

DAD IN CONVERSATION with

Olivier Michel

Lives and works in Amiens

“How have you interpreted/responded to the project title transmettre/transmit?”

In a very literal manner, to transmit is to pass on. I wanted to create a series of very flat sculptures, tangled lines on a kind of wheeled “platform”, where one form of expression passes over to another.

To do this, my starting point was a scribble-piece resulting from loops made using a graphic tablet on the computer. Through subsequent digital processing, the “vector line” was distorted, stretched, distended to produce 5 different propositions all from the same initial drawing.

The link of kinship between the forms led to a sequential series: one movement broken down into 5 successive stages to produce a series of skateboard-like forms, hence the title: skate.

In addition to your references to Transmettre/Transmit, how has the project's location in heritage sites impacted conceptually on your practice?

Because of the restrictions on hanging work at the sites, I had to review my usual drawing practice and move it towards a form which would be more site specific ...

Very quickly, I realised I had to use the ground as an anchorage point for my work, which influenced me in producing more sculptural forms.

How was I going to invade and contaminate a space other than that of the blank page?

My response was and remains primarily a purely formal one: volumes of forms arranged on the floor. And this installation in a heritage site whose main purpose is not to house contemporary art can only reinforce the ambiguity of

these objects: Are they sculptures, paintings, design objects?

What does showing with other artists and in two places at two different times mean to you?

Exhibiting with other artists allows us to meet, exchange information and look at our own work in the light of other work.

It is all the more interesting for artists since we are working on a common theme (transmit). And it is really nice to find out how each artist has found an appropriate response using their own way of working and their own personal approach.

Exhibiting with English artists gives the French artists an international dimension to their work, which is quite nice.

It is a way of experiencing another country, other places and once again to share our respective practices, artistic concerns and the way we see the world.

It seems to me that despite the language barriers, art is the territory where we can all meet, a form of universal language making other ways of talking pointless.

The opportunity to exhibit in different places at different times with the same people is an adventure.

A way of bouncing off each other, a to and fro between France and England.

Playing off against each other at another time in another space with the same artists working on the same project.

Meeting each other again, all together, to exhibit as a group in heritage sites and to meet a public who are not always knowledgeable about contemporary art...

Certainly the project makes for some interesting meetings!