



**MUSÉE D'ART
MODERNE ET
CONTEMPORAIN
SAINT-ÉTIENNE
MÉTROPOLE**

ANNE ET PATRICK POIRIER

Danger zones

JULY 2ND 2016 - JANUARY 29TH 2017

**PRESS
RELEASE**

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Open every day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Closed on Tuesdays

For the first retrospective exhibition of Anne and Patrick Poirier in France, the Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Saint-Etienne Métropole gathers some forty major works of one of the very first and rare artist couples.

Danger Zones, a title chosen purposefully by Anne and Patrick Poirier, refers back to one of their emblematic and premonitory works from 2001. It reflects the visionary character of their intuitions, stemming from their attentive and detached observation of past history and the course of world events today. It vividly reasserts the pertinence of the questioning at the heart of their polymorphic and poetic work: the fragility of civilisations and of nature, the primordial role of memory and its functioning as an antidote to the tyranny of time, the havoc of wars and the threats to our consciousness.

Anne and Patrick Poirier refer to themselves as architects-archaeologists. They started to visit, to search, collect and make inventories on the sites and vestiges of ancient civilisations from the moment they first worked together in Rome in 1967. Their passion for travel, sometimes almost in the form of wanderings, and their discoveries of the heritage of humanity, are deeply rooted in their artistic practice. In the wake of Claude Lévi-Strauss' teachings, they belong to the first generations of artists to have travelled around the world to understand the organization of ancient cities, and more particularly, the forms of their disappearance.

This exhibition features recent works such as Daidalopolis (2016), a monumental work resembling a drone, a kind of Noah's Ark of culture, specifically conceived for the exhibition; the white paintings from the Mésopotamie series (2012-2016), monochrome allegories of the current destruction in the Middle East, or Hatra (2016), a carpet evoking the martyrdom of this town devastated by the forces of the Islamic State. Others are earlier works, including 2235 AP JC (2001), a spectacular model of a futuristic post-apocalyptic city, or Construction IV (1977), from the Domus aurea series, a vast landscape of blackened ruins submerged in water, as dark as it is sordid.



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Echoing their artistic development – “we have imagined this exhibition as a journey where time and places mingle, a journey without chronology or a map, through the landscapes of our memory, through our works both old and new” – the exhibition invites visitors to enter Anne and Patrick Poirier’s world, to the rhythm of the inter-connecting rooms, from that of the Ruines du futur, (Ruins of the future) to the Regards intérieurs (Interior Regards), then onto L’incertitude et de l’oubli (The uncertainty and the forgotten), finally leading to La salle des Mémoires englouties (The room of submerged memories).

Curator : Lóránd Hegyi, General director of the Museum

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Anne and Patrick Poirier were children of the war : she was born in 1941 in Marseille, and he in Nantes in 1942. They studied at the École des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and were residents at the Villa Médicis in Rome from 1967 to 1971.

They took part in numerous international exhibitions such as the Biennial of Venice (1976, 1980 and 1984), the Documenta VI in Kassel (1977) and the Biennial of Lyon (2000) and the Biennial of Valencia (2013). Their work has been exhibited in the most prestigious institutions: the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein in Berlin (1977), the National Museum of Modern Art Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1978), the M.O.M.A in New York (1979), the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna (1994) and The Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles (2001). More recently, their work was presented at the Museum of Fine Arts in Nantes (2014), at the Cocteau Museum in Menton (2015) and they had a solo exhibition at the Mitterrand Gallery (2015). They were also invited to the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Tokyo (2014) and to the Echigo-Tsumari Art Field Triennial in Japan (2015).

A trilingual catalogue (French, English, German) is published by Editions Dilecta, with the support of the Mitterrand Gallery, including a text by Lorand Hegyi, Director of Musée d’art moderne et contemporain de Saint-Etienne Métropole and curator of the exhibition, and an interview with the art historian, Heinz-Norbert Jocks.

One of their emblematic works, Mnemosyne (1990) opens the exhibition, Carambolages, at the Grand Palais in Paris (until the 4th of July 2016). Tony Cragg holds a solo exhibition of their work at his Waldfrieden Skulpturenpark foundation in Wuppertal, from the 29th of October 2016 to the 8th of January 2017. La maison européenne de la Photographie (MEP) in Paris organizes their first photography retrospective in September and October 2017.

