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claire chesnier

a vertical spreading

6 june 2025 - 18 january 2026

press release

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claire chesnier

a vertical spreading

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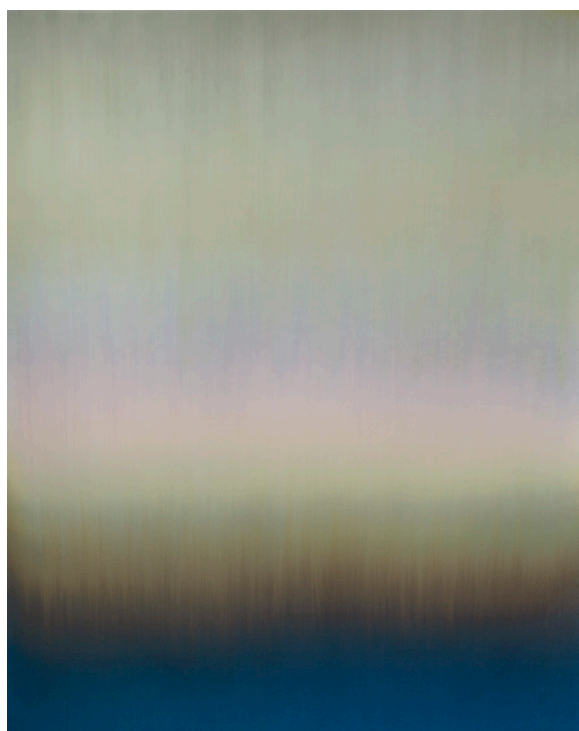
opening on 5th june 2025
white gallery

curator & texts:
Marine Rochard

From June 2025, the CCCOD has invited Claire Chesnier to exhibit her latest paintings in the white gallery, each of which is a space, a moment, a memory, a recurrence. Each of them is an interweaving of colours, transparencies and lightness, applied layer by layer, on the surface of which, over the last few years, a horizontal division of masses has been systematically created. More subtle than a simple border, as delicate as a *quattrocento sfumato*, it resembles a horizon line marking the boundary between earth and sky.

For one of the rooms in the white gallery, the artist, in collaboration with Olumee, is also developing a new light installation that will allow us to experience the time involved in her painting, but also to discover how its appearance can change according to the time of day.

"Une éclaircie verticale" ("A Vertical Spreading") is part of a cycle of solo and group exhibitions by Claire Chesnier that will take place in France and abroad from 2024 to 2026 and coincides with a publication dedicated to her work.



Claire Chesnier, 030623, 2023, ink on paper, 172 x 137 cm, Courtesy THE PILL, © Fabrice Seixas

a vertical spreading *intention*

Understanding Claire Chesnier's work depends as much on what we look at as on how we look at it¹, on the context of the observation, on the sensory and memorable impressions that touch us and connect us for a moment with those that accompanied the artist during the creation of the work. The words chosen to describe her *paintings*² can only be metaphorical or analogical, because "no matter how much we say what we see, what we see never fits into what we say"³; *these works fully appeal to perception, to each of our senses*.

They are also created on a human scale, or at least on the scale of the artist's body. For the viewer, too, *the relationship with the work is physical from the outset*: not only is the work a real presence in the room, but it is also transformed by the strange phenomenon at play on its surface. The colours melt imperceptibly before our eyes, giving us the illusion that they are flowing, or rather that they are blending to take on new nuances that we had not noticed before. Clearly, these paintings do not require representation; *they embody abstract ideas*, if we may borrow these words from the choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker⁴; they give substance to the virtual existences⁵ of our impressions.

And yet our gaze is drawn in, and our imagination wanders, against our will, through the colours, trying to see or feel in the clarity, in the fluorescence on the surface, in a ray of sunlight highlighting the dew on the grass in the morning, in a veil of mist drifting down a hillside. This allusion to the landscape, to the world of the senses, is contradicted by the *systematic use of vertical formats*, which are more reminiscent of the portrait tradition. Moreover, we sometimes encounter a kind of flatness more than we penetrate the vastness and depth of a landscape. The lines of the horizon, uncertain edges that are sometimes only hinted at, are woven vertically by the juxtaposition, meeting and interpenetration of very fine lines of ink.

¹ I paraphrase André Gide, *The Fruits of the Earth*, Paris, Gallimard, 1971 [1897], p.21.

² These paintings are not really paintings at all: the artist uses inks and pigments that she mixes with lots of water before applying them to a damp sheet of paper.

³ Michel Foucault, *Les Mots et les choses*, Paris, Gallimard, 1966, p.25.

⁴ Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker, *Incarnar une abstraction*, Arles, Actes Sud, 2020 [lecture at the Collège de France in 2019].

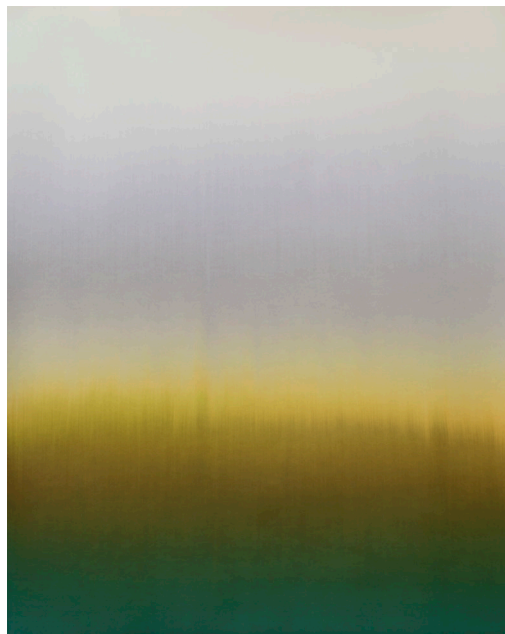
⁵ Regarding the « virtual existences », see Étienne Souriau, *Les Différents modes d'existence* (Paris, PUF, 2009[1943]), and as interpreted by David Lapoujade, *Les Existences moindres* (Paris, Minuit, 2017).

a vertical spreading *intention*

Our gaze is immediately struck by a sense of discrepancy, of a physical impossibility, of an unthinkable fact, because this horizon line dissolves infinitely, flowing upwards against gravity, as if the earth - those dark masses at the bottom - were melting, only to be sucked up and breathed in by the sky.

Although the paintings seem ephemeral, **they are nevertheless repeated allusions to the material world**, to concrete reality, its textures, its brilliance, its hardness. They are raw, physical materials, but sometimes they are also about something contained, opaque, as if the painting were imbued, incorporated or embodied. Claire Chesnier gives us **"the physical possibility of feeling colour"**⁶ by giving it a sense of vastness, space and duration.

The tension between horizontality and verticality, between flatness and expanse, produces a dizzying sensation that is difficult to describe in any intelligible way, and that also provokes a kind of incomprehension. Stunned to the point of blindness and deafness, all we can feel in the end are the swirls and ripples of colour seeping through our closed eyelids, drenched in sunlight.



Claire Chesnier, 030923, 2023, ink on paper, 170 x 136 cm,
Courtesy THE PILL, © Fabrice Seixas

⁶ Statement by Olivier Debré dated May 1977 and reproduced in *Aspects de la peinture en France de 1950 à 1980* (exhibition catalogue), Montauban, Musée Ingres, 1985, p.23.

a vertical spreading *intention*

« the sky is full, and opening again ⁷ », claire chesnier

artist's statement about their new installation for the CCCOD

“

In this installation of images and light, painterly and scientific elements come together. Both are linked to the sensory experience of seeing, influenced by the variations in light that shape our perception of a work of art and its surroundings. Paintings have a tactile surface that responds to changes in natural light throughout the day, revealing subtle variations in hue. As engineers at the start-up Olumee, Arnaud Lejeune, Guillaume Lejeune and Jean-Yves Moulin have developed an innovative lighting system that uses sensors to reproduce the sky's fluctuating temperature and color intensity in real time.

The concept was born from a dream—the dream of immersing the viewer in the contemplative experience of painting, of transferring the ever-changing aspects of the sky, the passage of human time and the evolving mood of a day, from sunrise to sunset, onto the painted surface, and of extending this experience onto the viewer's own skin. Because the sky is always around us, it touches our bodies and we are in it. The air changes and with it the luminosity of our skin, the color of our eyes, our perception of the present moment. So the same work of art would reflect the vast expanse of shadow under a cloudy sky or the fiery glow of the midday sun in August. I wanted to evoke the temporality of the gaze, of the creation of the painting, of the old masters working in dusky chapels or by candlelight, of stained glass or domestic windows. Let each hour, each moment of this journey become movement, become life. In *The Sky Is Full, and Opening Again*, the light gradations of twelve hours of the day condense into twelve minutes, like an ephemeris.

⁷The title of the installation is a quotation from André du Bouchet, taken from his very short poem “The Uninhabited” (“L’Inhabité”) published in 1968 as part of the collection *Ou le soleil*:

“We pause, for the view, in the wind that doesn't wane in the distance, on the upright rock / Our support sways. The sky is bursting, and still expanding.”

(re-edited in André du Bouchet, *Dans la chaleur vacante* followed by *Ou le soleil*, Paris, Gallimard, 1991, p.131)

Concerning Claire Chesnier's work, it is interesting to note that du Bouchet used to write standing up, gesturally so to speak, tracing his very short poems on the surface of large panels almost the size of his body.

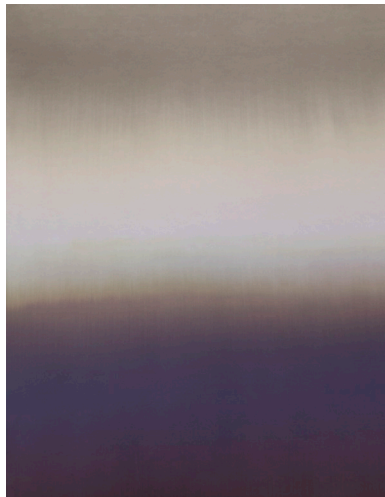
The text written by Claire Chesnier and reproduced here is taken from: David Desrimais and Jean-Charles Vergne (eds.), *Claire Chesnier*, Paris, JBE Books, 2024, pp.162-163.

a vertical spreading *intention*

The modulations of light intensity and temperature were conceived as a tableau, moving from the slow rise of dawn to sudden showers, passing clouds and nightfall in relation to the viewer and the paintings themselves. The weather and the passage of time shape our observation of the surface of the painting as it pulsates and transforms. *Painting is about touch, about touching and being touched.* I hope that this installation opens up the possibility of a sensitive approach to a time that mirrors the sky, which is no longer just above our heads, but in and before our eyes, embedded in the passing veils of color. »

”

Olumee
lumière vivante haute-fidélité



Claire Chesnier, 060323, 2023, ink on paper, 161,5 x 135,5 cm, Courtesy Ceysson & Bénétière, © Fabrice Seixas



Claire Chesnier, 130323, 2023, ink on paper, 170 x 135 cm, Courtesy Ceysson & Bénétière,

a vertical spreading news

exhibition series

Several exhibitions are dedicated to the artist in 2025:

05.12.24 - 25.01.25 (personal) *Un rose, une rosée, un couchant*, text by Maylis de Kerangal, Galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris

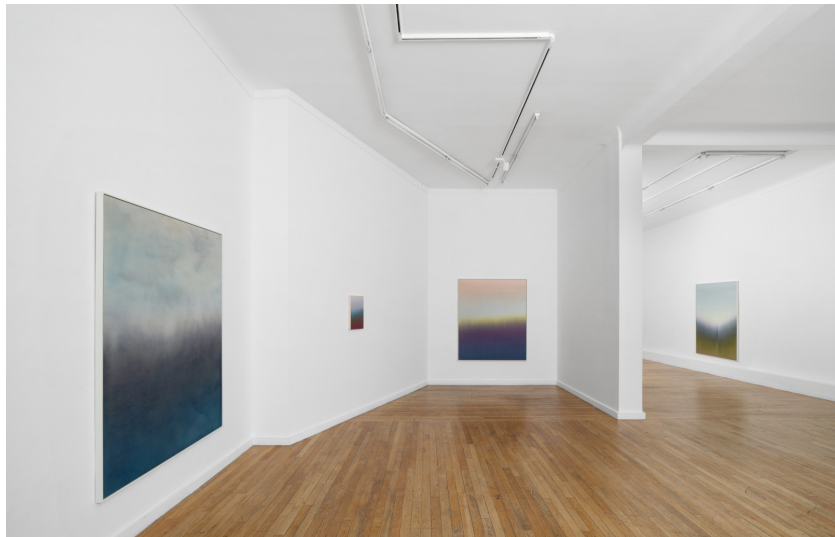
30.01 - 22.03.25 (collective) *Format Paysage*, curator and text by Anne Favier, Galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Lyon

27.03 - 17.05.25 (personal) *Claire Chesnier, THE PILL®*, Istanbul

29.04 - 18.08.25 (collective) *Dans le flou, une autre vision de l'art, de 1945 à nos jours*, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris
curator and catalogue : Claire Bernardi & Emilia Philippot,

18.09.25 - 05.04.26 in collaboration with Juliette Degennes
CaixaForum, Madrid

12.05 - 27.09.26
CaixaForum, Barcelone



exhibition view *un rose, une rosée, un couchant* galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris, 2025
©Aurélien Mole

a vertical spreading *news*

publication

This series of exhibitions is accompanied by the publication of a monograph, available for purchase at the CCCOD bookstore.

Claire Chesnier, Ed. JBE books - texts by Maylis de Kerangal, Molly Warnock, Pierre Watt, Jean-Michel Alberola - december 2024

Price: €35 - Hardcover - 240 pages - Available in French and English - www.jbe-books.com

Co-published by Galerie Ceysson & Bénétière et THE PILL®, with the participation of L'ahah, the Pascaline Mulliez Endowment Fund and the Centre de création contemporaine Olivier Debré – CCCOD, Tours (FR) on the occasion of the solo exhibition of Claire Chesnier (white gallery) from June 6, 2025, to January 18, 2026. Supported by ADAGP, Monograph Collection Grant 2024.



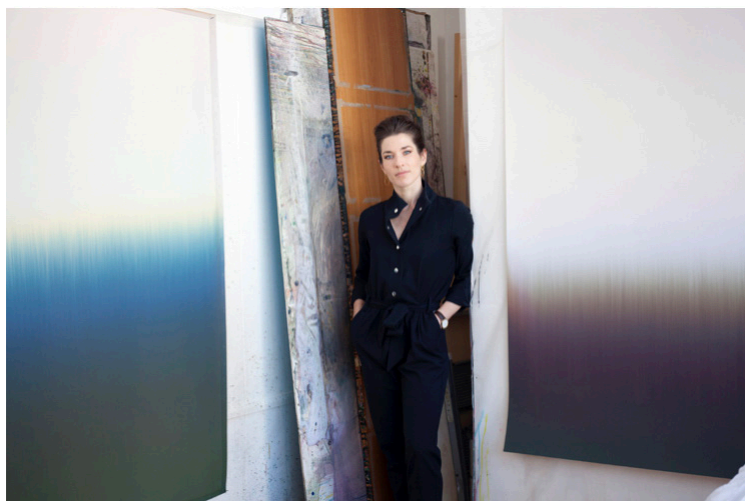
claire chesnier

biography

Claire Chesnier (b. 1986) first meets art through music and writing she practices very early. She devotes nearly twenty years to classical and contemporary dance. Painting, which she had been practicing since the beginning, was the decisive encounter experienced as an enlargement of the writing gesture and the incarnation of an extended dance gesture. Her commitment to painting is turned towards a physical and poetic relationship to the world, of apprehension of touch, and of the sensitive embrace of things, of life. For her, "painting is a story of touch, of how to touch and be touched. She arrives where words fail by tactility and rhythm".

She won several prizes such as the Prix des Amis des Beaux-Arts, the Contemporary Talents Prize of the François Schneider Foundation, the Art Collector Prize, the Fénéon Prize of the Chancellerie des Universités de Paris as well as the Yishu 8 Prize of the House of Arts in Beijing. Her paintings have been included in several public and private collections (FRAC Auvergne, Paul Dini Museum, Collection of the city of Vitry-sur-Seine (MACVAL), agnès b. Collection, François Schneider Collection, ...) and have been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions in France and abroad. Since 2022 she is represented by the Ceysson and Bénétière Gallery (Paris, New York, Luxembourg, Geneva, Lyon, Saint-Etienne) and by the Pill Gallery (Istanbul, Paris). She lives and works in Paris.

(source : THE PILL®)



© Renaud Monfourny

claire chesnier

exhibitions

personal exhibitions (selection)

- 2025** *Une éclaircie à la verticale*, cur. Marine Rochard, CCC OD, Tours, FR
Claire Chesnier, galerie THE PILL®, Istanbul, TR
- 2024** *Un rose, une rosée, un couchant*, text by Maylis de Kerangal, galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris, FR
- 2023** *Rayer le jour, le soir étain*, text by Itzhak Goldberg, galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Lyon, FR
Les Jours, cur. Philippe Piguet, chapelle de la Visitation, Centre d'art de Thonon-les-Bains, FR
- 2022** *Mudhoney*, Claire Chesnier - Denis Laget, cur. Jean-Charles Vergne, galerie ETC, Paris, FR
- 2021** *Par espacements et par apparitions*, text by Pierre Wat, l'ahah, Paris, FR
- 2020** *Le ciel aussi est un fracas*, cur. Karim Ghaddab, galerie ETC, Paris, FR
- 2019** *L'Art dans les chapelles*, cur. Éric Suchère, chapelle de la Trinité Castennec, Bieuzy, FR
Une réserve de nuit, Claire Chesnier - Estèla Alliaud, cur. John Cornu, galerie Art & Essai, Rennes, FR
- 2018** *Under B Shall Come Butterfly Powder*, galerie Maior, Palma de Majorque, ES
Fragments d'une déposition, espace Communes, Paris, FR
- 2016** *Résonances*, galerie du Jour agnès b., Paris, FR
- 2014** *L'Aire des aurores*, cur. Léa Bismuth, le Patio, Paris, FR
- 2013** *Résonance*, Yishu 8 Maison des Arts, Pékin, CN
- 2012** *Fragments d'une déposition*, galerie du Jour agnès b., Paris, FR
Fragments d'une déposition, galerie agnès b., Marseille, FR
Parcours Saint-Germain, agnès b., Paris, FR
Re-veiling, T-Gallery, Bratislava, SVK

claire chesnier

exhibitions

collective exhibitions (selection)

- 2025** *Dans le flou, des années 1950 à nos jours*, cur. Claire Bernardi, Emilia Philippot, musée de l'Orangerie, Paris, FR, CaixaForum, Madrid, ES, CaixaForum, Barcelone, ES
Format paysage, cur. Anne Favier, galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Lyon, FR
Collective, galerie THE PILL®, Paris, FR
- 2024** *Le Jour des peintres*, cur. Nicolas Gausserand, Thomas Lévy-Lasne, musée d'Orsay, Paris, FR
Monomania, Michael Woolworth Publications, Paris, FR
The Colour Out of Space, cur. Jean-Charles Vergne, THE PILL®, Istanbul, TR
Tokyo Gendai Art Fair, Galerie THE PILL®, Tokyo, JP
Collective, Galerie Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris, FR
Histoire d'Yishu 8, National Art Museum of China, Pékin, CN
Les Lois de l'imaginaire, cur. Laure Forlay, FRAC Auvergne, musées d'Aurillac, FR
- 2023** *Le Toucher du monde*, cur. Sylvie Carlier, Laure Forlay, Jean-Charles Vergne, musée Paul Dini, Villefranche-sur-Saône, FR
Beautés, cur. Jean-Charles Vergne, FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, FR
Perceptions, cur. Élodie Derval, musées d'Angers-Artothèque, Angers, FR
Mirages, cur. Nicolas Dhervillers, galerie Claire Gastaud, Clermont Ferrand, FR
- 2022** *À contre-jour, dialogue avec Eugène Leroy*, cur. Germain Hirselj, Mélanie Lerat, Christelle Manfredi, musée des Beaux-Arts Eugène Leroy MUBa, Tourcoing, FR
Yishu 8, Dialogue with the collections of musée Guimet, cur. Sophie Makariou, Henry-Claude Cousseau, musée Guimet, Paris, FR
Le Promontoire du songe, cur. Jean-Charles Vergne, FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, FR
- 2021** *Printemps*, Fondation Fiminco, Romainville, FR
Inspiré.e.s, cur. Lucile Hitier, Centre d'art l'ArTsenal, Dreux, FR
April Showers Bring May Flowers, Michael Woolworth Publications, Paris, FR
Collection Gilles Balmet, cur. Gilles Balmet, Pavillon Carré de Baudouin, Paris, FR
Les Apparences, cur. Thomas Lévy-Lasne, Centre d'art À cent mètres du centre du monde, Perpignan, FR
- 2020** *Hors champ et paysages*, collection agnès b., cur. Jean de Loisy, La Fab' agnès b., Paris, FR
The Painting People, Michael Woolworth Publications, Paris, FR
- 2019** *Some of Us, an Overview of French Art Scene*, NordArt, cur. Jérôme Cotinet-Alphaize, Marianne Derrien, Kunstwerk Carlshütte, Budelsdorf, DE

claire chesnier

exhibitions

- Résurgence III : dimension supplémentaire*, cur. Valentine Boé, artothèque du Lot, Souillac, FR
- 2018** *Vertiges, une chute dans le vide du ciel*, cur. Léa Bismuth, LaBanque, Béthune, FR
Secrets d'ateliers, galerie Jean-Paul Barrès, Toulouse, FR
Eclectic, galerie Maior, Pollença, Majorque, ES
Fading Away, cur. Céline Flècheux, Rosario Caltabiano, galerie 22,48m², Paris, FR
- 2017** *Aurores*, galerie Pauline Pavéc, Paris, FR
Cinq fois deux, cur. Philippe Piguet, la Patinoire royale, Bruxelles, BE
Vantablack, cur. Erik Verhagen et Jocelyn Wolff, galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, FR
Peindre dit-elle chap. 2, cur. Julie Crenn, Annabelle Ténèze, Amélie Lavin, musée des Beaux-Arts de Dole, FR
- 2016** *À quoi tient la beauté des étreintes*, cur. Jean-Charles Vergne, FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, FR
Histoire des formes, cur. Éric Degoutte, Centre d'art Les Tanneries, Amilly, FR
Cinq fois deux, cur. Philippe Piguet, le Patio, Paris, FR
Virage, galerie de Roussan, Paris, FR
Peindre n'est(-ce) pas teindre?, cur. Sandrine Morsillo, musée de la Toile de Jouy, Jouy-en-Josas, FR
- 2015** *Minéral*, cur. Jean-Marie Gallais et Ludovic Delalande, galerie Max Hetzler, Paris, FR
Un regard sur la collection agnès b., cur. Marc Donnadiou, Lille métropole musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut (LaM), Villeneuve-d'Ascq, FR
Traits d'esprit, galerie du Jour agnès b., Paris, FR
Ouvrages de dames, cur. Dominique Païni, galerie Valérie Delaunay, Paris, FR
- 2014** *Avec et sans peinture*, musée d'Art contemporain du Val-de-Marne (MAC VAL), Vitry-sur-Seine, FR
Et la peinture...?, galerie du Jour agnès b., Paris, FR
Talents contemporains, Fondation François Schneider, Fondation de France, Wattwiller, FR
Biennale du dessin, cur. Emmanuelle Brugerolles, Gilgian Gelzer, Bernard Moninot, Cité internationale des arts, Paris, FR
- 2013** *The Drawer*, Ed. The Drawer, galerie du Jour agnès b., Paris, FR
Bruissements (Nouvelles vagues, Palais de Tokyo), cur. Léa Bismuth, galerie Isabelle Gounod, Paris, FR
Sur la mauvaise pente (Nouvelles vagues, Palais de Tokyo), cur. Nabila Mokrani, galerie de Roussan, Paris, FR

claire chesnier

exhibitions

Art Osaka, Jeune Création, Institut français du Japon-Kansai,
hôtel Granvia, Osaka, JP

Ce que le sonore fait au visuel, château de Servières, Marseille, FR

Last dance, cur. Le Syndicat magnifique, galerie Gourvennec Ogor,
Marseille, FR

La Rime et la Raison, cur. MPVITE, Label hypothèse, l'Escaut,
Bruxelles, BE

Fondation, Galerie Leonardo Agosti, Sète, FR

La Dispute de l'âme et du corps, cur. Jean-Christophe Arcos,
cloître des Billettes, Paris, FR

2012 *Emergence*, cur. Katrin Bremermann, Yifat Gat, Erin Lawlor, hôtel Sauroy,
Paris, FR

Filiations - Dialogues avec les œuvres de la Donation Albers-Honegger,
cur. Fabienne Fulchéri, Alexandra Deslys, espace de l'Art concret,
château de Mouans-Sartoux, FR

Jeune Création, le Centquatre, Paris, FR

Décalage, espace Communes, Paris, FR

Ready for Fatality?, Fabienne Bideaud, Institut français de Berlin,
Note on, Berlin, DE

Blank Generation, Salon de Montrouge, le Beffroi, Montrouge, FR

Biennale de la Jeune Création, La Graineterie, Houilles, FR

Figures du sommeil, cur. Catherine Viollet, galerie Jean Collet,
Vitry-sur-Seine, FR

2011 *Comme elle vient*, cur. Label hypothèse, Rosenblum Collection & Friends,
Paris, FR

Prix des amis des Beaux-Arts de Paris, ENSBA, Paris, FR

Prix international de peinture J.-M. Murlot (Fondation de France), galerie
Jeu de Paume, Marseille, FR

2010 *Prix international de peinture*, galerie Jean Collet, Vitry-sur-Seine, FR

2009 *Kiitos II*, musée des Arts et métiers, Paris, FR

the cccod



Maurizio Nannucci, *Listen to your eyes*, 2010, fnac 10-1055, CNAP collection, 2018-2023. Photo by F. Fernandez, CCCOD - Tours

Right in the historic centre of Tours, with its contemporary architecture designed by the Portuguese agency Aires Mateus, the Centre de Création contemporaine Olivier Debré is somewhere the public can come and make discoveries, share knowledge and experiences in an open setting. A contemporary art centre, it is also a multidisciplinary culture venue which engages with all local stakeholders in its ambition to explore new ground.

The CCCOD is now the custodian of a donation of works by the painter Olivier Debré who lived in Touraine from early childhood. Hosting a historic collection within a contemporary art centre throws up a whole host of unique possibilities for building bridges between past and present creation.

All year round, our Visitors' Department organises a wide range of activities for young and old alike, tailoring their options to suit individuals and different groups. An exciting and intriguing programme of cultural events can be enjoyed alongside the exhibitions, including conferences, encounters, performances and film screenings – all designed to awaken your senses and broaden your knowledge.

With an ambitious exhibition programme, the CCCOD is forging ever closer ties with its region whilst exploring international creation. Pioneering, inquisitive and ever mindful of the issues that matter today, it looks ahead with the artists who are constantly questioning our world in a different way.

practical information

claire chesnier
a vertical spreading
6 june 2025 - 18 january 2026

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getting here

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5 minutes by tram from Tours train station,
stop Porte-de-Loire
1h10 from Paris by TGV
via the A10 motorway, exit Tours Centre

opening hours

wednesday to sunday 11am - 6pm
saturday until 7pm

entry fees

8.50 € (full price)
5.50 € (reduced price)
free access under 18

CCC OD LEPASS

unlimited access to exhibitions and event
valid for 1 year
27 € single pass
45 € duo pass
12 € for students / 7 € PCE

free access

the coffee shop

Le Café de Paula, is a friendly and welcoming place to enjoy quality coffee, a pastry, or a daily special, all made in-house with local and seasonal products.
Open Wednesday to Friday from 12pm to 6pm,
Saturday from 11am to 7pm, and Sunday from 11am to 6pm
paulacafetours@gmail.com

the bookstore - shop

Mailys, our bookseller, offers a wide selection of books specializing in art, architecture, and design, as well as books and games for children, postcards, and goodies...
Open Wednesday to Friday from 2pm to 6pm, and Saturday from 11am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm.
07 85 93 42 93 / librairie@cccod.fr

facilities

the CCC OD is accessible to people with disabilities.
2 accessible parking spaces for people with reduced mobility (PRM) at Jardin François 1^{er}.
Bicycle parking and car parking available at Porte-de-Loire, Place de la Résistance, and Rue du Commerce.
On-site services include: elevators, accessible toilets, stroller storage, baby changing facilities, and a wheelchair (available at reception upon request).

Le CCC OD is a cultural equipment of Tours Métropole Val de Loire.
Its achievement was made possible thanks to the State and territorial collectivities support.

