



Culture



## NEARCH

### **Imagining : Artists in residence – Paris Agapanthe : Alice Mulliez and Florent Konné**

**AGAPANTHE: Konné & Mulliez** was born in 2013. Florent Konne and Alice Mulliez aim to put in common and in form the data collected through their numerous travels and life experiences.

The territories they travel through and live in become new plastic and aesthetic vocabulary. The plastic forms they create are like refrains, repetitions and rhymes that bring echoing to their artistic practices.

Alice Mulliez has a polymorphic artistic approach, as her work takes shape in culinary equipments and installations. Florent Konné plays with the simulacrum. He invests into porous interstices between fixed and animated images, in two and three dimensions.

#### **As part of NEARCH, the proposed project is the following:**

“I have developed a passion for sugar in the past few years for several reasons.”

Alice Mulliez is interested in sugar because it is one of those items that triggered global historical changes. It is part of a fairly recent history although it is at the origin of an era. This research will be in dialogue with visual artist and plastician Florent Konné. In the framework of NEARCH, Agapanthe’s goal will be to create plastic forms from Alice Mulliez’s current research that will be enriched by experiences and encounters.

In their projects, sugar is used as building material for plastic shapes. It can take many different forms, and different states allow multiple plastics. There is a before, a during and an after sugar.

They would like to develop a formal archaeology of the present. The concepts of heritage (physical, emotional and sensitive), of remains and temporality are at the heart of their concerns.

To continue and refine their research on sugar and in order to create plastic forms, they would need to meet a team of researchers but also historians specializing in the history of sugar and colonies.

It is also important for them to understand the development of an excavation or an archaeological research project, in order to extract from it a plastic language.

They will need to continue travelling between the major sugar producing poles (North of Europe with beets, sugar islands, Brazil...) but also in the various ports of the triangular trade such as Nantes, La Rochelle and Bordeaux. This will allow them to collect fixed and moving images.

For the project layout, they will need to work with confectioners as well as moulders and chemists.

They imagine objects of different eras and backgrounds, crystallized and imprisoned in candi sugar. It will also be casts, fingerprints, objects and images collected on different trips and meetings. Between mineral, precious and fossils, all stages of the sugar manufacture from earth to crystal sugar, then and now can be taken into account for the creation of these plastic forms.

They believe this research will divide into several tracks, but in these different orientations, traces, remnants and absences will be evoked. The history of sugar will be their guideline. Plastic forms will be lures of a sensitive archaeology created on these remains.

The first idea is the sugar research project that will take the form of an installation comprising envelopes, crystallization, moulded objects, and footprints pertaining to the history of this food. Another project would be to use the technique of embossing on paper to create a white planisphere where the maps from the time of discovery until today would telescope in graphic lines. It is a work focusing on borders and representations of the world: a sort of "Geomontographie" becoming a kind of a surface that lists and maps.

Between envelopes, moulds and anti-forms and carving, the aim will be to plastically use infra-thin layers that either solid or hollow, determine the trace of the object and make it significantly palpable: signify any materiality and the symbolic scope of the object by its absence, its envelope or footprint and therefore make it exist.

“We are foreigners-non-contemporary to these objects found in excavations, it is in this sense that we can not be outside of them and therefore have no other choice than contemplating and interpreting them.”

**"What does it means for you as an artist to work with universities and research institutions as proposed by NEARCH?"**

“We expect a lot of the encounters that will take place with researchers. It is thanks to the rich contribution of the encounters to come, that we will be able to extract a new visual vocabulary. The enrichment brought by these meetings will enable the necessary porosities in the creative process.”