

The background of the entire page is a black field populated with numerous white, glossy spheres of varying sizes. Some spheres are in sharp focus, showing highlights and reflections, while others are blurred, creating a sense of depth and movement. The spheres are scattered across the frame, with a higher concentration in the upper left and lower right areas.

Press kit

**CÉLESTE**  
**BOURSIER-MOUGENOT**  
***LIQUIDE***  
***LIQUIDE***



FONDATION  
FRANÇOIS SCHNEIDER

# CÉLESTE BOURSIER-MOUGENOT : *LIQUIDE LIQUIDE*

**Exhibition: 8 June - 22 September 2019**

Preview : 7 June 2019 at 6pm

## ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

A major figure of the French and international art scene, Céleste Boursier-Mougenot was given free rein by the François Schneider Foundation.

In response, the representative for France at the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale in 2015 took a poetic knife to the entire Art Centre, recreating *in situ* a set of visual and sound installations whose aim is to disorient the visitor. The usual downwards trajectory is inverted to create a route that goes from the building's deepest point up to its peak.

The materials flow, escape, spread out. Glass, water and minerals spread from the edges of the foundation to its viscera. At once both minimal and sophisticated, Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's work is a clever fusion of science and fiction.

A visionary for improbable encounters between the living things and manufactured objects that populate our world, to which the artist grants a soul, Céleste Boursier-Mougenot shapes his hybrid works with the control of a craftsman and the "irrationality" of an engineer. His subtle staging and use of space draws on his experiences in the theatre. In the belief that too much visual noise erodes the listening experience, he recreates a sensory, sprightly procession at the heart of the Art Centre, whereby the visitor plays the roles of tightrope walker, swimmer, cosmonaut...

His choice of title, *Liquide Liquide*, echoing the famous '80s New York post-punk band, sets the tone for the Foundation's summer exhibition: vibrant, alternative and free.



## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Céleste Boursier-Mougenot was a politically committed actor in the underground scene in Nice at the end of the 1970s. From an early age, he developed a solid visual and auditory ethos, in which questions of space quickly came to the fore. He grew up surrounded by artists and intellectuals: his grandfather was a painter, his father was a glass-maker, sculptor and latterly a horticultural historian, and his mother was an urban sociologist. His work seeks to answer tangible questions by using various tools and creating devices that subvert spatial constraints through a combination of force and gentleness. Boursier-Mougenot's onerous but hardworking experience at the Nice Conservatory of Music and Dance, which he attended as a child and a teenager, made him realise that he was ill-suited to academic models. This in turn led him to become the composer for the company Side One / Posthume Théâtre (1985-1994), for which the author and director Pascal Rambert gave him free creative rein.

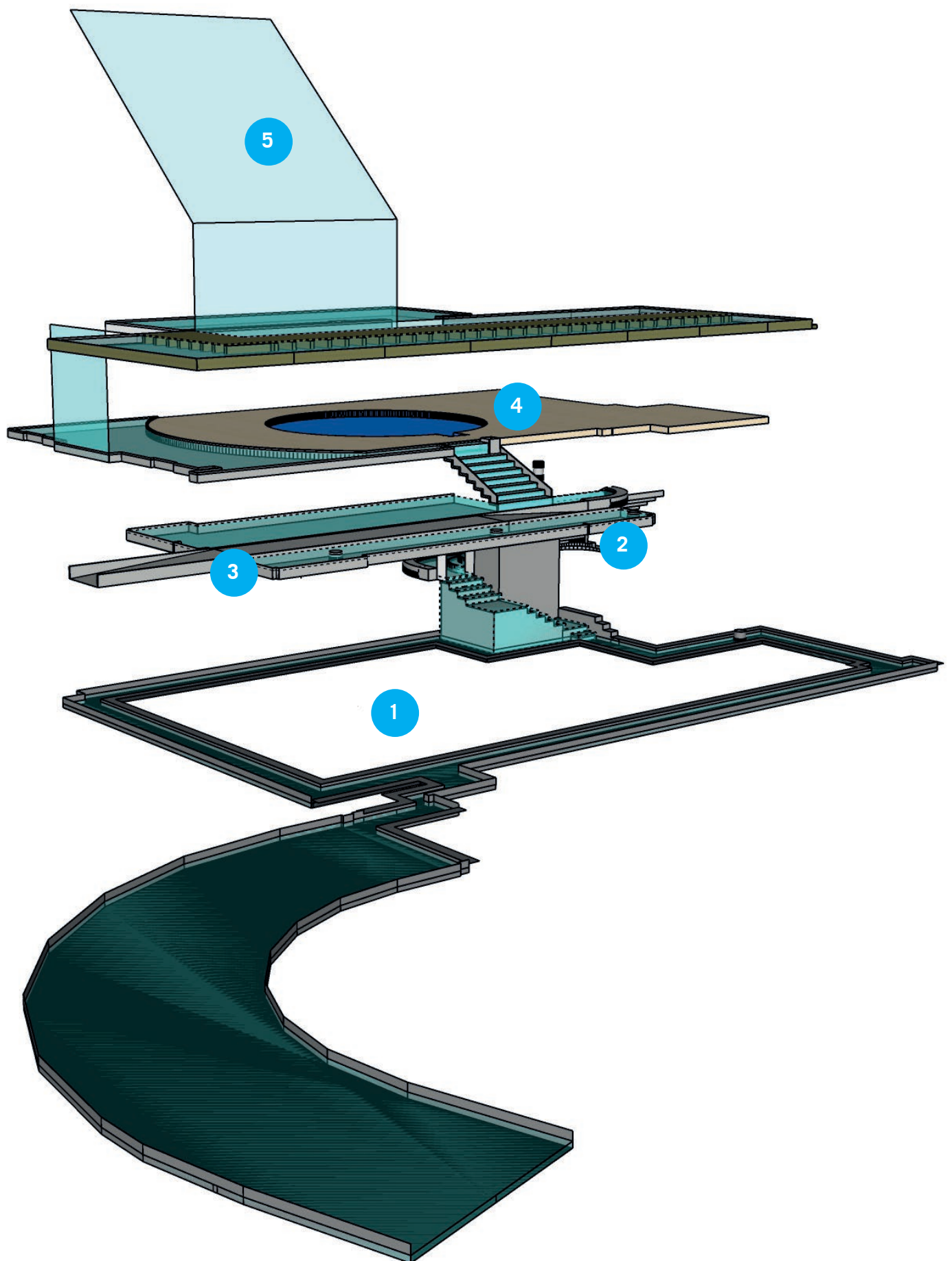
Subsequently, he indulged his musical ambitions by creating more and more physical installations that integrate forms in motion. First French artist to win the International Studio Program (PS1) in New York in 1998-1999, he has spent some time in America where he has been encouraged to develop increasingly tangible experiments and means of expression. This is particularly apparent in musical installations such as *From Here to Ear*, where the visitor is invited to enter a "bird territory" in a museum room that has been transformed into an aviary, or his famous inflatable pools (*Untitled*) filled with water and tinkling porcelain containers at the Paula Cooper Gallery (1999). Since then, his work has focused on stories of living beings and ephemeral objects. The dialogue between technique and imagination has been a constant undercurrent to his work in France and abroad over the past 30 years. Operating at the fringes of commercial channels, he develops his projects almost exclusively *in situ*.

His work has been exhibited at major institutions, including the last two Lyon Biennales (2015-2017) and at the Minsheng Museum in Shanghai (2017), the Venice Biennale (2015), the Palais de Tokyo (2015), the Victoria National Gallery in Melbourne (2013), the Barbican Art Center in London (2010) and the Pinacoteca de São Paulo (2009).

Céleste Boursier-Mougenot is represented by the Paula Cooper Gallery (New York), the Xippas Gallery (Paris, Geneva, Montevideo, Athens) and the Mario Mazzoli Gallery (Berlin).

Céleste Boursier-Mougenot was born in Nice in 1961. Father of four children, he lives and works in Sète in France.

## THE ARTWORKS





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***plex3, 2019.***

Mixed technique, recycled pallets, polyurethane foam, black carpet, black PVC liner, water, sound, stones, audio-video projection. A François Schneider Foundation and RPC - Fija Group Production.



Visitors enter into a strange, flooded hallway or via the bowels of the building. Their journey begins in darkness. Gradually, they discover a room in which circular moving objects change shape on the walls.

*plex3* is the playback of an earlier video recording of the *clinamen* installation. A seemingly uneven, obscure landscape invites the visitor to lie down, collapse or wander aimlessly, as they like. The soundscape is the amplified noise of the images, in the form of an electric wave. The video signal of the projections is converted into audio, processed, and then broadcast to convey the modulations of the bowls as they move in the frame.

*plex3* is an introspective first stop on the journey through the space. Oedipal memories recall the mother's womb; or, less weightily, the darkened corners of a moonlit nightclub!

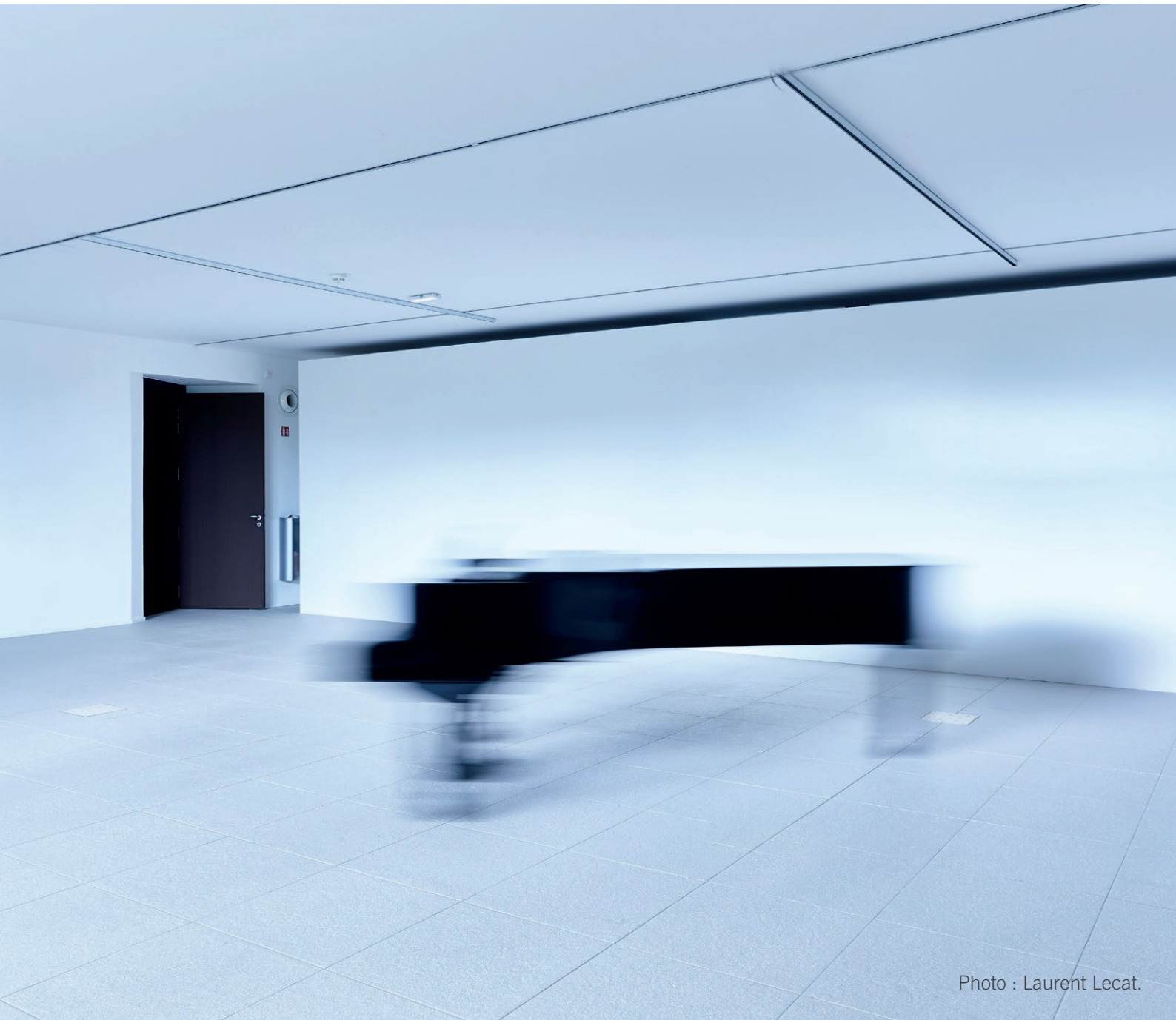


**∞, 2019.**

Mixed technique, a motorized Estonia grand piano fitted with an automatic PianoDisc game system, weather vane and anemometer, geolocation system, computers. Electro-mechanics by Guilhem de Gramont. Robotics by Guilhem Saurel, LAAS CNRS. A François Schneider Foundation Production.



The piano is one of Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's favourite materials, which he has broken down, exploited and interpreted in a range of different ways. In *offroad* (2014), three dilapidated pianos become mobile and start banging into one another. In *karambolage* (2013) the artist transforms a grand piano into a billiard table. And in the installations *index* (2011) and *indexes* (2012), a program translates textual and stock market data into piano music. At the François Schneider Foundation, Céleste Boursier-Mougenot draws on these past experiments to come up with ∞. In a slow, figure-of-eight choreography, the piano's course expands and contracts on the wind caught by a weather vane, recalling the movement of the *clinamen* bowls that bob in the pool between two hemispheres. With its pauses punctuated by the sounds emitted by the porcelain, replayed as an echo, the work addresses the recurrent question of subtle, unpredictable variation.





***plage, 2019***

Mixed technique, 26.5 m x 11.5 m x 5 cm, white cullet glass, (industrial glass used for recycling, from the company GIREV). A François Schneider Foundation Production.

Consisting of 20 tons of white cullet glass set down in 5 cm-thick layer, *plage* was designed specifically for the *liquide liquide* exhibition.

An expanse of transparent glass is fixed to the ground over a 300 m<sup>2</sup> area, revealing crystals, petrified salt or tiny pieces of exploded sea ice. The glass is delicate and fragmented; its reflections change according to the natural light and the weather conditions. Here, Celeste Boursier-Mougenot plays with interior and exterior landscapes. He creates a bridge between the building and the gardens, opening the work up to the whims of the inclement summer weather. At their own risk, visitors can walk on this glass “beach” and listen to the crunching under their feet that echoes their own movement.





### ***clinamen* v.6, 2012-2019.**

Mixed technique. 3-ply pine floor, benches, 6.5 m-diameter pool with blue PVC liner, pump, water, white porcelain containers. Variable sizes. A François Schneider Foundation and RPC - Fija Group Production.



*Clinamen*: seventeenth century. A Latin word, *clinamen*, meaning "inclination, bias", from *clinare*, "to incline". In the system proposed by Epicurus and Lucretius: the unpredictable motion of an atom as it falls into the void, joining another atom to form matter.

The concept of subtle, unpredictable variation is a central theme in Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's work. Here, *clinamen* examines the exhaustive nature of materials and their possible forms. A central theme to the artist's thought and work is his examination of the ways we can transcend the human imagination to create devices where materials and objects outdo their original functions.

*clinamen* v.6 consists of a large 6.5 meter-diameter pool filled with water in which a hundred white porcelain containers are submerged. The bowls float on the surface, collide with one another, chink together. Originally shown as "Untitled", this installation is one of Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's most well-known works. First constructed in 1997 using inflatable pools in the artist's own apartment, it has since been exhibited and re-contextualized according to the location (CAPC Bordeaux, the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, the National Gallery of Victoria, the Mazzoli Gallery in Berlin, the Center Pompidou Metz, the Lyon Biennale, the San Francisco MOMA, the Shanghai Minsheng Art Museum, etc). The installation continues to capture the imagination of visitors from around the world, its bowls bobbing on a gentle current. In its ostensible simplicity, the device replaces a music score.

The works and installations of the *liquide liquide* exhibition arrange, deconstruct and propel themselves as constellations on both sides of this precise geometry that becomes the building's central, organising feature.





***torrent*, 2019.**

Mixed technology, water pumps and UV filtration system, made-to-measure liners by the company RPC - Fija Group, wood, found stones, water. Variable dimensions.

A François Schneider Foundation and RPC - Fija Group Production.



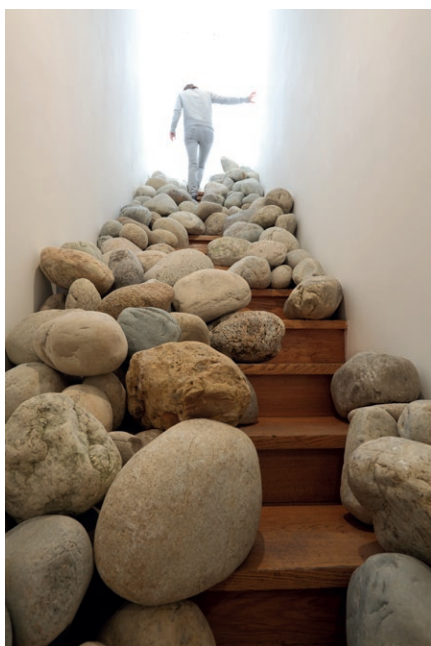
Conceived as a thread to guide the visitor, *torrent* winds through the art centre's different spaces like a rope linking the various works within the exhibition. Water tumbles from the roof onto the outdoor terrace and into a large pool. Visitors can wade through it, entering via a door on the mezzanine where once again the water flows as a gentle waterfall, licking up against the nave's large inner window and spreading over the floors and stairways. Like a mountain stream, its route is punctuated by accidents, dams, and elements placed in its path.



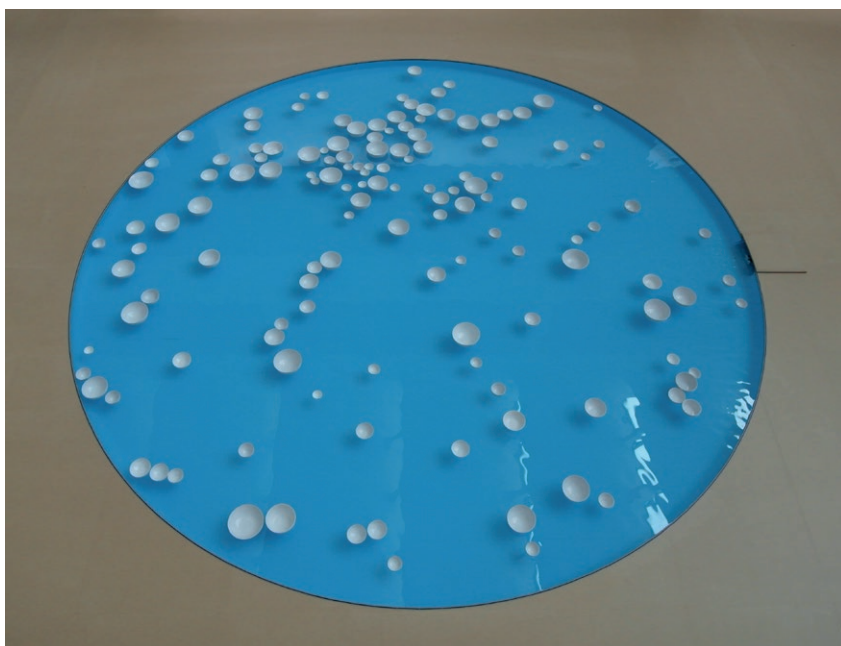


## PRESS VISUALS

Please contact L'art en plus for the in-situ visuals.



Céleste Boursier-Mougenot  
*chorégraphie*, 2012  
Courtesy of the artist and the Galerie Xippas  
© Frédéric Lanternier



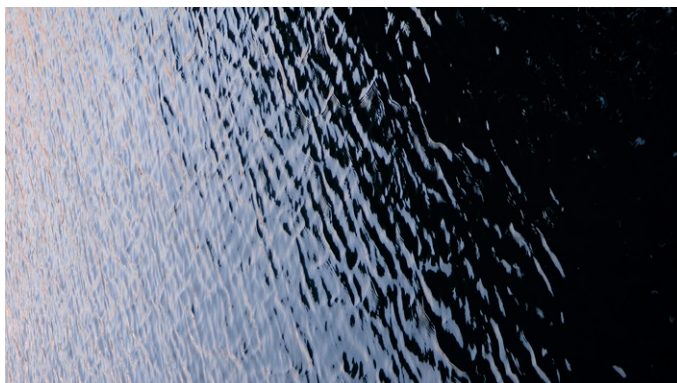
Céleste Boursier-Mougenot  
*clinamen v.0*, 2011  
Courtesy of the artist



Céleste Boursier-Mougenot  
*offroad*, 2014  
Courtesy of the artist © Cédric Eymerier



Céleste Boursier-Mougenot  
*plage* pour l'exposition *Liquide Liquide*, 2019  
Courtesy of the artist and the François Schneider Foundation



Céleste Boursier-Mougenot  
*surface*, 2015  
Courtesy of the artist



## EVENTS

**Friday, June 7 at 6 pm** | **Exhibition opening**

**Saturday, June 8 at 2.30 pm** | **Guided tour with Céleste Boursier-Mougenot**

**Friday, June 14 at 8 pm** | Conference **Water and its hydrogen bonds** by Dr. Bénédicte Lebeau as part of the «Fête de l'eau» of Wattwiller

**Sunday, June 23** | Free admission to the art center and cross-course with the «Fête de l'eau» of Wattwiller  
**FE | W**

**Sunday, July 7 at 2 pm** | Family visit - workshop **Mock-up** with the artist Audrey Abraham  
Visit at 2 pm & workshop at 3 pm  
3€ per family in addition to the entrance ticket

**Saturday, August 3 at 8 pm** | **Celestial Night**

The Night of the Stars will be the occasion of a special program: observation of the celestial vault, concert of the duet «Encore» mixing electronic melodies and audiovisual trance, cosmic cocktails and restorations, astral drawing and guided tours. In partnership with the festival Météo Mulhouse.



**Sunday, August 4 at 2 pm** | Family visit - workshop **The poetic journey of water** with the artist Stéphane Clor  
Visit at 2 pm & workshop at 3 pm  
3€ per family in addition to the entrance ticket

**Sunday, September 1 at 2 pm** | Family visit - workshop **Make-cup !**

Visit at 2 pm & workshop at 3 pm  
3€ per family in addition to the entrance ticket

## ABOUT THE FRANÇOIS SCHNEIDER FOUNDATION

Philanthropic foundation, established in 2000 and recognized as a body acting in the public interest in 2005, the François Schneider Foundation, 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 François Schneider Foundation places interculturality at the heart of its programming, aiming to bring about fruitful contacts between artists and the local populations of these different areas.

### Other 2019 news:

Exhibition *L'eau dessinée* (October 2019 - March 2020), Wattwiller (France)



### Press contact

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