

LOUVRE

Press release

Exhibition

April 5–June 25, 2007

Department of Sculptures /
Department of Near Eastern
Antiquities

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thanks to the generous support of
Caisse des Dépôts.



Exhibition curator:
**Marie-Laure Bernadac, curator in
charge, special advisor on
contemporary art at the Louvre**
Assisted by Pauline Guélaud



Michel Verjux
2006

Counterpoint III

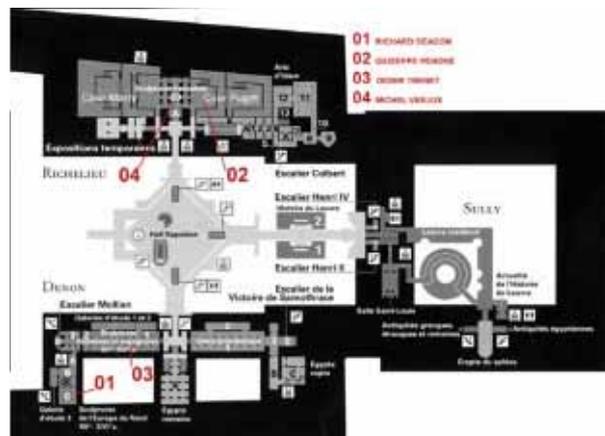
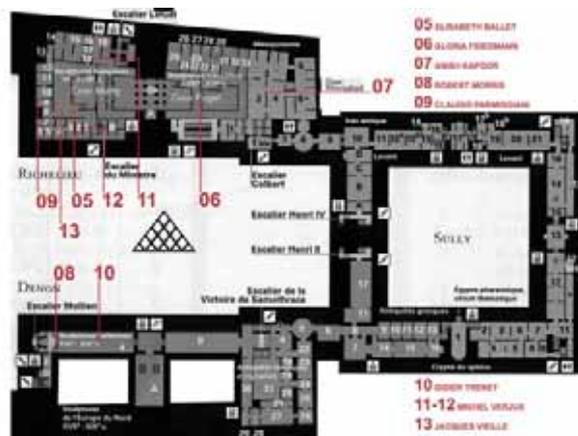
On Sculpture

The third edition of *Counterpoint* is held in the Department of Sculptures and the Department of Near Eastern Antiquities. Inaugurated in November 2004, this annual event invites selected contemporary artists to engage in dialogue with works in the collections of the Louvre.

Eleven major figures in contemporary art present works that, in large part, were created especially for the Louvre, installed in specific galleries of their choosing. The internationally renowned participants in *Counterpoint III* are: Luciano Fabro, Claudio Parmiggiani and Giuseppe Penone, leading protagonists of the Arte Povera movement; the influential British sculptors Richard Deacon and Anish Kapoor; the versatile American artist Robert Morris; as well as Elisabeth Ballet, Gloria Friedmann, Didier Trenet, Michel Verjux and Jacques Vieille, prominent representatives of current French artistic trends.

The selection of the Departments of Sculptures and of Near Eastern Antiquities reflects various motivations: the specific architectural features of certain exhibition spaces, such as the Cour Marly or the Cour Puget, whose vast dimensions allow for the presentation of monumental works; the desire to encourage the public to discover the Louvre's unequalled collection of French, Italian and German sculptures from the Middle Ages to the 19th century; and the intention to demonstrate the lasting presence within contemporary sculpture of certain long established practices and themes. Although the 20th century brought a number of major developments in sculpture, with certain artists exploring new domains (light, installations, film) and making use of new materials (resin, plastic, aluminum), others continued to work in plaster, wood or stone while introducing an entirely new visual language of representation.

Counterpoint III invites visitors to experience an unprecedented encounter between sculptures of earlier centuries and works of the present.



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Giuseppe Penone
Two 5-Meter Trees
 Collection of the artist
 ©ADAGP, Paris, 2006



Elisabeth Ballet
Preparatory study for her Cour Marly project, 2007
 ©ADAGP, Paris, 2006

Visitor information

Place

The works are presented in the galleries of the Departments of Sculptures and of Near Eastern Antiquities.

Hours

Open daily except Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and until 9:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The installations by Richard Deacon and Didier Ternet are not open to the public during the evening hours on Fridays. The installation by Anish Kapoor is not open to the public during the evening hours on Wednesdays.

Admission fees

Access to the exhibition is included in the purchase of an admission to the Museum's permanent collections: €8.50; €6 after 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays. Free admission for all visitors the first Sunday of each month, and for youths under 26 on Fridays after 6 p.m.

Free admission at all times for youths under 18.

Further information

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www.louvre.fr

Six of the eleven artists have chosen to present their works in the prestigious courtyards of the Richelieu Wing: Cour Marly and Cour Puget, home to monumental French garden statuary from the 17th to the 19th century, and Cour Khorsabad, which houses a re-creation of the entrance to the palace of the Assyrian king Sargon II.

Giuseppe Penone and **Gloria Friedmann** have installed their works in the Cour Puget. Giuseppe Penone has long favored trees, whether prone (as is the case for the work by this artist presented in the Tuileries Gardens) or erect, to embody his reflections on precultural and cultural forms. Due to their structure and their verticality, in his view trees are at the genesis of sculpture. In the vast glass-enclosed Cour Puget, he presents two spectacular 5-meter high trees. Meticulously chiseling through the growth rings of timber beams, he reveals their internal structure and developing branches. Gloria Friedmann places a dozen plaster figures on the steps of the same courtyard. Each holds a clock opposite its face, all set to the same time. Are these *Contemporaries* actually beyond time? What importance can any given moment have compared to the lifetime of a human being, or of a work?

Luciano Fabro, **Jacques Vieille** and **Elisabeth Ballet** intervene in the Cour Marly.

Luciano Fabro presents a work entitled *Cul de Ciel*, a rolled-up map of the sky in white marble inserted in a block of pink marble.

Elizabeth Ballet engages with the museum's approach to the presentation of French sculptures in the Cour Marly. Gods and nymphs avert the spectator's gaze, turning to face each other. At the center of this staged scene, a life-sized boom operator in resin underscores the concept of a renewal of dialogue between the works. Lastly, Jacques Vieille intervenes with the group of three sculptures by Antoine Coysevox devoted to the forest. *Flora* (goddess of the blossoming flowers of spring), *Hamadryad* (wood nymph and spirit associated with a particular tree) and the *Flute-Playing Faun* are surrounded by hundreds of *Mara des bois* strawberry plants growing in a long, red plastic tube.

Claudio Parmiggiani and **Michel Verjux** stake out territory in the galleries adjoining the Cour Marly. Claudio Parmiggiani hangs scythes in the Salle Philippe Pot (devoted to 15th century funerary art). The traditional implement of the Grim Reaper, their presence reinforces the memorial function of the sculptures exhibited, the recumbent figures and the tomb of this great seneschal of Bordeaux. With this work, we find ourselves submerged in the silent, enveloping world of the sacred. Michel Verjux's installation consists of beams of bright light in the shape of broken-up squares that he projects into exhibition spaces. He has selected three locations: an empty display case of the Girardon crypt (sculptures from the time of Louis XIV), a Roman tympanum at the Estagel portal (6th–12th century sculptures), and a sculpted bas-relief in the Pont-au-Change gallery (17th century French sculptures). By means of this site-specific lighting installation, Michel Verjux thwarts the traditional modes of exhibition and creates an immaterial sculpture.



Anish Kapoor
Installation Project for the Cour Khorsabad,
 2007



Robert Morris
Excerpts from Birthday Boy,
 2004
 ©ADAGP, Paris, 2006



Luciano Fabro
Cul de Ciel, Marble, 2006



Claudio Parmiggiani
 Project for the Salle Philippe Pot

Anish Kapoor has conceived a curved mirror, two meters high and eight meters wide, for the Cour Khorsabad. Within these prestigious surroundings housing sculpted reliefs from 8th century B.C. Mesopotamia, Kapoor's intervention at once absorbs space, light and volume, thus renewing our perception of the place and the works displayed as well as the figures depicted.

The four remaining artists have selected the sculpture galleries of the Denon Wing (Italian and Northern European sculptures).

Robert Morris offers an ironic, detached reflection on the work of art and its interpretation. Produced for the 500th anniversary of Michelangelo's *David*, in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, the two *Birthdays Boy* videos will be shown on either side of the Mollien staircase near Michelangelo's *Slaves*.

Didier Treno presents two works. The first is a cage made of copper tubing inspired by baroque garlands, studded with spheres and pieces of marble, which encloses the *Veiled Lady* by Antonio Corradini. The second intrudes between the Virgin and the Angel Gabriel in the display case of the *Annunciation* in the Donatello gallery. It evokes the fleur-de-lys missing from the delicately opened hands of the two protagonists.

Richard Deacon takes inspiration from the Louvre's collection of Northern European sculptures. He observes the characteristic draping effect in these late Gothic Dutch, Flemish and German masterpieces and stops before the *Saint Mary Magdalene* by Gregor Erhart. Responding to her long hair, he creates a sculpture in polychrome wood consisting of long twisted shafts reaching upward.

Related events and publications

Publication: Special issue of *Connaissance des Arts*

Special evening event in the galleries with Elisabeth Ballet on Friday, May 11 at 7 p.m.

“Face to Face” events in the Auditorium du Louvre
 Conversation with Richard Deacon, Friday, April 20 at 8 p.m.
 Conversation with Luciano Fabro, Friday, May 4 at 8 p.m.
 Conversation with Robert Morris, Friday, May 25 at 8 p.m.

Guided tours: On certain dates, guides will be present to answer visitors' questions.