



Maison de l'Architecture
Occitanie Pyrénées

PRESS RELEASE

Crossroads

« Un léger décalage à la jointure des mondes »

Artists and Architects-in-residency

“The border situation is a common landscape swept by the same winds; it is a daily encounter between two cultures that becomes its identity. It is a light line on an agile displacement.”

Along 2020 and 2021, the border territory between France and Spain hosts an artists and architects-in-residency program. Hosted by the Galeria Horizon in Colera, proposed by the Maison de l'Architecture Occitanie Pyrénées within the program of “10 Résidences d'architectes” of the Réseau des Maisons

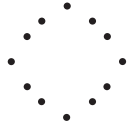


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de l'Architecture, and supported by La Caisse des Dépôts, the program proposes to architects and artists to invent new narratives on an unknown territory. This year, Odysseas Yannikouris and Alessandra Monarcha, both architects and artists have been selected among 47 teams of emerging practices to explore the landscape of the border. They intervene in a sanitary context that during the course of the year gave a new sense to the notion of border, the one of closure, security, necessary protection, a meaning that we had tend to forget as we were used to think that their openness is no longer revokable. Borders are lines of uncertainties and as such, they have their own tensions.

What they encounter is what they propose the public to discover the landscape through their eyes, through simple yet almost "ready made" interventions.

Accompanied by the photographer Claire Lavabre, they propose a new narrative of the juncture of the worlds in 3 acts: an exhibition within the Galeria Horizon, an atlas to invite inhabitants as tourists to discover a less known part of the touristic coast, and



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an act of construction as an invitation to collectively care on an existing building rest. As such, they open up through the residency a new public space open to all, a place of beauty to sense and protect, a place that is no longer a place of separation but rather of reconnexion.



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An Architects-in-Residency Program

Initiated by the Réseau des maisons de l'architecture, the Residences of Architects are supported locally by the Maisons de l'architecture. The CROSSROADS – “à la jointure des mondes” residence is carried by the Maison de l'Architecture Occitanie Pyrénées and questions the territory and the border landscape located between Cerbère and Colera, between France and Spain.

Based on a call for applications, the maisons de l'architecture select and support resident multidisciplinary teams who will be expected to settle, live and work on their territory in order to develop a research project over a period of a few weeks or several months.

Anchored in time and space, these in situ experiences aim to encourage encounters, sharing and exchange with residents and elected officials in order to provoke reflection and provide collective responses to contemporary urban and landscape issues.

In 2017, the Réseau des Maisons de l'Architecture launched, with the support of the sponsorship of Caisse des Dépôts, the first edition of the residences of architects, supported by the Maisons. This project gave rise to a national partnership renewed for the third edition in 2020.

In 2020, the Maison de l'Architecture Occitanie Pyrénées launches, with its partner the Galeria Horizon located across the French border in Colera, a transnational residency aiming at questioning the nature of the border, its territories and its cultures from an architectural point of view.

About the Galeria Horizon

Since 1992 the Galeria d'Art Horizon has been organizing art exhibitions and diverse cultural activities. The intention of the gallery is in helping to establish a vital dialogue among artists and institutions, both nationally as well as internationally. The gallery was founded in Colera in



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the northeastern tip of Spain by Silvy Wittevrongel (Belgium) and artist Ralph Bernabei (NYC). In 2006, parallel to these activities, the gallery has been responsible for the publishing of Outer Horizons, an annual, international publication which focuses on Art and Philosophy. The objective of this endeavor is to exchange material sensible in the form of image and thought from other horizons.

The goal of Galeria d'Art Horizon in the future is to continue hanging bridges without constructing walls.

www.galeria-horizon.com

About the Maison de l'Architecture Occitanie Pyrénées

The Maison de l'Architecture Occitanie Pyrénées is a cultural association whose aim is to promote the quality of past and present creation in the fields of architecture, urbanism, the environment and, in general, the living environment, by promoting architecture in connection with related artistic disciplines, by participating in the diffusion of architectural culture by offering mediation tools for the public, by proposing to all audiences awareness and educational actions in the fields of architecture. Within the framework of its cultural program, MAOP proposes exhibitions, publications, conferences, participatory workshops, architectural walks developed in relation with the actors of arts and architecture of the region.

www.maop.fr

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Galeria d'Art Horizon

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Odysseas Yannikouris & Alessandra Monarcha



Odysseas and Alessandra are architects, urban planners and visual artists, based in Marseille. Through their training and their concrete experience of the project at all its scales (scenography, architectural design, construction, urban and public space project, territorial study...) they have been able to develop a precise know-how on many aspects of the field of their discipline. They work together from 2016, and continue their collaboration further in 2017, on the occasion of Odysseas' residency at the Villa Medici. The project then aims to provide new perspectives:

- *to certain new project substances: energy, climate, nature.*



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- to the issues of the attention that everyone must pay to the territories of production, those outside the metropolises.

Their attachment to the multiple themes of ecology is based on an active and emerging culture of understanding interactions. Their practice is based on two themes that link them to this thinking: the hybridity of identity, and the link between violence, politics, and Nature. These themes have motivated their work as architects since 2009, and in 2017 they have had the opportunity to broaden this practice to address new artistic fields. Thus they have started a plural production that freely uses writing, drawing, photography, video and modeling as correlated elements of meaning production. Chapters of this desire to describe complexity, their in-situ installation work is aimed at demonstrating the evidence of certain phenomena. Situated outside of all discourse and metaphor, these works allow them to give the perspectives of wonder, which the subject of ecology is capable of, and needs.

Today they are engaged in projects of architecture, territorial exploration, installation in contact with local realities, writing and teaching.



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Planning of events

EXHIBITION AND PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF THE RESIDENCY AT THE GALERIA HORIZON

March 27-28, 2021

In the Galeria Horizon in Colera, the exhibition will show the result of the work of exploration and narration of the territory between Cerbere, Port Bou and Colera. The photographic work of Claire Lavabre, the maps that have been drawn from the walks, the models, the collection of samples, will offer an immersion in the artist's exploration during the residence, and proposes the visitor to discover these situations.

Inside the Galeria Horizon maps will be available to visitors. They are diffuse invitations to the original and personal experience of the unknown land. Discover these three walks, intense in situations, not very accessible, and a bit wild.

Updates and information at www.maop.fr / @insta: [la.jointure.des.mondes](https://www.instagram.com/la.jointure.des.mondes)

- Presentation of the Atlas
- Meravelles, Journal and Maps
- Invitation to wander at « la jointure des mondes »

PUBLIC EVENT AT "LA JOINTURE DES MONDES"

March 27, 2021

42,178493 N; 3,1592359 E



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This place has an atmosphere that benefits from a perfect aesthetic contingency. The project proposes to clean this ruin and the parts of the path leading to it in order to give it a new value and transform it into a new public space. In this landscape of a thousand situations that have been examined, there will be an "act of construction", starting from the ruin without much interest, from something that was built there, the artists propose something: an amenity, without specific function, without relation to the fabric of the territory, with only objective to exist.

They will have built a surface on which to stand : rather than the result, what is to be seen is the process and the act of caring for underestimated natural jewels. Its only purpose will be to be generous. It will be presented at an end-of-residence event on March 27th and 28th.

For this collective moment the artists invite Clement Bondu for a reading and kAO for a musical performance.

Updates and information at www.maop.fr / @insta: [la.jointure.des.mondes](https://www.instagram.com/la.jointure.des.mondes)

The architects and artists in residency invite you to discover the « juncture of worlds » as they have seen and experienced it when they encountered it.

The event will be accompanied by an artistic program.

PUBLIC EVENT IN CERBÈRE / PORT BOU

For further events in Cerbère- Port Bou and Hotel du Rayon Vert

Updates and information at www.maop.fr / @insta: [la.jointure.des.mondes](https://www.instagram.com/la.jointure.des.mondes)



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Artists Statement



Photo ©Claire Lavabre

Le Monde

Colera, Portbou and Cerbère are allegories of a frenetic modern time, that came to fade. What would one think of its languor, and should we wish for this idle land to regain some activity? Maybe we could plan to restore the flamboyance of the cumbersome logistics industry it once was, or maybe it could benefit from a depleted tourism that exhausted the Costa Brava. Maybe



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one could think of something else, new, and cleverly benchmarked... Eventually something will come, however for now, a loose life remains, gentle and harsh at the same time, anachronistically (or premonitory) slow, but with deep passion.

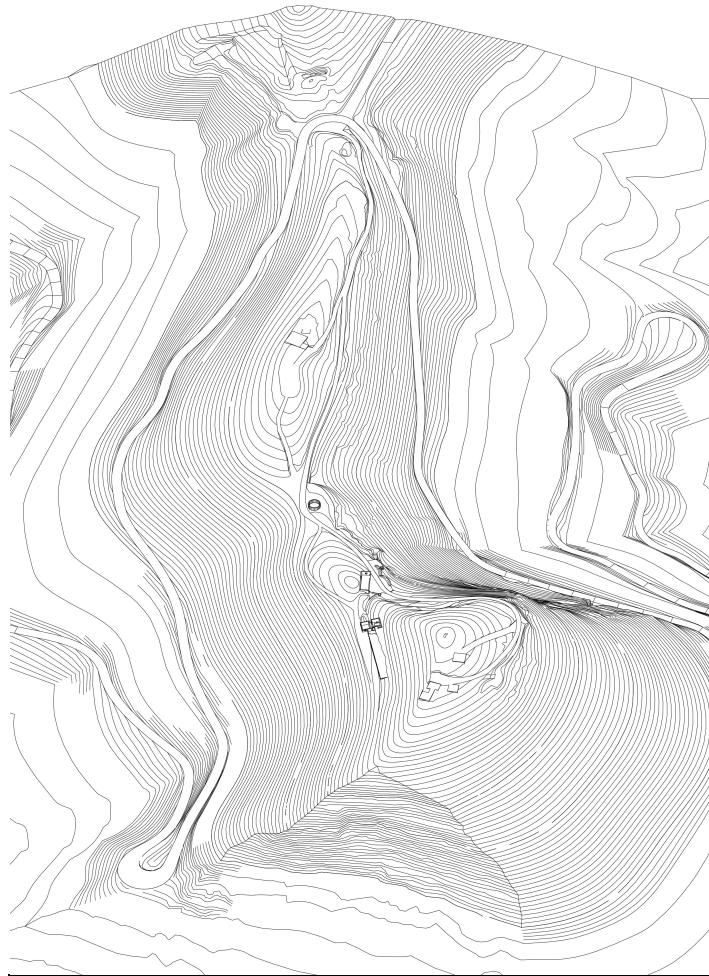
It seems that the state of crisis can't stop figuring out new ways to sustain itself through time. It gets harder and harder to have certainties yet, one thing we can say is that, today, we have more time to spend than anything else to regain prosperity. City attractiveness is indexed on the quantity of heavy things we move from here to there, whatever energy it disperses. In the current economy, pouring concrete is a program in itself, and it remunerates each actors of its implementation. To build, to abandon, and to rebuild slightly differently is not only for the better, it is also about maintaining the acceleration of trade flow. Yet, each time it dried up, we came to realize how fast the quest for velocity brought us to fail; yet again, each time it dries up we languish from immobility.

We came to think about slowness as both, a resistance to exhausting exhilaration, and a cure for the boredom of paralysis. Sobriety is mandatory but it is not quiet a project yet, whereas slowness brought to a model, can value solidity. Within spatial practices, it would translate into carrying, cultivating and sustaining, rather than building and delivering. That is almost Buckminster Fuller's motto « doing more with less », but with extra-time to scrutinize « the less ». Considering Colera, Portbou and Cerbère, and the quantity of material that has been moved around and forgotten about: what a lab to understand how to turn each $m^2 \cdot kg / s^2$ of a new work into a temple. Matter is available, and if one's eye works enough, it perceives that it already bears satisfactions in itself.

From Colera, to Cerbère, one can visit a lot of reveries, with the smile of esthetic exaltations only pictures of cracked worlds produce.



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Map of the site ©Odysseas Yannikouris and Alessandra Monarcha

Travelling Worlds

From, Colera to Cerbère, everything is made of massive objects. It's Spanish and French built, made for defense and exchange: it's heavy and thick, designed to accommodate millions of tons and cannonballs. There are magnificent ruins, magnificent buildings, breathtaking panoramas, romantic skies and wine to fall for... the train stations are three-times-too-big functioning platform, there is a cultural and touristic activity, people hike and motorcycle, dwell, buy and sell... there is a slight animation, within three-times-too-big spaces.



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One sense of aesthetic would get rid of the abandoned and dysfunctional, wishing to use this rich patrimonial and natural heritage, as a set for renewed splendors, and vivid activities. We think about potential and activation... but unless miracle, everything's too massive to consider strategic ulterior motives.

But then, the more we explore, the more this esthetics of moral, which likes lively streets, the well restored and the well composed, feels boring. The exploration unveils singular places time has left to some cultivated neglects. Moving within the area, one's mind paints a thousand of pictures from the intense diversity of situations beard within only 16 km. One sees glorious architectures fading, trucks moving with care on alleys about their size ; one passes before people languishing nicely and harshly, in social housing's collective spaces ; one feels the needles that have grown through deflection of south slopes, or the slight alterations the careful hand of a left-behind brought... one crosses slabs on which automaton slides and blows, one climbs on gardens which only harvest water... Time has fulfill the enormous matter of this landscape, with the contrasts of its action, whether things grow, wear from sea and air, are repaired with care or reused at optimum...

The atmosphere seize more than the eyes: it revives our sense of feeling time passing. All, from the functioning to the ruins, are adding up to an Atlas of intangible qualities. What this world do, is to make us discover the sweet esthetics of lethargy, and few kilometers are enough to feel like adventures in some forgotten space. We have time now, to value the care dispensed by languor, and the healing capabilities to feel time flowing tranquilo: that's the project.

Atlas

We discovered three paths of complete enjoyment. It's intense, not with easy access, and a little wild. It does not lead to picturesque and preserved sceneries. On the contrary, these are a succession of cultivated contrasts time has left behind for someone to care for. Those walks, they infringe upon the esthetics of moral without being a quest for romantic neglect. If one follows it, one accepts its discomfort and risks (the discomfort of a half-collapsed stair, of needles covering the clothes, of the withstanding bush, of trespassing limits that only unease draws). These are



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invitations to abandon oneself to the pleasure of drift which revitalises our threshold capacities. It stimulates the body with envies for spatial thrills, and it takes us to sceneries of elsewhere and rejuvenating time. As «the quest for sensorial experience from the world is the best way to know oneself» we won't change the world, but we may change ourselves.

Like all explorers and conqueridor de camins, we draw maps, we collected treasures, and we wrote diaries of discoveries and encounters in pandemic times.

The Atlas will be displayed at the Galeria Horizon in Colera, on Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th of March.

The maps

We have three maps for hiking.

Just like hiking maps, they are the diffuse invitations to an original and personal experience. The path is approximate, demanding, and with some light demarcations. The visitor is invited to an active, non-commented, sensory experience: no guide but the map, no social behaviorism requirements, no comments, the right side of the brain has to work slowly not to disturb le left part, and the stomach, and the spine, and feet and hands...

Landscapes from Memories

As explorers, we collected samples and meravelles; like memories from the materiality of the landscape. It tells stories, right? Slate, is what gives wine its taste; is as rusty as corten steel; is basis material for the architecture of agriculture. Bricks, are common construction material; are common to most of the buildings which were built in the last century ; are wear by sea and wind the same way cliffs and rocks are (because it's the same air and water)... and everywhere, something grows and pushes itself on something else, with contrast brought by solar, wind, and, moisture exposition. So we were impressed indeed, to see how a brick from the Punta d'Escala, turned into the expression of the whole cliff. So we were impressed to see the variations into solid matter, differentiated cares could bring to theoretically similar areas.



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Therefore this collection of memories is not only the annex of a construction guide: it is a narrative of the actions a variety of cares brought by time, have on objects to melt them into a wider consideration of Nature and scales.

Diary

And in-between, or in reference to the maps, to the hikes, to our collections of meravelles, will lay fragments of pictural, written, or taste diaries of the exploration, and of our encounters with the society of all things. Our diaries are obviously highly personal and interpretative, yet it's what you can expect from sobriety: having from one piece of material, stories by the number.



Landscape from Mermories ©Odysseas Yannikouris



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The Juncture of Worlds

Finally, we want to take our part into the action of taking care with languor, (it's also to heal ourselves from our exasperated immobility). Well, we were all reminded quiet traumatically, that being outside on a public space, is a consistent part of life. So we've been looking for a place, out in the open, to do something in.

The thing with 42,178493N ; 3,1592359E, is that one, being there, cannot believe what is before the eye. It is a powerful atmospheric contingency, where walls and lintels, growing and broken things, light, climate, and time, compete in acting beautifully. Because we saw it as a desirable space, we will work at «restoring» this rather neglected part of Muntana Portbou, into a space where one would stop, and meet, with the pleasure of standing elsewhere.

Therefore, within this landscape of a thousand situations we have surveyed, there will be an « act of construction ».

From the rather insignificant remaining of something that was built there, we will make something: a small amenity with no specific function or connection to the urban fabric, which only aim is to exist. No need to think about a program, neither if the area is strategic enough: pulling time and effort into doing, will be already something. We will build a public floor. The way to use it, the way it can be appropriated in the long term by people: if there is care, it will happen.

What will it look like and how we do it ?

We will do as taught: with sobriety, patience, and languor: the structures and the materials are almost all there, there is even a little too much already. So we will clean at first, and we will recuperate samples, and we will clean those samples as well. This will be our raw material for acting with delicacy: doing more with nothing. Then the design? Well, what we do is how we do it : the design won't be an indispensable prerequisite, it will come from the ressource we have harvested from this ruin.



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We will build a surface to stand on, with, as sole and unique program, to spend efforts on it. Its only aim is to be generous and free. It will be unveiled in a final event on the 27th and 28th of March.

Let's meet there: 42,178493 N ; 3,1592359 E,