

Art in the city - The north walk

FROM AVENUE MOZART (16TH) TO AVENUE JEAN-JAURÈS (19TH)

Throughout the capital, the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Paris maintains the monuments and statues which form part of the municipal or State heritage. Most of these works date from the beginning of the Third Republic, an active period for artistic commissions. The 20th century was for a long time more cautious in this respect, but over the last twenty years or so, the City of Paris has revived the tradition of commissioning public art. In 2003, it set up the Art Committee in the City, a committee of elected officials, experts and departments to consult on the projects planned. Since then, the City of Paris has commissioned the permanent or temporary works which can be discovered on three walks: North, Central and South.

The nine works/stages in this walk, which crosses four districts from eastern to northern Paris, are accessible from the stations on metro line 2 Porte Dauphine-Nation. As four of them are lit up, you can discover a new side to them during your night-time wanderings. Others interact well with each other, such as those created in 2008 for the opening of the artistic establishment of the City of Paris, "The 104", or those of the Inges Idee collective on Avenue Jean Jaurès (19th). Finally, this route also provides the opportunity to observe how art can pay tribute, whether to Alexandre Dumas (father), the Utopian Charles Fourier or the Prefect Erignac.

1

(16th) 61, Avenue Mozart

Jakob Gautel "Tribute to the Prefect Erignac", 2004

In tribute to the Prefect Claude Erignac, who was assassinated in Bastia in 1998, Jakob Gautel has created a work for the square which bears his name. After reading the personal notes written by the Prefect in his notebook, he created an urban system which is beyond monumental. The public benches are arranged as an opus incertum (irregular arrangement) at varying distances around a chess table. As the walker approaches, he can see brass plaques screwed onto the backs of the benches with phrases written by the Prefect in his notebook; one page of this notebook is video-projected onto an adjacent wall.

Jakob Gautel was born in Germany in 1965 and lives in Paris. In his works he uses different mediums linked to image, sound, installation and also "action" in performances, whose traces are preserved in film. Gautel's work, which pays particular attention to the precariousness of things and beings, transforms the tragic banality of existence into a poetic and aesthetic experience. His work is a glimpse of the world, revealing the essence of things. The artist willingly distances himself from the traditional locations of art in order to move into the public domain. His works question the artist's place in the city and by extension man's place in his environment.

2

(16th) Place de Mexico

Agueda Lozano "Land of Mexico in France", 2006

The Mexican government wanted to offer a sculpture to the French capital to mark the links between the two countries. Of the various projects submitted to the City of Paris by the Mexican authorities in 1999, the work of Agueda Lozano was the one selected. This vertical sculpture, some 5 metres high and made of stainless steel laminated sheet metal, patinated and polished, has two wings opening up towards the sky to symbolise the union of the two cultures. The artist combines the lyricism and purity of volumes and develops a system of folds whose leakage paths, whether broken or smooth, open out into space.

Agueda Lozano was born in Cuauhtémoc (Mexico) in 1944 and lives and works in Paris.

3

(17th) Place Jules Renard

Wang Du "The Exercise Tower", 2008

Wang Du's work is a tribute by the City of Paris to its fire-fighters and accentuates perspective to reproduce the architecture of the tower used for fire brigade exercises, located in the courtyard of the nearby fire station.

Made of stainless steel and polished like a fire-fighter's helmet, this 7-tonne sculpture is 11 metres high and reflects its direct surroundings of Parisian limestone (fires station façade) and brick (side walls), typical of

buildings constructed on the sites of former Paris fortifications in the 1930s.

Wang Du was born in China in 1956 and has lived and worked in France since 1990. He is an internationally famous artist known chiefly for criticising the media. He collects images in the press of personalities and events. Disproportionately enlarged and transposed onto sculptures or installations, they call out to spectators and expose the hold of images over our political, social and economic life. In order to create his Exercise Tower, Wang Du worked closely with the Fire Brigade Headquarters in Paris, located on the edge of the square.

4

(17th) Place du Général Catroux

Khômbol Museum “Irons”, 2009

In tribute to General Alexandre Dumas (1762 – 1806), father of the author of *The Three Musketeers*, the City of Paris commissioned the artist Driss Sans-Arcidet (known by his pseudonym Khômbol Museum) to produce a monumental work evoking the life of the first French general of Afro-Caribbean origin; this life was led in a three-pronged fight for freedom - as a slave, a revolutionary soldier and a citizen hurt by the return of slavery. The artist spent a long time studying the General's life before he proposed this intentionally primitive sculpture, designed with the aid of the ironsmith Dominique Tillard. Five metres high and weighing over 5 tonnes each, these irons seem to be thrown onto the ground, broken by a chisel and men's determination. They are made of polished Corten steel and remind us that this slavery into which General Dumas was born has not yet entirely disappeared.

Driss Sans-Arcidet, who goes by the pseudonym Musée Khômbol, was born in 1960 and lived for a long time in Toulouse before settling in Caen in 2001. Khômbol Museum consists of series of collections which claim to be an exhaustive list of everything which exists in the universe. The gathered objects belong to a collective mythology, with reference to universal myths and beliefs. They are grouped together in several different parts or sections.

5

(18th) Place de Clichy

Franck Scurti “The Fourth Apple”, 2011

This work by Franck Scurti is a tribute to the Utopian thinker and philosopher Charles Fourier (1772 – 1837). The apple refers to his indignation at finding this fruit 100 times more expensive in Paris than where it originated from and to his exposure of the wrongdoings of commercial networks. The artist wanted to represent this apple, which is symbolically the fourth in reference to the three previous ones, namely the “Apple of Discord” offered to Aphrodite by Paris, the Biblical apple of temptation and that of Isaac Newton. The work is made of brushed aluminium and is engraved with a planisphere. The original pedestal is covered with a glass cube in the colours of “universal harmony”.

Franck Scurti was born in Lyon in 1965 and lives and works in Paris. He creates his works from simple ideas found in the street or inspired by reading newspapers. With a combination of seriousness and humour, he tries to respect the traditional functions of art, namely entertainment, didacticism, reflection and interpretation of a social world, forgetting the Utopian fervour.

6

(18th) Binet School, Rue Binet

Carmela Gross “Blueyellowredred”, 2004

Blueyellowredred is a fresco created within the Ecole Binet. The artist decided to “dress” the façade of the school around the playground; the composition recreates the geometry of the wall by enlivening it with beaches in binary colours – yellow, red and blue, as well as white. Paintings on the ground in the inner walkway and the outside alley leading to the school prolong this colourful and rhythmical composition. The work, which is typical of the standardised architecture of the 1960s and 1970s, is part of a Brazilian tradition heavily marked by the legacy of Bauhaus and Le Corbusier.

Carmela Gross was born in São Paulo (Brazil) in 1946 and has lived and worked there since she began her career as a visual artist in the 1960s.

7

(19th) 104, Rue d'Aubervilliers

The CENTQUATRE (104) Artistic establishment of the City of Paris, 2008

Five projects were commissioned when the CENTQUATRE was constructed. Christian Prigent (born in Saint Brieuc in 1954) created a body of 104 slogans, inspired by the carnivalesque; he transformed them, one by one, using different linguistic methods, including metonymy, metaphor and slang. In the two enclosures, the COLOCO landscape painters' collective created a sloping, participatory garden which focuses on local plants; in fact the 19th district has one of the widest varieties of plants in Paris. Gérard Pesson (born in Torteron in 1958), a major composer of our times, has produced *Pomp/Circumstances*, 104 musical actions recorded during 24 new moons at the CENTQUATRE. Paul Cox (born in Paris in 1959) proposed *Exhibition for you to create yourself*, an impressive design which allows the public to create their own miniature installations. Finally, the work by Anri Sala consists of projecting some sixty fictitious statements one by one onto a device which includes the local temperature. Each film was selected due to a subjective or literal link with temperature.

8

(19th) 35 Avenue Jean-Jaurès

Inges Idee "The Red Balcony", 2007

The Red Balcony by the Inges Idee collective is a tribute to the great orator Jean Jaurès. The work, which is attached to the partition of the gable wall of number 37 Avenue Jean Jaurès, is treated as a modern construction, visible from afar, like a minimalist red sculpture, in response to the "pseudo-architectures" of Bernard Tschumi in nearby La Villette Park. Opening an aperture in the wall makes the balcony accessible; it is a symbolic place for political discourse and communication, the extension of the private sphere into the public sphere.

The Inges Idee artists' collective was formed in Berlin, Germany, in 1992 and specialises in creating works in public places. It consists of four German artists, Hans Hemmert, Axel Lieber, Thomas A. Schmidt and Georg Zey, all born between 1960 and 1962. They have already produced a large number of joint works, principally in Germany, but also in Luxembourg and Japan. They also pursue their individual artistic careers.

9

(19th) Avenue Jean-Jaurès on the corner of Boulevard Serrurier

Inges Idee "The Forest of Candelabras", 2007

Further up the Avenue, The Forest of Candelabras consists of twelve different, unaligned, lamp posts grouped into an original "urban copse". This sculptural group, arranged around a central point, is very densely packed into the space. During the day, the anarchical state of the elements underlines the "no man's land" aspect of the platform. In the evening and at night, the entire work is lit up and radiates light with no other purpose than to shine for itself. Thanks to filters which cut the light into designs, the beams are all different from each other, creating an extraordinary halo. The idea refers to the Enlightenment philosophers and the humanist spirit of Jean Jaurès – even in the most modest urban locations, it is possible to find a place which lights up for a common idea. The diversity of the different types of lamp post, brought together in this urban area, is also representative of European cities. It underlines the plurality of cultures and individuals who live together and communicate every day in this district and, more widely, in Europe.

10 YEARS OF PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

The artistic 1% programme

This procedure allows public project managers to reserve 1% of the net cost of the work for commissioning or purchasing one or more works of art designed for the building in question.

The dialogue between art and the city continues...

•Artistic accompaniment for the T3 East tramline

The extension of the T3 to Porte de la Chapelle was an opportunity for an unprecedented commission of public art. The project proposed by Christian Bernard, Artistic Director, was to create a continuity between Paris and its outlying communes, to encourage a moment for pause, reflection and dialogue in the usual speed of public transport. This led to the preference for works with user value (benches, fountains) and monumental "signals",

reference points for everyone.

• 1% Department of Research and Training (UFR) Lamarck & Lavoisier

For this 1%, two independent organisers, Mélanie Bouteloup and Caroline Naphegyi, proposed that an artist collaborate with the university world to create a permanent work of art. Research professors intervene during the creative process to ensure that the challenges of the project are correctly interpreted.

• 1% A. Césaire College

Florence Lazar is working on identity. In collaboration with students and teachers, she is creating a living photographic archive, bringing back memories.

