



July 2008  
PRESS KIT

Contemporary art in France

## **THE 2008 MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

### **EXHIBITION OF THE NOMINATED ARTISTS**

**FIAC - Cour Carrée in the Louvre**

**23rd to 26th October 2008**

Stands E01, E02, E03, E04

### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE WINNER:**

**Saturday 25th October, 11 a.m.**

**Michel BLAZY**, born in 1966 in Monaco, lives and works in Paris

**Stéphane CALAIS**, born in 1967 in Arras, lives and works in Paris

**Laurent GRASSO**, born in 1972 in Mulhouse, lives and works in Paris

**Didier MARCEL**, born in 1961 in Besançon, lives and works in Dijon

The Marcel Duchamp Prize was created in 2000 by the contemporary art collectors and members of the ADIAF - Association for the International Diffusion of French Art - in order to help promote the French contemporary art scene worldwide.

It is organized in partnership with the Pompidou Centre, National Museum of Modern Art and the FIAC.

#### **WINNERS**

2000 – Thomas Hirschhorn

2002 – Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster

2003 – Mathieu Mercier

2004 – Carole Benzaken

2005 – Claude Closky

2006 – Philippe Mayaux

2007 – Tatiana Trouvé



Association pour la Diffusion Internationale de l'Art français - [www.adiaf.com](http://www.adiaf.com)

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JURY  
PARTNERS  
CONTACTS

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With the support of:  
**Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch**  
**Sanofi-Aventis**

**Artcurial, DTAM, Inlex IP Expertise**



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## **L'ADIAF – [www.adiaf.com](http://www.adiaf.com)**

### **Art collectors-patrons committed to promoting the French art scene**

Founded in 1994, the ADIAF – Association for the International Diffusion of French Art (under 1901 legislation) – is the most important group of private collectors and amateurs of contemporary art in France today. Presided over by Gilles Fuchs, former chairman of NINA RICCI, collector and winner of the 2003 Montblanc Prize for cultural patronage the Association now counts more than 200 members.

Playing a vital role in the art market, these art collectors-patrons aim to promote the French art scene worldwide and made a wider public aware of the vitality of contemporary creation.

The ADIAF mobilizes the energies of its militant collectors around several ambitious objectives:

**Support artists residing in France with the MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE.** A collectors' prize, organized every year since 2000, in partnership with the Pompidou Centre/NMMA and the FIAC,

**Produce exhibitions of artists who are representative of the French art scene:** the ADIAF regularly organizes exhibitions of works from private collections in order to demonstrate the dynamic state of the French art market: "France, une nouvelle génération" in Madrid and Sintra (1999): "Arrêts du Images" at the Kunst-Werke, Berlin (2001): exhibition "Autour du PRIX MARCEL DUCHAMP" presented within the framework of several art events: Art Moscou (2004), Cologne Art Fair (2005) and La Force de l'Art in Paris (2006):

**Present contemporary art from the collector's viewpoint with the triennial exhibition "De leur temps":** first showing in the Tourcoing Museum in 2004, second in the Museum of Grenoble in 2007 and third planned for 2010 The exhibition proposes a "snapshot" of French contemporary art collections through a selection of works acquired by private collectors over the three years prior to the exhibition. It aims to give a current view of individual collections while they are being made and observes the options taken as well as the choices made in current creation. Constituting a unique panorama of recent acquisitions by French collectors, it testifies to the vitality of these collectors with different sensibilities, all of them committed to the art "of their times".

Develop in France a "**collector's spirit**" with an agenda of activities proposed to the members of the Association: meetings with artists, visits to private collections, exhibition previews, collectors' trips, participation in seminars and round tables...



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# **LE PRIX MARCEL DUCHAMP**

## **Promote the reputation of an artist residing France**

One of the strongest initiatives recently undertaken to help promote French contemporary art on the international scene, **the MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE was created in 2000 by the ADIAF**, Association for the International Diffusion of French Art. Named after the French artist considered to be the pioneer of contemporary art, it aims to **support the French art scene** and encourage all of the new artistic forms that stimulate creation. Its main ambition is to promote the reputation of an artist residing in France, representative of his or her generation, and working in the field of the plastic and visual arts: installation, video, painting, photography and sculpture.

The MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE is organized in **partnership with the Pompidou Centre, National Museum of Modern Art**, which has chosen to widen its mode of selection of exhibited artists via the eye of the collector. **Since 2005, the FIAC**, the Paris International Art Fair, has also entered into partnership with the organizers, thereby providing a wide showcase for the pre-selected artists and giving them even greater visibility with both French and international collectors.

The result of a private initiative relayed by a public institution, this Prize endows a new generation of artists with a structure that encourages their recognition, gives a much greater visibility to their works and helps them to acquire an international status.

The originality of the MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE resides in the way the artists are selected, as it is the members of the ADIAF selection committee, i.e. the private collectors, who establish the list of nominated artists. The "selection of artists" is then submitted to an international jury comprised of experts considered to be authorities in the field of contemporary art: curators, critics as well as French and international collectors. The presentation of each artist's work is made by a reporter chosen by the artist. The members of the selection committee and the international jury are renewed for each prize.

### **PRIZE'S ENDOWMENT**

#### Nominated artists

MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE exhibition at the FIAC, Paris International Contemporary Art Fair - Publication by the ADIAF of a catalogue of the selected artists

#### Winner

MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE exhibition at the Pompidou Centre: the winning artist is invited to create an original work for a two month show in the 315 space.

Financial endowment of 35 000 euros offered by the ADIAF

Publication by the Pompidou Centre of a catalogue of the winning artist



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## **THE MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE – 8th prize**

### **Four nominated artists**

#### **Michel BLAZY**

Born in 1966 in Monaco, lives and works in Paris

#### **Stéphane CALAIS**

Born in 1967 in Arras, lives and works in Paris

#### **Laurent GRASSO**

Born in 1972 in Mulhouse, lives and works in Paris

#### **Didier MARCEL**

Born in 1961 in Besançon, lives and works in Dijon

### **International jury**

#### **Pierre DARIER**

Collector, President of the Mamco (Switzerland)

#### **Gilles FUCHS**

President of the ADIAF (France)

#### **Jacqueline MATISSE-MONNIER**

Artist (France)

#### **Alfred PACQUEMENT**

Director of the National Museum of Modern Art, Pompidou Centre (France)

#### **Julia PEYTON-JONES**

Director of the Serpentine Gallery (Great Britain)

#### **Guy TOSSATO**

Director of the Museum of Grenoble (France)

#### **Walter VANHAERENTS**

Collector (Belgium)



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## **THE 2008 MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

### **Artist nominated for the 8<sup>th</sup> prize**

#### **Michel Blazy**

Born in 1966 in Monaco, lives and works in Paris

Reporter: Marc-Olivier Walher, Director of the Palais de Tokyo

Galerie Art:Concept, Paris



Michel BLAZY

Untitled (owner's choice) 2005

Shaving foam & polyurethane foam

120 x 55 x 105cm

Photographer: Eternal Network

Courtesy Art: Concept, Paris

A sculptor of the most unusual materials, Michel Blazy evolves within art through his works made from feathers and foam. Fascinated by organic matter, perishable produce and dry foodstuffs, he crystallizes creations around themes recalling the human condition: death, rot and decay. Thus, Michel Blazy shows rotting tomatoes, testifying to man's ineluctable destiny but also to the beauty and the strangeness of nature living in a state of constant mutation. He likes to mix humour with art: sculptures made from flashy chick yellow soy noodles, poodles in shaving foam or an unusual sheet made from wallpaper and spaghetti.



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## **THE 2008 MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

### **Artist nominated for the 8<sup>th</sup> prize**

#### **Stéphane Calais**

Born in 1967 in Arras, lives and works in Paris

Reporter: Jean de Loisy, Exhibition Commissioner, Art Critic

Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris



Stéphane Calais

*Boxe Thaï* > 1999 > mixed techniques > 45 x 33 x 46cm

Photographer: Florian Kleinfenn > Private collection

Stéphane Calais is an atypical figure in the world of contemporary art. He vindicates a Jack-of-all-trades approach and many varied influences. Tales, legends and popular icons are revisited and mixed with a universe where abstraction coexists alongside figuration. "For a long time, the 'atypical' label that has been stuck on me, used to surprise me, says Stéphane Calais. I only envision pieces in an efficient manner in relation to my commitments. Naturally, drawing, my first tool, allows me to navigate between the different fields through which it passes: that is to say all of them. The questions which are then raised according to the mediums used (painting, mural drawings, collages of objects or images...) are classic questions. But it is within their connection, their proximity that the tensions, ellipses or short-cuts are called into play."



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## **THE 2008 MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

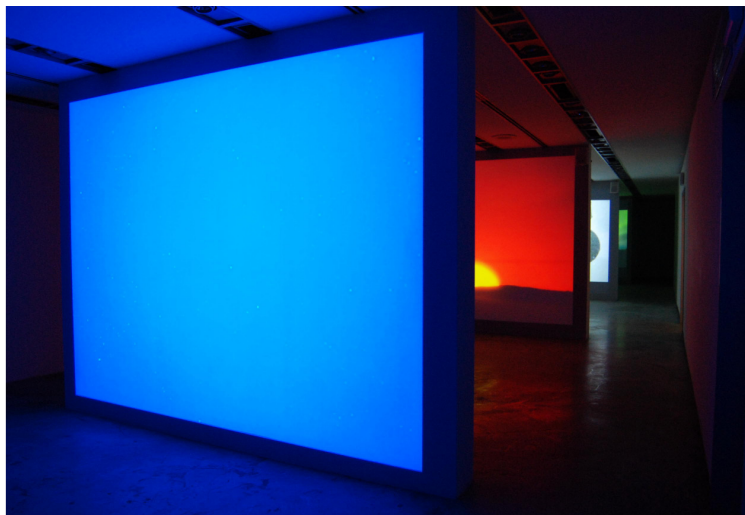
### **Artist nominated for the 8<sup>th</sup> prize**

#### **Laurent Grasso**

Born in 1972 in Mulhouse, lives and works in Paris

Reporter: Michel Gauthier, Art critic

Gallery: Chez Valentin, Paris



Laurent Grasso

View of the exhibition "Neurocinéma", Akbank Sanat, Istanbul, Turkey, 2008

Courtesy Galerie Chez Valentin

Whether he (re) activates the shapes more or less identifiable of our controlling society or diverts the cinematographic techniques and conventions that fashion our collective imagination, Laurent Grasso creates environments with a great narrative potential, mixing ancestral fears with scientific evidence and menacing contemporary mythologies.

For Michel Gauthier, Grasso's poetic quality has for incentive the tension between two paranoia – etymologically: between two positions somewhere on the edge of truth – that threaten a world saturated with information.

By mobilizing various means (film, light, sound, models, engraving, etc....), in less than ten years Grasso's work has known how to disturb the aesthetic awareness and certainties of the modern discourse.



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## **THE 2008 MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

### **Artist nominated for the 8<sup>th</sup> prize**

#### **Didier Marcel**

Born in 1961 in Besançon, lives and works in Dijon.

Reporter: Xavier Douroux, Director of the Consortium of Dijon  
Galerie Michel Rein, Paris



Didier Marcel

*Untitled (campus)*, 2007

Carpet, hand-tufted pure wool, various materials, rotating system,  
polished stainless steel

142 x 95 x 72cm

Private collection, Paris

Courtesy Galerie Michel Rein, Paris

Didier Marcel's artistic approach, inaugurated during his 1980s exhibitions, focuses on the idea of opposition and contrast. Widening the practice of sculpture, he proposes a singular vision of space. The viewer no longer has to walk around a piece of sculpture, instead there is a whole work unfolding around him within the place of exhibition. By using daily objects that he re-dimensions, Didier Marcel upsets the order of things and their localization within the social space. He enables us to envision differently our relationship with landscape that has become an idealized reality as evoked by the architectural models or natural elements (birch wood logs, fabric trees) in the artist's work.

Extract from texts by Creativtv.



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## **THE 2008 MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

### **Partners**

**The Marcel Duchamp Prize benefits from the support of companies committed to cultural patronage:**

**LOMBARD ODIER DARIER HENTSCH** - [www.lodh.com](http://www.lodh.com)

Private bankers since 1796, the Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch Group specializes in individual and institutional asset management. The group supports the Marcel Duchamp Prize for the sixth consecutive year as part of their commitment to preserving and enhancing our artistic legacy for future generations.

**SANOFI-AVENTIS** - [www.sanofi-aventis.com](http://www.sanofi-aventis.com)

Sanofi-aventis, a global leader in the pharmaceutical industry, researches and develops medicines and vaccines to help improve the lives of the greatest possible number of people. R&D explores a broad spectrum of innovative approaches and develops new products in the key areas of therapeutic expertise: Thrombosis, Cardiovascular diseases, Diabetes, Vaccines, Oncology, Central Nervous System disorders and Internal Medicine.

**INLEX EXPERTISE** - [www.inlex.com](http://www.inlex.com)

Because "talent must be encouraged especially when it is creative, original and new"... Inlex, a law firm dealing in intellectual property rights and its specialist department "ARTinLEX", have wished to promote contemporary art by joining the ADIAF in the awarding of the Marcel Duchamp Prize.

**ARTCURIAL**- [www.artcurial.com](http://www.artcurial.com)

The leading French auction house Artcurial Briest-Lefur-Poulain-F. Tajan enjoys an ever-growing international reputation. Endowed with a very active modern and contemporary art department, Artcurial joined forces with the ADIAF in 2006 and gives its support to the MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE.

**Day Trade Asset Management/DTAM** - [www.dtam.fr](http://www.dtam.fr)

Established in Paris since 2002, DTAM is a forerunner in Day Trade Leverage. By revolutionizing the usual modes and criteria of asset management, DTAM has imposed this new style of Day Trading to the great financial benefit of its clients. In supporting the ADIAF and its artists, DTAM demonstrates the same spirit of perpetual and enduring innovation.

The **Axense** agency and the online television **CreativTV** collaborate with the ADIAF in the organization of the prize.

[www.axense.fr](http://www.axense.fr)

[www.creativtv.net](http://www.creativtv.net)



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## **VISUALS ON REQUEST FROM THE ADIAF**



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## **WINNERS OF THE MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE**

### **MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE 2007 – Tatiana Trouvé**

Born in 1968 in Cosenza (Italy), lives and works in Paris.

Installation

Creation for the Pompidou Centre exhibition: "4 between 3 and 2",  
Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Miami; Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels;  
Johann König, Berlin.

The making of a space linked to the expression of psychic phenomena is at the heart of Tatiana Trouvé's work. The *Bureau d'Activités Implicites*, or B.A.I., began in 1997, is its matrix. Her research continued with the realization of "Polders", spaces in reduction composed of elements making reference to heterogeneous universes: sport, medicine, music. The artist's very personal universe and the visionary character of her approach are underlined Elie During: "The strength of T&T relies on the manner in which she manages, beyond any "atmosphere", to impose the obviousness of an autonomous and consistent universe that is nevertheless perfectly foreign to the usual coordinates and scales."

### **PRIX MARCEL DUCHAMP 2006 – Philippe Mayaux**

Born in 1961 in Roubaix (France), lives and works in Montreuil

Painting, sculpture, installation

Creation for the exhibition in the Pompidou Centre: "A mort l'infini" (2007)  
Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris

Philippe Mayaux is like a high diver, capable of the most insane somersaults. This unrivalled stunt man likes to land systematically on the stomach in a voluntarily grotesque posture, generously splashing the sides of the pool. A painter of placebos for domestic use, sculptor of electric logs, poet of the « fire that glows in the hearth-stone in placo-plaster », technician of the endless screw and promoter of the « advanced post in the Desert », Philippe Mayaux is a magnificent traitor. He makes us touch the sublime in order to break the toys that fascinate us even more effectively. He flatters. He pierces through. And then begins again.

Text by Marc-Olivier Wahler, 1999.



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### **MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE 2005 – Claude Closky**

Born in 1963 in Paris – Lives in Paris

Multimedia

Creation for the Pompidou Centre exhibition: "Manège" (2006)

Laurent Godin Gallery, Paris

An extremely inventive artist, Claude Closky calls upon all sorts of supports to develop his vocabulary. Web sites, projections of images, books, paintings, drawings, collages, wallpaper or urban electronic billboards... anything is good for commenting on the contemporary world. Closky proposes inventories, builds montages, aligns words and signs and manipulates figures, all those things with which the media inundates us on a daily basis. He underlines the absurdity and the contradictions of it all. Behind his apparent lightness, there is work with multiple meanings that he constantly reinvents with a lot of subtlety.

### **MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE 2004 – Carole Benzaken**

Born in 1964 in Grenoble – Lives in Paris

Painting

Creation for the Pompidou Centre exhibition: "Search for the New Land" (2004)

Nathalie Obadia Gallery, Paris

Carole Benzaken made a strong impression on the 90s artistic scene with her series *Tulips* and her commitment to the pictorial medium. She is perpetually in quest of fleeting moments and shifting images that she likes to jumble together using painting, drawing and video or even a more traditional technique like mosaics. For us, she revisits the strategy of appropriating medium images, seducing us into casting a new eye on the world around us, in works that combine the decorative with a documentary-like dimension.

### **MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE 2003 – Mathieu Mercier**

Born in 1970 at Conflans Saint Honorine – Lives and works in Paris

Sculpture and installation

Creation for the Pompidou Centre exhibition: "Sans titre" (2003)

Galerie Chez Valentin, Paris

Confessing to a passion for what the French refer to as System D, Mathieu Mercier became known in the 90s for his work inspired by leisure activities: screws, pegs, neon lights, electrical sockets and cheap building wood are his favourite materials. He fixes, customizes and rearranges the standards of mass consumerism. Nourished by a critical reflection on contemporary society, Mathieu Mercier's work discusses his interest in the object and its relationship to architecture and design. Mischievously reformulating the fundamental notions of artistic activity, he makes sculptures and installations that invite each of us to reflect and to doubt.



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### **MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE 2002 - Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster**

Born in 1965 in Strasbourg – Lives and works in Paris

Installation and video

Creation for the Pompidou Centre exhibition: "Exotourisme" (2002)

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster belongs to a generation of artists who place their work at the crossroads of several disciplines and re-think the traditional forms of art. Her favourite themes include absence, disappearance, expectation... Simultaneously, her installations give free run to a narrative thread rather like a multiple perceptual experience. In the same way, her films play on cinematic codes, while remaining in keeping with what is real or create environments that take the shape of habitable and strangely familiar "rooms".

### **MARCEL DUCHAMP PRIZE 2000-2001- Thomas Hirschhorn**

Born in 1957 in Bern (Switzerland) – Lives and works in Paris

Installation

Creation for the Pompidou Centre exhibition: "Pôle Self" (2001)

Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

The initiator of highly identifiable aesthetics calling upon commonly used materials, Thomas Hirschhorn questions the artist's commitment to life and to history. He revisits the strategies of the Dadaists or the Russian Constructivists with the use of poor materials like adhesive tape, bits of cardboard or images taken from the media. These big, very often spectacular installations, question the notion of monument as well as exhibition. He develops "bugs" which propagate at the core of his works but also beyond the traditional exhibition space to spill over into public space.



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