

BETTS PROJECT

PRESS RELEASE

JACQUES HONDELATTE ONE CAN'T ENGRAVE LIES IN MARBLE

OPENING RECEPTION:

FRIDAY 5 APRIL 2019, 6 – 8 PM

6 APRIL – 18 MAY 2019



Betts Project is pleased to present *One Can't Engrave Lies in Marble*, the second solo exhibition at the gallery by French architect Jacques Hondelatte (1942-2002). Expanding on Hondelatte's previous exhibition at Betts Project in 2017, this exhibition unveils rare works from his family archive that assist in understanding his architectural idiosyncrasies and demonstrate his staunch disinclination for architectural sketching.

The airbrush drawings on display were produced by Hondelatte and his team between 1984 and 1987 at his studio in Bordeaux. During this period Hondelatte developed perhaps his most seminal architectural concept, the idea of mythogenesis; the moment when mythology was integrated into his design tools as a way to metamorphise architectural elements. With this conceptual framework at hand, Hondelatte and his devoted collective Epinard Bleu (Frédéric Druot, Jean-Luc Goulesque, Patrick Jean, Jacques Robert, Hubert Saladin and Jean-Charles Zebo) became fascinated by the variability that language offered within their everyday stories and personal sagas. This interest in linguistic flexibility was assimilated to the new opportunities afforded by early computer technology to modify and amend design, and together Hondelatte and Epinard Bleu began producing airbrush drawings that were produced completely spontaneously and set out to express the adaptability of communication.

This exhibition centres around the 1984 work *Untitled (Fountain of Time/La fontaine du temps)*, which depicts a peaceful autumn landscape alive with a light breeze that drifts between the trees and a red railing fountain. Time is seemingly on tilt and close to static as the wind governs the pace of the picture plane. This fountain is one of Hondelatte's many mythogenic objects and becomes a recurring motive within the works of the exhibition. Like a figment of the imagination, the fountain appears at different moments and amongst varying scenes, continuously suggesting the potential for fiction and for new and alternative stories to be told.

"I am used to signing my projects with futile details, identifying signs which weave a thread of reassurance to connect all my work, and the non-continuity of which surprises me and occasionally worries me. Not long ago a spectre haunted me, and imposed itself on me. An object present in my mind and present in this project, under the trees at the bottom of the field. A fountain of time passing, it measures about eight meters, and is built in kiln-enamelled steel, with a colour of indigo. Along the sloping profile flows a trickle of water that disappears into the ground. This fountain is directed to the East, and its face is inclined at an angle of 270; an angle which derives from magical calculations which only I hold the secret to. This fountain, like the airbrakes on the wings of a Boeing 747, would slow down, I hope, the rotation of the earth and consequently lengthen infinitesimally the time that passes. By multiplying these objects I seek to make perceptible the slowness of time."

— Jacques Hondelatte, *Logement Mythogenese & Melancolie*, 1987

Jacques Hondelatte (1942-2002) is one of the French architects who made the greatest impact on his generation. Little known to the general public, mainly published in specialised journals, he nonetheless remains cult for his peers Jean Nouvel and Rudy Ricciotti, as well as for his more direct disciples including Lacaton-Vassal, the group Epinard Bleu with Frédéric Druot, and Duncan Lewis. At the Ecole d'Architecture of Bordeaux he was their professor, 'their guru without dogma' according to Druot. He left a radical body of work in his wake that Jean Nouvel (a longtime friend and associate, with whom he notably designed, in 1984, a project for the high school in Pessac, near Bordeaux) defined as "an architecture based on abstraction and discussion and no longer derived from drawings".

Architecture agency **Epinard Bleu** (Blue Spinach) has been considered a front line for the French architecture of the 90's and won the award: "Album de la Jeune Architecture."

About the curators

Juan Perez-Amaya (Colombia 1984) is a Paris-based artist, curator and founder of El Atelier, an interdisciplinary architectural design studio.

Felix Beytout (France 1992) is an architect and co-Founder of El Atelier. He works within architecture into experimental mediums as concept, sound and video. He is the grandson of Jacques Hondelatte.

Title image: Jacques Hondelatte, *Station thermale, La Léchère (Savoie)*, 1986, Airbrush painting, 30.3 x 27.2 cm (unframed), © The Artist. Courtesy Betts Project.

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Jacques Hondelatte

Station thermale, La Léchère (Savoie), 1986

Airbrush painting on paper
30.3 x 27.2 cm (unframed)



Jacques Hondelatte

Station thermale, La Léchère (Savoie), 1986

Airbrush painting on paper
30.3 x 27.2 cm (unframed)

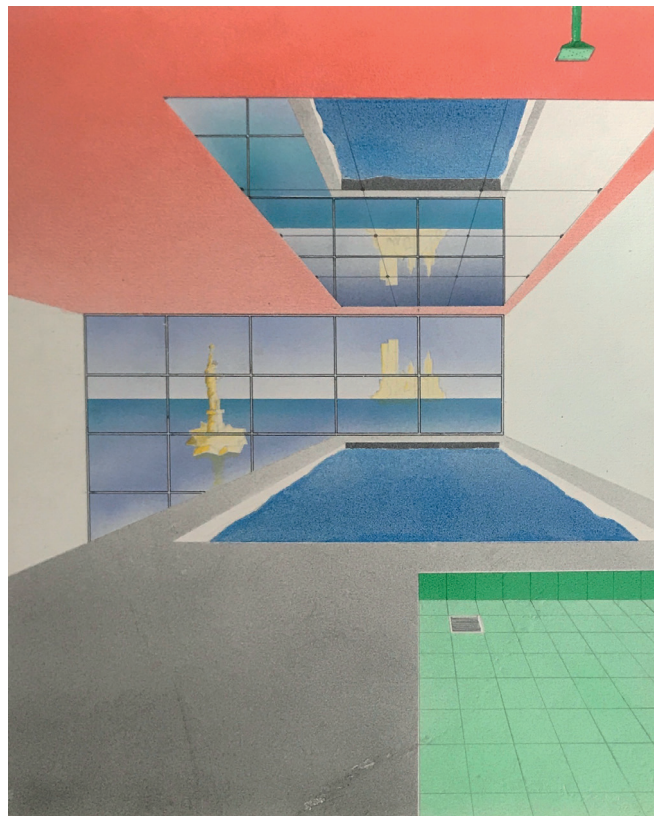


Jacques Hondelatte

Untitled, 1985

Airbrush painting, coloured pencil on paper

34 x 27.3 cm (unframed)



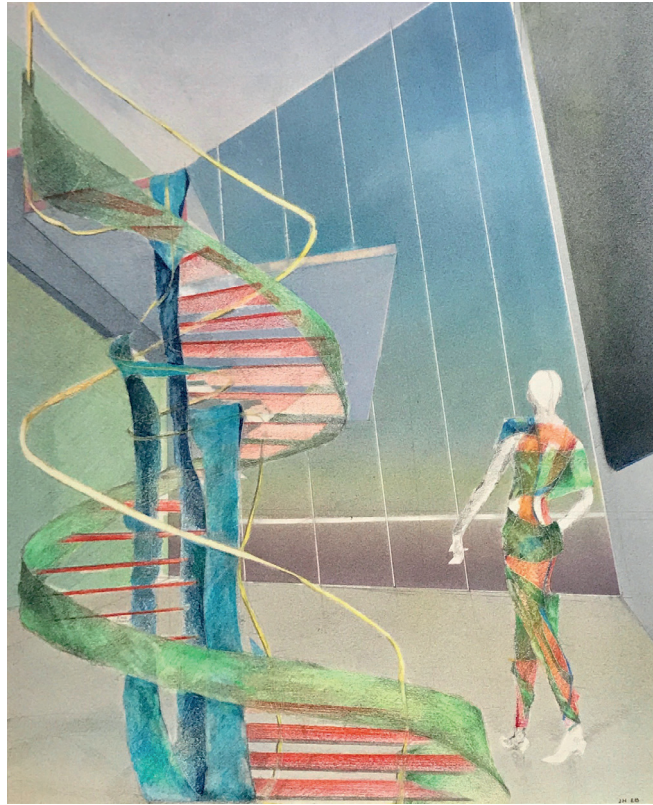
Jacques Hondelatte

Reminiscences, The bath-pool of Rem Koolhaas, 1985

(Réminiscences / La piscine-Baignoire pour Rem Koolhaas)

Airbrush painting on paper

25.7 x 21.2 cm (unframed)



Jacques Hondelatte

Reminiscences, The textile-staircase: Change your mind as often as you change your underwear, 1985
(*Réminiscences / L'escalier-textile changer d'escalier comme de chemise*)

Airbrush painting on paper
25.7 x 21.2 cm (unframed)



Jacques Hondelatte

Untitled (Fountain of Time/La fontaine du temps), 1984

Airbrush painting on paper
24.2 x 20.6 cm (unframed)

Opening Hours

Wednesday — Friday, 12 — 6 pm
Saturday, 12 — 5 pm
or by appointment

Address

Betts Project
100 Central Street
London EC1V 8AJ
www.bettsproject.com

About Betts Project

Betts Project is a London-based contemporary art gallery specialising in architecture, founded in 2013 by Marie Coulon.

The concept behind Betts Project is to introduce both a specialist audience and wider public to new ways of discovering and thinking about architecture, through the exhibition and promotion of materials integral to architecture – largely drawings, but also models and other forms of representation. It aims to support and promote work by established and emerging international architects, as well as lesser known or overlooked practices still very much relevant to the contemporary discourse.

The gallery is also driven by the desire to introduce architectural objects as works of art. To do so, it organises high calibre exhibitions for new and established audiences and participate to art fairs, and thereby brings unique collectable works to the market at an affordable price. Over the past years the exhibition programme has featured solo shows by established international figures such as Sam Jacob, Günter Günschel, Denise Scott Brown, De Vylder Vink Taillieu architects, Florian Beigel + Philip Christou, Caruso St John, Alexander Brodsky, Lars Lerup, Tony Fretton, Fred Scott, Studio Mumbai, Richard Goodwin, Peter Märkli alongside artist Hans Josephsohn, Pier Vittorio Aureli, and OFFICE kgdvs with photographer Bas Princen.

Next exhibition**Shin Egashira****8th June - 27th July 2019**

To find out more visit: www.bettsproject.com and sign-up to the Betts Project e-newsletters.

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