

WALDEN **R A F T**

FLORENT **ALBINET**

ELISE **MORIN**



WALDEN R A F T

An installation by Elise Morin and Florent Albinet

From 13 June until 27 September 2015 at Lac de Gayme (Picherande, Auvergne region)

Festival Horizons "Arts-Nature" in Sancy #9

The cabin is open to the public on the following days:

July 2, August 3, and 26-27 September 2015.

Walden Raft is a dynamic and contemplative experience which offers the public a space for reflection, referencing Henry David Thoreau's cabin built in the woods of Walden Pond in 1845. Designed between opacity and transparency, "Walden Raft" is a space for experimentation- a floating, luminous, audible, mobile vessel.

----- A CABIN WITHOUT WALLS -----

An archetype of the small rustic cabin chosen as a paradigm of "true" architecture, "Walden Raft" follows the proportions of Thoreau's cabin.

Buoyancy and mobility make this shelter a space which is neither too near nor too far from the human society. The combination of wood and a modern industrial material, acrylic glass, brings transparency to the construction while maintaining its protective function. "Walden Raft" offers an intermediary space between Thoreau's 'Walled-in Space' and the open air, permitting a permanent interaction between interior and exterior. On the shore, cabin and visitors integrate with the landscape. Primitive and modern techniques mingle, permitting an experience lived and shared with solid ground.

The esthetics of the structure which oppose the Romantic fusion of humanity into the environment are emphasized not only by the choice of transparency but also that of flotation. From the interior or the exterior, the material's occasional transparency offers a ensemble of unique perspectives which dissolve the perception of "wilderness" and "tameness" underlying the fundamental misunderstanding placing us in opposition with Nature. Thus, one does not inhabit this cabin; it serves to induce a specific relationship to the territory surrounding it. "Walden Raft" is a non-space whose position is unceasingly readjusted. Neither public property, nor private, nor entirely outside the world, nor entirely interiorized, it is an intermediatespace, a lookout post where one can see while accepting to be seen.

----- A NAVIGABLE CABIN -----

The cabin, a model of the primitive habitat at the birth of architecture, can perhaps be considered as the beginning point of any house. The cabin is also a child's dream. "Walden Raft" is a floating, "navigable" cabin which can be moved along a cable strung from the shore to an anchor in the depths of the lake. Movement of "Walden Raft" requires the strength of an individual moving the reel around which the cord coils. From that results enough pulling force to move the cabin, cutting it off from solid ground by a few meters.

The stretch of water crossed does not serve to link two banks but in fact to distance and immobilize the vessel on the lake. The initial process of leaving the shore as an experience in itself emphasizes the idea that we are not only users but also practitioners. We can 'practice' objects and spaces as we practice a musical instrument. It thus no longer means that we "consume" a utilitarian path but actually understand it, work on it, fully take advantage of it. The visitor's participatory movement reinforces the underlying message of Thoreau's work, which we adopt: "the non-human environment is evoked as an entirely separate actor and not only as a frame for human experience."

"Walden Raft's" integration into the landscape is also defined by its trajectory, which underlines the horizon, and by its reflection in the lake, referencing Thoreau's "open-air temple linking earth and sky." Rich with these navigable, practicable, and observational experiences, the "Walden Raft" cabin materializes a logical space, losing its unique dimension as a shelter, by involving a particular relationship between immediate and distant Nature.

Gayme Lake is an artificial lake created from a bog in 1983. It is unique in being situated at the same latitude as the spot in which H.D. Thoreau performed his experiment.

Kindly sponsored by Altuglas International – Arkema Group - Abaqueplast



----- Specifications -----

List of principle materials used

Acrylic glass – Altuglass

raw pine wood

polyethylene floats

rope screws

nocturnal lighting

Altuglas International, which aims to develop ever-more innovative and efficient materials, supplied 1.5 tons of recyclable acrylic glass for this project. This material is 2 to 3 times lighter than glass, is more transparent, and consumes less energy both in its production and in its various applications (building, architecture, design, billboards,, the automobile industry, visual communications). These materials of superior quality were taken from the over-supply stock inherent to all industrial production. Walden Raft's conception, with its emphasis on lightness and transparency, was attractive to Altuglas International because it considers these qualities key to its brand. These shared values created a beautiful opportunity to share in this eco-conscious adventure.

Location

Lac de Gayme

63113 PICHERANDE Altitude: 1100 m

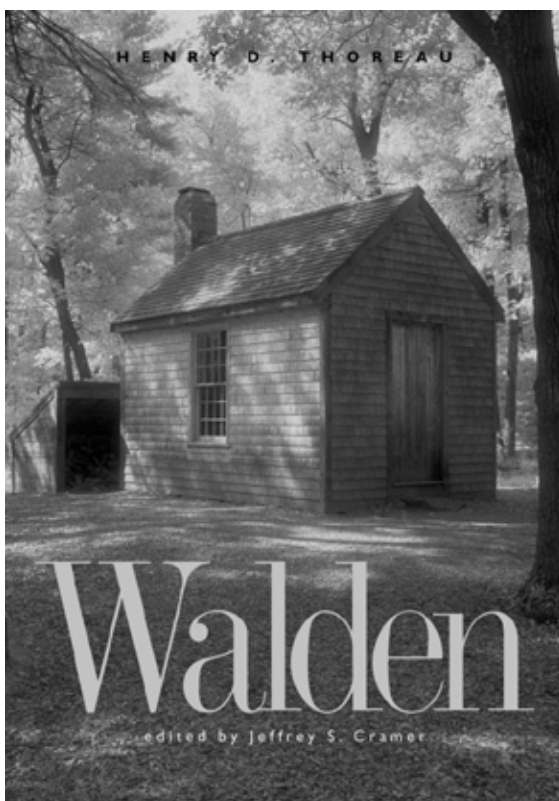
Google Maps : Latitude 45.466461 - Longitude 2.777689

GPS : Latitude N 45 27.988 - Longitude E 2 46.66

Precise dimensions of the work

Height: 4 m Width: 2.5 m Length: 4 m

Total area: 10 sq.m Approximate weight: 1,200 kg



----- Biography -----



Florent Albinet- Biography

Born in France in 1983, Florent Albinet lives and works in Aubervilliers. He graduated from the Ecole Boulle in 2004 and ESAD Reims in 2008.

In 2012 he created his workshop which is oriented around projects linked to scenography, micro-architecture, urbanism, and objects. He sees the marine, or more generally aquatic, element as a new field for investigation and experimentation based on savoir-faire, technical mastery, and a his specific culture.

Beyond the specificity of these fields of intervention, water, in his work, represents a part of the terra incognita which questions, immerses, and finally reveals to spectators an environment which can be seen differently through the lens of new sensations.

forcées par la présence de mécaniques opérantes.

In constant movement, indefinable, waters remain open to abstraction, inspiring imagination and contemplation. His work thus puts into practice a perspective of voyages and adventures reinforced by the presence of operating mechanics.

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Elise Morin- Biography

Born in 1978, Elise Morin lives and works in Paris.

Trained at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, at Central Saint Martins College in London, and then at Tokyo's National University of Fine Arts, Elise Morin develops installations and videos marked with references to the evolving forms of contemporary landscapes.

Relationships to place and modes of production are intrinsic components of her work.

They bring about reflection on the relationship which is maintained between creation to the commons and on the role of the esthetic in comprehending and evaluating practices and spaces. A wider poetic approach is based on the workings of patterns, time, and light.

Her artistic work was recently recognized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Prize for the Best of Lab Art and Sustainability in 2012. Elise Morin has exposed her work at the Centquatre, the Jeu de Paume, and the Grand Palais in France and at the Museums of Contemporary Art of Bucharest and Tokyo.

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