

Press Release
20 May 2010

Excavation of Daniel Spoerri's *Déjeuner sous l'herbe* at Jouy-en-Josas

On April 23, 1983, 120 personalities of the Contemporary Art World took part in a banquet orchestrated by the artist Daniel Spoerri in the park of the domain of Montcel, at Jouy-en-Josas (Yvelines), where, a year later, the Cartier Foundation was to be installed. In the middle of this feast of entrails and offal, the banquet was buried in a 60 metre long trench dug in the lawn. Tables, table-cloths, crockery, cutlery, meal remains, graffiti, odd dedicatory notes, *objets d'art*, photos, were all buried under square cubes of earth, during a collective ceremony organised by the artist.

This performance entitled *L'enterrement du tableau-piège* (*The Burial of a Trick-Picture*) marked Daniel Spoerri's renunciation of the series of *tableaux-pièges*, many of which are displayed in museums. In the park, there will remain a discreet work entitled *Le déjeuner sous l'herbe* in ironical reference to Manet's painting *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*, itself inspired by Titian's *Concert champêtre*.

Le déjeuner sous l'herbe is one of the permanent works (Arman's *Long Term Parking*, *Hommage à Eiffel* by César, *Six ifs* by Raymond Hains...), which have remained in the Park of Montcel after the moving of the Cartier Foundation to Boulevard Raspail, Paris, in 1994.

Buried since 1983, Daniel Spoerri's banquet has decomposed, to the point of being little more than a memory. To study the remains, twenty-seven years later, the first archaeological dig in the history of contemporary art has been organised under the aegis of the artist by the *Société du déterrement du tableau-piège*, the University of Paris I, the EHESS (Ecole de hautes études en sciences sociales), the *l'Institut de recherche interdisciplinaire sur les enjeux sociaux* of the CNRS, in association with Inrap.

This multidisciplinary event will take place from May 31 to June 10, 2010 and will bring together, in the presence of Daniel Spoerri, archaeologists, an anthropologist and an art historian, a film director...

If some hope to push back the classical definitions of science and creation, for others it is a true anthropological investigation ; the excavation of the *Déjeuner sous l'herbe* joins the archaeology of contemporary rubbish, the Anglo-American *Garbage Archaeology*, which has no equivalent in Europe. It will bring together all archaeological specialties: palynology, dendrology, sedimentology, carbon 14 dating, chemical analyses, etc.

This dig invites opens up the redefinition of chronological limits of the discipline and an interrogation of the archaeology of the present time.

Artist, performer, sculptor and founder, in 1960, of the movement of *Nouveau Réalisme*, with Yves Klein, Martial Raysse and Jean Tinguely, Daniel Spoerri (born in 1930) here continues to question what constitutes a work of art and creation, while offering to scientific study an extraordinary field of experimental research.

Entitled *Le déterrement du tableau-piège*, the excavation of the *Déjeunersousl'herbe* will be open to the public during the day that the ARTE television channel devotes to archaeology on June 5, a day that Inrap will relay to more than a hundred places in France.

Open Day at the excavation

Saturday June 5, from 11am to 6 pm
Domaine du Montcel
3 rue de la Manufacture
78350 Jouy-en-Josas

RER ligne C, station « Jouy-en-Josas » (the domain is situated 1,300 metres from the station)

Inrap

With more than 2,000 collaborators and researchers, Inrap is the largest French archaeological organization of research and one of the foremost in Europe. A public research establishment, it carries out most of the archaeological evaluations and excavations in France in partnership with private and public developers: i.e. nearly 2,500 sites a year in Mainland France and in the Overseas Departments. Its missions include the scientific exploitation of results and the diffusion of archaeological knowledge to the public at large.

Archaeological research : **Inrap and University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne**
Anthropological research **IRIS (Institut de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les enjeux Sociaux) - UMR 8156 CNRS – CNRS, INSERM, EHESS, UP13**

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