



FONDATION
FRANÇOIS SCHNEIDER

Talents Contemporains

1st edition

Abbaye de Pontigny

La Terre

The finalists – 2026 Edition

PRESS RELEASE



“TALENTS CONTEMPORAINS – EARTH – ABBAYE DE PONTIGNY” COMPETITION 1ST EDITION

THE FINALISTS

The Fondation François Schneider is pleased to announce the shortlisted **30 finalists** of the first edition of its new competition, “Talents Contemporains – Earth – Abbaye de Pontigny” (list on the following page).

The application files received were carefully reviewed by an Expert Committee in September 2026. The **30** shortlisted works will be gathered in a bilingual booklet published in November 2026.

The next stage of the competition will take place at the end of November 2026, with the final selection of the laureates by the Grand International Jury. Composed of recognized figures in the fields of art and culture (Colette Barbier, Frédéric Bodet, Angelo Crespi, Jean Frémon, Natasa Petrešin-Bachelez),

chaired by Christine Macel, this Grand International Jury will select between **4 and 5 laureates**.

The laureates will each receive **€15,000** (incl. VAT) for the acquisition of their work and as a merit prize.

Through the “Talents Contemporains – Earth – Abbaye de Pontigny” competition, the Fondation François Schneider aims to discover, support, and highlight emerging talent while promoting contemporary creation around the theme of Earth. The Foundation supports these artists through the **acquisition of their works** and their display in the **gardens of the Abbaye de Pontigny**, within Domaine des Arts et de la Terre (domain of Arts and Earth).



ABOUT THE “TALENTS CONTEMPORAINS – EARTH” COMPETITION

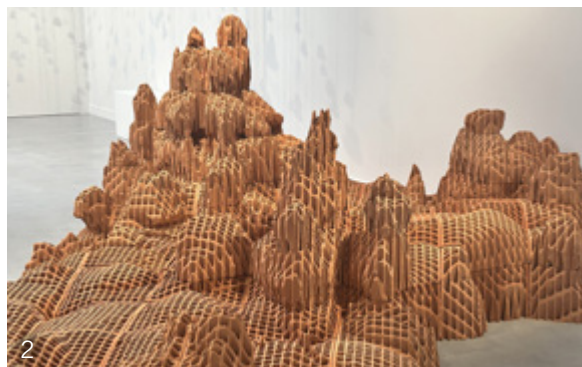
In parallel with the construction phase at the abbey's domain, the Fondation François Schneider launched the “Talents Contemporains – Earth – Abbaye de Pontigny” competition in 2026.

It revolves around two major pillars: fostering the emergence of visual artists through an acquisition and dissemination policy, and building a unique artistic body of work centered on the theme of Earth.

This inaugural edition, focused on acquiring works intended for outdoor display, will create an artistic promenade through the gardens of the Abbaye de Pontigny. These works will join the Fondation François Schneider's collection, which will expand with each edition of the competition.



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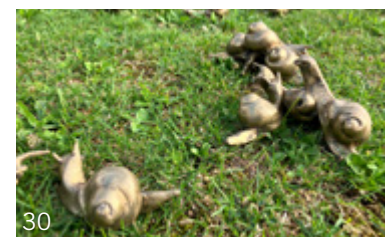
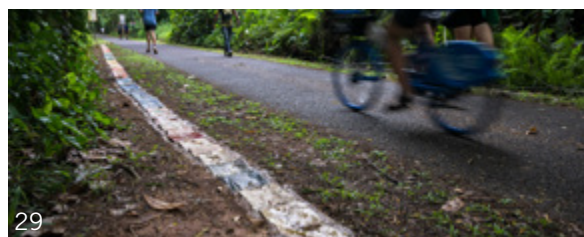
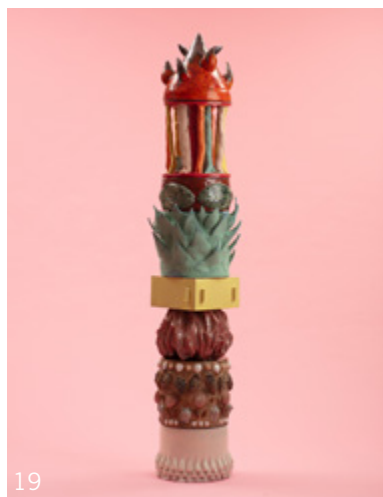


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1. Rachel Labastie, *FOUNDATIONS*, 2025 2. Vincent Mauger, *Logique systémique*, 2025 3. Clara Imbert, *Astra Codex*, 2024 4. Suska Bastian, *Les pierres maillées*, 2026 © Photo: Claudia Goletto 5. Ali Ibrahim Öcal, *Sans Titre (série de pelles inutiles)*, 2018 6. Capucine Vever, *Duc d'Alva*, 2024 © Photo: Salim Santa Lucia 7. Hugo Saby, *Premier gros tesson*, 2025 8. Ludwig Kittinger, *Toni and Charlie*, 2026 9. Axel Gouala, *Falaise (7)*, 2026 10. Darta Sidere, *Matrioshka brain*, 2021 © Photo: Grégory Copitet 11. Thomas Teurlai, *Camping Sauvage*, 2024 12. Thomas Bischoff, *Pelota Grande*, 2017 13. Elizaveta Konovalova, *Script*, 2021 14. Gabrielle Herveet, *Calendrier cylindrique et spiralaire des nuits de Pleine lune et des nuits de Nouvelle lune d'avril 2023 à août 2045*, 2023 15. Frédérique Fleury, *Flacon aux 8 tresses*, 2026



16. Judicaël Eymard, *L'Arche*, 2025 17. Emilia Neumann, *UG.PI*, 2026 18. Leïla Helmstetter, *Alces*, 2025 19. Le club céramique, *La Pile*, 2025, © Photo: Baptiste Coulon 20. Raphaël Emine, *Supernature I*, 2025 21. Will Menter, *Un Champ Sonore du Possible*, 2019 22. Lucie Laflorientie, *La Famille*, 2024 23. Jobe Burns, *Born of the same body*, 2026 24. Kristina Sedlerova Villanen, *TRANSFER*, 2023 25. Matteo Tassan, *Mirages des Koractis*, 2025 26. Olga Golos, *___Weiß*, 2025 27. Louis Guillaume, *Notre dit Pays*, 2026 © Photo: DR 28. Jane Norbury, *Trois Passeuses*, 2022 29. Kate Newby, *A line through time*, 2025 30. Olivier Jonvaux, *Jeremy*, 2026.

THE FINALISTS

Suska Bastian (Germany), *Les pierres maillées*, sculptures, 130 x 75 x 60 cm and 50 x 40 x 70 cm, 2026

Thomas Bischoff (France), *Pelota Grande*, sculpture, 100 x 100 x 100 cm, 2017

Jobe Burns (United Kingdom), *Born of the same body*, sculpture, 300 x 180 x 180 cm, 2026

Raphaël Emine (France), *Supernature I*, sculpture, 195 x 55 x 55 cm, 2025

Judicaël Eymard (France), *L'Arche*, sculpture, 300 x 175 x 175, 2025

Frédérique Fleury (France), *Flacon aux 8 tresses*, sculpture, 145 x 135 x 65 cm, 2026

Olga Golos (Germany), *__Weiß*, installation, 250 x 700 x 800 cm, 2025

Axel Gouala (France), *Falaise (7)*, sculpture, 225 x 300 x 150 cm, 2026

Louis Guillaume (France), *Notre dit Pays*, installation, 1 600 x 1 300 cm, 2026

Leïla Helmstetter (France), *Alces*, sculpture, 173 x 54 x 54 cm, 2025

Gabrielle Herveet (France), *Calendrier cylindrique et spiralaire des nuits de Pleine lune et des nuits de Nouvelle lune d'avril 2023 à août 2045*, 50 x 340 cm, 2023

Clara Imbert (France), *Astra Codex*, sculpture, 165 x 110 x 120 cm, 2024

Olivier Jonvaux (France), *Jeremy*, sculptures, variable dimensions, 2026

Ludwig Kittinger (Austria), *Toni and Charlie*, sculptures, 185 x 90 x 90 cm and 210 x 110 x 70 cm, 2026

Elizaveta Konovalova (France), *Script*, installation, variable dimensions, 2021

Rachel Labastie (France), *FONDATIONS*, installation, 5 x (50-65 cm), 2025

Lucie Laflorentie (France), *La Famille*, sculptures, 3 x (40 x 25 x 180 cm), 2024

Le club céramique (France, Switzerland), *La Pile*, sculpture, 190 x 35 cm, 2025

Vincent Mauger (France), *Logique systémique*, installation, 120 x 400 x 300 cm, 2025

Will Menter (United Kingdom), *One Possible Sound Field*, installation, 1 800 x 80 x 230 cm, 2019

Emilia Neumann (Germany), *UG.PI*, sculpture, 147 x 180 x 190 cm, 2026

Kate Newby (New Zealand), *A line through time*, sculpture, variable dimensions, 2025

Jane Norbury (United Kingdom), *Trois Passeuses*, sculptures, 3 x (50 x 85 x 85 cm), 2022

Ali Ibrahim Öcal (Turkey), *Sans Titre (série de pelles inutiles)*, installation, variable dimensions, 2018

Hugo Saby (France), *Premier gros tesston*, sculpture, 60 x 160 x 18 cm, 2025

Kristina Sedlerova Villanen (Finland), *TRANSFER*, sculpture, 35 x 220 x 130 cm, 2023

Darta Sidere (Latvia), *Matrioshka brain*, sculptures, 130 x 60 cm and 55 x 60 x 30 cm, 2021

Matteo Tassan (France), *Mirages des Koractis*, sculptures, 380 x 60 x 70 cm and 350 x 50 x 60 cm, 2025

Thomas Teurlai (France), *Camping Sauvage*, sculpture, 240 x 135 x 85 cm, 2024

Capucine Vever (France), *Duc d'Alva*, installation, 18 sculptures of variable dimensions, 2024

THE EXPERT COMMITTEE

Vincent Chevillon, visual artist, lecturer at the Haute École des Arts du Rhin, HEAR – Strasbourg (France)

Sarah Guilain, head of Artistic Projects and Collection at the Fondation François Schneider – Wattwiller (France)

Marina Krüger, visual artist and Artistic Director of the “Fête de l’Eau Wattwiller” (France)

Thomas Perraudin, director of the Espace d’art contemporain André Malraux and the École d’Art Plastiques – Colmar (France)

Léa Rosenfeld, production and “Talents Contemporains” Competition Manager at the Fondation François Schneider – Wattwiller (France)



LE GRAND JURY

Christine Macel

President of the Grand International Jury, General Curator of Heritage, art historian, and exhibition curator – Paris.

Colette Barbier

Founder and Director of the Fondation Pernod Ricard until 2020. President of la source Garouste – Paris.

Frédéric Bodet

Independent exhibition curator and critic specializing in 20th and 21st-century decorative arts and design, lecturer at HEAD – Genève since 2023.

Angelo Crespi

General Director of the Pinacoteca di Brera. Head of the “Grande Brera” – Italy.

Jean Frémon

Président de la Galerie Lelong – Paris and New York.

Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez

Head of Curatorial Public Art, Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi since 2026. Independent exhibition curator and Head of Artistic and Cultural Programming at the Cité internationale des arts in Paris until 2025.

ABOUT FONDATION FRANÇOIS SCHNEIDER

WATTWILLER | WATER

A philanthropic foundation created in 2000 and recognized as a body acting in the public interest in 2005, the Fondation François Schneider pursues a dual commitment to education and culture.

On the one hand, it enables young high school graduates from Alsace and Yonne to access higher education by granting them scholarships. On the other hand, it supports contemporary artists in their careers by contributing to their institutional recognition through an acquisition and diffusion policy via its “Talents Contemporains” competition. It complements its action through publications, loans, and travelling exhibitions. Numerous community outreach projects (schools, prisons, hospitals, etc.) have also been developed since 2018.

Since 2011, its “Talents Contemporains” competition has rewarded several artists each year for works or projects themed around Water. Over the years, a unique collection has been built, reflecting the diversity of 21st-century artistic practices. Today, nearly 96 works form a singular body of work, standing apart from institutional trends, exhibited both at its art centre in Wattwiller, Alsace, and travelling worldwide.

PONTIGNY | EARTH

A Cistercian masterpiece spanning 9 hectares and housing 6,000 m² of historic buildings, the Domaine de l'Abbaye de Pontigny begins a new chapter in 2026 under the impetus of the Fondation François Schneider.

After Water in Alsace, the Foundation is establishing Earth in Burgundy as its second major pillar with the “La Terre à Pontigny” project. Currently undergoing renovation, the site is destined to become a space exclusively dedicated to the theme of Earth and to housing a new segment of the Foundation’s contemporary art collection.

Two historic locations, two universal themes, but a single ambition: to reveal the diversity of contemporary art scenes.



Renaud Auguste-Dormeuil, *From Here to There*, 2016
© Fondation François Schneider – Steeve Constanty



Pontigny Abbey and the Lay Brothers' Building
© Fondation François Schneider – Alexandre Petzold

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Fondation François Schneider

Wattwiller | Water

27 rue de la Première Armée
68700 Wattwiller, France
fondationfrancoisschneider.org



Pontigny | Earth

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CONTACT

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Photo credits:

p.1 Axel Gouala, *Falaise (7)*, 2026.
p.2, p.3, p.7 © Photo: Alexandre Petzold.