

# The Territories of Water

22 May  
— 26 September 2021

Exhibition co-organized with  
the musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac



# The territories of water

From 22 May to 26 September 2021

- > An exhibition co-organized by the François Schneider Foundation and the musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac
- > A dialogue between the contemporary art collection of the François Schneider Foundation and the collection of extra-European objects of the musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac to highlight the universality of the theme of water.
- > More than 120 works and objects by artists, creators and craftsmen, immersing themselves in the centuries, materials and representations of water on the 5 continents.

## General Commission

**Marie Terrieux**, Director of the Fondation François Schneider

## Associate Commissioner

**Constance de Monbrison**, responsible for the Insulinde collections  
(musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac)

**Aurélien Gaborit**, in charge of the Africa collections  
(musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac)  
and in charge of the Pavillon des Sessions (musée du Louvre)

## Scenography

**Olivia Berthon**, Studio Vaste

## Fondation François Schneider

27 rue de la première armée  
68700 Wattwiller (Haut Rhin- France)

[fondationfrançoisschneider.org](http://fondationfrançoisschneider.org)



## Media and communication contact

L'art en plus  
Virginie Burnet / Amandine Legrand  
[a.legrand@lartenplus.com](mailto:a.legrand@lartenplus.com)  
+33 (0)1.45.53.62.74

## Cover

*Fragment of an urn depicting the head of the god Cocijo, Zapotec culture, state of Oaxaca, Mexico, 300 - 900.*  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, photograph Pauline Guyon



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## About the Fondation François Schneider

Constituted since 2011 - via the Contemporary Talents competition - the collection of the Fondation François Schneider is unique and singular with water as its main theme. It currently brings together 70 works: drawings, paintings, photographs, installations, videos.

The Fondation François Schneider was created in 2000 with two main missions, support for education - each year more than 100 scholarships are awarded to bachelors - and support for contemporary creation.

Since 2013, three major annual exhibitions have been held at the Foundation's art center in Wattwiller, Alsace (*Nils Udo, The Cloud Atlas, Céleste Boursier-Mougenot: Liquid Liquid, Drawing water...*). Lectures, concerts, workshops related to the theme of water are offered continuously. At the same time, the Foundation is developing numerous social projects (psychiatric hospital, nursery assistant, prison...) linking the territory and contemporary creation.

The Fondation François Schneider celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020.



© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, photo Roland Halbe

## About the musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac

The musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac is dedicated to the arts and civilizations of Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas. With 370,000 objects, 700,000 iconographic pieces and more than 200,000 reference works, its collection is one of the largest in the world. It includes many masterpieces, testimony to the genius of men and the life of societies, and its pieces are of major cultural and scientific interest. The numerous scientific activities carried out by the institution contribute to the preservation of the objects and to their study, encouraging the dissemination of knowledge to a wider public, in France and abroad.



# « I am the river and the river is me »

Maori declaration

Social space, object of beliefs and rituals, geographical territory, technical tool, water has always been at the heart of people's lives, both in their daily lives and in their imaginations.

*The territories of water* resonate with works and objects from the collections of the musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac with a selection of works from the Fondation François Schneider, a contemporary art fund set up in 2011 on the issue of water.

The Contemporary Talents competition rewards 7 winners from all disciplines and nationalities. Videos, photographs, drawings, installations, digital works, blown glass sculptures make up a collection of pieces telling the story of water in all its forms. Crossing the Mediterranean, drifting sheep, an odyssey on the Norwegian fjords, tin and molten water, contemporary rituals, questions about mass fishing, dams, water mechanics, a reinvented planet... are the varied themes and subjects of the contemporary artists who won the competition.

These water stories deserve to be put into perspective with works from outside Europe, highlighting the universality of the subject. The exceptional pieces of the musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac thus offer the possibility of creating an original itinerary inviting the visitor to plunge into the materials, centuries and representations related to water.

For thousands of years, artists, creators and craftsmen have been fascinated by this subject and we can observe important resurgences and iconographic links between all periods.

Nigerian zoomorphic masks, Vietnamese nets, Polynesian dugout canoes, sculpted bathing shoes, Zapotec deities, Dogon statuettes, and shell headdresses are all objects and works that question man's relationship with water, from its technical aspects to its spiritual dimension.

Whatever their status, objects of daily life, sacred objects or works of contemporary art, all these works bear witness to the links woven by men with the primary source of life. The exhibition celebrates the universality of the hand gesture when it comes to creating, the artist's intention when he integrates water as a living entity in the face of contemporary questions.

The course of the exhibition allows to navigate in 5 main sections: the manufacture of techniques and landscape, the daily life of water, liquid imaginary, territories of the sacred and geography of crossings. Indeed, man irrigates rice fields, develops hydraulic technologies and observes life in rivers and oceans. Water structures societies through its absence or omnipresence. It also inspires myths and dreams. Frightening or fascinating, it summons the sacred and rituals. Water is the witness of the crossings of men, for more or less happy journeys.

More than 120 works and objects meet for a singular dialogue. The contemporary representation of the world of the abyss is, for example, brought into resonance with ancient representations of maritime fauna. Contemporary photographs of Greenland converse with Inuit objects such as ivory hooks or fur coats. The Middle Eastern water culture represented by bathing objects is linked to a video installation deciphering the drought of a river in Iran. Old and new maps of the journey are shown next to each other in the exhibition. Ritual objects invoking water - statuettes, amulets, magic objects - are presented and coexist with new contemporary forms and practices such as performance.

*The territories of water* invites to a multidisciplinary and multicultural journey where man and nature are in conversation.

## Artists from the collection of the Fondation François Schneider

Nour Awada, Guillaume Barth, Benoît Billotte, Mathieu Bonardet, Jessie Brennan, Julie Chaffort, Yves Chaudouët, Edouard Decam, Asieh Dehghani, Rebecca Digne, Cristina Escobar, Sara Ferrer, Antoine Gonin, Elizaveta Konovalova, Mathilde Lavenne, Olivier Leroi, Claire Malrieux, Mehdi Meddaci, Camille Michel, Gustavo Millon, Hélène Mugot, Benoît Pype, Paul Souviron, Wiktorija Wojciechowska.



Anthropomorphic sculpture of a goddess,  
Mexico, Aztec culture, 1350-1521  
Dense greyish volcanic rock, goethite ochre  
and hematite red pigments  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac



Guillaume Barth, *Elina*, 2015  
Photograph of the salt and water sculpture, 300 cm in diameter, Bolivia, Elina project 2013-2015  
© Guillaume Barth - courtesy of the artist



Olivier Leroi, *Souffles (Blows)*, 2007  
Taxidermy fish, blown glass, 12x100 x8 cm  
© Fondation François Schneider



Crest mask sawfish, Nigeria, Ijo population, 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Wood, pigments including kaolin and ochre  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, photo Patrick Gries, Bruno Descoings





Wiktoria Wojciechowska, *Short Flashes* (detail), 2013  
Photograph, 80 x 768 cm  
© Fondation François Schneider



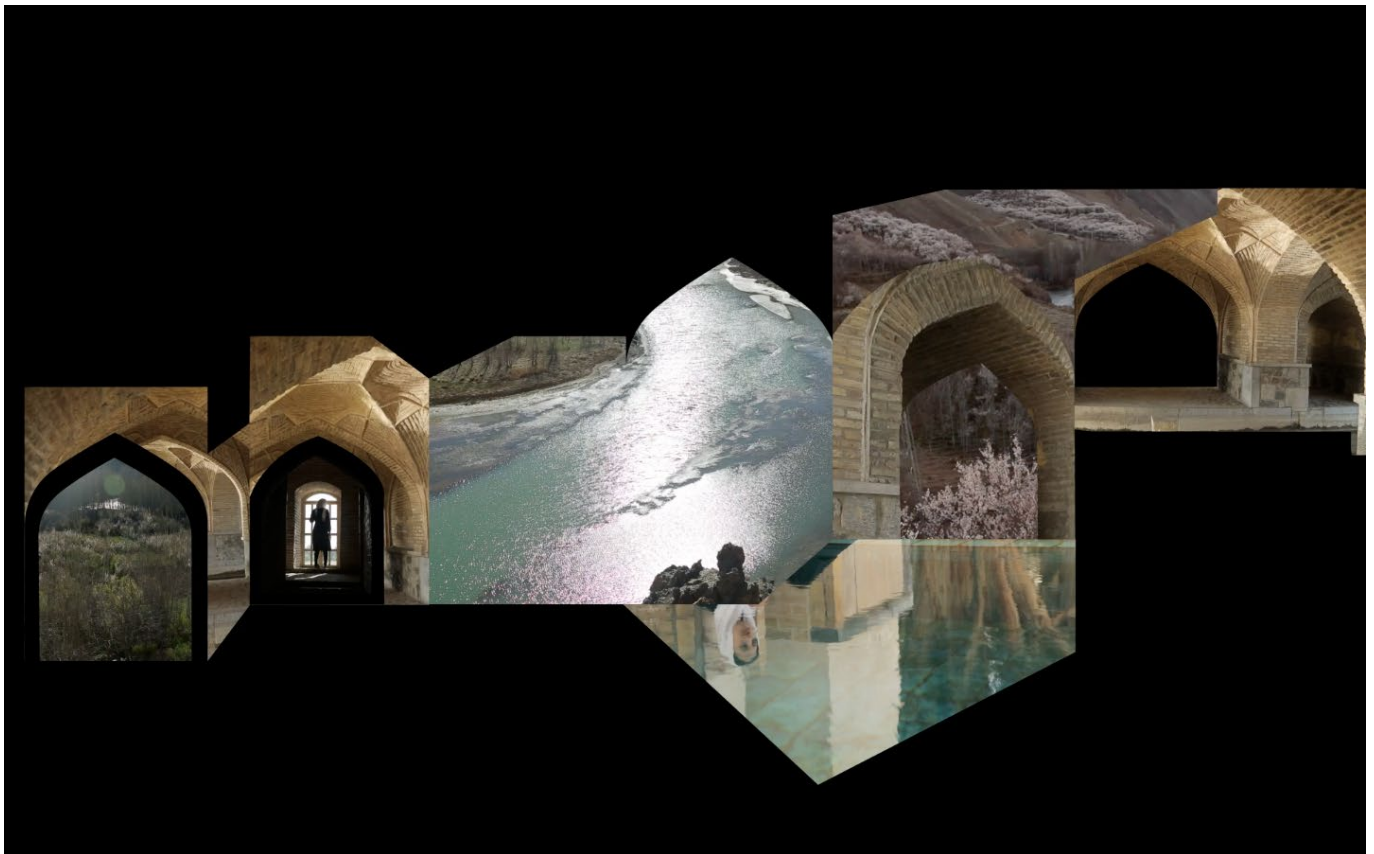
Rain cape, Philippines, late 19th century  
Topstitched infrapetiolar palm fabric  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, photo Claude Germain

Crest mask, Ciwara, Mali  
Population Bamana, before 1931  
Mud-dyed wood and plant fibres  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac,  
photo Patrick Gries, Bruno Descoings





Bath sheet, Baghdad, Iraq  
Early 20th century  
Ikate silk, silver  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac,  
photo Claude Germain (detail)



Asieh Deghani, *Anahita, The Eros of community*, 2015  
Installation, videos, 5 screens  
© Fondation François Schneider





Child's anorak, Alaska, America  
Yupik / Inuit culture, late 19<sup>th</sup> century  
Seal intestine, leather  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac,  
photo Claude Germain



Camille Michel, *Uummanaq*, 2014-2015  
24 original art prints on fine art paper 300g, 6x(60x85 cm), 18x(38x52 cm)  
© Fondation François Schneider



Rebecca Digne, *Climats* (Climates), 2014, video, 5' mn.  
© Fondation François Schneider



Magic Stone, New Caledonia, Kanak population  
Mid 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Lithic, concretion of magnesia  
© musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac,  
photo Thierry Ollivier, Michel Urtado



Benoît Pype, *Chutes libres* (Free falls), 2015  
Installation, tin, 2 x 2 x 1 cm  
© Fondation François Schneider, photo Steeve Constanty