

**A heritage has to be "cultivated". Either you commit it for good to the drawers of a bygone past, or you inform it, in such a way as to resurrect it. This is the intent of the light work by Caroline Tapernoux and Fred de Fred at the Carthusian monastery of Valbonne.**

Some monuments, like Valbonne, are references for the general public discovering them. So it is tempting to take advantage of such media to make our contemporaries aware of forms of aesthetics whose codes elude them, but which would undoubtedly have exercised the old residents, here Carthusian monks, for their part open to other aesthetics, more directly associated with their day and age. The main thing is not to get the choice of artists wrong. So choosing Caroline Tapernoux for the "visual" part and Fred de Fred for the acoustic part was a daring wager, whose relevance and success must be underscored right away. Caroline Tapernoux has done her utmost to emphasize the spiritual nature of the monastery, playing on the lightness of the materials (plastic, altuglass, and glass and mirrors), on their capacity to absorb the space through interplays of reflections, with their ability to be projected onto the walls giving rise to strange visual entities, on their ability to adapt to the shadow and half-light so as to reflect the potential light, and to become combined through the strength of the movement bringing about their metamorphosis. All this in harmony with Fred de Fred's monastic chants, with a counterpoint of contemporary strident notes, like glass. A marriage of ancient and modern. The exhibition's title « AVEC / WITH » underlines their cooperation with the third party, to wit, the genius of the place, as well as the way those involved co-exist with the spirit of the site.

As you make your way through the various rooms, some larger than others, which Caroline Tapernoux has redefined, you actually come very close to a miracle, produced by the effects of light, as if the spirit-or her spirits-of the place were making its-or their- contribution to this intervention imbued with grace. A miracle that has to do with the appearance of the image, as at the dawn of humanity, when the spirit of God was still blowing over so many things, a decisive action that the artist proposes to renew, by suggesting that we bring life to the pieces in mid-air. Not only do these latter become transformed in their strange material ballet, but their shadow lends a

different physiognomy, while a third element, made of the pure, light and intangible illumination of the spirit starts to turn, informing the room occupied.

Elsewhere, in a chapel of compassion, thirteen shards of glass form a veil in front of the altar, extending backwards and forwards depending on their varying weight. This brings the outside light into this discreet, dark space. The shift at the sides is akin to a spray of pure lines reaching skywards.

Caroline Tapernoux has played on geometric symbolism, particularly on the passage from matter to spirit, represented by square and circle, and, for Fred de Fred, by the use of "the" universal note. A ubiquitous circle greeting visitors at the entrance, humbly making them cast their eyes to the floor, the better to make them aware of the celestial summons. You who enter these places, abandon your attachment to the world's seductions. The design of the vaults in fact divides the roundness of the circle into four curved elements, while the spider-like diagonal ribs which hallmark the so-called strangers' chapel are reflected in the silvering of the huge mirror. Anyone entering this place must shed all vanity and all arrogance. In the Chapterhouse chapel, four different sized circles of glass are set on the altar, like a call to meditation, to be sure, but also like a reference to the mystic halo, symbol of the saintliness honoured in the lateral recesses, and to the initial Romanesque curve. In the Lampisterie [lamp store], Fred de Fred makes the basement vibrate. One thinks of life inside the womb and the new being to be born, unless what is involved is a faraway echo of hell, ever ready to tempt fragile souls. The gallery of the great cloister, plunged in obscurity, a dark way along a plastic path placed on the ground, which takes on the consistency of water, offers many different sensory effects, for the duration of a circuit then to be made in the other direction, so as to rejoin the daylight, gradually emerging. One comes back out regenerated, illuminated, and feeling lighter. The spirit of the light is enough to fill these places, from which one can step back and take stock « with » things ...