



CHÂTEAU LA COSTE

Provence



ANNIE MORRIS

27 June - September 2022

This summer Château La Coste is delighted to present the inaugural show of British artist Annie Morris in the newly completed Oscar Niemeyer Pavilion. The artist's first solo exhibition in France features new sculptures, tapestries and paintings, as well as a 6 metre bronze sculpture, her largest work to date, especially conceived for the grounds of Château La Coste.

Taking centre stage in the exhibition is a group of *Stacks* - Morris' iconic towers of vivid coloured spheres. Following the tragic stillbirth of her first child in 2014, these sculptures were inspired by the artist's grief but have since become a "joyous obsession" for the artist. Carved by hand from pigmented plaster and sand, the works on view in Niemeyer's vast concrete space contrast with the taller towers of Morris' past *Stack* series. Their silhouettes comprised of

fewer and larger elements acquire an almost figurative quality, recalling the female form and pregnant bodies. Some are staged in pairs, as if in conversation with one another. In their intense, soft and velvety hues, these sculptures also reflect Morris' fascination with colour and her attempt to capture pigment in its raw form. In addition to the ultramarine, viridian and ochre omnipresent in her work, the artist has introduced softer colours, such as lavender and pale greens, which are directly inspired by her visits to the vineyards and the surrounding Provençal countryside.

The exhibition also highlights the importance of drawing and painting in Morris' work. Combining personal ciphers with mark-making and grid-like structures, her drawings and tapestries, like her sculptures, sit between abstraction and figuration. They also reflect the artist's constant experimentation with pigments, as seen in a group of paintings in the show. These pigment works are carefully assembled to create a colourful and impressive 15 meter-wide mural. Finally, the beautiful rawness of Morris' tapestries are made up of fabrics collaged together and stitched with thread.

In the gardens, the monumental 6 metre *Stack* sculpture, created in bronze, is the latest addition to Château La Coste's outdoor art and architecture trail. In a nod to women artists and creativity, the towering work will be sited opposite Louise Bourgeois' *Crouching Spider*, creating a powerful dialogue between two artists exploring the themes of motherhood and birth.

Annie Morris says: "My sculptures are about holding onto something that's fallen, and to express the hope and defiance of life. The vibrant pigment on the surface is a way of trying to freeze the moment when paint hasn't yet dried, and is caught in its most raw form. They assemble to create abstract paintings that escalate upwards and express the fragility we all feel in our lives. There is not a day that goes by that I don't draw something, and this is the beginning of all my work. France is integral to me, having studied at the Beaux-Arts in Paris. Château La Coste is an inspiration and I am delighted that my first show in France will be in the Oscar Niemeyer Pavilion."

This exhibition is co-curated by Gagosian Director Georgina Cohen who says: "I'm thrilled to collaborate on the inaugural show at the Niemeyer pavilion with my dear friend Annie Morris. To see her works bring joy and colour to Château La Coste is such an exciting moment. Annie's work has the ability to evoke hope and energy to heal, to inspire, and uplift the soul, it's been a wonderful journey to get to this point and I'm excited to share this exhibition with the visitors."

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT ANNIE MORRIS

London-based artist Annie Morris was born in 1978. Morris studied at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris between 1997 and 2001 under Giuseppe Penone before completing her education at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Morris's multi-disciplinary practice draws on both personal experience and the history of art. Encompassing sculpture, tapestry, painting and drawing, Morris's intuitive use of line weaves between abstraction and representation. Morris's most recognizable body of work is her 'Stack' series, begun in 2014 and inspired by the artist's grief following a stillbirth. The sculptures, which are comprised of irregular spheres precariously arranged into tall columns, evoke the swell of pregnancy. Sculpted in plaster or cast in bronze, the forms are painted with hand-sourced, raw pigments in vivid hues such as Ultramarine, Viridian and Ochre, which give Morris's lumpy orbs a rich, vibrant hue. Morris uses the same deep pigments in her drawing and tapestry practice, which

combines personal ciphers with abstract mark-making and grid-like structures. Morris lives and works in London, UK.

Morris has exhibited most recently at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2021) with her first UK museum solo show *When a Happy Thing Falls*. Further selected solo exhibitions include Timothy Taylor, London and New York; Union Gallery, London; ProjectB Gallery, Milan; Winston Wachter Fine Arts, New York and Laura Bartlett Gallery, London. Selected group exhibitions include *Colour Space*, Mucciaccia Gallery, Rome (2021); *London Calling*, Fundación Bancaja, Valencia (2021); *Idris Khan and Annie Morris*, Galerie Isa, Mumbai (2019-2020); The Summer Show, The Royal Academy (2014) and *The House of Fairy Tales*, Tate St Ives (2010). Her work is included in public and private collections including the Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris France/Shanghai; Perez Collection, Miami; The Gersh Collection, Los Angeles; Missoni Family Collection, Italy and the Hotel Crillon Collection, Paris.

ABOUT CHÂTEAU LA COSTE

Situated in one of the oldest winemaking regions of France, between the historic city of Aix-En-Provence and the Luberon National Park, Château La Coste is a vineyard where wine, art and architecture co-exist in harmony. Since it opened to the public in 2011, Château La Coste invites visitors to discover over forty major works of contemporary art installed in the open air and five gallery spaces dotted across the 500-acre site.

Each year artists and architects are invited to visit the domain and discover the unique beauty of this Provençal landscape, with its famed cypresses, stone pines, olive trees and ancient oaks. They are given the freedom to create a site-specific work in an area of the site that inspires them, so Château La Coste continues to evolve as new projects and installations are developed. Artists and architects who have created permanent works at Château La Coste include Frank O. Gehry, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Louise Bourgeois, Richard Rogers, Sophie Calle, Tracey Emin and Jean Nouvel.

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