



PRESS RELEASE

EARTHY GARDENERS HEAVENLY GARDENERS

7TH INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN MELLE 2015

JULY 4, 2015 - SEPTEMBER 27, 2015

*"Within us, man of all time. Within us, all men. Within us, animals, plants, and minerals. Man is not only man. He is the universe."*¹ The 7th International Biennial of Contemporary Art of Melle in 2015 is conceived from this thought by Aimé Césaire, expressing a dual-commitment to both the poetic and the political. Far from any notion of anthropocentrism, this new edition puts into action an ethics and an aesthetic of correlation, cooperation, and interdependence. It combines ecology and a philosophy of existence, including artists who are out of the ordinary; from Gilles Clément to Bill Viola, from Marie-Monique Robin to Reena Umbersada Valvi, from Kôichi Kurita to Jivya Soma Mashe. All of these artists cultivate life, awakening us to urgent levels of consciousness and replacing man at the heart of a vital movement, with feet planted firmly in the planetary garden on the balcony of the universe. Particularly melliferous, **EARTHY GARDENERS HEAVENLY GARDENERS**, brings together 30 artists who transgress the borders of art and science, of culture and agriculture.... All poets of physics, astrophysics, and metaphysics... they will offer us more light, more space, more meaning, more consciousness, and more pleasure!

EARTHY GARDENERS HEAVENLY GARDENERS is based on *"the indispensable complicity, since time immemorial, between human and non-human, the systemic interdependence of the community of the living,"* observed by anthropologist, Philippe Descola,² on the planet Earth, the only oasis of life in our solar system.

"We live in a rare time," Gilles Clément³ tells us. *"It is a period that brings out from within us the ability to redefine ourselves in the cosmos, a restoration of the like that mankind has probably never known, for humanity to advance in the understanding of itself among the living, and, in doing so, attempt to improve our conditions. [...] Truly, humanity has only just been born. It does not yet know where it lives."* Earthly and heavenly, the gardeners of all that is living awaken us and contribute to the common good.

It is within this context that the artists, each filled with a shared knowledge of life, will be brought together in Melle.

Dominique Truco, artistic director

From July 4th to September 27th, 2015, the 7th International Contemporary Art Biennial of Melle will host around thirty international artists among them **JULIEN BLAINE • KARINE BONNEVAL • PATRICIA CARTEREAU • GILLES CLÉMENT • PASCAL COLRAT • ALAIN CUGNO • OLIVIER DARNÉ & LE PARTI POÉTIQUE • RAMESH HENGADI • KÔICHI KURITA • NICOLAS KOZAKIS & RAOUL VANEIGEM • MANUELA MARQUES • JIVYA SOMA MASHE • BALOU JIVYA MASHE • LAURENT MILLET • OSCAR MUÑOZ • DOMINIQUE ROBIN • MARIE-MONIQUE ROBIN • FLORIAN DE LA SALLE • SYLVAIN SOUSSAN • YURIKO TAKAGI • SHANTARAM CHINTYA TUMBADA • REENA UMBERSADA VALVI • ANIL VANGAD • BILL VIOLA** within the exceptional heritage of the town (Romanesque churches, the Hôtel de Ménéoc, the Silver Mines, and more).

Also not to be missed are the nine permanent installations from the 2003 to 2013 biennials in the gardens and town center: **GILLES CLÉMENT • THIERRY FONTAINE • JAKOB GAUTEL • CHRISTIAN JACCARD • MICHEL JEANNES-LA MERCERIE • TADASHI KAWAMATA • CHRISTIAN LAPIE • SOUSSAN LTD-MUSÉE DES NUAGES • KNUD VIKTOR** as well as the public commissions from **MATHIEU LEHANNEUR** and **RÉMY HYSBERGUE** in the Romanesque churches of Saint-Hilaire and Saint-Savinien, and of **FRANÇOISE GUARDON**, Le Pont aux roses (The Rose Bridge), to celebrate the passage into the third millennium.

1. *Poésie et Connaissance*, Aimé Césaire, Revue *Tropiques*, January 1945

2. *Par-delà nature et culture*, Philippe Descola, Gallimard, 2005

3. *L'alternative ambiante*, Gilles Clément, Sens&Tonka, 2014

The Biennial of Melle 2015 is realised by the Town of Melle with the support of the Region of Poitou-Charentes, the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Regional Direction of Cultural Affairs of Poitou-Charentes, the General Council of Deux-Sèvres, the Town of Niort, the Community of Greater Niort, the communes of Saint-Martin-lès-Melle and La Mothe Saint-Héray. The Biennial of Melle 2015 Earthly Gardeners Heavenly Gardeners was approved by the COP21/Paris Climat 2015.

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