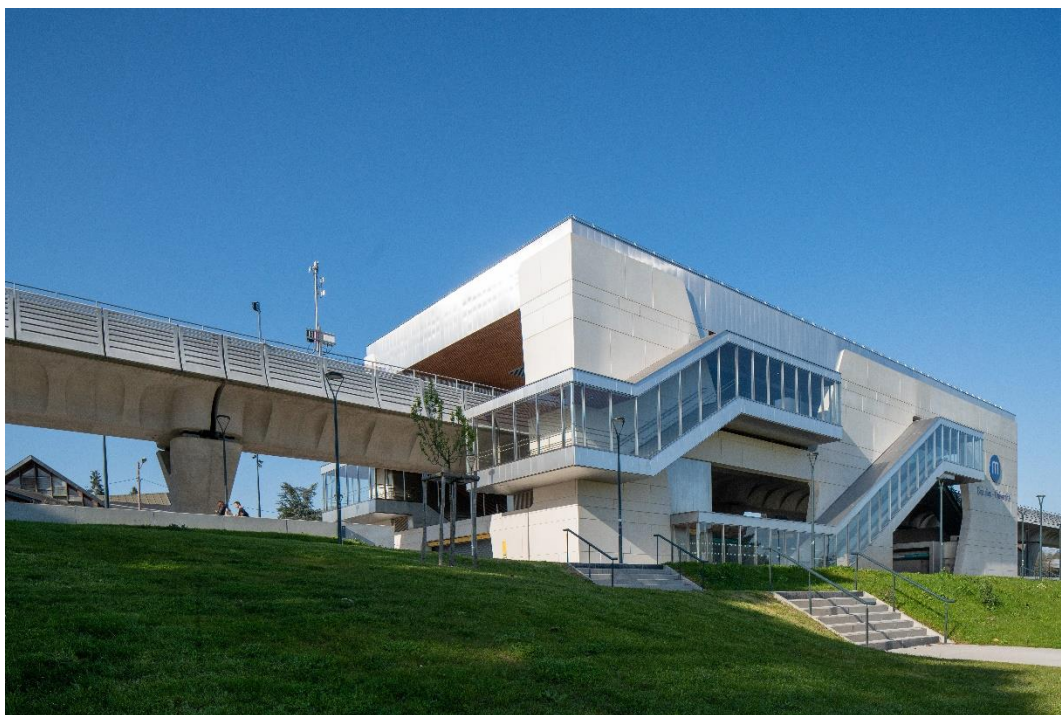

Friday 25 November 2022

Culture

An exceptional public commission near Metro line b



Beaulieu-Université station © Arnaud Loubry

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Editorial by Nathalie Appéré

In Rennes, the commissioning of public art is a tradition which has persisted for more than 40 years, as evidenced everywhere, in the streets and squares of the city. The commissioning of seven works for Metro line b is consistent with this proactive policy, a genuine marker of our commitment to supporting artistic creation and enhancing our heritage.

From Saint-Jacques-Gaîté to Cesson-Via Silva, via the Gares and Gros-Chêne stations, the new line presents us with wonderful urban wanderings to explore contemporary art. Created by world-renowned artists working closely with local artisans, the seven works of line b echo the architecture of each station and pave the way for a new, shared vision.

The purpose of art is to push the boundaries. Art must establish itself across the city and reach as many people as possible. With their audacity and creativity, the artists re-enchant the way we perceive our territory while charting new landscapes. Works of art add beauty to our everyday lives, transform the use of the city and allow residents to reclaim the city.

I would like to thank the artists, the members of the Artistic Committee and our partners, in particular the State, who have worked with us to complete one of France's largest public art commissions of the past 10 years, as part of a strong collective impetus towards culture for all.

Nathalie Appéré,
Mayor of Rennes
President of Rennes Métropole

Introductory remarks by Franck Gautherot

Reconnecting

Envisioning the works that will be commissioned from the artists is a perilous task insofar as it can only be verified after the fact. Lessons drawn from integrating works into the context, induced narratives, political specifications and technical dictates are taken into account from the onset, yet instantly forgotten.

The decision to assign specific artists to the sites was a prerequisite which, after following a sketchy *feng shui* approach, determined the path based on communication nodes, parallel areas, driving forces and places to be.

Reconnecting with equestrian sculpture [Jean-Marie Appriou]; with multicoloured abstract sculpture [Phillip King]; with anthropomorphic statues [Ugo Rondinone]; with mural painting [Camila Oliveira Fairclough]; with the utilitarian environment [Isabelle Cornaro, Valentin Carron]; but also, first and foremost, with the digital future [Charles de Meaux].

Public art is assigned the role of geographical and cultural marker of the sites selected along line b: educational and cultural facilities absorb the echoes of the adjacent route – the fence of the Joliot-Curie secondary school redesigned with a trembling, wobbly hand, in the words of Valentin Carron, into a golden railing, also marks a frontier perceived as the spatial boundaries of the impact of this new Metro line on the urban environment.

The raised hand of the delicate design is also evocative of corporal punishment, the use of which has now been banned. The design is an authority figure.

On the outskirts, one of the expected benefits will stem from repurposing, accompanied by the delivery of a facility hosting items from the Beaux-Arts Museum as well as educational and cultural events. Isabelle Cornaro, whose visual vocabulary oscillates between obligatory modernism and multiple ornamental references, will be in charge of furnishing and staging this space.

From the three-dimensional setting to the wall painting, all it takes is an escalator to get to level R-1 of the Sainte-Anne station – at the intersection of lines a and b. Intersecting lines, intersecting time lines, intersecting styles: this is what painting can do *ad libitum*.

Dubonnet's *Cassandre (du bon du bo dubonnet)* illustrated/erased from a wall in the vicinity of the Sainte-Anne site provided Camila Oliveira Fairclough with the specifications for her wall painting commission that appears in two places in the station. Blue, red and black patches combined with the digital signals of messages and advertisements galore. An example of decorative painting reminiscent of the paper posters of transatlantic cruises and aperitif wines with exotic notes.

The *ad hoc* surroundings are of course amongst the focal points identified as parallel sites displaying the artistic expression commissioned. The terminus is the poor relation of the terminal which accompanied (thus far!) our daily or seasonal perspectives.

In the Saint-Jacques-Gaîté terminus, modern office buildings are delighted to host the colourful abstract sculpture of British artist Phillip King for his first public commission in France. Unfortunately, the artist died before he could complete the work, depriving him of his customary humble pride in the finished piece. Here, King creates sharp spikes and contoured surfaces of dynamic angles of equilibrium for a construction anchored on a circular base.

At the other end, at the Cesson-Viasilva elevated station, the line sits on pillars with a highly architectural design and, from this giant causeway, the gaze falls on the standing man of Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone. As a maker of statues reduced to volumes of rock barely extracted from quarries in southern Italy, depicting humans boiling down to a head, a torso and legs, Rondinone is in full control of his statuary art, which has great symbolic and transactional value.

In the middle of line b, the railway/Metro (a and b) junction, this central spot serves as a sign and a symbol. The new SNCF station, suspended at the junction of two Metro lines, enjoys an elevated position on a gently sloped, grassy hill overlooking the city, where an overhang bears the colours of “local” artist Jean-Marie Appriou who is now enjoying truly international success. Equestrian statues are found at pre-eminent celebratory locations in the main squares of our cities with a military history. While horses feature prominently in equestrian art, it finds its fullest expression in the rider! Heroic generals, triumphant knights, kings in armour, Louis XIV, Napoleon and Joan of Arc (the only woman celebrated), the litany of swords drawn and alpha males: Appriou mercifully opted to strip away all human elements. A two-headed horse with a dual posture, upright and leaning forward to drink in the middle of green algae, displays the virtues of animal comfort and persistence in an urban situation.

The metro tunnel is adorned with anthropomorphic metaphors to reassure passengers in transit, confident in this new automated line passing through the city at high speed. Are we reconnecting with the original palaeolithic cave? The commission assigned to Charles de Meaux for the line b tunnel embraced these specifications.

How to turn a metro tunnel into a new venue for parietal art in the 21st century, the primary purpose of which would be to conjure a Stone age bestiary as glazed carriages go by? This is indeed a new form of artistic investment which candidly and normally addresses the need to support works of art as part of the implementation of a new underground communication channel.

Public art is more than ready to confront the darkness of the line b tunnel. May its appearance be a fleeting and repeatable experience of art in a confined space. May the experience of this fantastic bestiary be as magical and shivering as the horses of the Chauvet caves illuminated by the flickering flame of the torches of our old fellow humans!

The passing Metro will reconnect with the future engulfed by the darkness of the shaft dug by a boring machine, and the magnificent beasts, half digital robots half creatures emerging from the history of art, will accompany passengers during their underground journey, at a given location, for a fairly short time yet sufficient to leave them with brand new memories.

The variety of visual propositions and their distribution across a dynamic metropolis is a great opportunity to restore the rightful place of commission art in the ordinary urban and suburban landscape of its residents.

We should look forward to a future where commission art – neither sorrowful, academic, illustrative and demagogic or deceptive – contributes to re-establishing ties and clearing up any misunderstandings public art may have caused, to give the city, as it emerges from the chaos of health-related lockdown, a new lease of life and new artistic, symbolic and political narratives.

Franck Gautherot
Co-director and founder
of the “Consortium” contemporary
art centre in Dijon,
Chair of the artistic committee
of the line b works

Seven works of art for the new Metro line

Part of the budget for the construction of Metro line b by Rennes Métropole was allocated to the commissioning of works of art. This is in keeping with a long-standing tradition of public art commissions in Rennes, initiated in the 1980s¹. For line b, seven works of art were commissioned simultaneously. The purpose of this commission was to support artistic creation and provide line b with emblematic features echoing the stations' architecture while also developing their surroundings. Particular attention was paid to the maintenance of the works, the environmental impact of their materials as well as user safety.

To choose the artists and their works, Rennes Métropole appointed an artistic committee, made up of Xavier Duroux, co-director of the *Consortium* contemporary art centre in Dijon, who led the committee until his death in 2017, and was succeeded by Franck Gautherot, co-director of the same institution; Sophie Kaplan, director of the *La Criée* contemporary art centre in Rennes; Anne Dary, director of the Rennes Beaux-Arts Museum until 2019; Jean-Roch Bouiller, current director of the Rennes Beaux-Arts Museum; Odile Le Borgne, director of *École européenne supérieure d'art de Bretagne* (European Academy of Art in Brittany), Rennes site; Olivier Lerch, plastic arts advisor for the Brittany region's Cultural Affairs Directorate; David Perreau, art critic; Pedro Pereira, in charge of visual arts with the Culture Department of Rennes Ville and Métropole until 2021.

The artistic committee put forward artist names, which were submitted to the arbitration of the elected representatives of Rennes Métropole as well as the Rennes, Saint-Jacques-de-la-Lande and Cesson-Sévigné municipalities. The artists belong to different generations and do not have the same level of experience or fame.

The works were selected based on a number of criteria: their visibility, their proximity to Metro users, the consideration of the environment where they are installed, their relevance to contemporary artistic creation in major cities around the world and their cost. The artists were given considerable leeway. The project includes large-scale, free-standing sculpture (works by Ugo Rondinone, Phillip King and Jean-Marie Appriou), memorial works (by Camila Oliveira Fairclough), functional works (by Valentin Carron), experimental works (by Isabelle Cornaro) and technological works (by Charles de Meaux), reflecting the artistic committee's intentions.

¹ An interactive map of all public art commissions in Rennes is accessible at: <https://metropole.rennes.fr/lart-dans-la-ville>.



The sites where the works are installed were selected so as to highlight key elements of line b. A decision was made to showcase its two end points (Saint-Jacques - Gaîté and Cesson - Viasilva stations), its intersections with line a (Gares and Sainte-Anne stations), or its infrastructure (tunnel near the Saint-Germain station). Lastly, special attention was paid to the artistic promotion of a station located near several secondary schools (Joliot-Curie - Chateaubriand station) and a station in a priority district under the urban policy, undergoing significant changes (Gros-Chêne station).

Amounting to €2,039,000 in total, the commissioning of works of art for Metro line b was financed by Rennes Métropole (€1,650,000), the State (€250,000 via the ministry of Culture) and the Brittany Region (€139,000).

La Ronde de Rennes, at the Saint-Jacques – Gaîté station



La Ronde de Rennes by Phillip King © Stéphane Chalmeau

Galvanised steel, polyester powder coating

Construction: The White Wall Company, London

For the Saint-Jacques – Gaîté station, Phillip King designed a sculpture with overlapping volumes evocative of dance figures. The artist sought to capture the momentum and energy of choreographic movements in a fixed structure.

Contained in a coloured circle, each module is independent but appears to be dependent on the others, as if removing one may result in the collapse of the entire structure. These brightly painted pieces create an impression of movement that catches the eye and invites viewers to join the dance.

The artist: Phillip King

Phillip King was a sculptor born in 1934 in Tunis and deceased on 27 July 2021 in London. He was an internationally acclaimed artist, a professor of sculpture at the London Royal College of Art. Having been discovered by abstract sculptor Anthony Caro in the 1950s, he joined the prestigious St Martin's School of Art of London in 1957, where he was trained by Caro. He was involved in the *New Generation* movement that redefined British sculpture in the 1960s, breaking with the figurative and expressionist style of the 1950s.

Phillip King's work is characterised by the assembly of simple and abstract painted shapes, constantly innovating in the choice and combination of materials. Lively colours create an impression of joyful dynamism. His sculptures are installed on the ground, without a base, for closer proximity to the viewer. *Ronde de Rennes* is one of his last works before his death, and his only one created for a public space in France.

Morvac'h, at the Gares station



Morvac'h by Jean-Marie Appriou © Stéphane Chalmeau

Aluminium

Construction: Fusions foundry,
Charbonnières-les-Vieilles

For the Gares station, Jean-Marie Appriou created a monumental horse and its reflection in water, inspired by Morvac'h, the horse of legendary king Gradlon of Brittany, who could walk on water. To create his work, the artist took the station's environment into account.

The horse refers to transport and travel, as do train, bus and Metro stations. Its position on a promontory suggests a glorious equestrian statue, in keeping with the great tradition of Western sculpture. And yet, there is no hero on the horse's back, nor is there a pedestal under its feet. Commuters can approach it, touch it and feel the fineness of its contours, as if the animal were taking a rest after an epic journey.

The artist: Jean-Marie Appriou

Jean-Marie Appriou is a sculptor born in Brest in 1986, a graduate of *École européenne supérieure d'art de Bretagne* in Rennes. He currently resides and works in Paris. The artist explores the medium of sculpture, whose traditional know-how he appropriates in order to subvert it and extend its possibilities.

Alone or with the help of skilled artisans, he works – together or separately – with materials such as aluminium, glass, bronze or terracotta by freeing himself from traditional processes.

Human, animal and plant figures emerge out of his experiments with substance, responding to each other and complementing one another, giving rise to various scenarios. This fantastic, magical, sometimes frightening universe, is inspired by a variety of themes such as Egyptian mythology, Pre-Raphaelite paintings, science-fiction literature, cinema and comic books.

Bestiaire, at the Gares station



Bestiaire by Charles de Meaux © Eponime Momencaeu

Three LED screens of 1x10 metres each, synchronised video sequences

Construction: Shenzen Multimedia, Anna Sanders films, Paris

For the Saint-Germain station, French artist Charles de Meaux created a digital artwork in the Metro tunnel, which can only be seen from moving carriages. Every time a train passes by, three sequences of animals in motion surreptitiously appear on LED screens. The location and subject matter of the work refer to prehistoric cave paintings.

With this process, Charles de Meaux is re-enchanting the Metro journey by introducing movement and animal life into an unexpected place. The artist filmed animals and gave them a fantastical aspect. Their appearance is so brief that viewers must picture them in their minds to identify them. Every time a train passes by, one image from among one hundred available images is displayed at random on each screen, creating a different travel experience each time.

The artist: Charles de Meaux

Charles de Meaux is a filmmaker born in Istanbul in 1967, who lives and works in Paris. He was a jockey for about ten years before he created the Anna Sanders Films production company in 1997, along with artists Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parenno and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. Charles de Meaux has directed a number of feature films: *Le Pont du trieur* (2000, co-directed by Philippe Parenno), *Shimkent Hotel* (2003), *Stretch* (2011) and *Le Portrait interdit* (2017).

He divides his time between films intended for the big screen and work created for museums and public and private institutions. His work has a strong presence in public spaces, in an effort to take art out of the protective environment provided by cinemas or museums. His artistic endeavours integrate naturally into their implementation context, making the technological prowess achieved imperceptible. Thus, the entangled tunnels of his *Train Fantôme*, a monumental work exhibited in 2014, were reminiscent of the architecture of the Pompidou Centre where it was hosted.

	This tube-shaped corridor full of screens presaged the technical principle of the <i>Bestiaire</i> in Rennes.
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Rendez-vous, at the Sainte-Anne station



Rendez-vous by Camila Oliveira Fairclough © Stéphane Chalmeau

Concrete, paint

Formwork by: Semtcar

Technical support: Olivier Vadrot, Jérôme Corré et Hugo Pernet

In Sainte-Anne, Camila Oliveira Fairclough conceived a two-part work, at the entrance to the station and close to the platforms, to breathe new life into the advert for the Dubonnet wine-based aperitif, which was once visible from Sainte-Anne square. With this work, the artist brings up memories of this painted wall which has now disappeared.

On the first level of the station, Camila Oliveira Fairclough applied the blue and red colours characteristic of the Dubonnet adverts on a concrete heart encompassing one of the station pillars. The artist converts this cumbersome pillar into a benchmark, just like the defunct advert in the heart of Sainte-Anne square. By doing so, she creates a rendezvous point in the middle of a heavy traffic area, at the junction between the two Metro lines.

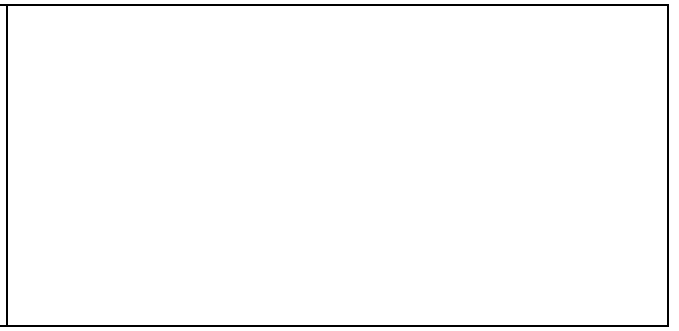
For the platforms, Camila Oliveira Fairclough uses the mural painting process. She superimposes outstanding

The artist: Camila Oliveira Fairclough

Camila Oliveira Fairclough is a painter born in 1979 in Rio-de-Janeiro (Brazil), who lives and works in Paris. She is a graduate of *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. Her paintings delve into abstract forms and language. They are influenced by popular culture and graphic design. The artist also draws inspiration from the principle of Marcel Duchamp's *readymades*, these everyday objects reworked to become "ready-for-use" works of art.

Thus, Camila Oliveira Fairclough's works often stem from an everyday object, pattern or image that the artist recreates in a painting, such as the old Dubonnet advert at the Sainte-Anne station. Camila Oliveira Fairclough essentially paints freehand using solid colour patches bounded by geometrical lines. Her precise touch cannot prevent the inevitable imperfections of the human hand, which give her work a warm, intimate feel.

features from the Dubonnet adverts: the red and blue colours, the cat, the lightning bolt. The cat in the shadow brings up memories of Dubonnet in Sainte-Anne. The heart-shaped eyes express a certain nostalgia. The lightning bolt reproduces the dynamic graphic style of Cassandre, the designer of the *Dubo, Dubon, Dubonnet* slogan.



Scènes I, at the Gros-Chêne station



Scènes #1, view of the *Témoins oculaires* exhibition, Spike Island (Bristol), 2015 © Stuart Whipps

Concrete, aluminium, glass	The artist: Isabelle Cornaro
Construction: Self Signal, Cesson-Sévigné	Isabelle Cornaro is a visual artist born in Aurillac in 1974, who lives and works in Paris and Geneva (Switzerland). She studied art history at <i>École du Louvre</i> , and art practice at <i>École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts</i> in Paris. This formal training is apparent in her practice, which bridges the gap between ancient art history and contemporary art. Isabelle
For the Gros-Chêne station and the Beaux-Arts Museum – Maurepas ² , Isabelle Cornaro has conceived street furniture inspired by her series <i>Scènes</i> (2015), the pure and simple lines of which reflect her minimalist aesthetics. This furniture is intended to display artistic posters from	

² Located north-east of the City of Rennes, the Maurepas district is particularly rich in artistic and cultural initiatives developed by residents, associations and public amenities.

A large-scale urban renewal programme has been underway in the district since 2014. Multiple future alterations and improvements include a new 400 m² area in the Beaux-Arts Museum to be inaugurated soon as part of the arrival of Metro line b and the opening of the Gros chêne station at the foot of the “La Banane” building. A games library and a reception area for young children will also be installed on adjacent premises.

The Beaux-Arts Museum in Maurepas will house classic and contemporary works of art, mainly from its collections. Two temporary exhibitions will be organised every year. The exhibitions will be accessible to all through free admission and activities; they will cater for all audiences and formats.

This place is intended to be open to its environment and to be run like a laboratory, to rethink the relationship between the visitors and the museum. One of the two annual exhibitions will be jointly organised with local residents, as will the artistic programme in the public sphere. Various collaborative approaches will be tested, for example in relation to the development of collections or cultural programming.

time to time, produced in partnership with local visual artists, starting with the *La Criée* contemporary art centre in 2023.

Isabelle Cornaro made these five sculptures out of cast concrete. This weather-resistant material goes well with the metal and glass of the poster frames. It also allows for complex interplay between surfaces: some are smooth while others are matt, glossy or uneven. The sides of these cases are all different in their design, dimensions and surfaces: their specific nature gradually emerges when walking around them, which invites the public to saunter between the Metro station and the museum.

Cornaro works with video, sculpture, painting, staging and installations.

Isabelle Cornaro dissects the composition of classic paintings through the 3D staging of objects and shapes, arranged so as to recreate the different levels of these paintings. While the artistic value of each element taken separately is questionable, the combination thereof is what confers on them the value required for the creation of a work of art. This process gave rise to the *Paysages* and *Scènes* series, in which the artist develops a form of conceptual art, where her intention outweighs the form of the end product, and minimal art where forms are reduced to their simplest expression.

***Creatura*, at the Joliot-Curie - Chateaubriand station**



Creatura by Valentin Carron © Stéphane Chalmeau

Powder-coated steel, polyester resin, paint

Engineering and construction: Idéa Métal, Pont-Péan

For the Joliot-Curie – Chateaubriand station, Rennes Métropole and the Brittany Region entrusted the design of the Chateaubriand secondary school's fence to Valentin Carron. The Swiss artist plays with the authoritarian nature of the fence that shuts in and divides, adding an artistic dimension that unites and instils doubt.

Valentin Carron initially redesigned the existing fence with a trembling, wobbly hand. The outline achieved is evocative of the wavy lines of literary manuscripts such as Chateaubriand's. He then enlarged his drawing to scale 1:1, before a blacksmith converted the sketch on paper into a metal structure. With their distorted appearance, the bars seem unstable and fragile, just like human beings.

The artist: Valentin Carron

Valentin Carron is a visual artist born in Martigny (Switzerland) in 1977, where he lives and works. He is a graduate of the Lausanne and Valais Cantonal Schools of Art. His work consists of sculptures, paintings, collages and installations. This internationally acclaimed artist appropriates familiar symbols and objects to humorously subvert them and question their authenticity.

This is precisely what he set out to do with Swiss folklore, drawing inspiration from constituent parts of the identity of the Valais Canton where he resides. In his work *Authentik* (2000), he ordered a wrought-iron replica of this word, in the style of the names affixed to picturesque Swiss chalets. The misspelling contradicts the very meaning of the written word and the authenticity of the chalet it may adorn. By the same token, the fragile appearance of the *Creatura* fences contradicts their primary function and ensuing rigidity.

***The Sincere*, at the Cesson - Viasilva station**



The Sincere by Ugo Rondinone © Stéphane Chalmeau

Blue stone, stainless steel

For the Cesson - Viasilva station, Ugo Rondinone created a sculpture entitled *The Sincere*. It represents the human figure in its most elemental, most archaic form (a head, a chest, two legs), using an ancestral material: stone. The blue stone used is roughly cut in the form of blocks, which are subsequently stacked one on top of the other.

Drill holes and chips on the surface of the sculpture are visible traces of the work performed in the quarry from which the blocks were extracted. Unlike traditional sculpture where material and technique give way to form, this work exposes the stones for what they are: heavy, coarse, carved by the wind, time and corrosion. Its uneven natural surface is in contrast to the architectural context of the Cesson - Viasilva station, where great care was taken with the finishing touches, and its artificial environment.

The artist: Ugo Rondinone

Ugo Rondinone is a visual artist born in Brunnen (Switzerland) in 1964, who lives and works in Zurich and New York. He studied at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and works with sculpture, drawing, painting, video, photography, land art and installations. His work defies definition and is exhibited in galleries and museums as well as public spaces. It is the visual expression of the artist's dreams and visions.

In 2013, Ugo Rondinone started his series of *Stone Figures*, of which *The Sincere*, installed near the Cesson - Viasilva station, forms part. This series of hundreds of sculptures invariably represents a human form consisting of five to seven simple elements: legs, torso, stomach, shoulders, head. The works installed in the public space are generally on a monumental scale, and contrast with the environment in which they are located.

A history of public commissioning in Rennes

The City of Rennes has a long-standing, ambitious policy consisting of installing works of art in the public space, which goes far beyond the “1% for arts” regulatory obligations³. Since the 1980s, the City of Rennes has stepped up its support for contemporary creation by earmarking budget lines in improvement or construction operations that were not covered by the 1% obligation. One hundred or so works are currently scattered across the territory, some of which are conspicuous and well known to the public (*Des Baigneuses pas très académiques* by Gérard Collin-Thiébaud, 2000, Place de Bretagne), while others are more discreet or have been dismantled (*Sculpture cybernétique* by Nicolas Schöffer, 1970, Maison de la culture).



Des Baigneuses pas très académiques by Gérard Collin-Thiébaud © Arnaud Loubry

Over the past few years, the City and the metropolitan area have undergone major changes. The creation or reconfiguration of some districts (EuroRennes), the commissioning of Metro line b or the reclaiming of certain places emblematic of the history of the territory (the Jacobins Convent) are improvement

³ The 1% procedure is a regulatory obligation relating to the “obligation to decorate public constructions” (decree of 29 April 2002). As part of the construction of buildings, local authorities and the State must implement the provisions of this decree and buy or commission a work of art corresponding with 1% of the amount of the operation excl. VAT.

operations that reshape the urban environment while altering its uses and perception. The City of Rennes affirms its strong artistic ambition in urban development projects, as public joint development zones (ZAC) now provide an opportunity to plan for and finance works of art in public spaces, such as that created by Jan Kopp as part of the Madeleine ZAC (*Après la pluie*, 2022).

Thus, the commissioning of works of art has gone hand in hand with these urban transformations and the construction of new buildings. Commissioning a work of art is always a unique operation insofar as it consistently fits within a specific context and because the vast majority of the works are original creations, resulting in great formal diversity and giving rise to a body of work representative of contemporary art practices.

Examples include Nissim Merkado's monumental sculpture (*Degré*, 1987, avenue de la Touraudais) representative of a minimalist approach to sculpture. Equally monumental is Peter Downsbrough's work (*L'Unité de la*, 1990) located on a major thoroughfare in the city centre (boulevard de la Liberté), which consists of a conceptual and minimalist graphic installation on the gable wall of a building. *In situ* installations initiate dialogue between heritage buildings and contemporary formal styles, as with Laurent Grasso's work for the Jacobins Convent (*Revolving History*, 2018).

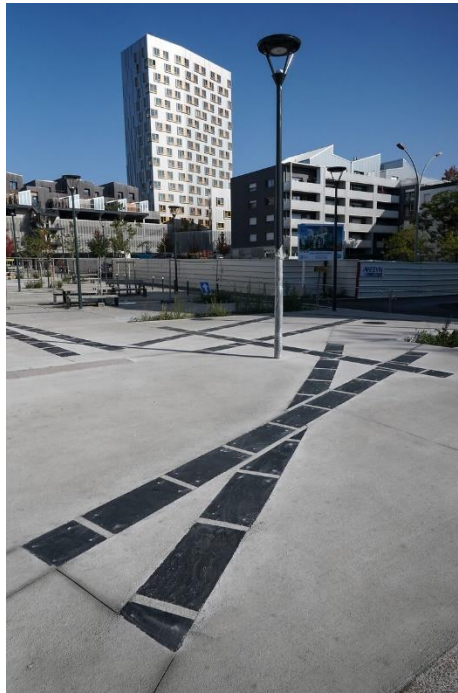
Works may also have a usage value depending on the installation context. Thus, the work of designer Matali Crasset (*Aéro Végétale*, 2017) outside the Nelson Mandela school invites those who use the site to sit on a circular bench. One should also mention the creation of furniture for the lobby of the new Antipode by designer Erwan Mével as part of the "1% for art" in 2021.



L'Alignement du XX^e siècle by Aurélie Nemours © Arnaud Loubry

The works are also conducive to contemplation, prompting us to take a break in the midst of intense urban activity. Work by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec (*Le Belvédère*, 2020) provides a new perspective on the River Vilaine and the surrounding heart of the city. Aurélie Nemours' work located at the edge of the Beauregard park (*L'Alignement du XX^e siècle*, 2006) takes on an architectural dimension and genuinely calls for physical involvement from those wishing to explore it in depth. Last but not least, Yann Lestrat's work (*Trait pour trait*, 2021) bridges the gap in this history of public art in Rennes, as the newly created work on the Normandie Square originates from the reuse of slates making up a work by François Morellet (*La ligne and le point du jour*, 1989), which was dismantled

in 2007 following the demolition of the buildings onto the gable of which it was installed.



Trait pour trait by Yann Lestrat © Arnaud Loubry

The works of Metro line b are fully consistent with this history. This is the culmination of 40 years of proactive policy aimed at supporting contemporary creation while also facilitating access to contemporary art. The scale of the works commissioned for Metro line b is impressive (seven works, €2 million budget), enhancing a legacy which already features one hundred works or so. This exceptional commission marks a turning point in public art commissioning in Rennes and heralds other projects (8 current or future commissions).

Rennes and its affinity to contemporary art

Rennes maintains close ties with contemporary art. It is home to a multitude of players who form a particularly rich mosaic:

- two art centres of national interest certified by the French ministry of Culture;
- one second-generation Frac (Regional fund for contemporary art);
- one Beaux-Arts Museum which places increasing emphasis on contemporary art;
- *Champs Libres* facilities with a strong commitment to contemporary photography;
- 40 artists' workshops made available by the City and numerous private workshops;
- one communal fund for contemporary art with more than 500 works;
- one *école supérieure d'art* (higher school of art);
- numerous specialist associations;
- galleries;
- private collectors;
- major patrons;
- conservators of contemporary art;
- mediation operations;
- and artistic workshops for all.

In parallel with the very proactive policy of commissioning works of art for public spaces, the City of Rennes and Rennes Métropole support contemporary artistic creation and dissemination.

EXPORAMA, the annual highlight for contemporary art

Launched in the summer of 2021, Exporama is the new summer event backed by Rennes Métropole with the City of Rennes, focused on creation and contemporary art. Exporama's programme provides local residents as well as tourists with an urban focus highlighting Rennes' multiple contemporary art initiatives. Exporama aims at uniting local contemporary art stakeholders around joint programming, demonstrating the vitality and density of contemporary creation and dissemination in Rennes and in Brittany. This programming brings stakeholders together under a municipal or metropolitan agency (Beaux-Arts Museum, *La Criée* contemporary art centre, communal fund for contemporary art, *Les Champs Libres*, etc.), FRAC Brittany, associations supporting the creation and dissemination of visual arts (40mcube certified art centre, Ateliers du Vent, Teenage Kicks, *l'Œil d'Oodaaq*, etc.), the cultural centres of local communities (Phakt) and private galleries.

Summer programming is based on one or two flagship exhibitions with a strong potential for attraction and outreach. These exhibitions are the cornerstone of a constellation of concepts (exhibitions, outdoor installations, performances, events, etc.) backed by all territorial players. Summer programming is reinforced thanks to a call for projects that supports proposals made by local stakeholders. These proposals reflect the diversity of the territory's artistic landscape, with a

variety of styles and media: visual arts, photography, video, street art, etc. The show, to be renewed every summer, should establish itself as a national high point of the cultural and tourist agenda, making it one of France's major contemporary art events.



40 artists' workshops and support for creation

For nearly 30 years, the City of Rennes has provided visual artists with suitable premises, taken from its property portfolio, allowing them to work in good conditions. In 2022, the City was home to 37 artists' workshops, including 6 live-in workshops. The existence of these areas dedicated to contemporary creation contributes to Rennes' cultural vitality, attesting to the City's desire to involve artists in urban transformations, and helping initiate discussions and debates with local residents. The graduates of *École des Beaux-Arts* and the visual arts department of the Rennes 2 University form a breeding ground for young artists that the City intends to support. The provision of moderately priced workshops addresses the need to support them in the early stages of their career. Furthermore, every year the City organises open days in these artists' workshops. These workshops are accompanied by the award of creation support grants, allowing artists to develop research in a specific formal and/or technical field, attend shows, artist residencies, etc.



Artists' workshop open days © Christophe Le Dévéhat

Communal fund for contemporary art (FCAC) with 500 works

The City acquires works of art as part of the FCAC. This collection reflects Rennes' artistic life, the artists who live and work there (art school professors) or whose work has left a mark on the city (e.g. public commission). Every summer since 2013, the City of Rennes exhibits the works acquired during the year by the communal fund for contemporary art, which now features 500 pieces.
