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ANNE ET PATRICK POIRIER

56^e CAMPAGNE DE FOUILLES. 1968/2024

15.11.2024 - 18.01.2025

From Tuesday to Saturday, from 11am to 7pm

Opening on Thursday, November 14th 2024, from 6pm to 8pm

79, rue du Temple, Paris III^e



Anne et Patrick Poirier, *Fragilita*, 2024

PRESS RELEASE

Galerie Mitterrand | Temple is pleased to present a new exhibition by artist couple Anne and Patrick Poirier, from November 15, 2024, to January 18, 2025. Entitled *56^e Campagne de Fouilles, 1968/2024*, this fourth exhibition at the gallery is an unprecedented exploration of their work, in which Anne and Patrick Poirier are the archaeologists. “They exhume and present works from diverse periods and expressions, dating back to the 1970s when they reintroduced the concepts of ruins and memory into contemporary art.”¹

Presented in both gallery spaces, this exhibition brings together more than twenty works that reveal, through a multiplicity of media, the insatiable curiosity, the ongoing taste for experimentation, and the abundant creativity of the duo since their decision to work together in 1968 at the Villa Medici in Rome. The 1970s were a decade of general questioning. In art, this was embodied in several movements: conceptual art, minimal art, New Realism, Arte Povera... Without belonging to any of these movements, their approach is nonetheless in line with a common desire to break with artistic conventions. In this spirit of rupture, when they were invited to Japan in 1970 to participate in the French pavilion at the World Expo in Osaka, Anne had her profession listed as “architect” and Patrick as “archaeologist”.

Among the works on show, *La cité des ombres* (2022) occupies a particular place. Presented in France for the first time, it follows in the footsteps of the great maquettes which, as Tony Cragg rightly pointed out expanded the field of sculpture². Nourished by their experiences as children of the war and their explorations of ancient sites around the world, these maquettes, like all their work, are metaphors for

human violence and the disasters it wreaks on the future of humanity.

La cité des ombres is similar to the *Mnémosyne* series in its elliptical shape and white color but differs in the materials used (wool and earthenware), as well as in its intimate component. This work is the result of a dream Anne Poirier had in January 2022, shortly before the return of war to the gates of Europe. In it, Anne Poirier is guided by her son, who passed in 2002, through a deserted city in ruins. The earthenware elements made by the artists and inspired by the architecture of the Etruscan necropolis of Cerveteri in Italy reinforce the meditative, existential character of the work.

The duo’s introspective stroll through their work allows visitors to discover several historic and previously unseen pieces. The sculpture *De la fragilité du pouvoir* (1986-2024) is linked to the monumental works of the 1980s. The *Isola Sacra* series (1973) belongs to the duo’s earliest works, created on the site of the ancient necropolis itself, using the stamping technique, which they later discovered was the one used by archaeologists. The two *Jardin noir. Domus Aurea* (1975) are among the herbariums that accompanied the creation of the great black models of the 1970s. They bear witness to an early awareness of the damaging effects of consumer society on nature. *Reflets de l’âme* (2019) belongs to a body of work developed since 1990, in which the recurring shape of the brain testifies to the couple’s interest in memory and the complexities of the psyche, whose secrets they attempt to unravel and represent. In the photographs on porcelain in the series *La serre de Chaumont* and *D’après nature. Museo Archeologico Salinas, Palermo* (2024), the duo revisits this technique, already used

in the 1970s, but here in color, broadening the scope of their experimentation.

“Anne and Patrick Poirier respond with the necessary hindsight to today’s world events. (...) By plunging their gaze into the mists of time, they are thus day-watchers, always on the alert to bear witness to man’s misdeeds on man and attempt to grasp the contradictory complexities of his psyche.”³ Hence, Anne and Patrick Poirier are visionary artists whose work never ceases to be a source of reflection and inspiration.

In parallel with this exhibition, Anne and Patrick Poirier present two chandeliers entitled *Le Monde à l’envers* at Régis Mathieu gallery (2, rue de Miromesnil, Paris VIII^e).

Anne and Patrick Poirier (born in 1941 and 1942 respectively) are pioneers in the creation of art as a couple. They took part in the Venice Biennale (1976, 1980 and 1984) and documenta VI in Kassel (1977). Their work has been the subject of solo exhibitions in prestigious institutions such as the Centre Pompidou, Paris (1978), MoMA, New York (1979), the Musée d’art moderne de Saint-Étienne (2016), the Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris (2017), De Pont Museum, Tilburg (2018-2019), Villa Medici, Rome (2019), Château La Coste, Le Puy Ste-Réparate (2021), Ludwig Museum, Koblenz (2022), Musée Ingres Bourdelle, Montauban (2023) and Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire (2024). Their work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions at the Grand Palais, Paris (2016), the Palazzo Fortuny, Venice (2018) and the Juan March Foundation, Madrid (2023).

REFERENCES

1. Anne et Patrick Poirier, September 2024.
2. Tony Cragg’s speech at the opening of Anne and Patrick Poirier’s exhibition at his eponymous foundation in Wuppertal in 2016.
3. Jean-Hubert Martin, *Veilleurs de jour*, ANNE ET PATRICK POIRIER, Paris, Editions Flammarion, 2017, p. 7.

IC INSIGHT COMMUNICATIONS
JASMINE SPEZIE / ADÈLE GODET
ADELE@INSIGHTCOMMUNICATIONS.CC
T +33 1 42 84 19 09

GALERIE MITTERRAND
CONSTANÇA COSTA SANTOS
CONSTANCA@GALERIEMITTERRAND.COM
T +33 1 43 26 12 05

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ART MODERNE ET CONTEMPORAIN
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