

My first Summer in the Sierra

Works from the Centre national des arts plastiques

28 June – 6 December 2015*

Opening Sunday 28 June, from noon

Xavier ANTIN, Olivier BABIN, Michel BLAZY, Pierrette BLOCH, Katinka BOCK, Hubert DUPRAT, Hreinn FRIDFINNSSON, Dominique GHESQUIÈRE, Andy GOLDSWORTHY, Thomas GRÜNFELD, Sigurdur GUDMUNDSSON, Carsten HÖLLER, Gordon MATTA-CLARK, Pratchaya PHINTHONG, Abraham POINCHEUAL / Laurent TIXADOR, Erik SAMAKH, Joe SCANLAN, Stéphane THIDET, TUNGA, herman de vries

Curators: Sébastien Faucon and Xavier Franceschi



Carsten Höller, *Canary*, 2009
FNAC 2011-0165 (1à9)
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Contacts :

Isabelle Fabre, Communications Manager > +33 1 76 21 13 26 > ifabre@fraciledefrance.com

Magda Kachouche, Press Officer > +33 6 84 45 47 63 > mkachouche@fraciledefrance.com

le château, Rentilly

Parc culturel de Rentilly
1, rue de l'Étang
77 600 Bussy-Saint-Martin
T +33 (0)1 60 35 46 72

Le frac île-de-france reçoit le soutien du Conseil régional d'île-de-France, du ministère de la Culture et de la Communication – Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'île-de-France et de la Mairie de Paris. Membre du réseau Tram. de Platform.

For this second exhibition at the château de Rentilly, recently rehabilitated by the Communauté d'agglomération de Marne et Gondoire, the frac île-de-france invite the Centre national des arts plastiques to make an exhibition project based on a selection of works from the Fond National d'Art Contemporain's collection, which it is the CNAP's brief to enrich, conserve and diffuse.

My First Summer in the Sierra is freely inspired by the book self-title written by the American naturalist John Muir (1838-1914), and brings together some thirty works from the collection, clearly promote the idea of nature and the link between man and his environment.

John Muir, a confirmed activist, was a powerful figure in proto-ecological thinking. Throughout his life he stood apart as a result of his stance in favour of the landscape's preservation, involving, in particular, the creation of Yosemite National Park. His inspiring writings are also a tremendous exaltation of a nature that is ever more surprising and fascinating.


With *My First Summer in the Sierra*, John Muir invites us on a journey to the Sierra Nevada during the summer of 1869, a mountain range where fauna and flora are connected: "When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world".

By following this thread of a nature which, in the specific context of Rentilly – and its park of more than 125 acres – seems primordial, the exhibition proposes a new landscape, strange and familiar. A walk in the nature's heart that is disturbing and sublime. Inside the château, which is devoid of any scenographical adjunct, thus underpinning one of the wagers of the rehabilitation project and this special relationship with the exterior, the works thus engage in a dialogue with the surrounding nature.

Be it a floor/sculpture made of terra cotta conjuring up the depths of the Lac de Vassivière in Limoges region (Dominique Ghesquière), an ascent with a tree as its high point (Katinka Bock), painstaking samples of colours and plants (herman de vries), a tapestry made solely with horse hair (Pierrette Bloch), or the effect of a previously coloured snowball on a sheet of paper (Andy Goldsworthy), this relation to nature is unambiguously established, and the reality that is brought to us is asserted in the most direct manner.

In many instances, the logic of the approach embarked upon by the artists comes across just as clearly. The rules and procedures which govern what is presented are made so legible for us that the works stemming from them seem natural to us, in more than one respect: broken into bits, a rock is put back together again as it once was, in an extremely minimal operation (Hubert Duprat), in a powerful way, chocolate-coated substances and mice are summoned to create surprising abstract paintings (Michel Blazy), and a cupboard houses many flat stones like books in a library (Stéphane Thidet)... In many cases, the procedure is above all a game which draws us turn by turn towards the strange, the absurd, and the wondrous.

In this way, by means of this thread which is as explicit as it is fundamental, *My First Summer in the Sierra* asserts the singular qualities of nature and its strong evocative powers, for a free wander between captures of reality and sweet daydreams.

The  National Centre for the Visual Arts [CNAP] is one of the main arms of the policy of the Ministry of Culture and Communication in the field of contemporary visual arts. As a cultural and economic player, it encourages the art scene in all its diversity and assists both artists and professionals through several support systems. On behalf of the State, it enriches a national collection, the Fonds national d'art contemporain (National Contemporary Art Collection), which it curates and brings to attention by means of loans in France and abroad. This establishment undoubtedly has one of Europe's most important collections devoted to contemporary art. In an exemplary manner, with more than 95,000 works, it represents not only all the various fields, tendencies and media of art over the past two centuries, but also the French and international scenes.

Since the opening of the Parc Culturel de Rentilly in 2006, the frac île-de-france has been a partner of the Marne et Gondoire conurbation, developing the contemporary art element. The rehabilitation of the castle, which is part of the estate, has made it possible – thanks to the initiative of the frac île-de-france – to develop an extra-ordinary project: entrusting this rehabilitation to an artist, Xavier Veilhan – accompanied by the architects Elisabeth Lemerrier and Philippe Bona, and the set designer Alexis Bertrand – to turn the castle into both an artwork, no less, and a place totally suited to the showing of artworks. Together with le plateau in Paris, the château de Rentilly is the frac île-de-france's second exhibition venue, whose programme is focused on the presentation of its collection as well as other invited collections, public and private alike, be they French or foreign.

Parc culturel de Rentilly/ frac île-de-france, le château

Address

Domaine de Rentilly
1 rue de l'Etang
77600 Bussy-Saint-Martin
+33 (0)1 60 35 43 50

Opening hours

Wednesday and Saturday 2.30 – 5.30 pm
Sunday 10.30 am to 1 pm and 2.30 – 5.30 pm

Access

RER A Torcy stop, then on foot (15 minutes), or PEP's line 21 bus (Rentilly stop), or lines 46/25/13 (Cèdre stop)

Admission free

*** The château will be closed from 3-21 August inclusive.**