

A very personal and subjective view of Paris life for all of you who are curious of what's going on in France

## In Senlis, contemporary art takes over at Fondation Francès

14 February 2022



*Cat Loray, "Virga", 2021, ceramic sculpture ( 50 000€) and "Madre", 2021 on the wall, 5 000€*

You might remember the extraordinary exhibition of ceramic sculptures by Cat Loray at [Ivry sur Seine](#) last year? I was totally overwhelmed by this artist who happens to live near Senlis with her husband [Clément Borderie](#), also an artist, who creates canvases which are "tinted" by time and nature in the open. Estelle and Hervé Francès, started [Fondation Francès](#) to show their collection of contemporary art in 2008. At the moment, they have picked couples who create in the area and the show "La vie est un entre-deux" (life is a go between) which just opened, is the second in the series. The works speak to each other in a very natural way.



*Clément Borderie, canvas produced by the matrix Cuve in Hôpital Charles-Foix in Ivry sur Seine, 7 500€*

The way Borderie works is totally natural: he installs a canvas on a metallic structure which he calls a matrix. It can have different shapes. The cloth is covered with successive layers of micro particles which eventually represent time spent. "They reproduce the mysterious writing of nature". The effect is very strong and the colors completely organic. The first room of the Fondation Francès shows a large installation of ceramics by Cat Loray with a protuberant canvas "Iris", by her husband, produced on the well of a garden of the old hospital chapel in Belle-Ile-en-mer. The alliance of the two is spectacular.





*The garden of the Francès Foundation with the Senlis cathedral, Clément's (white) matrix beginning its transformation process on the left and Cat Loray's Mirror Ribbon all around*

The space of the Foundation is conceived to exhibit the Francès' private collection of contemporary art but in the last year, this generous couple, who chooses and buys all pieces together, has decided to give a special visibility to local artists with an International following and who work as a couple. Like the Albers, the Poirier or the Christo, who achieved fame together, Cat Loray and Clément Borderie work separately or sometimes on the same canvas like "Aile 2".

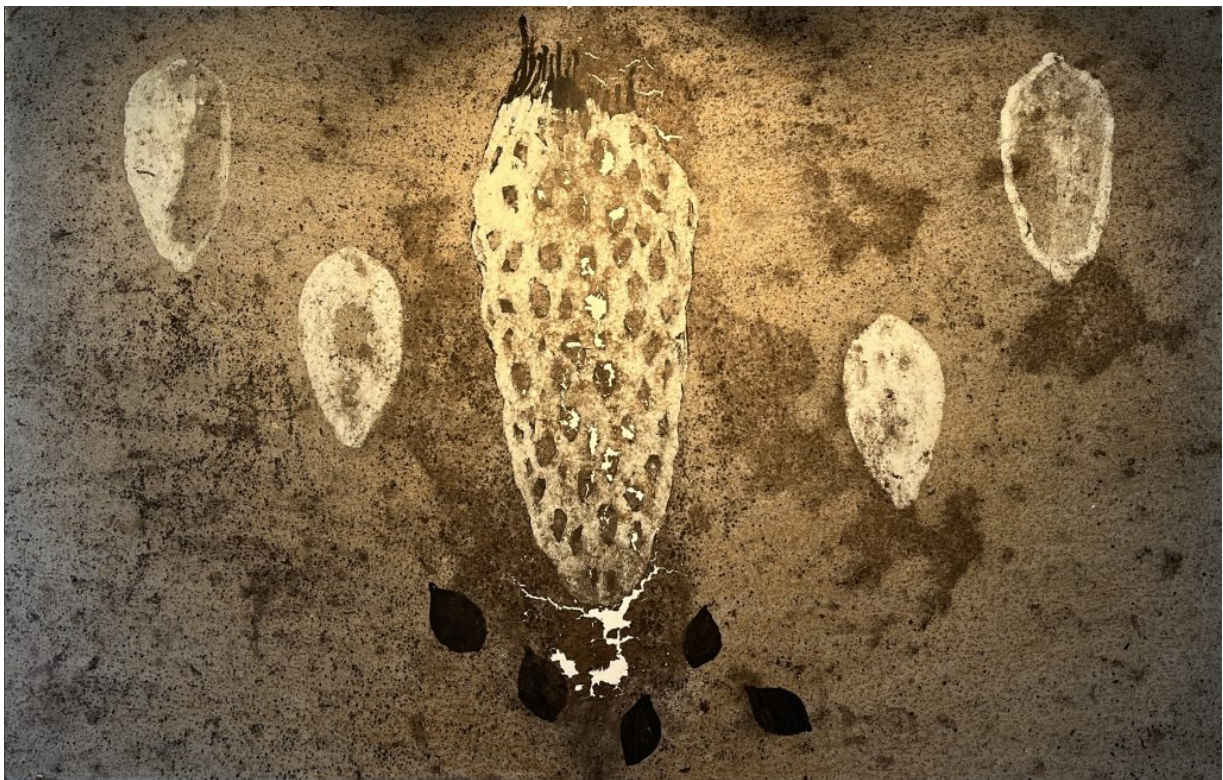
The premises are a charming old house where the space might sometimes feel too small for contemporary art (some large pieces of the collection cannot be shown inside). I discovered Irish artist [Claire Morgan](#) there for the first time years ago and was impressed that in a town as conservative and "well-to-do" as Senlis, one would dare show such high quality installations. Estelle and Hervé collect among young artists at Salon de Montrouge or at Carreau du Temple as much as in established galleries such as Kamel Mennour or Galleria





*Cat Loray, Glaciers, 2019, 9 000 € and Clément Borderie, “Pierre de Sel” (natural salt stone for cows), 5 000€*

Continua whose artist Kader Attia was shown early on at the foundation.



*Cat Loray and Clément Borderie, “Aile 2”, 2007*

With almost 300 different artists from a wide range of countries, the collection includes photography, (Diane Arbus, Helmut Newton, Robert Mapplethorpe, Bettina Rheims, John Stewart), prints, sculptures and installations. The only criteria for acquiring is that they both love the piece. While Estelle is often the first one to spot, Hervé is quicker at buying. Mona Hatoum, Subodh Gupta, Banksy, Kehinde Wiley, famous names are side by side with younger emergent artists and there is no “investment” philosophy in this collection which should soon be exhibited in a national museum, probably in 2024.





*Clément Borderie, CB-2: Iris, Fall Winter 2019, 11 000€*

So now is the time to discover it before April 30. The [foundation](#) is open every day from Wednesday to Saturday and the second Sunday of the month, when the center of Senlis is pedestrian. Besides the cathedral and the Musée de la Chasse (hunting museum), you can take this opportunity to visit Abbaye de Chaalis, 7 kms away with Nelly Jacquemart André's collections. (50 mn drive from Paris)

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