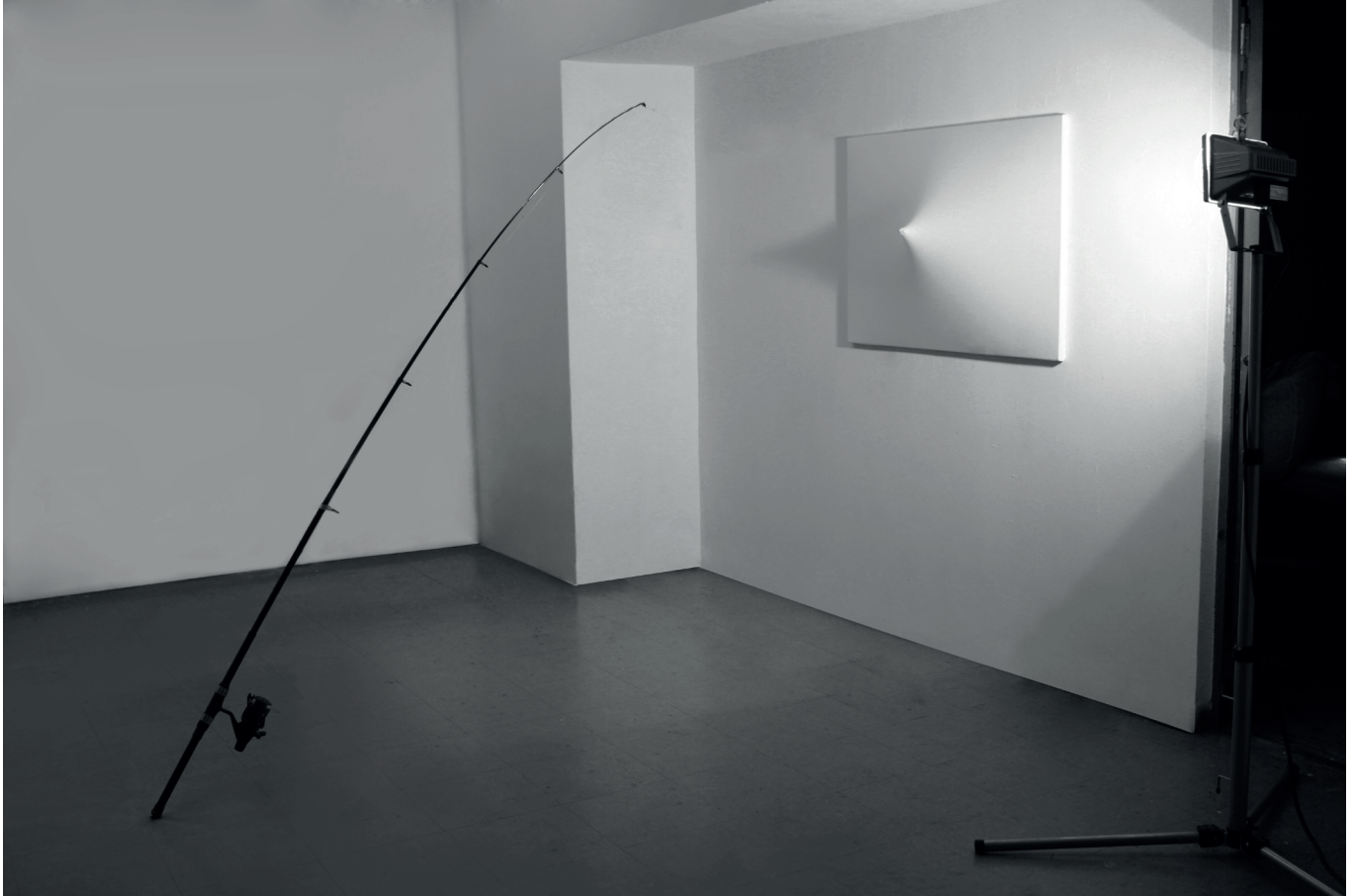
## BIOGRAPHY

### **Born in 1977 in Cuba | Lives and works in Nancy (France)**

Cristina Escobar graduated from the Academy of Plastic Arts (1996) and the National Centre of Plastic Arts in Santiago de Cuba (1998). She later graduated from the Nancy National School of Art (2006). In 2016, she spent a year in India as part of the Bonjour India 2017 artist's residency. Her work has been exhibited in France (Nancy, Metz, Paris), London and China. Cristina Escobar's work addresses the issues that affect her: the foundations of our society; world designs; and the sources and consequences of conflicts and utopias. She develops a narrative from everyday objects, drawings, sculptures and installations, mixing fiction with reality.

Artist's website : [cristinaescobar.net](http://cristinaescobar.net)

# SARA FERRER



**Sara Ferrer, *Fishing the Soul*, 2016.** Fishing rod, fishing line, wooden frame and lycra fabric, 400 x 500 x 150 cm.

Throughout her works, Sara Ferrer uses maritime symbols (boats, compasses, sharks, buoys, etc.) to represent emotions. With aesthetic simplicity, she explores the complexity of emotions such as fear and vulnerability, and social and personal values. The subliminal language hidden in the most everyday gestures and details is often harder to understand, analyse and accept. They are unconscious signals which we send out in normalised day-to-day actions.

In this way, she analyses our internal and external struggles, and casts a critical eye over the consequences of some of our interactions with nature.

She recently combined her hobby of diving with her artistic works by examining practices which are harming our oceans. In *Fishing the Soul*, she condemns overfishing and overconsumption, and highlights the urgent need to “heal” the oceans.

## BIOGRAPHY

### **Born in 1979, in Espagne | Lives and works in Berlin (Germany)**

Sara Ferrer graduated in Fine Art from Northumbria University (2005, UK), in Theatre Techniques from the Centro de Tecnología de Espectáculo in Madrid (2008, Espagne) and specialised in art and design at the Escuela de Arte y Diseño La Plama in Madrid (2011, Spain). In 2017, she took part in a training course on conservation at the NODE Center in Berlin. In 2011, she won first prize for sculpture at the Escuela de Arte y Diseño La Plama (Madrid) and the Aurelio Blanco award de la Conserjería de Educación Comunidad de Madrid.

The sculptures, installations and photographs which she produces are focused on human psychology, stripped of any rationality and context, and structured around animalistic forms and objects which connect us to nature

Artist's website : [saraferrer.com](http://saraferrer.com)



# CLAIRE MALRIEUX



**Claire Malrieux, *Waterscape*, 2017.** Generative drawing projected on screen.

*Waterscape* is a generative graphic work in which water is represented within the contemporary anthropocene climate. This display involves a drawing of water in motion, autonomous and infinite. Like water, this work is constantly evolving and has no planned end.

The graphic gesture is controlled by an algorithm and by data implemented in the program. Using generative instructions and analysis of data from climate records related to precipitation, disasters since 1900, droughts, floods and hurricanes, as well as predictive simulations related to the management of future water crises, the program creates an animation whose script is based on a nonlinear interpretation of events. The representation of water is thus in constant flux and influenced by the environment in which it evolves. As in dreams or in hypnosis, drawing leaves space for the knowledge and imagination of every viewer, recalling the diversity and complexity of different representations of water.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Born in 1972, in France | Lives and works in Paris (France)**

Claire Malrieux is a graduate of the Olivier de Serres School (1995) and the Paris School of Fine Arts (2000). She specialized in new technologies at Ensci-les-ateliers (2011) and at the University of Lille 3 (2016), where she created her *Hyperdrawings*. She currently teaches drawing at Ensci-les Ateliers and at the Rhine University of Arts, and pursues her Hyperdrawing research at the Ensad Lab of the School of Decorative Arts in Paris. She is co-founder of the Mix collective and Mix publishing.

Her graphic work has been shown in various institutions, including the Museum of Decorative Arts (2014), l'Espace Kiasma (2015), La Terrasse à Nanterre (2016), and the Hyperpavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale. Claire Malrieux has developed an artistic practice that operates at the borderline of sculpture, installation and drawing. Since 2013, she has been researching the relationship between drawing and digital practices.

Artist's website : [claire-malrieux.com](http://claire-malrieux.com)

# CAMILLE MICHEL



**Camille Michel, *Uummannaq*, 2014-2015.** Series of 24 photographs.

*Uummannaq* is an island in North West Greenland, located 590 km from the Arctic Circle. Uummannaq means “heart-shaped” in Greenlandic, so-named due to the appearance of the island’s mountain. This rock has 1,280 inhabitants, most of whom are fishermen and hunters. Fishing is the main economic activity. However, climate change and the modern world are transforming society.

On the island, lifestyles are increasingly westernized. Fishing practices are becoming more industrial. Sled dogs share the pack ice with cars and scooters. In 2004, there were over 5,000 dogs ; by 2017, this number had reduced to just 500. Mobile phones and social networks are the new big thing ! The landscape is marked by modern infrastructures such as supermarkets, a gas station. Imported European products make life simpler, but these also cause diabetes pollution. All the waste is burned in the open air. Traces of dioxin have been found in the lake. Both the health and food security are under threat. Many people go to Nuuk, the capital, or to Denmark in search of work and a more comfortable life. Which is more responsible for these problems : climate change, or the race towards a modern economy that is steering Greenland towards becoming a materialistic society ? This series depicts the daily life of a population in metamorphosis : a Greenland torn between tradition and modernity, ecological disaster and power.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Born in 1988, in France | Lives and works in Paris (France)**

Camille Michel is a photographer who studied art at Paris 8 University (2012) and photography at the Arles National School of Photography (2015). Her work addresses the relationship between man and the environment, and their respective impacts, for societies in close proximity to nature. What relationships do man and nature have with the twenty-first century ? What is left of traditional culture ? What is the impact of industrialization ? She uses to document the daily life of populations and communities in times of great upheaval.

Her work has been published in *Liberation*, *The New York Times*, *La Croix* and *Le Monde*. She has received several awards for her photographs, which have been exhibited in France, England, Argentina, USA, Italy and Brazil. Since 2015, she has been represented by the Hans Lucas studio, directed by Wilfrid Estève. Camille Michel is a member of the Photographic Observatory of the Poles. She is represented by the studio Hans Lucas.

Artist’s website : [camillem.net](http://camillem.net)



# MAËL NOHAZIC



**Maël Nozahic, *Close*, 2013.** Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm.

*Close* is the painting of an apparition. In Berlin, Treptower Park hides an abandoned amusement park that can be viewed in autumn. A frozen world lies barricaded behind large gates: brambles and ivy cover the once-colourful rides, strangling the disintegrating wooden horses. The desolation of the park sits in stark contrast with the images of laughing children and the unimpeded motion of the rides. All evidence of life seems to have disappeared. It is as if the world had been devastated by a series of catastrophes, and we have discovered its vestiges, the last remaining evidence of happy times long past.

Two small peeling white huts, chewed at by a type of greenish moss, stand out. Pieces of glass hang from the windows, their brightness in contrast with the pervasive gloom. The security huts are reflected in a large puddle of water, like a pond. The image undulates to the rhythms of an icy breeze.

Water in this context is a mirror that reflects, on one hand, our anxieties about disappearance, and on the other quenches our apparently insatiable thirst for life.

## BIOGRAPHY

### **Born in 1972, in France | Lives and works in Paris (France)**

Maël Nozahic studied at the Brittany School of Art in Quimper and the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Karlsruhe. After graduating in 2009, she moved to Germany and exhibited her works in several galleries, at the Berlin French Institute and the Villa Merkel/Bahnwärterhaus in Esslingen. In 2010, the gallery owner Eva Hober invited her to take part in "Beautiful Painting is Behind Us" in Istanbul, Ankara and Maribor, as well as at the Lieu Unique in Nantes. In 2012, she won the Lesquivin-Garnier painting prize. M. Nozahic has completed an ARTU residency-mission organized by the Universities of Nord-Pas-de-Calais and DRAC North Pas-de-Calais/Picardy, as well as a dual creative residence proposed by the city of Brest. Inspiration for the colourful, post-apocalyptic universe that characterizes her paintings is drawn from natural history, myths and religion.

Artist's website : [maelnozahic.com](http://maelnozahic.com)

# BENJAMIN ROSSI



**Benjamin Rossi, *Après la Mer, les Chaos*, 2016.** Blown glass, 39 x 32 x 20,5 cm.

This sculpture, produced in the Musuerre de Sars-Poteries workshops by the glass blower Stéphane Rivoal, was conceived out of the desire to show a universally familiar form - an iceberg, a balloon, a crevice, a wave - that has never previously been noted for its sculptural value. The impression at the heart of the piece was extracted from a rock pile (called 'chaos') found deep in the forest of Fontainebleau.

The reproduction of this landform in a material that connotes and embodies 'fragility' in equal measure is born of a steadfast ecological bias. Nature conservation begins with an awareness of the existence of living species, the multiple components of the landscape, and the need for these to be safeguarded by humans. This is one of the main ambitions of this sculpture: a work of art that helps steer observers towards challenges both artistic and ecological.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Born in 1986 in Angers (France) | Lives and works in Rennes (France)**

A graduate of the National School of Decorative Arts in 2014, Benjamin Rossi exhibits both in France and abroad (Japan, Belgium). He seeks to identify a distinctive feature, extract it, isolate it, highlight it. To find a way of depicting that which sometimes exists beyond our line of vision.

It's a question of fighting the inertia of the present; of taking a risk on the relentless movement of passing time. Step by step, forms and counter-forms reveal unexpected details, redraw familiar surfaces, express the movement that shaped them, and, finally, reveal those things we generally try to remedy: things hidden in the crevices, within the hollows of the world.

Artist's website : [benjaminrossi.fr](http://benjaminrossi.fr)



# Collective SANDRA & RICARDO



**Collective Sandra & Ricardo, *The Memory of Water*, 2017.** Installation, plastic bags filled with water, diving board and pool ladder.

*The Memory of Water* suggests an explorative immersion in one's own territories of in-betweenness. Water generates life, and destroys it. Water embellishes the landscape, and devastates it. Water rains from the sky, pure or acid. Human social spaces arise from water, and with them, their culture.

*The Memory of Water* installation simulates a swimming pool with hundreds of little water-filled bags placed on the bottom of the pool. The work invites the viewer on an emotionally cathartic and intellectually analytical exploration of the

subjectivity of today's opposing forces, the expanded universality and compressed fragmentation, and to question their sustainability. Time and memory are retained in metal's surface oxidation and stains. Water, the natural element of in-betweenness, whose fluidity is compressed by thousands of fragile parcels, which, in turn, are spatially delimited, is aggressed by plastic and metals artificiality.

The diver evokes solitude and a distant closeness. The work invites one to question the paradox of certain vulnerabilities, both in society and in the individual.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Born in 1968 and 1975 in Portugal | Live and work in Cascais and Lisbon (Portugal)**

The collective is composed of the artists Sandra Baía and Ricardo Escarducha. Sandra Baía has a multidisciplinary practice exploring different techniques and materials. Her mode of expression ranges from minimalism to expressionism, from the figurative to the abstract. She addresses questions of individuality, intimacy and vulnerability. Ricardo Escarducha combines various artistic forms including dramaturgy, performance art, photography, video, literature and music. He is also a permanent contributor to the Portuguese contemporary art magazine *Artecapital*, and member of the Pogo art collective in Lisbon.

Website of Sandra Baía : [sandra-baia.com](http://sandra-baia.com)



## THE FOUNDATION FRANÇOIS SCHNEIDER

Philanthropic foundation, established in 2000 and recognized as a body acting in the public interest in 2005, the Fondation François Schneider, works in the twin fields of culture and education. The Foundation enables secondary school pupils to access higher education by offering them grants and assists contemporary artists by supporting the diffusion of their work.

The Foundation, directed by Marie Terrieux, encourages creative activity through various initiatives devoted to the theme of water, including an international competition, the acquisition of works for its collection and the organisation of themed exhibitions in its contemporary art centre and sculpture garden. This work is complemented by publications, loans, travelling exhibitions and a residency programme for young artists from art schools along the Rhine.

Located beside the Rhine, which runs from Switzerland to the Netherlands by way of France and Germany, the Fondation François Schneider places interculturality at the heart of its programming, helping to bring about fruitful contacts between artists and the local populations of these different areas.

### **The big dates of the Foundation :**

- 2000 Creation of the Foundation
- 2005 Recognizing as a body acting in the public interest
- 2011 Creation of the competition Contemporary Talents
- 2013 Inauguration of the Art Center of 4.500 m<sup>2</sup>
- 2018 Launch of the art residencies KunstArt

## THE CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER OF THE FOUNDATION

Set in an exceptional natural landscape at the foot of the Vosges mountains in the village of Wattwiller in Alsace, the contemporary art center of the Fondation François Schneider presents an annual programme of cultural events and exhibitions dedicated to the theme of the water. The site, which was inaugurated in 2013 in an extended and transformed former bottling plant, offers 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> of space.

With its architecture based around light and transparency, the building contains three exhibition rooms with a surface area of 1,200 m<sup>2</sup>. An adjoining sculpture garden allows visitors to stroll amongst artworks from the permanent collection dating from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Water cascades from the monumental Nana figure in Niki de Saint-Phalle's *Star Fountain* and trickles from Ilana Isehayek's *Toupiés d'eau* before following the Vosges mountain ridges evoked by Sylvie de Meurville's installation and sparkling across the surface of Pol Bury's steel spheres. In the large pool created by Renaud Auguste-Dormeuil for his work *From Here to There*, the water reflects the movement of the clouds before being channelled to the far side of the Pacific through an imaginary tunnel.

Visitors can also enjoy a bookshop and a restaurant serving a menu based on local produce mainly derived from organic and fair-trade sources.

# About

## Media and communication contact

L'art en plus

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Virginie Burnet / Amandine Legrand

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## Contact

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## Opening and price

Exhibition presented from 9 February to 21 April 2019

Contemporary Art Center is open

March – September : from Wednesday to Sunday 11 am - 6 pm

October – February : from Wednesday to Sunday 11 am - 5 pm

Guided tours on request

**Full price : 5€**

**Reduced price : 3€** : (Cezam Card, unemployed visitors, 12-18 y.o, teachers, students, group of 10 pax, disabled visitors, seniors (+65 y.o)

**Free admission** : Icom Card, 0-12 y.o, Museums Pass Musées

## Found us

Foundation François Schneider

27 rue de la Première Armée

68700 Wattwiller – France

## Depuis Paris :

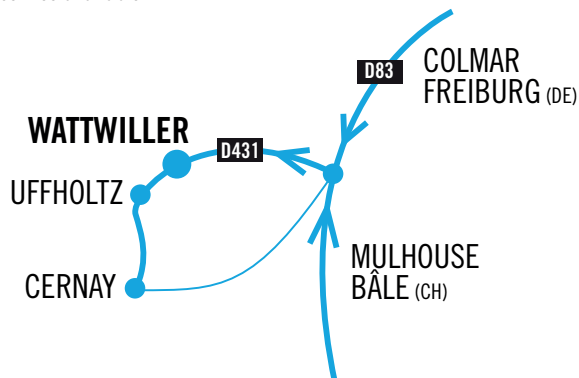
Direct train between Paris "Gare de Lyon" and the train station of Mulhouse

Direct train between Paris "Gare de l'Est" and the train station of Colmar

Train Station of Colmar and Mulhouse are 30 min from the Fondation by car

Basel / Mulhouse International Airport is 45 minutes from the Fondation by car

Taxi service available



## Foundation team

**Marie Terrieux** - Director

**Elodie Graff** - Operations manager

**Sylvaine Bahls** - Accountant and administrative assistant

**Raoul Ermel** - Registrar

**Lucie Stroh** - Production coordinator and public responsible

**Gwenaël D'Anna** - Receptionist & registrar

**Halima El Hamdi** - Receptionist and administrative assistant

**Candice Felder** - Graphic designer and community manager

## Coffe shop - Le Bistr'eu

Stéphanie Blaser offers you delicious home cooking, created with fresh local produce, mainly from organic and fair-trade sources.

Come and have lunch, take in an exhibition and enjoy a pastry, or relax with a tea on our panoramic terrace.

The coffe shop is open :

March – September : from Wednesday to Sunday 11 am - 6 pm

October – February : from Wednesday to Saturday 11 am - 5 pm

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