

MERLIN CARPENTER

archive élastique



CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME

PRESS RELEASE

MERLIN CARPENTER archive élastique

EXHIBITION FROM 24 OCTOBER 2020 TO 29 AUGUST 2021

OPENING FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER FROM 4PM TO 7PM
ATTENDED BY THE ARTIST

Due to the epidemic situation linked to COVID-19, wearing a mask is compulsory in all areas of the art center and other safety rules must be observed (physical distancing, hand washing with hydroalcoholic gel).

There will be a limited amount of visitors allowed at once in the exhibition spaces. Visitors might have to wait in line before entering.

The art center team thanks you for respecting these instructions and would like to remind you that this event may be subject to modification or cancellation depending on the health context and government measures.

Any program changes will be communicated in good time.

We would like to thank Fluxus Art Projects, Guillaume Lemuhot, the municipal employees of Delme, Loxam, 49 Nord 6 Est - Frac Lorraine and Centre Pompidou-Metz.



Merlin Carpenter is an artist and painter whose painting practice, in order to reflect on itself, does not hesitate to go beyond its limits and extends towards other mediums or fields. In parallel with this he keeps a conscientious and evolving eye on issues of institutional critique or contemporary versions of “contextual” art. He constantly questions his medium, its appearance and existential conditions, as well as what it means to be an artist today within the machinery of capitalism.

Basing his work on Marx’s theories of value (as shown in the many theoretical writings which accompany his artistic practice¹), in his view the artistic critique is no longer content with acting as an example of development for capital: though it stigmatises and condemns, being caught in capital’s grip itself, it acts directly for it. Also, each of Merlin Carpenter’s projects is a chance taken to react to the various crises punctuating the recent history of capitalism, even if they impose a conceptual reversal on them, sometimes subtracting themselves in this contradiction. Aware that capitalism always emerges more strengthened than weakened by these crises, he looks for some other way to maintain a certain intellectual and artistic freedom.

If we take the view that visitors of cultural sites now have a consumer reflex, are consumers of culture, of art; then some of his recent exhibitions have aimed to hinder the satisfaction of the immediate desire of the visitor/consumer. In these exhibitions, hidden, concealed works are created with materials that are considered poor or improper for art. And when he makes figurative paintings, enabling him to give viewers what they appear to need to satisfy their desires, these have something encrypted; they are either kitsch, or are well-painted but their subject does not offer itself in an immediate way. In so doing, Merlin Carpenter gladly admits that his art has something to do with the creation of value, and though it can appear abstruse, deceptive or sometimes iconoclastic, the artist believes that every anti-aesthetic or anti-spectacular approach, which still had a strong critical or subversive connotation a few years ago, is now doomed to be academic and even decorative, to become a cliché of “contemporary art”, negating the expected effect. So it is here that he believes it is most relevant to act, in those interstices where capital absorbs what opposes its logic. Merlin Carpenter therefore does not make art just to produce art, but to highlight the context of his art, the situation in which it is made and evolves. Where others consider this whole apparatus of the establishment of art’s value to be secondary, the artist chooses an aesthetic approach that brings it to the fore. If his work tends not to represent an end in itself, or has ends other than its own, he finds himself in an endless operation in an ever-more unpredictable social context.

The exhibition *archive élastique* takes as its point of departure the Synagogue de Delme’s location, the road running through the village, on which numerous lorries and wide loads circulate. In the middle of a rural area, this traffic is irritating. France is a distribution machine. Also—and because the synagogue/exhibition space is located at the side of that road—the artist proposes to make it into a warehouse or archival storage space, in which one finds thousands of boxes, awaiting transportation. Right in front of the synagogue entrance is a forklift, parked and ready to load the pallets into lorries for hypothetical delivery. But since no forklift of this kind could get through the door, the vehicle is doomed to wait outside.

¹ See for example Merlin Carpenter, *“The Outside Can’t Go Outside”*, Institut für Kunstkritik, Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste - Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, Sternberg Press, Berlin, 2018.



MERLIN CARPENTER'S BIOGRAPHY

Merlin Carpenter (UK, 1967) lives in Shepperton, UK and works in London and Berlin. He graduated from Central Saint Martin's School of Art, London.

Since the early 90's, his work has been exhibited on the occasion of solo shows, events and projects. Recently at dépendance, Brussels ; Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York ; Simon Lee Gallery, London ; Overduin & Co, Amsterdam/Los Angeles ; Christian Andersen, Copenhagen ; Galerie Neu, Berlin and earlier at Kunsthalle Bern (2015), Bergen Kunsthall, Norway (2005), Secession, Vienna (2000) as well as for the project « Burberry Propaganda Tour 2013 » ... and featured in group shows at Galeria Municipal do Porto ; Galerie Emmanuel Layr, Vienna ; Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga ; Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles ; Aishti Art Foundation, Jal el Dib, Lebanon ; MUMOK, Vienna ; Swiss Institute, New York ; Aram Art Gallery, Goyang Aram Nuri Arts Centre, Seoul ; Gaudel de Stampa, Paris ; Centre Pompidou, Paris ; The Kitchen, New York ; Contemporary Art Centre (CAC), Vilnius ; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York ; Museum Brandhorst, Munich ; Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York ...

www.merlincarpenter.com



PRESS IMAGES

HD visuals can be downloaded from the press page at www.cac-synagoguedelme.org (username and password provided upon request).
Exhibition views will be available after the opening.



Merlin Carpenter, *Long Title*, 2017, wooden pallet, 80 x 120 x 14.5 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery, London. Photo: Malle Madsen.

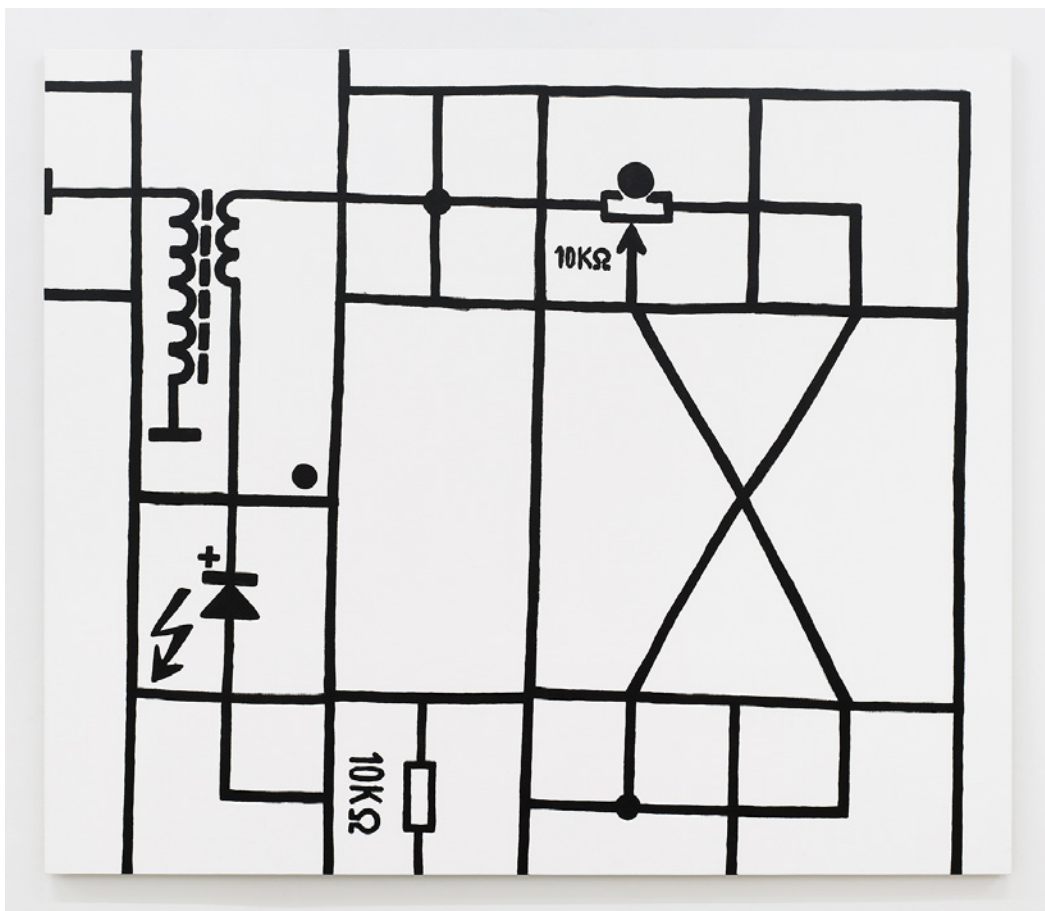


Merlin Carpenter, *Do Not Open Until 2081*, installation view, Simon Lee Gallery, London, 2017.
Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery, London.





Merlin Carpenter, *Midcareer paintings*, installation view, Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, 2015.
Photo: Gunnar Meier.

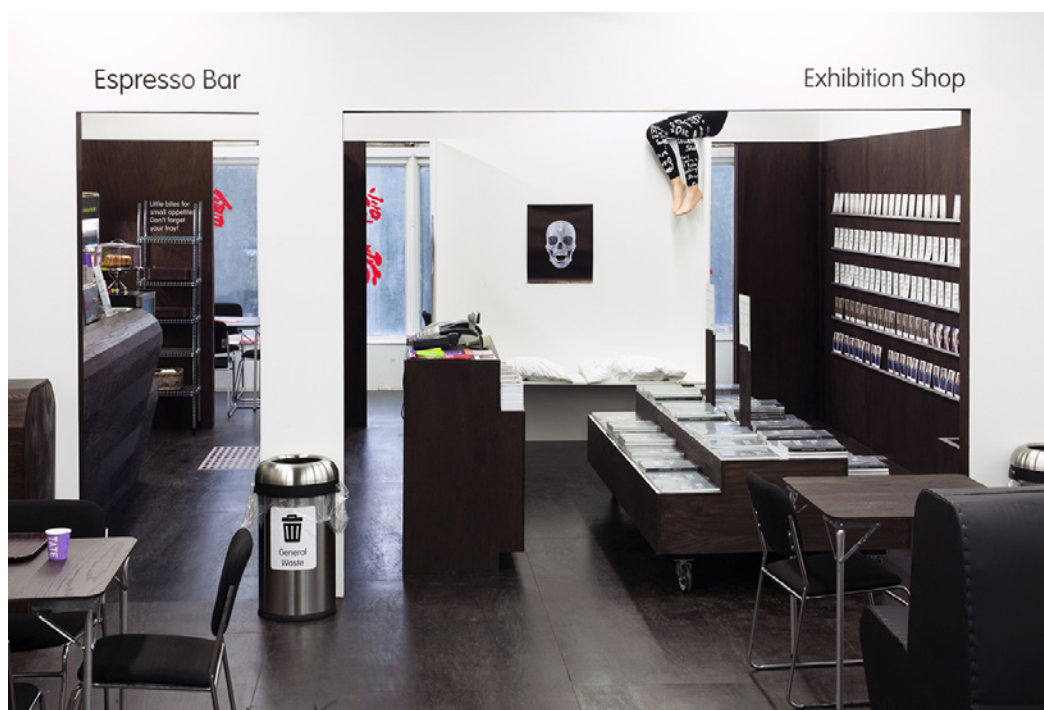


Merlin Carpenter, *Value Circuit*, 2018. Acrylic on linen, 175 cm x 210 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and dépendance, Bruxelles.





Merlin Carpenter, *Untitled*, 2012, empty Transit van.
Group show «Port (Curated by Lindsay Jarvis)», Galeria Nuno Centeno, Porto, 2012.
Photo: Pedro Magalhães.



Merlin Carpenter, *Tate Café*, 2012, installation view, dimensions variable.
Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2012.

TOURS

GUIDED TOUR BY BENOÎT LAMY DE LA CHAPELLE, DIRECTOR OF THE ART CENTER

Saturday, November 1st 2020 at 4 pm

Free, reservation on 03 87 01 43 42 or info@cac-synagoguedelme.org

TEACHER MEETING

Teachers will be welcomed by Camille Grasser, head of visitor services, for an introduction to the exhibition *archive élastique*.

Thursday, 29 October 2020 at 4.30 pm

WEEKLY TOUR

Guided tour of the exhibition *archive élastique*.

Every Sunday at 4 pm

Free, reservation not required.

WORKSHOPS

"BIG IDEAS SMALL HANDS" WORKSHOPS > FOR CHILDREN AGED 6-11

Led by Camille Grasser, head of visitor services, and artist Katia Mourer, these workshops allow children to discover the current exhibition through a playful, concrete approach to the exhibited works.

Wednesdays, 25 November, 9 December 2020 and 20 January 2020 from 2 pm to 5 pm.

Free. Reservation required on 03 87 01 43 42.

HAND-IN-HAND WORKSHOP > PARENTS AND CHILDREN AGED 5-12

For children aged 5 to 12 accompanied by their parents. The art centre is offering a workshop for children and their parents! Little ones and bigger ones can come and share a convivial moment playfully discovering works of art.

Sunday, 30 January 2021 from 3 pm to 4.30 pm.

Free. Reservation required on 03 87 01 43 42.

VISITE BOUT'CHOUX > FROM 1 TO 3 YEARS OLD

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PARENTS CHILDCARE ASSISTANT RELAY OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SAULNOIS

Discovery of the current exhibition *archive élastique* through a sensitive approach of the artworks: observation, listening, experimentation. An exploration filled with emotions and sensations !

Wednesday, 2 December 2020 from 10 am to 10.45 am.

Free. Reservation required by e-mail to rpam@cc-saulnois.fr / 03 87 01 17 88.

PLAY-WORKSHOP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MÉDIATHÈQUE DE DELME > CHILDREN AGED 7 AND UP

Play-workshop around the exhibition *archive élastique*.

Wednesday, 25 November 2020 from 10 am to 11.30 am.

Free. Reservation required on 03 87 01 39 91.



LINDRE-BASSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM



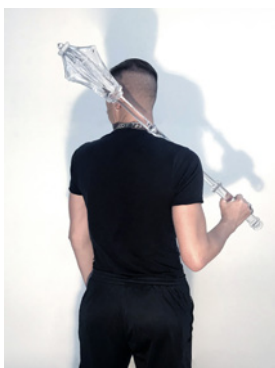
Photo: OH Dancy

Since 2002, in close collaboration with the commune of Lindre-Basse and the Lorraine Regional Natural Park, the CAC - la synagogue de Delme has been running a programme of artist residencies in the former presbytery of Lindre-Basse, which was specially refitted as a studio. The residency session offers the artist a chance to develop a specific project outside of his or her day-to-day context. The natural environment, the local population, the region's socio-economic data, its traffic, its potential in terms of history or tourism, or simply the structure of the studio offer many new possibilities to the resident artist. This residency also involves an ongoing dialogue with the art centre and meetings with professionals and other regional contacts.

CURRENT RESIDENCY

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2020: Floryan Varennes

OPENING ON NOVEMBER 12TH FROM 4PM TO 7PM



As a body of work, Floryan Varennes's sculptures and installations, with their remarkable formal perfection, present a strange sparring between fascination and repulsion, between the absence of bodies and an imposing physical presence due the preciousness of their materials, their modes of presentation and the symbols they summon. Often involving combat weapons, surgical instruments or coercive repression equipment, his works fully engage in a subjective representation of violence. Not in order to explicitly condemn it, but more to consider its integration into the body as a life discipline, a way of learning to live with it so as to either better defend oneself against it, or build something out of the suffering it causes physically or psychologically.

Photo : Floryan Varennes

UPCOMING RESIDENCIES

MARCH - MAY 2021

Angélique Aubrit and Ludovic Beillard



Angélique Aubrit, *Don't leave me alone with my thoughts*, 2019.

JUNE - AUGUST 2021

Irma Name (Clement Caignart and Hélène Deléan)



Irma Name, *Ombilicon*, HD video, 2017.



CAC - LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME



CAC - la synagogue de Delme.
Photo OH Dancy.

Catherine Jacquat
Chair

Benoît Lamy de La Chapelle
Director

Fanny Larcher-Collin
Administration et communication

Camille Grasser
Educational services and residency coordinator

Alain Colardelle
Production manager and head technician

Camille Chastant
Educational services and reception

The Centre for contemporary Art in Delme is located in a former synagogue, built in an Oriental style in the late nineteenth century. Not least among its special features are a dome, an arcaded entryway decorated with latticework, and windows with geometric stained glass.

The synagogue was partly destroyed during the Second World War. The outer walls survived, but the interior was rebuilt along stricter lines after the war. The synagogue was permanently de-consecrated in the early 1980s for lack of sufficient numbers of worshippers. The first art exhibition was held in 1993.

The many artists who have exhibited in this unusual venue in the past twenty-five years, generating an identity and reputation for the art center both locally and internationally, include: François Morellet, Daniel Buren, Tadashi Kawamata, Ann Veronica Janssens, Marc Camille Chaimowicz, Katinka Bock, Julien Prévieux, Gianni Motti, Yona Friedman, Eric Baudelaire, Clovis Maillet et Louise Hervé, Marie Cool et Fabio Balducci, Susan Hiller, Clément Rodzielski, Jimmie Robert, Jean-Luc Moulène, Shilpa Gupta, Merlin Carpenter etc.

All have developed a special view of the venue by creating site specific works. In addition to three or four temporary shows presented in the former synagogue every year, the Delme art center manages an artist-in-residence program in the village of Lindre-Basse in the heart of the Lorraine regional park area.

The Delme synagogue, located in a rural region of Lorraine, has always positioned itself as an art lab, a site of artistic exploration and production. The art center makes a concerted effort to establish a dialogue with all potential audiences, focusing on the local area.

Since 2019, the CAC - la synagogue de Delme obtained the label « Contemporary art center of national interest » by the french Ministry of Culture.



Inaugurated on 22 September 2012, *Gue(ho)st House* is an architecture-sculpture made out of an existing building. It offers visitor reception spaces dedicated to mediation and documentation, and allows everyone to prolong their visit to the exhibitions at the art centre.

It's signed by the artists Christophe Berdager and Marie Péjus.

CAC - la synagogue de Delme.
Gue(ho)st House, Berdager & Péjus, 2012.
© Adagp Paris 2012 / Berdager & Péjus.
Photo: OH Dancy.



PRATICAL INFORMATIONS

Exhibition Merlin Carpenter *archive élastique* from 24 October 2020 to 29 August 2021.
Opening: Friday 23 October from 4pm to 7 pm.

Due to the epidemic situation linked to COVID-19, wearing a mask is compulsory in all areas of the art center and other safety rules must be observed (physical distancing, hand washing with hydroalcoholic gel).
There will be a limited amount of visitors allowed at once in the exhibition spaces. Visitors might have to wait in line before entering.
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Any program changes will be communicated in good time.

From Wednesday to Saturday, 2 pm - 5.30 pm
and Sunday 11 am - 5.30 pm.

Admission free.

Guided tour every Sunday at 4 pm.

The CAC will be closed from 23 December 2020 to 1 January 2021 included.

PRESS CONTACT

Fanny Larcher-Collin
communication@cac-synagoguedelme.org
+33(0)3 87 01 43 42
Visuals available upon request.

CONTACT AND ACCESS

CAC - la synagogue de Delme
33 rue Poincaré F-57590 Delme
+33(0)3 87 01 43 42
info@cac-synagoguedelme.org
www.cac-synagoguedelme.org

FROM PARIS (by train 90mins):
TGV Est, get off at Metz or Nancy

FROM METZ (by car, 30mins):
D955, formerly route de Strasbourg

FROM NANCY (by car, 30mins):
N74 towards Château-Salins then D955 towards Metz

PARTNERS

Since 2019, the CAC - la synagogue de Delme obtained the label « Contemporary art center of national interest » from the french Ministry of Culture.

The CAC - la synagogue de Delme is supported by



The exhibition Merlin Carpenter *archive élastique* is supported by Fluxus Art Projects.



The art center is a member of d.c.a / association française de développement des centres d'art, Lora - Lorraine Réseau Art contemporain and Arts en résidence - French national network.

