

The image shows a large-scale art installation in a high-ceilinged space. The ceiling is covered with a dense array of circular, translucent discs, each containing a different landscape or celestial scene. These discs are suspended by thin wires, creating a complex, layered visual effect. Below the ceiling, the floor is covered with a dense layer of small, dark, tree-like sculptures, creating a forest-like floor. The overall effect is a vast, immersive environment that changes as the viewer's perspective shifts.

centre
de
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olivier
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group show
l'idée des corps célestes
(the idea of celestial bodies)

10 July 26 - 03 January 27

press release

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calder year at CCC OD

In 2026, as part of the regional programme AR(t)CHIPEL dedicated to Alexander Calder, the CCC OD is developing a two-part program exploring the artist's living legacy and lasting impact on contemporary art.

This season will bring contemporary practices and historical perspectives into dialogue through a group exhibition in the summer, followed by a monographic exhibition in autumn 2026 :

- group show

l'idée des corps célestes (the idea of celestial bodies)

10 July 2026 - 03 January 2027 : black gallery

10 July 2026 - 13 September 26 : nave (Marc Fornes)

- monographic exhibition

alexander calder

16 October 2026 - 28 March 27 : nave



The Atelier Calder in Saché
photo: Guillaume Blanc / Atelier Calder, Saché

l'idée des corps célestes *(the idea of celestial bodies)* group show

10.07.26 - 03.01.27:
black gallery

10.07.26 - 13.09.26: nave

double opening on 9 July

Curators & texts:
Delphine Masson
& Marine Rochard

 **Centre Pompidou**

ATELIER
CALDER

This exhibition is presented thanks to the exceptional loans generously provided by the Centre Pompidou, the Cnap, the Atelier Calder, the Frac Bretagne, the Frac des Pays de la Loire, the Frac Picardie, Les Abattoirs, Musée-Frac Occitanie et the Musée de Rochechouart.

« The first things I made were very simple combinations of forms in a limited number, and soon the idea of celestial bodies, atmospheric conditions, etc., in a very simple form, became the basis of my compositions. Then I thought that the laws of nature would be more closely respected if the interrelations between my elements were more general, so I articulated some of the supports in wire, thus allowing movement. This, in turn, suggested to me that movement itself could be used in composition, and I then began to make "mobiles". Symmetry and order do not make a composition. It is the apparent accident to regularity which the artist actually controls, by which he makes or mars a work.¹ »

(Alexander Calder, handwritten text, 1943)

Attila Csörgö • Marc Fornes • Jeppe Hein • Žilvinas Kempinas
Jaume Plensa • Valerie Snobeck • Francisco Tropa
Hema Upadhyay

In 2026, as part of the regional programme dedicated to Alexander Calder, the CCCOD is developing a preliminary programme that seeks to examine the persistence of the American artist's founding principles within contemporary practices.

His studio in Saché, transformed in 1989 into a space dedicated to artistic residencies, has hosted more than seventy artists over the years. From this history, we have identified a number of figures, and above all certain practices, that resonate with the ever-renewed experimental spirit of Calder's work.

Influenced as much by the scientific discoveries and technological innovations of his time as by a pragmatic, everyday sensibility, Alexander Calder developed an approach whose apparent simplicity draws on the fleeting sense of lightness that daily life can sometimes afford. Working across both sculpture and what might be termed an "anti-sculptural" mode, and engaging with physical principles such as gravity and balance, Calder produced works situated at the threshold between sculpture and machine.² Through their lightness and mobility, these works assume shifting, transitory appearances, never settling into a fixed or definitive state of perception.

¹ Alexander Calder, handwritten text, 1943. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Agnes Rindge Claflin Papers. (Reproduced in Arnauld Pierre, Calder, *la sculpture en mouvement*, Paris: Gallimard, 1996, p. 96.)

² 'Better a poor machine and a good sculpture.'
Alexander Calder, "A propos of *Measuring a Mobile*", handwritten text, 7 October 1943, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Agnes Rindge Claflin Papers. (Reproduced in Arnauld Pierre, Calder: *Sculpture in Movement* (op. cit.), p. 96.)

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From this constellation of concerns, we have brought together *eight artists who, in the years after him, briefly stayed in Saché* creating within the environment and studio he had initially conceived for his own practice.

The works of seven of them will be presented in dialogue within the black gallery, while, in resonance, a monumental piece by Marc Fornes will occupy the nave, serving as a prefiguration of the installation of three large-scale Mobiles by Alexander Calder (from October 2026).

From one work to another, the aim is to represent—or rather *to experience—the invisible forces of nature*, approached in a manner that is more pragmatic than scientific, and to bring to light *the major abstract concepts that shape our transient existences*, even as they remain interwoven with a sense of continuity.

'I have always been fascinated by the way things connect to one another.'³

This remark by Alexander Calder aptly illustrates the tenacity with which we strive to understand the world around us, even when it exceeds our capacity to fully grasp it⁴.

The works in the exhibition propose a shared way of *engaging with time and space*.

Temporality can be perceived as a repetitive cycle, as in the work of Valerie Snobeck, or through the prism of circularity, lightness, and the almost immaterial, as in the practices of Žilvinas Kempinas and Jeppe Hein. For his part, Attila Csörgő explores the infinite and uninterrupted progression of time, a reflection that may also echo theories of the continuous expansion of the universe, within which bodies are in constant motion and perpetual reconfiguration in relation to one another, as seen in the works of Francisco Tropa, Hema Upadhyay, and Marc Fornes.

Yet it is always through an apparent simplicity that these artists engage with such complex notions. While some draw on the language of mathematics and the sciences, it is rather a form of *empiricism* that underpins their approach to *the invisible forces governing the world and its mechanisms*, which they seek to experience and articulate.

³ Reported statements by Alexander Calder, in *Calder*, Maeght Éditeur, Galerie municipale de Prague, 1992, p. 74.

⁴ 'The underlying formal sense of my work has been the system of the universe—or at least a part of it. For one must admit that the model is a little too large for anyone who would wish to base themselves upon it.' (idem)

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Requiring highly elaborate calculations, the “machine-sculptures” constructed by **Attila Csörgő** using rudimentary technological means nevertheless propose paradoxical representations of time and space. Through movement and light, the installation *Clock Work* explores the tension between linear and cyclical conceptions of time. In *Möbius Space (Kerguéhennec-1)*, a photograph compresses the dimensions of a three-dimensional landscape onto a single plane.

In her video *Go Soft*, **Valerie Snobeck** explores duration by filming, in a fixed shot and in real time, the dismantling and reassembly of each gear of a clock mechanism. The artist thus engages the viewer in a human-scale temporality that resists the economic acceleration of the contemporary world.

Žilvinas Kempinas composes his works with the elemental force of air. In *Flux*, the breath of a fan sets a strip of magnetic tape in motion, forming in space a floating circular loop, suspended in a state of weightlessness.

This extreme lightness also characterises the installation of **Hema Upadhyay**. Entirely transparent, her *Untitled* work, composed of hundreds of small plexiglass medallions, comes alive with the slightest movement of air, shaping light into multiple shifting reflections that transform and amplify the surrounding space.

Moving Neon Cube by **Jeppie Hein** is likewise a sculpture of light. Materialising twelve neon cubes arranged on the floor, the work seeks to create the illusion of movement. As the neon lights activate in sequence, they form a single cube rotating on itself in an uninterrupted trajectory, like a die in motion.

In *Quad*, **Francisco Tropa** likewise employs the geometric form of the cube to evoke movement. Stone cubes are placed on a thin layer of sand, which preserves the successive strata of their displacements and past trajectories.

With his suspended blue sculpture mobile *La Terre*, he revisits the cube, proposing a two-dimensional representation of the form within a three-dimensional volume. Suspended in space, the work describes an almost imperceptible rotational movement, creating the illusion for the eye of a cube reduced to an intermittent existence.

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Highly present throughout the exhibition, geometric forms aspire to an abstract and universal representation of the world and the notions that animate it. In the triptych *Blind, Mute, Deaf (Suite Saché II)*, [Jaume Plensa](#) uses the circle to inscribe these fundamental notions of time and space, bringing them back to a human and existential experience.

The exhibition design seeks to highlight this particular space-time, materialised through the works and their relations to one another. Each of them constitutes a singularity that disrupts the trajectory of the body, which is thus compelled into a fractured movement, confronted with multiple pathways that open as so many probabilities to be traversed and explored.



Francisco Tropa, *Quad*, 2008, Ruivina marble, sand, black surface, 40 x 300 x 500 cm
Courtesy of Galerie Jocelyn Wolf. Collection of the Frac des Pays de la Loire.

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Attila Csörgő

In residence at the Atelier Calder from March to July 2011

Born in 1965 at Budapest (Hungary). He currently lives and works in Warsaw, (Poland).

works featured in the exhibition

Clock Work, 2011

Metal, wood, spotlights, motors

AM 2015-6. Acquired in 2015

Centre Pompidou, Paris

Musée national d'art moderne /

Centre de création industrielle

Möbius Space (Kerghéhenec-1), 2006

Framed black-and-white photograph, transparent film, and light table.

Inv. : 121495.

Collection Fonds régional d'art contemporain Bretagne

The Hungarian artist Attila Csörgő is committed to giving form to the invisible laws and structures that govern the world. With a strong interest in cosmology, physics, mathematics, and geometry, he conceives his works as visual and playful resolutions to complex scientific problems. Drawing on highly elaborate calculations, his sculptures, installations, and photographs generate striking optical illusions involving movement and light. They unsettle habitual modes of perception and interrogate fundamental universal notions such as the relationship between time and space.

It is through simple means that Attila Csörgő engages with complex scientific phenomena. To generate his striking visual equations, he constructs his own devices, openly embracing their “makeshift” character in reference to the often rudimentary instruments that have accompanied major scientific discoveries. This approach shifts the aesthetic stakes of his work beyond its material presence, situating them instead within the conceptual, philosophical, and poetic dimensions of the optical phenomena he brings into being. His mechanised devices function as machines for producing impossible images— such as transforming a circle into a square⁵ or compressing all the dimensions of a space into a single photograph.

In Csörgő's work, the use of scientific methods and language is not intended to explain the physical and rational world, but rather to evoke astonishment and the form of perceptual disruption inherent to aesthetic experience.

The installation *Clock Work* (2011), presented in the exhibition, was developed during the artist's residency at the Atelier Calder. It belongs to a body of work and research initiated in the early 1990s on the representation of time. *Clock Work* ingeniously combines a moving geometric structure with its luminous projection. At the centre of the installation, an apparently irregular volume is in fact the result of a complex reflection combining geometry and mathematics. When illuminated by two light sources reflected through telescope mirrors, the form is doubled on the surrounding walls into two distinct geometric figures. The shadows alternately trace a circle and a lemniscate—the elongated figure eight symbol of infinity.

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From a single form, the artist thus intertwines two fundamental and opposing concepts of time: cyclical time and linear time. If the former corresponds to the archaic circularity of a repetitive temporality, folding back onto itself through the cycles of seasons and days, the latter refers to the modern conception of historical time, oriented toward infinite progression.

By simultaneously representing these two foundational conceptions of time, Attila Csörgő develops a poetic and philosophical reflection on their interdependence.

The installation *Möbius Space (Kerguehenec-1)* (2006) is part of a broader reflection on space and its representation through the photographic medium. During a residency at the Domaine de Kerguehenec in Brittany, Attila Csörgő constructed a photographic device featuring a dual rotational movement.

During the act of image-making—which does not occur instantaneously but unfolds over a duration—the apparatus records the landscape onto a Möbius strip. This geometric form, which twists back onto itself, has the property of possessing only one surface (unlike a conventional strip, which has two). Echoing the infinite figure of the lemniscate, the photographic image thus forms a loop, bringing together on a single plane the multiple dimensions of the landscape.



Attila Csörgő, *Möbius Space (Kerguehenec-1)*, 2006
Collection Frac Bretagne © Attila Csörgő
Photo credit: Courtesy of the galerie Jérôme Poggi

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Marc Fornes

Born in 1975 at Strasbourg,
lives and works in New York.
theverymany.com

work featured in the exhibition

DAW / Double Agent White, 2012

Created during a residency at the
atelier Calder in Saché

Pavilion composed of nine openwork
spheres assembled together
Cut and riveted white lacquered
aluminum

FNAC 2014-0348. Acquired from the
artist in 2012.

Collection of the National Centre for
Visual Arts (CNAP).

On deposit at Frac Centre-Val
de Loire.

In residence at the Atelier Calder from April to July 2012

Trained as an architect, Marc Fornes has, from early on in his career, developed an experimental practice rooted in computational design. His work is best understood as a hybrid field between architecture, design, and sculpture.

In the early 2000s, he founded in New York THEVERYMANY, a research-driven studio dedicated to expanding the structural possibilities of built form through lightweight materials and modular elements. These components are conceived using digital design and fabrication protocols, enabling highly precise yet adaptable systems of assembly.

The so-called “structural stripes” operate as both structure and skin, forming a construction system capable of generating complex, self-supporting curved surfaces with organic geometries. Contrary to common assumptions about experimental architecture, Fornes’s works are not confined to the realm of proposals: they are realised through commissions, most often installed in public space, and some have also entered museum collections.

During his residency at the Atelier Calder from April to July 2012, he developed *DWA/Double Agent White*, a sculpture now held in the Cnap collection, conceived as a space one can step into, almost like entering a room. The work encapsulates several key aspects of Marc Fornes’s practice. It is first and foremost intended as an immersive spatial experience, activated by those who temporarily inhabit it. At the same time, it is shaped through a computational approach to form-making. Rather than simply using digital tools to assist architectural design, Fornes draws on generative systems in which multiple agents interact, producing evolving structures and unexpected formal hybrids.

Within his studio, Marc Fornes develops his own meta-programming platforms, built on self-generating genetic algorithms that incorporate elements of chance and operate through combinatorial logics. These processes give rise to modular systems whose complexity stems from the near-infinite variations enabled by the underlying computational protocol.

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In the case of *DWA/Double Agent White*, the work begins with a simple structural sphere, progressively transformed through the intersection of additional spherical volumes. Its development responds not only to formal considerations but also to technical constraints: each component is cut from flat sheets of white aluminium and assembled by riveting. The finished piece takes the form of a self-supporting, biomorphic structure, standing 3.4 metres high and extending across a surface of 35 square metres. Yet once disassembled, its elements can be flattened and contained within a compact crate of less than one cubic metre.



Marc Fornes & Theverymany™, *DAW / Double Agent White*, 2012.
Architectural prototype. White lacquered aluminum, cut and riveted.
340 x 700 x 540 cm © Collection Centre national des arts plastiques
On deposit at Frac Centre-Val de Loire / Photo credit: François Laugini

This concern for efficient fabrication, along with the imperative of lightweight storage and transport, reflects a streamlining of the design and manufacturing process that is characteristic of Marc Fornes's prototypical practice. Each piece, conceived as a work of art whose uniqueness remains unquestioned, could nevertheless be produced in series according to a methodical protocol.

The overall lightness of the structure gives this installation an airy appearance, even though it was conceived as a monumental sculpture with a strong structural grounding.

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Jeppe Hein

Born in 1974 in Copenhagen
lives and works in
Copenhagen and Berlin.
He studied at the Royal
Academy of arts of
Copenhagen and the
Hochschule für Bildende
Künste Frankfurt.

work featured in the exhibition

Moving Neon Cube, 2004
Neon tubes, electrical cables, timer,
transformers
AM 2005-195. Acquired in 2005
Centre Pompidou, Paris
Musée national d'art moderne /
Centre de création industrielle

In residence at the Atelier Calder from September 2009 to January 2010

Time, as the fourth dimension of space, can be understood as much in terms of relativity as of illusion. Do the real and the present—the here and now—coincide? Can they truly be overlaid, or are they perceived differently by each observer?

With *Moving neon cube*⁶, Jeppe Hein approaches these physical and philosophical questions through a language of apparent simplicity. The sculpture is composed of twelve cubes, outlined in neon and arranged on the ground in a square formation. As the neon segments light up in sequence, they conjure the image of a single cube turning upon itself, tracing a continuous circular path—like a die set in motion.

Through installations and often simple, geometric sculptural forms, Jeppe Hein extends the legacy of 1960s Minimalism while subtly reconfiguring it—introducing play, a touch of humour, and, crucially, the viewer's perception as an active component. As with *Moving Neon Cube*, his works frequently reveal their own mechanics through processes of construction and deconstruction, making visible both their intrinsic modularity and, more broadly, that of the surrounding space. In doing so, they establish a dialogue between sculptural form and architecture.

The work presented in *The Idea of Celestial Bodies* more specifically engages with the tension between materialisation and dematerialisation, and with the way the artwork relates to reality through the viewer's gaze. The sculpture is activated in light: the viewer perceives a cube moving through space, while simultaneously witnessing a form that is in a constant state of assembly and disassembly. When the light goes out, however, does the inert structure still persist as an artwork?

⁶ This work belongs to the *Enlightments* series, a group of neon pieces.

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The relationship Jeppe Hein establishes between his work and kinetic art suggests that movement and time are regarded as inherent and fundamental materials within his sculptural practice. During his residency at the Atelier Calder in 2009–2010, the Danish artist notably presented *Circus Hein*, a project centered on the themes of art and circus. Hein invited a wide range of participants—visual artists, circus performers, and performers more broadly—to create a collective piece, produced in partnership with the Frac Centre–Val de Loire.



Jeppe Hein. *Circus Hein*, 2010 (detail), Atelier Calder, Saché. Photo: Guillaume Blanc / Atelier Calder, Saché.

Within the exhibition, *Moving Neon Cube*, through its continuous motion and sense of play, enters a direct dialogue with the work of Žilvinas Kempinas. Kempinas, for his part, creates sculptures out of almost nothing, relying on the physical properties of his materials and, with a certain wit, making the existence of the work contingent upon the viewer's gaze and experience.

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Žilvinas Kempinas

Born in 1969 in Plungė
(Lituanie). Lives and works
in New York.

work featured in the exhibition

Flux, 2009

Fan, MiniDV magnetic tape, painted
wooden plinth

AM 2010-257.

Gift of the artist, with the assistance
of the Calder Foundation and the
support of Galerija Vartai and Yvon
Lambert, 2010

Centre Pompidou, Paris

Musée national d'art moderne /
Centre de création industrielle

In residence at the Atelier Calder from January to June 2008

Lithuanian artist Žilvinas Kempinas explores the possibilities of movement in sculpture through a language of striking formal simplicity, extending the legacy of kinetic art and Op Art. Since the 1990s, he has focused in particular on the plastic and vibratory qualities of magnetic tape from video cassettes, which has become his material of choice.

Created a year after the artist's residency at the Atelier Calder, *Flux*, presented in the exhibition, is emblematic of the living, kinetic sculptures that brought Žilvinas Kempinas to international prominence in the early 2000s. It belongs to a series of aerial works that combine the lightness of magnetic tape with the airflow of fans that shape and animate it. The fine black ribbons hover in suspension, drawn into a hypnotic dance that seems to defy gravity.

Suspended by nothing more than air currents and their electrified source, these fragile forms seem perpetually on the verge of unravelling and dissolving, yet they hold together with striking persistence. They resist disappearance with a quiet insistence, continually resolving into the same minimal figures—circles, loops, or lemniscates—no matter how unstable they appear.



Žilvinas Kempinas, *Double O*, 2008. Installation view at Atelier Calder. © Žilvinas Kempinas / ADAGP, Paris 2026. Photo: Guillaume Blanc / Atelier Calder, Saché.

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Working with immaterial, elemental forces such as air and light, the artist is less interested in producing objects than in setting up perceptual situations. While his practice resonates with an infra-thin sensibility, it nonetheless generates poetic events that occupy space with a strong, almost physical intensity.

Now obsolete, though once widely used at the time he began working with it, magnetic videotape is not approached for its original purpose of recording image or sound. Instead, Žilvinas Kempinas draws on its material qualities—its lightness, flexibility, and reflective surface, which catches and modulates any available light. At the same time, the residual memory embedded in the medium lends the works an added depth, a form of latent “energy” offered up to the viewer’s imagination.

In works conceived in the spirit of *Flux*, the artist engages the kinetic properties of magnetic tape, experimenting with the many ways it can be set into motion. In other configurations, he turns more specifically to its optical potential. The strips of tape become networks of suspended lines stretched through space, vibrating, shimmering, and seemingly dissolving as light shifts and the viewer moves around them.

It was in this vein that Žilvinas Kempinas created the monumental installation *TUBE* during his residency at the Atelier Calder. Designed as an immersive passage that redefined the surrounding space, the work was later presented at the Lithuanian Pavilion of the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009.

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Jaume Plensa

Born in 1955 in Barcelone (Spain). Lives in Barcelone.

work featured in the exhibition

Blind, Mute, Deaf, (Suite Saché II), 1996

Three drawings, acrylic, cellulose adhesive, acrylic resin, and tracing paper

Collection Frac Picardie

In residence at the Atelier Calder from March to August 1996

Since his first exhibitions in the 1980s, the Catalan sculptor Jaume Plensa has developed a wide range of techniques and aesthetic languages, marking distinct phases within his practice. While his early work favoured a more abstract and conceptual approach to sculpture, it has gradually evolved towards figurative research centred on the representation of the human body. Recurring figures in his recent work, the hieratic female portraits he creates in a variety of materials and scales have played a key role in his international recognition, as well as in the numerous monumental projects he has realised around the world.

Deeply inspired by poetry, the artist gives a central place to language and writing, which take on physical form within the material and spatial presence of his sculptures. Paradoxically, words become part of a silent, introspective and meditative practice that also extends into drawing.

Across the various paths he explores, a continuous reflection on the human condition runs through Jaume Plensa's work.

His anthropomorphic figures present the body's outer shell as a way of probing its interiority and questioning the enigmatic nature of existence. The contradictions inherent in the human being—caught between an inexpressible inner space and the reverberations of the surrounding world—find expression in the ongoing dialogue Plensa establishes between opacity and transparency.

During his residency at the Atelier Calder in 1996, any form of figuration explored in the 1980s gave way to investigations into spatial structures and light-sensitive materials such as resin and glass. On this occasion, Jaume Plensa produced a series of cabins made of translucent resin panels⁷, conceived as metaphorical spaces for thought.

In parallel, he created large-scale geometric and abstract drawings, from which the three works *Blind, Mute, Deaf (Suite Saché II)* (1996), presented in the exhibition, are drawn.

⁷ This group of sculptures was exhibited the same year at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris.

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Jaume Plensa, *Blind, Mute, Deaf*, 1996, Acrylic, cellulose adhesive, acrylic resin, and tracing paper, 213 × 196 cm (each), Collection Frac Picardie, Amiens (France)

These works reflect the sculptural approach through which Plensa engages with drawing, testing it through materiality and volume. Combining glue, acrylic resin and tracing paper, the series plays with layers of transparency and translucency inherent to each medium, echoing the artist's enduring interest in light and its circulation.

The recurring appearance of geometric forms in his graphic works reflects a search for universal modes of representation through which to address fundamental notions such as time and space. Alluding to the cycle of the clock, the circles in these drawings suggest a frozen, suspended temporality—time crystallised within the resin. The human scale of the three circles, recalling the Vitruvian Man and its ideal relationship to space, points to a particular way of being in the world. Giving each drawing its title, four-letter words are likewise encapsulated within the resin. They belong to a vocabulary of the body and of impaired perception, cut off from the outside world.

Rather than simple disabilities, *Blind*, *Mute*, and *Deaf* here evoke an inward-looking world, closed in on itself. This trilogy recurs throughout the artist's practice, whether in his crouching scribes covering their eyes, mouth, or ears, or in the faces of young girls with closed eyes and a finger pressed to the lips in a gesture of silence. More than expressions of fragility, these figures seem to point toward the intimate space of thought. Within these three luminous circles, the themes that run through Jaume Plensa's work are distilled here into the pared-down, airy forms that define the exhibition as a whole.

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Valerie Snobeck

In residence at the Atelier Calder from May to July 2018

Born in 1980 in Wadena
(Minnesota, United States).
Lives and works in New York.
She studied at St Cloud
State University and at the
University of Chicago.

During her residency at the Atelier Calder in 2018, Valérie Snobeck developed a research-based practice centred on neoclassical architectural elements, which she deconstructs and reinterprets (*A Daisy with Two Leaves*). This approach, grounded in analytical fragmentation, recurs throughout her work. Formal inquiry is never separated from structural, and even political, questioning—one that engages with, and often unsettles, the dominant logics of productive systems.

L'idée des corps célestes (the idea of celestial bodies) turns to another work by the artist, held in the collection of Les Abattoirs in Toulouse, titled *Go Soft*⁸. This hour-long video presents a tight, fixed shot of a watchmaker's hands as he completely dismantles and then reassembles a wristwatch. The model in question was a special edition produced by Shell from the 1940s onwards, used to promote and legitimise its offshore drilling activities.

Through the slow, extended dismantling of the object, the artist reveals a working method grounded in the analytical deconstruction of dominant social norms. Without a single word being spoken, the film quietly calls into question the productive and economic activities driven by a handful of powerful corporations, often at the expense of the environment and the wider human community. It also runs counter to the speed that defines contemporary society and its underlying economic and structural logics, instead foregrounding slowness, along with the calm precision of the watchmaker's gestures.

The formal constraints the artist sets for the film—a sustained fixed close-up and a tightly focused, almost subjective framing—draw the viewer into a heightened state of attention. Its extended duration, as gestures unfold and components are gradually taken apart, fosters a relationship based less on constraint than on attention willingly granted, on time given to the work. What emerges is a shared space between viewer and image in which time seems to loosen and expand, opening a form of deceleration and suspension. In doing so, the film offers a quiet counterpoint to the watch or clock itself, whose function is precisely to regulate and normalise time.

work featured in the exhibition

Go Soft, 2014

Color video with sound, 60'38"

Collection les Abattoirs, Musée- Frac

Occitanie Toulouse (Inv : 2015.1.8)

⁸ The film was presented alongside the series of works produced at the Atelier Calder in 2018, as part of the artist's solo exhibition at Le Box in Marseille in 2019.

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With *Go Soft*, Valerie Snobeck proposes a more sensitive and liberated understanding of space-time⁹, one measured by the human gesture rather than by the mechanical ticking of seconds unfolding with relentless regularity. As the watch is reassembled, the artist also brings forward a cyclical conception of time.

'The universe described by these mechanical objects, unlike that of free mobiles, is a clockwork universe in which all movements proceed from external forces applied inexorably and immutably, setting off, like a chain reaction, a sequence of events in which the same outcome inevitably, at some point, returns.'¹⁰



Valerie Snobeck, *Go soft*, 2014, color video with sound, 60'38". Collection les Abattoirs, Musée - Frac Occitanie Toulouse. Work produced by Lafayette Anticipation, the corporate foundation of Galeries Lafayette. Courtesy of the artist and the Galerie Catherine Bastide / H & R Projects, Brussels // photo : Thomas Ozoux

⁹ On the subject of a sensitive and relative conception of time, Élie During refers to a "kaleidoscopic time" in "La relativité comme accélérateur de métaphysiques", in *Du yodel à la physique quantique...*, vol. 1, Palais de Tokyo (ed.), Paris, Palais de Tokyo / Archibooks, 2007, pp. A2-A8 (p. A5).

¹⁰ Arnauld Pierre, *Calder, la sculpture en mouvement*, Paris, Gallimard, 1996, p.40

l'idée des corps célestes *(the idea of celestial bodies)* artists

Francisco Tropa

Born in 1968 in Lisbon.
He represented Portugal in
Venice Biennale in 2011.

works featured in the exhibition

Quad, 2008
installation ; four stone cubes, sand,
black surface
Collection of Frac des Pays de la Loire

La Terre, 2015
Metal, oil paint, motor
Inv. : 2018.07
Collection Musée d'art contemporain
de la Haute-Vienne - Château de
Rochechouart

In residence at the Atelier Calder from March to May 2015

Created shortly before his residency at the Atelier Calder, *La Terre* functions both as a catalyst and as one component within a broader ensemble developed in Saché, titled *The Dream of Scipio*. The installation also brings into play the sun and the moon. The artist draws on the title of a poetic and mystical text written by Cicero in the 1st century BCE, which stages Scipio Aemilianus in the context of the Third Punic War. The narrative revolves around a dream in which several eminent historical figures reveal the cosmic order of the world to Scipio, teaching him that immortality of the soul is granted to those who have acted virtuously.

If Francisco Tropa's *La Terre* is indeed blue, it is not round. The sculpture takes the form of a cube without ever adopting its volume or contour. It is, in fact, a three-dimensional rendering of the two-dimensional representation of a cube. Suspended from the ceiling and driven by a motor, the work performs a slow, almost imperceptible rotation, producing the illusion of a cube that flickers in and out of existence. Alternating between flatness and volume, it takes on changing contours, which, depending on air currents and the viewer's position, appear to shift between two and three dimensions.

With a subtle sense of absurdity, it also gestures toward the lingering debates that still occasionally attribute flatness and immobility to the Earth today. In doing so, Francisco Tropa questions the very notion of reality—its shifting perceptions as much as its blind spots.



Francisco Tropa, *La Terre*, 2015, metal, oil paint, and motor, 84 x 71,5 x 15 cm. Collection of the musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne - château de Rochechouart © All rights reserved

L'idée des corps célestes *(the idea of celestial bodies)* artists

Within the exhibition *L'idée des corps célestes (the idea of celestial bodies)*, *La Terre* is set in relation to *Quad*, an earlier work by the artist, which unfolds in space in the form of actual cubes.

Initially, the installation of *Quad* is conceived as a fifteen-minute choreographic activation that unfolds in parallel with the construction of the drawing. Heavy stone cubes are moved through a gesture that tips them from one face to another across the ground, recalling the illuminated, scripted movement of Jeppe Hein's *Moving Neon Cube*. The protocol requires that each cube be repositioned four times. The final state of the work bears the traces of its earlier configurations, visible in the imprints left by the cubes in the sand that is sprinkled over them between each stage of movement. The title is borrowed from Samuel Beckett's television piece of the same name, in which four performers move along the virtual diagonal of a square¹¹. In Francisco Tropa's work, the displacement of the heavy stone cubes echoes the actors' trajectories while introducing a very different sense of weight—one that stands in stark contrast to the lightness of Beckett's original staging.

'In my work, the opposite gesture is just as compelling as the affirmative one. It carries the same force. This is a recurring thread throughout my practice. I do something, then I try its opposite—and it works just as well. Opposites are true engines of artistic composition.'¹²

¹¹ Samuel Beckett, *Quad* (written in English in 1982), first published in *Collected Shorter Plays*, London, Faber and Faber, 1984. Produced by Süddeutscher Rundfunk, it was first broadcast in Germany in 1983, and subsequently in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

¹² Statements by Francisco Tropa, recorded by Isabelle Reiher in an interview on 8 October 2025.

l'idée des corps célestes *(the idea of celestial bodies)* artists

Hema Upadhyay

Born in 1972 in Baroda (India)

—

Died in 2015 in Mumbai
(India).

work featured in the exhibition

Untitled, 2010

Printed Plexiglas and nylon thread

Work produced with the support
of the Atelier Calder, as part of Hema
Upadhyay's residency in 2010.

In residence at the Atelier Calder from September 2010 To January 2011

Hema Upadhyay belonged to a generation of Indian artists that emerged in the 1990s, at a time when India was undergoing a major economic transition towards globalisation. Responding to the profound transformations shaping their country, these artists contributed to the development of a contemporary Indian art that moved away from tradition to engage more directly with lived realities.

Working across a wide range of media—including painting, drawing, photography, and installation—Hema Upadhyay came to international prominence in the early 2000s. Her work was presented at venues such as the Singapore Tyler Print Institute (2008), the MACRO – Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome (2009), and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, where she took part in the group exhibition *Paris–Bombay–Delhi* (2011).

Prematurely deceased in 2015, the artist was deeply engaged with questions of migration and demographic flows. While rooted in the broader history of India, these concerns also resonated on a more personal level for Hema Upadhyay. Born into a Pakistani family that migrated to India at the time of Partition¹³, she herself had to come to terms with the vast scale of Mumbai after growing up and studying in a much smaller city. From that point on, India's largest megacity became a recurring source of inspiration for the artist, who gained recognition through large-scale installations rooted in specific areas of Mumbai, such as the Dharavi slum.¹⁴

These works unfold as large-scale maquettes that recreate the organic growth of ever-expanding urban landscapes—at once vibrant and chaotic, shaped by processes of evolution and destruction, invention and precarity. By immersing the viewer in densely packed environments of countless multi-coloured dwellings, the artist questioned the nature of the external gaze, often voyeuristic and elevated, directed at developing countries.

¹³ The Partition of India in 1947 refers to the division of the former British colonial empire into India and Pakistan. It led to one of the largest mass migrations in history, with an estimated 15 million people displaced.

¹⁴ Considered a true "city within a city," Dharavi is the second-largest slum in Asia.

l'idée des corps célestes *(the idea of celestial bodies)*

artists

She sought instead to shift this perspective, guiding it inward toward a more nuanced and less familiar reality. In Hema Upadhyay's work, form and space emerge through the accumulation and multiplication of small elements, evoking a metaphor for the individual lives that together compose the urban fabric.

The installation *Untitled*, presented in the exhibition, was created during the artist's residency at the Atelier Calder in 2010–2011. The expanses of meadows and forests surrounding the studio in Saché made a strong impression on her, as someone living in Mumbai and more accustomed to urban environments entirely shaped by human activity. Turning her attention to nature, she conceived a work that stands apart within her practice, proposing an encounter with the sense of the sublime emanating from the wild landscape. As if to bring the forest into the exhibition space, the installation unfolds as a constellation of transparent medallions engraved with drawings of trees and plant species from the Touraine region. These suspended elements form a fragmented, almost nebulous volume that hovers in space. The slightest movement of air sets them in motion, scattering light into a delicate shimmer that borders on the magical. To create this poetic evocation—defined by lightness, transparency, and luminosity—the artist chose plexiglass: an industrial, synthetic, non-biodegradable material through which Hema Upadhyay subtly underscores the contradictions of the modern urban condition, estranged from both memory and an embodied awareness of being in the world.



Hema Upadhyay, *Untitled*, 2010–2011
photo: Guillaume Blanc / Atelier Calder, Saché

atelier calder

a place for artistic research and production



Since 1989, the Atelier Calder has been dedicated to artistic research and production. Located in Saché, in France's Loire Valley, this former studio of American sculptor Alexander Calder continues a longstanding commitment to supporting artists in the development of new projects, fostering experimentation, and providing the conditions necessary for sustained creative inquiry. Unique in France, the Atelier Calder offers artists a three-month residency that combines accommodation, studio facilities, and technical and financial support.

More than seventy artists have undertaken residencies at Saché, engaging with the site in singular and often transformative ways. The works conceived and produced there have established original dialogues with both the surrounding landscape and the studio's distinctive architecture.

Each residency has generated a unique relationship to the creative process, whether by opening new directions of research, enabling experimentation with unfamiliar materials and methods, or providing the conditions necessary to bring long-term investigations to fruition.

Numerous projects developed in Saché have subsequently been presented at major international exhibitions and institutions, underscoring the significance of the residency programme and its global reach. Among them, Žilvinas Kempinas presented *Tube* at the 2009 Venice Biennale as part of the Lithuanian Pavilion; following his residency, Attila Csörgő was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Secession in Vienna in 2012. Hema Upadhyay participated in Paris–Delhi–Bombay at the Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre Pompidou in 2011 and in the Festival d'Automne à Paris in 2012.

Other former residents have been the focus of major institutional exhibitions and have entered prominent public collections, including Marina Abramović, Rosa Barba, Marie-Ange Guilleminot, Tarik Kiswanson, Ernesto Neto, Sarkis, and Zineb Sedira. Francisco Tropa was the subject of a solo exhibition at the MRAC Occitanie in Sérignan in 2015.

In 2026, the Atelier Calder will mark the centenary of Alexander Calder's arrival in France. This anniversary offers an opportunity to celebrate the enduring vitality, international scope, and artistic ambition of the residency programme. It will also provide a platform to present the work of artist Mimi Park, who will be in residence at the Atelier from September to December 2026.

The Atelier Calder is supported by the French Ministry of Culture (DRAC Centre–Val de Loire), the Centre–Val de Loire Regional Council, and the Calder Foundation.

press contact:
Corinne Bouvier
corinnebouvier@atelier-calder.com
www.atelier-calder.com
Place Alexander Calder
37190 Saché - France

alexander calder

monographic exhibition

16.10.26 - 28.03.27: nave

opening on 15 october

curators:

Ariane Coulondre

Alfred Pacquement

Jessica Watson



× **Centre Pompidou**

In autumn 2026, the nave of the CCC OD will host a monographic exhibition dedicated to Alexander Calder.

Featuring several major works never before exhibited in the region, the exhibition will offer an immersive journey into the artist's sculptural universe and provide an opportunity to rediscover the radical nature of his approach to movement, space, and perception.

Echoing the summer exhibition, this second chapter will highlight the contemporary vitality of Calder's legacy while offering a renewed perspective on one of the major figures of twentieth-century sculpture.

Through the AR(t)CHIPEL festival, visitors are invited to explore the Indre-et-Loire department and the Centre-Val de Loire region, discovering or rediscovering the artist's work in a selection of exceptional sites.



Alexander Calder in his studio in Saché (23 August 1966). Bibliothèque Kandinsky, MNAM-CCI, Centre Pompidou. Shunk-Kender Archive. Gift of the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation in memory of Harry Shunk and Janos Kender, 2014. © J. Paul Getty Trust. All rights reserved.

CCC OD • practical information

press contacts

National & international: Agence Alambret Communication
Emilie Harford: +33(0)6 85 29 06 02 | emilie.h@alambret.com

Regional: CCC OD
Léna Loizon: +33(0)2 47 70 23 22 | +33(0)6 82 44 87 54 | l.loizon@cccod.fr

getting here

1 parvis Jean Germain
37000 Tours
T +33 (0)2 47 66 50 00
F +33(0)2 47 61 60 24
contact@cccod.fr

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-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 events
valid for 1 year
27 € single pass
45 € duo pass
12 € for students / 7 € PCE

free access

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 7pm.
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facilities

the CCC OD is accessible to people with disabilities.
2 accessible parking spaces for people with reduced mobility (PRM) at Parvis Jean Germain.
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).

The CCC OD is a cultural equipment of Tours Métropole Val de Loire.
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