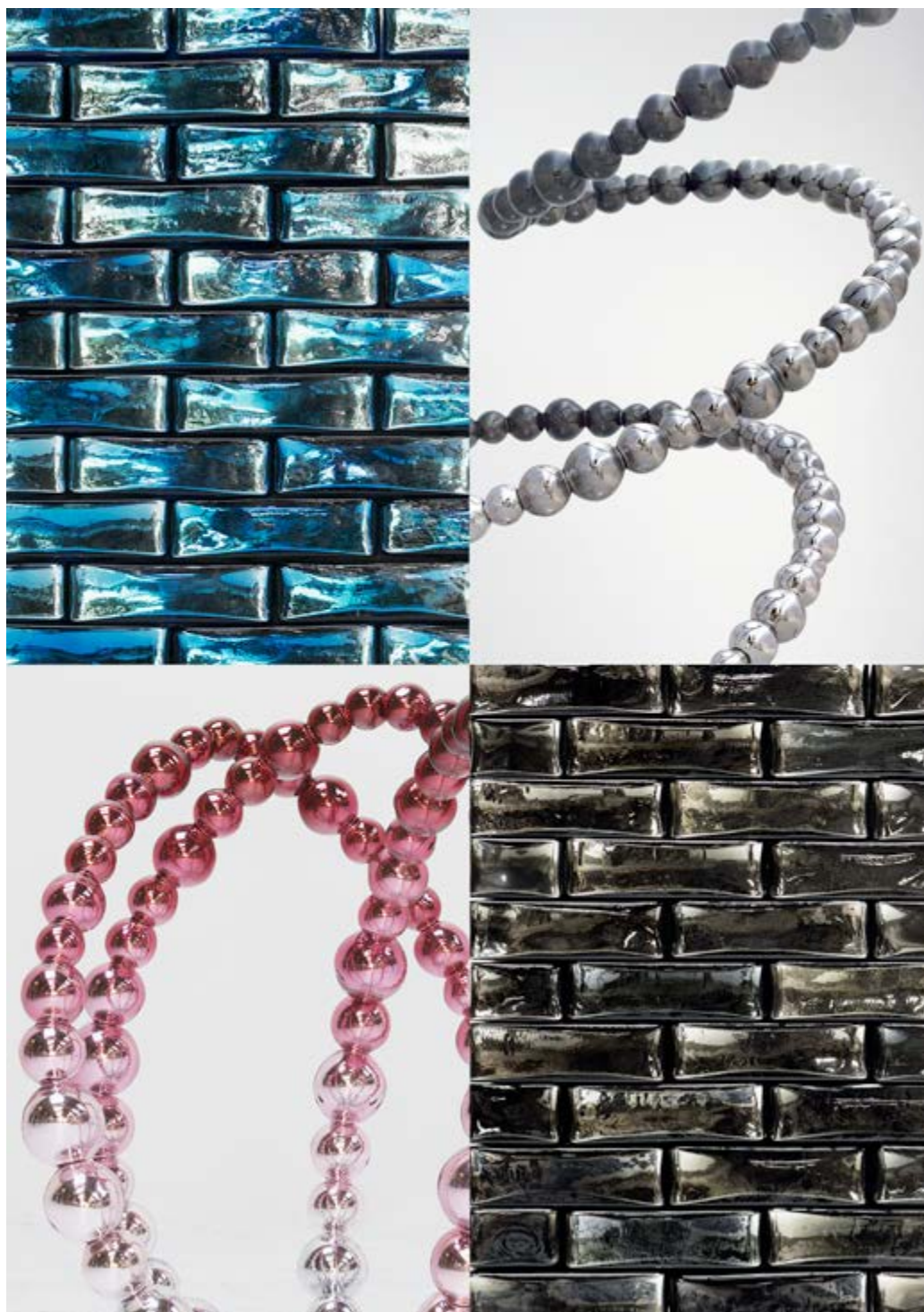


PRESS KIT

# JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL GÉOMÉTRIES AMOUREUSES

At the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain in **Sète** and at the Carré Sainte-Anne in **Montpellier**

June 10 – September 24, 2017



Press contacts, Brunswick Arts: Leslie Compan / Pierre-Edouard Moutin  
regionoccitanie@brunswickgroup.com / +33 1 85 96 83 83

*For Othoniel, re-enchanting the world is both a poetic and a political act. He is a singular artist who, since the late 1990s, has developed a marvellous world in which beauty is no longer an aesthetic datum but a condition of existence.*

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# Foreword

Carole Delga

President of the Région Occitanie / Pyrénées – Méditerranée



"I share Jean-Michel Othoniel's idea that beauty is one of the conditions of existence. Here in Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée, beauty is measured every day in our culture, our heritage, our museums and our arts. A major player in the development of contemporary art, with its many facilities, such as the Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain in Montpellier, the Musée d'Art Moderne in Céret, the Musée Régional d'Art Contemporain in Sérignan and the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain in Sète,

our region is really driven by its will to make art accessible to all. That is why I wanted to devote a substantial budget to it in 2017. My ambition is clear, I want the beauty of our region to be as vibrant and radiant as possible."

Philippe Saurel

Mayor of the City of Montpellier, President of Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole



" Two new exhibitions by Jean-Michel Othoniel are presented this summer in Montpellier and Sète as part of a unique partnership between the Carré Sainte-Anne and the art centre. Thus, visitors have the opportunity to discover Jean-Michel Othoniel's monumental works in these two Mediterranean cities where contemporary art never stops growing. This is a really explosive summer

for art, which the thousands of tourists who come to enjoy the seaside and the sunshine, the culture, the heritage, the traditions... will discover with the exhibitions of "Francis Bacon – Bruce Nauman, face à face» at the Musée Fabre, «William Gedney (1932–1989), Only the Lonely», the third exhibition of an American season at the Pavillon Populaire, dedicated to contemporary photography or «John Bock et Interstellar" at the Panacée, one of the three venues of the future contemporary art centre, the MoCo which will open in 2019. "

# JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL

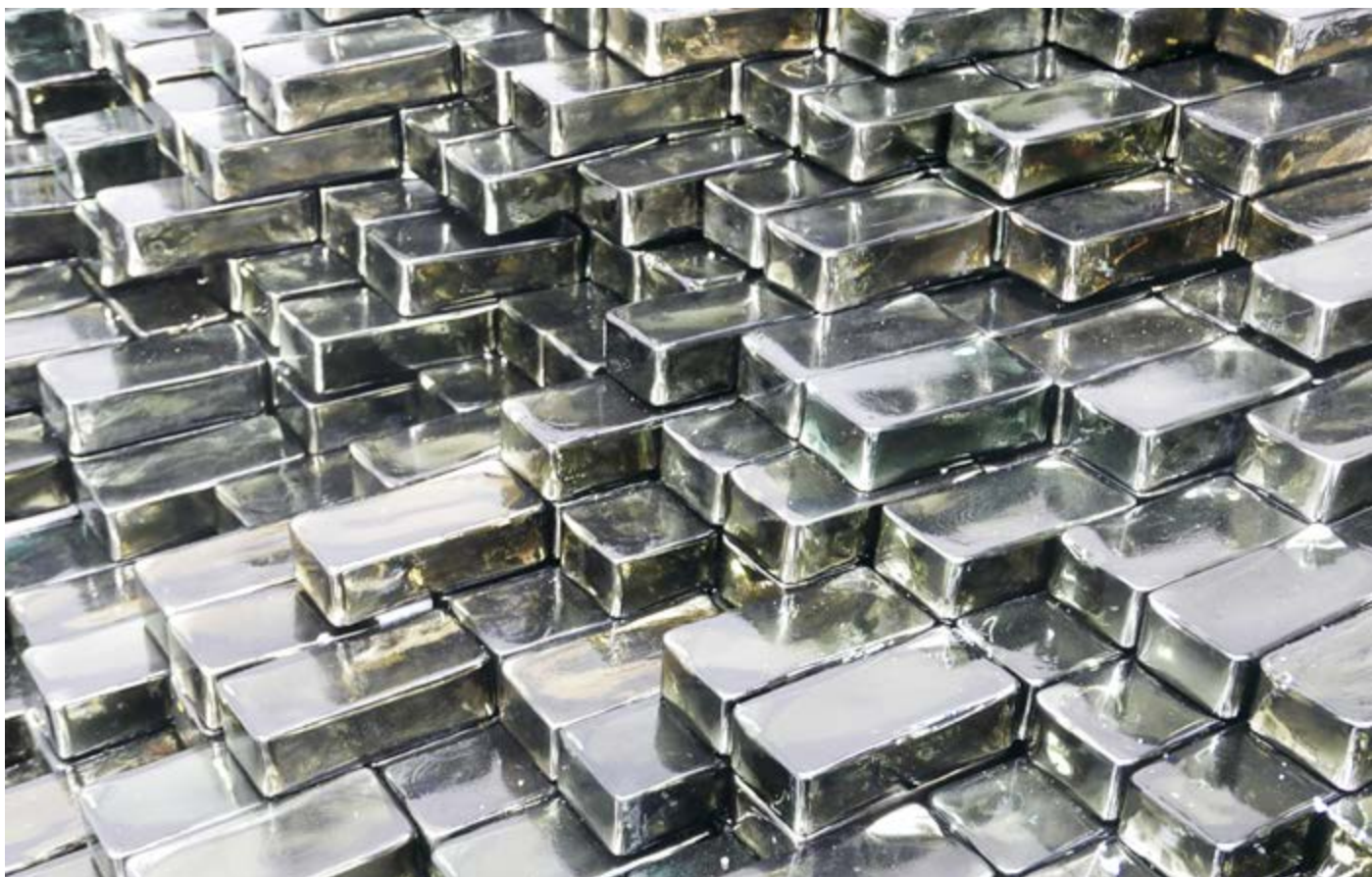
## GÉOMÉTRIES AMOUREUSES

June 10 - September 24, 2017

From June 10th onwards, the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée in Sète and the Carré Sainte-Anne, contemporary art space of the City of Montpellier, will present two simultaneous monographic exhibitions devoted to Jean-Michel Othoniel.

This double event, under the single title, «Géométries Amoureuses», presents many facets of the artist's work through some sixty sculptures, a dozen paintings and more than a hundred works on paper. By itself, the title unites the dualities that characterize Othoniel's work: sensuality and rigour, the hidden and the revealed, pain and beauty.

The Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain in Sète – a former industrial wasteland rehabilitated as an art centre – and the Carré Sainte-Anne – a contemporary art space of the City of Montpellier – offer their spaces, where the work of the artist can resonate with the specific characteristics and charms of each venue.



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## GÉOMÉTRIES AMOUREUSES

At the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain in Sète

*« A craving desire is a wave, belonging to a wave in a world of waves ».*

Jack Kerouac

# *The Big Wave and New Works*

(2016 - 2017)

The CRAC in Sète presents an exhibition composed of a new series of monumental works. Inspired by the forms of nature, it presents a journey close to a radical, monochrome and abstract architecture. These new works of glass, mirror, metal, ink or obsidian show how the artist's work has evolved since his retrospective at the Centre Pompidou in 2011.

On the ground floor, the exhibition welcomes the visitors with a colossal wave, six metres high and fifteen meters long, composed of more than ten thousand bricks of black glass. Specially designed for the venue, this work echoes with the first photograph taken in Sète in 1857 by Gustave Le Gray, entitled *La Grande Vague*. In the following rooms, the visitors will discover mysterious meteorites in obsidian – the black rock which results from the lava of volcanoes – as well as a series of previously unseen works, made on canvas and entitled *Black Lotus*, surrounding eponymous sculptures. The final rooms of the exhibition display the violence of the elements, represented by a series of gigantic steel tornadoes hanging in space, and a large knot of coloured glass beads, *The Wild Pansy*, a tribute to the freedom of being different.

On the first floor, one hundred and twelve drawings, like a large travel diary made between 1996 and 2017, reveal the artist's thought process and the genesis of many of his works.

With this project, the artist presents a set of works that show a strong connection with Sète and the architecture of the art centre. To end more than twenty years as head of the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain, Noëlle Tissier chose Jean-Michel Othoniel, the artist she invited in 1988 for the opening of the Villa Saint Clair artist residency in Sète.

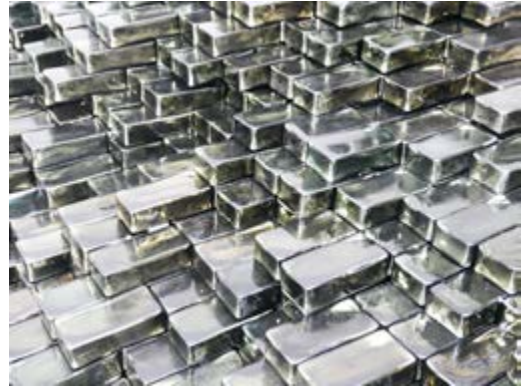
For the last few years, Noëlle Tissier has commissioned a cycle of reverse monographs called "Les premiers seront les derniers (The first will be the last)", which revisits the young artists she has hosted since 1988 who subsequently went on to have an international career.

Curator : Noëlle Tissier

# Visuels



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *La Grande Vague*, 2016.  
Watercolour on paper. H: 26 x W: 36cm.  
Collection of the artist.



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *The Big Wave*, 2017.  
Indian black glass bricks, steel. Variable dimensions, Courtesy  
Galerie Perrotin, photo : Jean-Michel Othoniel



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *The Wild Pansy*, 2016  
Watercolour on paper. H: 26 x W: 36cm.  
Artist's collection



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Black Lotus*, 2016  
Black anodised aluminium cast, steel.  
H : 150 x W : 166 x D : 138 cm.  
Courtesy Kukje Gallery, photo: Keith Park



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Twin Tornadoes*, 2017 (detail)  
Two entwined tornadoes. Chrome painted aluminium, steel.  
H : 340 x W : 170 x D : 170 cm, each.  
Courtesy Galerie Perrotin, photo: Daniel Infanger



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *The Gigantic Necklace*, 2012  
Mirrored glass, stainless steel.  
H : 800 x W : 90 x D : 55 cm.  
Courtesy Galerie Perrotin, photo: Daniel Infanger



# List of works exhibited in Sète

## ROOM 1: *The Big Wave*

- *The Big Wave*, 2016, glass, metal, wood. Variable dimensions.

## ROOM 2: Obsidian Self-Portraits

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015,

obsidian, chestnut base, 105 x 55 x 60 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015,

obsidian, chestnut base, 85 x 50 x 50 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015,

obsidian, chestnut base, 75 x 42 x 43 cm

## ROOM 3: Sculptures and painting

### Sculptures:

- *Black Lotus*, 2016

anodised cast aluminium painted black, steel, 166 x 150 x 138 cm

- *Black Lotus*, 2016

anodised cast aluminium painted black, steel, 145 x 130 x 126 cm

### Paintings:

- *Black Lotus*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 160 x 120 x 5 cm

- *Black Lotus*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 160 x 120 x 5 cm

- *Black Lotus*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 160 x 120 x 5 cm

- *Black Lotus*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 160 x 120 x 5 cm

- *Black Lotus*, 2016,

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 160 x 120 x 5 cm

- *The Knot of Shame*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 140 x 105 x 5,5 cm

- *The Knot of Shame*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 140 x 105 x 5,5 cm

- *The Knot of Shame*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 140 x 105 x 5,5 cm

- *The Knot of Shame*, 2016

painting on canvas, ink on white gold leaf, 140 x 105 x 5,5 cm

## ROOM 4: Obsidian Self-Portraits

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015

obsidian, chestnut base, 86 x 42 x 45 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015

obsidian, chestnut base, 97 x 42 x 42 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015

obsidian, chestnut base, 90 x 44 x 50 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015

obsidian, chestnut base, 91 x 48 x 52 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015

obsidian, chestnut base, 78 x 50 x 55 cm

- *Invisibility Face*, 2015

obsidian, chestnut base, 106 x 42 x 54 cm

## ROOM 5: Kinetic sculptures

- *Tornado*, 2016

aluminium beads, chrome paint, steel, 450 x 260 x 250 cm

- *Tornado*, 2016

aluminium beads, chrome paint, steel, 360 x 510 x 340 cm

- *Purple Tornado*, 2016

mirrored glass inox, 290 x 280 x 220 cm

## ROOM 6: Kinetic sculptures

- *Black Tornado*, 2016

aluminium beads, chrome paint, steel, 340 x 170 x 170 cm

- *Black Tornado*, 2016

aluminium beads, chrome paint, steel, 340 x 170 x 170 cm

## ROOM 7: Sculpture

- *The Wild Pansy*, 2016

Mirrored glass, stainless steel, 300 x 300 x 200 cm

## ROOM 8: between the ground floor and the first floor

- *The Gigantic Necklace*, 2012

mirrored glass and stainless steel, 800 x 90 x 55 cm

## THE THREE ROOMS ON THE FIRST FLOOR:

### Watercolours and Models of the Fountains of Versailles

- 112 framed watercolours on paper, 1996-2017

Each about 35,5 x 45,5 cm

- *Le Rigaudon de la Paix*, 2013

Model in gold leaf gilded cast aluminium, blue Murano glass bead, stainless steel base, 31 x 190 x 206 cm

- *La Bourrée d'Achille*, 2014

Model in gold leaf gilded cast aluminium, blue Murano glass bead, stainless steel base, 31 x 199 x 199 cm



||

## GÉOMÉTRIES AMOUREUSES

At the Carré Sainte-Anne à Montpellier

*" Like an enclosed garden, a dream world, a personal Map of Tendre, the installation modestly showcases the works as precious sacred talismans. I have kept all these key pieces in a collection of my own works in order to be able to go back to it and restore my energy ".*

Jean-Michel Othoniel

# Collecting oneself

(Glass 1992 - 2016)

The Carré Sainte-Anne of Montpellier presents some fifty works by Jean-Michel Othoniel, part of his personal collection. For Othoniel, to collect his own works tallies with a desire to remove himself from the world; foregoing his reticence and showing this collection of his works to the public is part of the ambivalence of feelings that the artist places at the heart of his work. The artworks presented here, which the artist holds dear, have been collected since the 1990s, when he began to take an interest in glass. They are arranged in an installation designed specifically for the venue. For Othoniel, being part of his own collection corresponds with a desire to remove himself from the world; foregoing his reticence and showing the public this collection of his work is part of the ambivalence of feelings that the artist places at the heart of his work. The works presented here, that the artist holds so dear, have been collected since the 1990s, when he began to take an interest in glass. They are arranged in an installation designed especially for the venue.

At the centre of the Carré Sainte-Anne, the artist has chosen to show *Le Contrepet (The Spoonerism)*, the founding work of this passion, created in 1992. The installation is built around this obsidian fragment of a body, retelling the key moments in Othoniel's journey through this glass period.

His major works, from the *Collier Cicatrice*, in red Murano glass, to the forbidden fruits of the Peggy Guggenheim gardens in Venice, including the *Bannières* of his exhibition at the Cartier Foundation and the *Géométrie Amoureuse* of the Mesopotamian room of the Louvre, are all suspended, floating above a floor of blue bricks made with the help of Indian glassmakers in Firozabad.

The exhibition invites us to share the intimacy that the artist maintains with his creations. In a booklet published for this occasion, Othoniel reveals why he has preciousely kept these works for the last fifteen years.

Curators: Nicole Kerangueven and Edouard Aujaleu, Les Amis du Musée Fabre Society

Artistic direction: Numa Hambursin

## Visuals



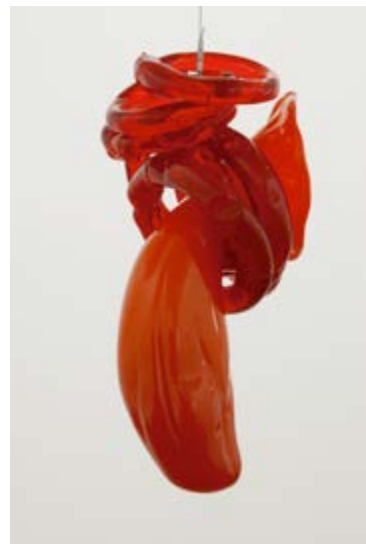
Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Géométrie Amoureuse*, 2004  
Murano glass, aluminium, H: 170 x W: 70 x D: 70cm.  
Artist's collection, photo: Othoniel Studio



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *The Blue Brick Road*, 2017 (detail).  
Indian blue glass bricks, wood. H : 7 x W : 307 x D : 1707 cm.  
Courtesy Galerie Perrotin, photo : Claire Dorn



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Bottle of Tears*, 2011  
Murano glass, demineralised water.  
H : 40 x W : 20 x D : 20 cm.  
Artist's collection, photo: Guillaume Ziccarelli



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Sabot de Venus*, 1997  
Murano glass. H: 26 x W: 14 x D: 14cm.  
Artist's collection, photo: Guillaume Ziccarelli



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *L'Amant suspendu (The Hanging lover)*, 2016  
Alessandrita and grey Murano glass, stainless steel  
H : 75 x W : 15 x D : 15 cm.  
Artist's collection, photo: Claire Dorn



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *The Pink Lotus*, 2015  
Mirrored glass, stainless steel.  
H: 142 x W: 135 x D: 122cm.  
Artist's collection, photo: Claire Dorn

# List of works exhibited in Montpellier

## WORKS IN

### THE CENTRAL INSTALLATION:

- *The Blue Brick Road*, 2016
- Blue Indian glass bricks, 7 x 307 x 1707 cm
- *Sabot de Vénus*, 1997
- orange and red Murano glass, 26 x 14 x 14 cm
- *Sabot de Vénus*, 1997
- yellow and red Murano glass, 26,5 x 11 x 12,5 cm
- *Sabot de Vénus*, 1997
- red and transparent Murano glass, 27 x 16 x 12 cm
- *Sabot de Vénus*, 1997
- yellow and transparent Murano glass, 16 x 11 x 11 cm
- *Sabot de Vénus*, 1997
- orange and turquoise Murano glass, 30 x 12 x 12 cm
- *Sabot de Vénus*, 1997
- orange and turquoise Murano glass, 30 x 12 x 12 cm
- *Un des leurres*, 1996
- orange and red Murano glass, 31,5 x 17 x 13 cm
- *Un des leurres*, 1996
- orange and red Murano glass, 23 x 12 x 19 cm
- *Le Cœur Couronne*, 1996
- red and orange Murano glass, 42 x 22 x 13 cm
- *La Croix*, 1996
- Murano glass, amber and crystal, 35 x 21 x 15,5 cm
- *The Rosary*, 1996
- Murano glass, 87 x 8 x 8 cm
- *Le Collier Seins*, 1997
- verre de Murano et inox, 170 x 60 x 20 cm
- *Le Collier Rouge*, 1999
- Murano glass and stainless steel, 120 x 60 x 15 cm
- *Bottle of Tears*, 2001
- Murano glass and stainless steel, 54 x 65 x 23 cm
- *L'Amant vert*, 2006
- Murano glass, green and crystal, 80 x 15 x 15 cm
- *Amant suspendu*, 2007
- Murano glass, amethyst and crystal, 80 x 18 x 18 cm
- *Amant suspendu*, 2016
- Murano glass, alessandrita and grey, stainless steel, 75 x 15 x 15 cm
- *Pink Lotus*, 2015
- Mirrored glass and stainless steel, 142 x 135 x 122 cm

### IN THE SIDE NAVES:

- *Le Cortège endormi: Bannière n°1*, 2003
- CIRVA glass and steel, 380 x 61 x 61 cm
- *Le Cortège endormi: Bannière n°2*, 2003
- CIRVA glass and steel, 380 x 61 x 61 cm
- *Le Cortège endormi: Bannière n°7*, 2003
- CIRVA glass and steel, 350 x 30 x 130 cm
- *Le Cortège endormi: Bannière n°13*, 2003
- CIRVA glass and steel, 380 x 61 x 61 cm
- *Le Cortège endormi: Bannière n°9*, 2003
- CIRVA glass and steel, 405 x 61 x 61 cm
- *Le Cortège endormi: Bannière n°6*, 2003
- CIRVA glass and steel, 350 x 30 x 130 cm

### ON THE WALL:

- *Le Contrepet (The Spoonerism)*, 1992
- Moulded obsidian, 27 x 20 x 8 cm
- *La Vierge du jardinier*, 1995
- Murano Glass, 22 x 7 x 8,7 cm
- *Le Collier Cicatrice*, 1997
- glass, wire, metal, framing, 46 x 25 x 4 cm
- *L'Herbier merveilleux*, 2008, 24 illuminated boards, watercolours, lead frame, 40,5 x 30,5 x 0,5 cm

### IN THE APSE CHAPELS:

- *Le Collier Alessandrita*, 2012
- Murano glass and stainless steel, 230 x 45 x 18 cm
- *Le Collier Noir*, 2012
- Murano glass and stainless steel, 320 x 45 x 15 cm
- *La Mandorle d'or blanc*, 2016
- Murano glass, gold leaf and stainless steel, 120 x 55 x 15 cm

### IN THE CHOIR:

- *Géométrie Amoureuse*, 2004
- Murano glass and aluminium, 170 x 70 x 70 cm

### III

## Interview between Noëlle Tissier and Jean-Michel Othoniel

*Why did you choose this title to cover both exhibitions?*

"Géométrie Amoureuse" is the title of one of the artworks shown at the Louvre in 2004, I decided to keep it in my personal collection and it will be presented in Montpellier with the other pieces in my collection. This title unites in itself some ambivalences that have characterised my work from the beginning, sensuality and rigour, the hidden and the revealed, pain and beauty.

The fact that the rigour of geometry is disturbed by love is an occurrence of the oxymoron which also characterises my latest creations presented in Sète. In these new works I bring together light and darkness, the monumental and the fragile, the austere and the marvellous, minimalism and baroque.



*Géométrie Amoureuse, 2004*

*The Big Wave is a monumental work that takes on a surprising architectural dimension. Where does this new inspiration come from?*

The new works are almost all monumental, *The Big Wave* is built as a metal frame covered with glass. It is the result of two years of work and several months of technical drawings. The beauty of the place really pushed me to build this radical, monochrome and abstract madness. It is composed of several thousand bricks that were all blown in India following my residency with Indian glassmakers. This scale 1 wave engulfs us. It is filled with contradictory feelings, between sadness and joy. In 2011, I was preparing an exhibition in Japan when the tsunami struck Fukushima and, as most people were, I was very shaken. Paradoxically a few years ago I was teaching in Hawaii and I was able to experience the joys of surfing, the violence and warmth of rolling waves.

This wave is also a direct tribute to the first photograph of *La Grande vague*, that Gustave Le Gray captured in Sète 160 years ago, in 1857. I was always passionate about early photography and my first works, as a young artist, were photosensitive plates that paid tribute to the alchemy of the very first photographers. These *Insuccès Photographiques* were actually shown in Sète at the Caserne Vauban in 1988 after my residency at Villa Saint Clair.

The different colours of black and the purity of forms inspired by nature are the pillars of the exhibition. All the summoned elements, such as glass, mirror, metal, ink or the obsidian of Armenian volcanoes, participate in this desire for violent, minimal and telluric enchantment.

*Your first glass works were in obsidian, what place do you give it in your work today?*

My first work in obsidian is now shown in the exhibition at the Carré Sainte-Anne in Montpellier. It will give perspective to the whole installation. This work was made in 1992 at the CIRVA in Marseille, it represents a piece of truncated body placed on the wall. This fragment, in the centre of which an orifice appears, also resembles a volcano on the water.

This work, *Le Contrepet*, was made after a trip to the Aeolian Islands in Italy. I went looking for native sulphur but during this trip I met a vulcanologist and archaeologist who told me about an extinct material, the obsidian of Lipari. The pumice that covers Lipari today, which has buried obsidian quarries forever since the Early Middle Ages, is composed of the same basalt as the obsidian, except that one has expanded and the other is vitrified. The vulcanologist explained to me that if one was able to melt the white pumice one would obtain black obsidian.



*Le Contrepet, 1992*

Motivated by this alchemical adventure, I contacted the CIRVA in Marseille and worked with the researchers for more than two years, trying to resurrect this extinct material together. Out of this adventure, only three works were born, allowing this extinct obsidian back into our world once more. The proximity with the glassmakers during this research seduced me, and this opened the way to a new teamwork that required the knowledge of exceptional craftsmen. It was my first encounter with this material.

Now, in Sète, in the rooms that follow *The Big Wave*, I present mysterious obsidian meteorites created with stones that I brought back from a trip to Armenia. These «Stern block here fallen from a mysterious disaster», made of the black glass of volcanoes, are placed on chestnut pedestals carved by anthroposophical carpenters of the city of Dornach, Switzerland. The energy from the lava stone thus interacts with that of the wood. These black masses, which I have sculpted with the help of the glassmakers, absorb light and leave a pale reflection of our own image. They are reminiscent of the polyhedron of Dürer's *Melancholia I* and impose gravity and mystery by their very presence. Similar to the tomb that Mallarmé described, these black shapes evoke Giacometti's Cube, an object of intense solitude that Georges Didi-Huberman so rightly described as being «a crystal of absence using the paradox of its own geometry». But above all, for me, these are self-portraits, invisible faces that look at the viewer and dominate him from their great heights. On the occasion of this exhibition, we will publish a book with Actes Sud that retraces, from the pen of Lawrence Rinder, director of the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), my fascination with this dark material\*.

\* Informations on the book p. 30

*Until today, you have shown very few of your paintings and drawings. How important are they to you and what is their role in your work?*

On the first floor of the CRAC, 112 drawings take the intimate form of a large travel diary. They were made between 1996 and 2017, and reveal my thought process and the genesis of many of my works. You can find there some of my emblematic projects such as the watercolours of the *Kiosque des Noctambules* in Paris, on Place Colette, or the ones for the more recent *Belles Danses* in the gardens of the Château de Versailles. There are also many, never realised, utopian projects like the many variations I have imagined around my own grave. In Montpellier, the drawings are also presented as a notebook. On the Pompeian red painted walls of the church are hung many watercolours interspersed with texts; these are the illuminated plates of *L'Herbier Merveilleux*. I have always kept, since adolescence, my writings on the hidden meaning of flowers in painting. This set, which I later illustrated, was published by Actes Sud in 2015, on the occasion of my exhibition at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston\*.

I am presenting in Sète a series of new paintings as independent works. I have already exhibited works on canvas, wax paintings or match scrapers, including at the Centre Pompidou, but I have always shown them independently. Under an apparent rhetorical simplicity, the black lotus, the subject of these paintings, represents the purity of a flower blackened by ink, our world blackened by man. Like reiterated abstract figures covering a backdrop of white gold leaves, these stained icons, born of the study of flowers, surround eponymous black bead sculptures: *Black Lotus*. They are representative of the importance of movement and gesture in my work, they are for me a lighter autonomous practice that spares me the complicated infrastructure of monumental sculpture, an instant of solitude regained.



*Black Lotus, 2016*

*As we can see in the works shown in Montpellier, the period when you used mostly glass is strongly marked by an obsession with the body, all at once suffering and sensual. At the CRAC in Sète, monumental works tower above the visitors, is this indicative of another relationship with the body in your work?*

You are right, the large and colourful installation in Montpellier conceals many works that resemble tortured and erotic jewellery. Suspended in the centre of the nave, some twenty works of different periods are floating above a bed of blue bricks made with the glass-makers of Firozabad. I have carefully kept all these works throughout the last fifteen years because they are artefacts of pivotal moments and important events in my journey: *Le Collier Cicatrice* in red Murano glass; the forbidden fruits of the Peggy Guggenheim gardens in Venice; the *Bannières* that punctuated the magic path of my exhibition at the Cartier Foundation; the Mexican made glass tears trapped between two waters; *Le Collier Seins* that was blown in Hawaii, in the traditional colour of these welcome flower garlands; *La Mandorle d'or* inspired

\* Informations on the book p. 31



by the skills of Hokkaido glassmakers; *La Géométrie Amoureuse* of the Mesopotamian room of the Louvre, *Black is beautiful*, a tribute which I wanted to pay to the suffering of the Black people of Louisiana, represented by a gigantic necklace of scarred black beads; *La Vierge du jardinier*, a small piece of blown glass from Brooklyn, intended as a watering trough for the cloister of the Augustinian monastery in Toulouse; *Le Collier Alessandrita* the colour of which comes from an extinct rock; *les Amants suspendus* with its baroque beads and concealed sensual orifices...

They are all memories of journeys, encounters, marvellous stages of the construction of my universe. Like an enclosed garden, a dream world, a personal Map of the Tendre, the venue modestly displays the works as precious sacred talismans. I have carefully kept all these key pieces in my collection of my own works in order to be able to go back to it and restore my energy. The drawings from my notebook, which are shown in Sète, are born of this same desire to keep a set of primordial works with me, the indestructible core of intimacy necessary for my creation.



*Twin Tornadoes, 2017*

The last rooms in Sète associate the body with storms and the violence of the elements. They feature tornadoes and a large knot of glass beads. Hanging like mobiles suspended in space, these sculptures seek the violence of forms by observing the mathematical combinations of reflections. The body is dominated and diffracted, the viewers are an integral part of the work, their reflections multiplied to infinity in the bead mirrors or glass bricks.

The balanced tornadoes like large mobiles surround the bodies of those who approach them. For me, the tornado is a metaphor for creation itself. It is more powerful than the artist, it dominates him and if the artist fails to remain centred, it ejects him. He then becomes a witness to his own work.

*The Wild Pansy* is the latest work exhibited at the CRAC. It works like a black hole in which the viewers allow themselves to be hypnotised and lost: their bodies are sucked in. *The Wild Pansy* is the portrait of a free man. It is the only work that was spared the different shades of black of the exhibition, it shines in a range of purple, violet and indigo.

*What does it mean for you to have two big solo exhibitions in France and in the region?*

Between intimacy and revelations, spectacular novelties and hidden treasures, these two large exhibitions include fifty sculptures, nine paintings and one hundred and forty works on paper. It is the first time since 2011 and "My Way", my retrospective exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, that I have presented so many of my works, most of them shown for the first time in France. It is a great opportunity for me that "Géométries Amoureuses" is shown in Montpellier and Sète throughout the summer of 2017. The presentation of my collection in Montpellier will offer those who could not come to Paris, Seoul or New York a retrospective view of my work. On top of my deep attachment to the city of Sète and the CRAC, an exhibition in Occitanie at the time of summer festivals is also an opportunity to benefit from an exceptional visibility. In this year of Documenta and the Venice Biennale, the region is on the mandatory path of the international art audience.



## IV

### Biography

JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL

Born in Saint-Étienne, France, on January 27, 1964

OTHONIEL STUDIO

18 rue de la Perle 75003 Paris France

T +33 (0)1 43 67 47 22

[www.othoniel.fr](http://www.othoniel.fr)

Facebook : [@jeanmichelothoniel](https://www.facebook.com/jeanmichelothoniel)

Instagram : [@Othoniel\\_Studio](https://www.instagram.com/Othoniel_Studio)

# Jean-Michel Othoniel

Jean-Michel Othoniel is a major artist in the French and international artistic scene who because of his taste for metamorphoses, sublimations and transmutations, prefers materials with poetic and sensitive properties. From drawing to sculpture, from installation to photography, from writing to performance, the artist has invented a universe with multiple outlines since the late 1980s. He first explored materials with reversible qualities such as sulphur and wax, and has been working with glass since 1993. This is now his signature material. His works have a strong architectural dimension and are happily combined with gardens or historic sites following public or private commissions all over the world.

## Metamorphoses, sublimations and transformations

In the early 1990s, Jean-Michel Othoniel favoured material with poetic and sensitive properties, and his first works, made of wax or sulphur, were presented by Jan Hoet at the 1992 documenta in Kassel. The following year, he introduced glass in his work which really marked a turning point in his career. While collaborating with the best craftsmen in Murano, he explored the properties of this material which then became his signature. The delicacy of glass and its subtle colours fuel the artist's project to bring back poetry and wonder to the world. In 1994, he participated in the exhibition "Féminin/Masculin" at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, where he presented a series of works in sulphur as well as a performance installation *My Beautiful Closet* featuring dancers filmed in a dark cupboard. In 1996, he was granted a residency at the Villa Medici in Rome. He then began creating works that interact with the landscape, suspending giant necklaces, for instance, in the Villa Medici gardens; in the trees outside the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice (1997); or at the Alhambra, Palace of the Generalife in Granada (1999). Like forbidden fruits, his works are merged into the landscape and foliage as if growing organically, absorbing shadows and diffracting the light.

## Between museums and public spaces

In 2000, Jean-Michel Othoniel accepted his first public commission: transforming Palais-Royal – Musée du Louvre, the Parisian subway station, a century after it was designed by Hector Guimard. In Othoniel's installation, *Le Kiosque des Noctambules*, two glass and aluminium crowns conceal a bench that invites random encounters while the city sleeps. From then on, his creations have been divided between public and museum spaces; site-specific works and exhibitions have given him many opportunities to experiment with the many possibilities his chosen materials offer and to develop his favourite themes. In 2003, for the "Crystal Palace" exhibition presented at the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art in Paris and the MOCA in Miami, he had blown-glass shapes made in Venice and at CIRVA, the International Glass Centre in Marseille. These were designed to become enigmatic sculptures, in a realm of their own, between jewellery, architecture and erotic objects. The following year, in 2004, he was invited by the Louvre Museum to exhibit his work in the spectacular Mesopotamian rooms as part of the exhibition "Contrepoint". It offered him the opportunity to make his first free-standing necklaces, including the large-scale *Rivière Blanche* composed of beads adorned with nipples, that was later acquired by the Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris.

## A traveling work

Since 1991, an opportunity for a long trip to Hong Kong during which Jean-Michel Othoniel installed a temporary studio on the roof of the Museum of contemporary art to prepare the exhibition "Too French", travelling has become a recurring theme in his work. He retains this taste for nomadic creation, producing pieces with glassblowers in Mexico, Japan and India.

This idea of travel is also reflected in the project *Le Petit Théâtre de Peau d'Âne* (2004, Centre Pompidou collection), inspired by small puppets found in the house of the great traveller Pierre Loti and presented on stage at the Théâtre de la Ville in Rochefort then at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. Cultivating the art of reconciling opposites, the artist creates a dialogue between poetic and politics, in his *Bateau de larmes* (*Boat of Tears*): this tribute to exiles is produced from a Cuban refugee boat, found in Miami, covered with cascading colourful beads, transforming into huge crystal clear tears, this artwork is exhibited at Art Unlimited 2005, in the pond located in front of the entrance of the Basel Exhibition. During a stay in India in 2010, he works with glassmakers in Firozabad with whom he produces a series of works presented the following year at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris in his exhibition "My Way". Retracing his artistic career path since leaving the École des Beaux-arts in Cergy-Pontoise in 1988 up to his latest works of art, this retrospective relates the multiplicity of his practices and inspirations. After Paris, "My Way" was presented in 2011 at the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art/Plateau in Seoul, then in 2012 at the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, at the Macao Museum of Art in Macao and at the Brooklyn Museum in New York.

## Interacting with history and the contemporary

In 2012, an invitation from the Eugène Delacroix Museum and studio in Paris enables Jean-Michel Othoniel to engage with this place steeped in history, through a series of sculptures inspired by the structure of the flowers and plates in his *Herbier Merveilleux* – a publication in which he explores the symbolism of flowers through texts and watercolours. From installation to commission, the artist creates works of art that reflect the beauty of a location and extend its magic.

In spring 2013, for its 10th anniversary the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo commissions *Kin no Kokoro*, a monumental heart of gilded bronze beads permanently installed in the Japanese Mohri Garden, thus offering him an opportunity to orchestrate an encounter between the recurring themes in his work and far eastern sacred symbolism. The same year, as part of the development along the banks of the Saône in Lyon, on the former Caluire lock he creates a belvedere formed of coloured glass beads that reflect the lanterns on Île Barbe opposite.

2014 is marked by an outstanding project: the redevelopment of the Water Theatre grove in the gardens of the Palace of Versailles with the landscape designer Louis Benech. For this commission, awarded after an international competition, Jean-Michel Othoniel creates three fountain sculptures in gilded glass, based on choreographies by the dancing master of King Louis XIV, Raoul-Auger Feuillet. At Versailles the artist discovers unprecedented prestige and scale and with *Les Belles Danses* (*The Beautiful Dances*) producing the first permanent commissioned work within the palace by a contemporary artist. Developed like an architectural project, these three fountain sculptures reflect

several of the main orientations recently adopted by the artist: the monumental dimension and the relationship to history that increasingly highlight his originality.

In 2016, Jean-Michel Othoniel revealed *The Trésor of the Angoulême's Cathedral* a monumental artwork of spectacular theatricality he worked on for more than eight years.

Regularly invited to create artworks in situ, interacting with historical places, Jean-Michel Othoniel also likes to encounter today's architecture. He has therefore repeatedly created sculptures for Peter Marino and Jean Nouvel.

Jean-Michel Othoniel is represented by several galleries: Perrotin (Paris, New York & Hong Kong); Karsten Greve (Cologne and Saint-Moritz); Kukje (Seoul).

His works are conserved in the greatest museums of contemporary art, foundations and private collections in the world.

# V

## The Artist's CV

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS (selected)

2019

«Othoniel», Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada.

2018

«Othoniel», Musée d'art contemporain de Saint-Étienne, Saint-Étienne, France.

«New Works», Galerie Perrotin New York, USA.

2017

«Nudos Salvajes», Instituto de Matematicas, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico.

«Géométries Amoureuses», CRAC d'Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée in Sète.

«Géométries Amoureuses», Carré Sainte-Anne, contemporary art venue of the City of Montpellier

« Le Cortège endormi », Eglise Notre-Dame de l'Assomption, Valloire.

2016

«Black Lotus» Kukje Gallery, Seoul, South Korea.

2015

«Locus Solus», Galerie des multiples, Dilecta, Paris, France.

«#OthonielSanFrancisco @ConservatoryofFlowers» Conservatory of Flowers, San Francisco, USA.

«#OthonielVersailles @836M» 836M Gallery, San Francisco, USA.

«Invisibility Faces» Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland.

«Jean-Michel Othoniel: Secret Flower Sculptures» Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, USA.

2014

«DNA of Love» Karuizawa New Art Museum, Karuizawa, Japan.

«Jean-Michel Othoniel» Hôtel-Dieu, Puy-en-Velay, France.

«Monumental Sculptures» Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong, China.

2013

«Othoniel, Jewel Boxes», Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, USA.

«Les Nœuds de Babel», Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France.

2012

«Othoniel», L&M Gallery, New York, USA.

«My Way», Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA.

«My Way», Museum of Art of Macao, Macao, China.

«My Way» and «Le Réel merveilleux», Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan

2011

«My Way», Leeum Samsung Museum of Art/Plateau, Seoul, South Korea.

«My Way», Galeries du Musée, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, Paris, France.

«Le Réel merveilleux», Galerie des Enfants, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, Paris, France.

2010

«The Precious Stonewall», Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, India.

## COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS (selected)

2018

«L'Or», MUCEM, Marseille, France.

«Les Visiteurs de Versailles», Palace of Versailles, Versailles, France / Metropolitan Museum, New York, USA.

2017

«Jardins», Grand Palais, Paris, France.

«Collection Fondation Cartier», Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea.

2014

«One way: Peter Marino», Bass Museum of Art, Miami, USA.

«Made by...feito por Brasileiros», Cidade Matarazzo, São Paulo, Brasil.

«Mémoires vives - 30 ANS Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain», Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris.

«G I R L», curated by Pharrell Williams, Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France.

2013

«Trésors de Beisson», Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence, France.

«André Le Nôtre en perspectives, 1613-2013», Château de Versailles, Versailles, France.

«Happy Birthday Galerie Perrotin 25 ans !», Tri Postal, Lille, France.

«La science des rêves - collection Odermatt», Arsenal, Montréal, Canada.

«L'île de Montmajour», Abbaye de Montmajour, Arles, France.

«All You Need Is Love», Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.

«Fragile», Musée Maillol, Paris, France.

«Rêves de Venise», Institut Culturel Bernard Magrez, Bordeaux, France.

2012

«Eugène Delacroix. Des Fleurs en hiver: Othoniel, Creten», Musée Eugène Delacroix, Paris, France.

«Pommery: 10 ans d'expérience», Domaine de Pommery et Villa Demoiselle, Reims, France.

2010

«Chefs-d'œuvre?», Centre Pompidou, Metz, France.

## SITE-SPECIFIC WORKS

2017

*La Rose des Vents*, Conservatory of Flowers, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, USA.

*Clear Water Bay's Rebound*, Clear Water Bay, Hong Kong, China.

*L'In Noir*, Mitsubishi Bank Collection, Tokyo, Japan.

2016

*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, Angoulême, France.

*Living by Numbers*, AIDSmonument, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

*Le Nœud Pivoine*, MBAM, Montreal, Canada.

2015

*Les Belles Danses*, Bosquet du Théâtre d'Eau, Gardens of the Château de Versailles, Versailles, France.  
(project with the French landscape designer Louis Benech)

2014

*Les Nœuds Solaires*, Gare Jean Macé, Lyon, France.

*Le Cœur de l'Hôtel-Dieu*, in front of the Cathedral, Le Puy-en-Velay, France.

*La Rose des vents*, Cité Beisson, Aix-en-Provence, France.

2013

*Le Belvédère et Les Lanternes de l'île Barbe*, in « River Movie », Caluire, Grand Lyon, France.

2012

*La Grand Nœud de Janus*, Leeum Samsung Museum, Seoul, South Korea.

2010

*The Secret Happy End*, The Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA.

*Le Collier Autoporté*, Fondation Boghossian, Villa Empain, Brussels, Belgium.

*Diary of Happiness*, Budi Tek – Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China.

2009

*Kokoro*, Hara Museum ARC, Gunma, Japan.

2008

*La Grande Croix rouge*, Château de La Coste, La Coste, France.

*La Fontaine des cœurs renversés*, Jardin Pontevès, Musée International de la Parfumerie, Grasse, France.

2007

*Les Larmes de couleurs*, Parvis du Collège Arthur Rimbaud, Amiens, France.

*Le Confident*, Square Doyen-Lépine, Tramway of Nice, Nice, France.

2004

*Le Mât des Utopistes*, station de métro Balma-Gramont, Toulouse, France.

2000

*Le Kiosque des Noctambules*, Place Colette, Métro Palais-Royal – Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.



## VI

### Practical information

#### **CENTRE RÉGIONAL D'ART CONTEMPORAIN**

26 quai Aspirant Herber F-34200 Sète

Tél. : +33 (0) 4 67 74 94 37 / [crac@laregion.fr](mailto:crac@laregion.fr)

[www.crac.languedocroussillon.fr](http://www.crac.languedocroussillon.fr)

Exhibition from June 10 to September 24, 2017

#### **Schedules**

Open every day from 12.30pm to 7pm; Saturday and Sunday from 3pm to 8pm

Closed on Tuesdays

Conversational tours on Saturdays and Sundays at 4pm

Group tours during the week, booking with the visitor department

«Spotlight on one work» tour, July–August, Mondays and Wednesday at 4pm

Guided tour in French Sign Language, July 29th at 4pm

Guided tour in English, July 13th and August 17th at 4pm

CRIC CRAC workshops for children every Friday during school holidays

Dynamic workshop for children, July 12 2pm–4pm

Free admission

#### **Getting here**

It is possible to come by train, plane, car or boat.

A TGV line connects Sète directly to Paris, in three hours forty five. Sète is less than two hours by train from Marseille and Toulouse. Montpellier International Airport is fifty minutes away by car via the A9 motorway. By car, take the A9 motorway (follow Sète). Parking is possible along the docks, in front of the CRAC. Car parks are also available for motorists: Pont de Tivoli (free) or Quai de la résistance (paying). By ferry, from Morocco and the Balearic Islands to the port of Sète during the high season.

#### **CARRÉ SAINTE-ANNE – CONTEMPORARY ART VENUE**

2, rue Philippy – 34000 Montpellier

Tél. : +33 4 67 60 82 11 / [carre.sainte-anne@ville-montpellier.fr](mailto:carre.sainte-anne@ville-montpellier.fr)

[www.montpellier.fr](http://www.montpellier.fr)

Exhibition from June 9 to September 24, 2017

#### **Schedules**

Self-guided tours, from Tuesday to Sunday from 11am to 1pm and from 2pm to 7pm

Group tour (guided or not): mandatory booking by email: [visites@ville-montpellier.fr](mailto:visites@ville-montpellier.fr)

Weekly guided tours

Discovery tour (45 minutes) at 4pm on Thursdays

Relaxed tour at 11am on Saturdays; at 2.30pm and 4pm on Sundays

Guided tours by Les Amis du Musée Fabre society on Saturdays at 3pm

Family tours on Wednesdays at 11am for 3–6 year olds and 4pm for 7–10 year olds. No bookings, please let the staff know that you are interested in taking this tour.

**Getting here:** By tramway, L1 and L2 stop at Comédie

## VII

### Presentation of the institutions



# Région Occitanie / Pyrénées-Méditerranée

With €85.6 million, Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée is among the regions that invest the more in culture

The Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée region has a real ambition to support culture, arts and heritage, all the while paying special attention to reducing territorial and cultural inequalities. Thus, in spite of a budget limited by public finances, in line with the previous commitments, culture and heritage will represent more than 3.2% of the regional budget in 2017 (not including European funds, regional administration and debt repayment). The region thus expresses clearly its desire to promote culture, a value it shares with other public entities.

Blessed with a particularly rich and dynamic contemporary art scene, the region Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée is keen to support its actors, helping the disseminating organisations and bringing contemporary art closer to all, while reaching for quality and covering the whole region. Among our region's ambitious schemes supporting contemporary art are the direct management of the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain (CRAC) in Sète and of the Musée Régional d'Art Contemporain (MRAC) in Sérignan; the involvement of the region with the Musée d'Art Moderne in Céret as a founding member of this public institution of cultural cooperation; the support of the Region to the creation of a regional network of contemporary art within the sector, through the support of more than fifty places in Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée; supporting events; direct support for creators; with the «artistic 1%» public commissions; or also through support for non-profit art galleries or galleries that are allowed to participate in contemporary art fairs in France and abroad.

## The Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain in Sète

Located in Sète, on the Canal Royal, the Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain overlooks the Mediterranean. The architecture of the building offers exceptional large volumes, thanks to its industrial character. The architect Lorenzo Piqueras has rehabilitated this original place to create the current configuration, with the different ceiling heights giving the exhibition spaces their church organ like character.

The CRAC's project runs along the artistic, historical, economic and tourist routes that travel from north to south, from east to west.

It is a place dedicated to artistic creation that offers a program of temporary exhibitions and site-specific projects. It favours international partnerships and offers privileged access to the exploration of modern creation. It brings to light the intersections between the different practices that are the basis of today's and tomorrow's art through the discovery of never before seen works.

As a site that facilitates creation, research, experimentation and exhibition, the CRAC has presented more than six hundred artists to date, representing the national and international art scene.

# The Métropole & City of Montpellier

## **Montpellier #DestinationCulture: contemporary art is a central priority for the City and for the Métropole**

By welcoming Jean-Michel Othoniel to the Carré Sainte-Anne, Montpellier confirms its ambitions. A major showcase of contemporary art in Montpellier and the region, the Carré Sainte-Anne has opened up to international artists who all strive to resonate with the deconsecrated church. The space, dedicated to contemporary art, is an integral part of the art scene offered in Montpellier thanks to the synergy between the different exhibition venues. Since 2014, thanks to the input of Philippe Saurel, Mayor of the City of Montpellier and President of Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole, culture has taken a new turn in Montpellier #DestinationCulture, showing innovative spirit, excellence, diversity and accessibility to as many people as possible.

## **Carré Sainte-Anne - Contemporary Art Venue**

Built at the end of the 19th century, the church of Sainte-Anne stands at sixty-nine meters. A parish church until the 1970s, Sainte-Anne is no longer used for worship and was deconsecrated in 1986. The City of Montpellier decided to make it a venue for contemporary art exhibitions, renaming it «Carré Sainte-Anne». Since then, Carré Sainte-Anne, which is free for the public to enter, has become a key showcase of contemporary art in Montpellier and the region. After hosting numerous exhibitions by young local artists, the venue has opened up since 2011 to international artists: Desgrandchamps, Gérard Garouste, Bernard Pagès, Hervé Di Rosa, Manuel Ocampo, Robert Combas, Léopold Rabus et JonOne, Carole Benzaken (Marcel Duchamp Prize), Barthélémy Toguo (short-listed for the 2016 Marcel Duchamp Prize)... All of whom have created exhibitions that resonated with the monumentality and the symbolic value of the venue. The program of the Carré Sainte-Anne is now characterized by the desire to present contemporary art creation in its eclecticism and diversity.

## **Innovation, excellence, diversity and accessibility**

With its renowned festivals, nationally recognised facilities and reputation for fostering the emergence of new talent and the development of art in all its forms, Montpellier is without a doubt a land of culture. Every art form is represented: from music to literature, visual arts to theatre, urban cultures to dance, cinema to heritage. Making culture accessible to as many people as possible is one of the main objectives of the city and the Métropole, and it has already been achieved through numerous events and equipments. As for exhibitions, all those offered at the Carré Sainte-Anne are entirely free. This is also the case for the Pavillon Populaire, the Espace Dominique Bagouet and La Panacée. Since 2014, the synergy between the different cultural facilities of the city and the Métropole – Musée Fabre, La Panacée, Pavillon Populaire, Carré Sainte-Anne, Musée Henri Prades, Espace D. Bagouet, Espace Saint-Ravy – has been developed. With the arrival of internationally renowned artists and the upcoming opening of the MoCo, Montpellier Contemporain, a new kind of contemporary art centre, Montpellier offers an art scene in which contemporary creation occupies its rightful place.

With an operational budget of €62 million and more than €120 million in investment expected by the end of the current mandate, the City and the Métropole have one of France's largest budgets for culture.

## Les Amis du Musée Fabre society

The aim of Les Amis du Musée Fabre is to improve and spread the fame of Montpellier's Musée Fabre and, generally, to promote visual arts in their diversity. As such, it intends to play an active role in favour of the Museum, acting as a true partner to the cultural dynamism in the City of Montpellier, the Métropole and the whole region. The Society is aimed at art lovers and all those who wish to better understand and appreciate collectively classic and contemporary artistic creation.

For more than fifteen years now, the contemporary art commission of Les Amis du Musée Fabre has been following its founding objective, presenting works that demonstrate commitment to a demanding pursuit. This time, Les Amis du Musée Fabre, in partnership with the City of Montpellier, present a selection of Jean-Michel Othoniel's personal works, from his own collection: "Géométries Amoureuses".

## GÉOMÉTRIES AMOUREUSES

## Books

*OTHONIEL*

Carré Sainte-Anne Montpellier, éditions Liénart, June 2017  
64 p. / 23,5 x 16 cm / Bilingual Franch-English / 20 €

As part of the exhibition "Géométries Amoureuses" in Montpellier, in which some fifty works by Jean-Michel Othoniel, from his personal collection, are exhibited, the Carré Sainte-Anne publishes a box containing two books: one tome on the exhibited works that the artist has kept since the 1990s, when he began working with glass; and another on the installation designed specifically for the venue. For Othoniel, being part of his own collection goes hand-in-hand with a desire to remove himself from the world; foregoing his reticence and showing this collection of his work to the public is part of the ambivalence of feelings that the artist places at the heart of his work.

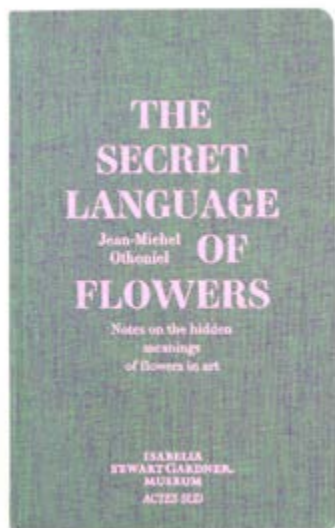
*OBSIDIANA*

Actes Sud, June 2017

96 p. / 13 x 21 cm / Bilingual Franch-English / 29 €



*Obsidiana* offers an opportunity to present a new series of works by Othoniel, entitled *Invisibility Faces*. This artistic production was presented at the Goetheanum near Basel in 2015. A place that is more than a simple backdrop and interacts with the works, the large angular and organic totems of obsidian and wood, themselves reminiscent of the shapes of the building that encases them. Concrete, wood, glass: the materials are mixed with harmony in a nearly carnal way, a sensual awakening. This book, abundantly illustrated, prefaced by Johannes Nilo of the Goetheanum documentation centre and accompanied by a text by Lawrence Rinder, Director of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA), is a real ode to matter. Conceived as an echo of the forms of both the *Invisibility Faces* and the Goetheanum, the book in turn becomes an element of reflection on matter and its mysteries.



### *The Secret Language of Flowers*

Actes Sud, 2015

96 p. / 13 x 21 cm / 32 €

On the occasion of his solo exhibition at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Jean-Michel Othoniel published *L'Herbier Merveilleux*. In this book, Othoniel discusses his passion for flowers and reveals their hidden meanings by retracing their histories and mythologies. He unveils the secret language of flowers and their symbolic meaning in painting.

This precious book, with its changing iridescent cover, is presented as a dictionary that the artist has nourished over the years through his research on the secret language of flowers. It is illustrated with details from paintings, drawings and photographs of flowers collected during his travels.

*The Secret Language of Flowers* was also published in French under the title *L'Herbier Merveilleux*.



# IX

## Press contacts & partners

### PRESS

#### Brunswick Arts:

Contacts : Leslie Compan / Pierre-Edouard Moutin  
regionoccitanie@brunswickgroup.com  
+33 1 85 96 83 83

#### Région Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée:

Contact : Sylvie Caumet  
sylvie.caumet@laregion.fr  
+33 6 80 65 59 67

#### The Métropole and City of Montpellier:

Contact : Ophélie Flohic  
o.flohic@montpellier3m.fr  
+ 33 6 75 92 55 25

### MEDIA PARTNER



### PARTNERS

#### Les Amis du Musée Fabre Society:

Contact : Nicole Kerangueven  
+ 33 6 82 18 06 66

#### Othoniel Studio :

Contacts : Benjamin Carteret / Cécilia Hurstel  
benjamin@othoniel.fr  
+33 1 43 67 47 22

#### Galerie Perrotin :

Contacts : Vanessa Clairet / Coralie David  
communication@perrotin.com  
+ 33 1 86 95 89 76