

CRAC Alsace, Centre rhénan d'art contemporain, is located in Altkirch, France, at 18 rue du Château. Contact CRAC Alsace at +33 (0)3 89 08 82 59 and info@cracalsace.com. Access the future, present and past of CRAC Alsace via www.cracalsace.com.

Press release

From February 18 to May 12, 2024, *Friendship : That Winter, That Aspen*, a group exhibition organized in collaboration with Centre d'art contemporain d'Ivry—le Crédac.

The exhibition brings together Boris Achour (with Émilie Renard), Noémie Bablet, Caroline Bachmann, Anna Byskov (with Bertil Byskov, Margaret Byskov, Camila Farina and Sophie Lamm), Thomas Cap de Ville, Caretto & Spagna, Lola González, Donna Gottschalk, Tom Hallet, Eric Hattan (with Silvia Bächli, Rut Himmelsbach, Guido Nussbaum, Hannah Villiger and Anna Winteler), Dorothy Iannone and Sarah Pucci, Youri Johnson, Edit Oderbolz, Hatice Pinarbaşı (with Aram Abbas, Zahna Siham Benamor, Hugo Ferretto and Elif Pinarbaşı), Marthe Ramm Fortun, Marnie Slater (with Robin Brettar, Matilda Cobanli, Judith Geerts, Jessica Gysel, Katja Mater and Clare Noonan) and Sarah Tritz.

On Sunday February 18, 2024 at 11.30 am at CRAC Alsace, Opening Brunch of the exhibition. With the performances of Marthe Ramm Fortun and Anna Byskov.

On this occasion, a free shuttle will leave from Basel. Departure at 10.45am from Meret Oppenheim Strasse, in front of the skatepark, perpendicular to Solothurnerstrasse. Return to Basel at 2.30pm. For reservations, please contact Maria Gamboa: m.gamboa@cracalsace.com.

From April 27 to July 13, 2024, the exhibition *Friendship : That Winter, That Aspen* will unfold at Crédac, in Ivry-sur-Seine.

For press enquiries, please contact Maria Gamboa, Head of Communication and Mediation, at m.gamboa@cracalsace.com or by phone at +33 (0)6 23 48 52 34.

Exhibition

Friendship : That Shiver, That Aspen is the fruit of the collaboration between @RA@ Alsace and Crédac. Located in two different geographical, social and artistic contexts—one in rural region, on the border with Switzerland and Germany, the other on the periphery of Paris—@RA@ Alsace and Crédac, both labelled Centres d'art contemporain d'intérêt nationaux, share a common commitment: to support experimentation and contemporary artistic creation, by promoting the encounter between artists, publics and works of art. On this occasion, the teams of @RA@ Alsace and the Crédac are joining forces to organize an exhibition around friendship as a way of life and creation, an exhibition that will unfold in both art centers:

«At @RA@ Alsace and Crédac, we are really motivated by sharing ideas, collaborating and pooling methods. One day, we brought to the table the Temple de l'Amitié (the temple of friendship), located at 20 rue Jacob in Paris and home to the American writer Natalie Clifford Barney from 1908 to 1972. This temple and its garden fascinate us. They hosted an influential literary salon, extravagant parties, lively discussions, torrid encounters and timeless friendships. We share these bonds of complicity with the artists and their pieces. Friendship provides our practices with a unique experience of art. Friendship constitutes a space for thinking, creating, entwining. Friendship leads us to push open doors: the doors to the garden of the Temple de l'Amitié.

Reading the poem *Au Temple de l'Amitié* by Natalie Clifford Barney, the words "Friendship : that shiver, that aspen"* resonate with us. Near to the aspen, we perceive bodies, laughter and friendships. These bodies capsize, laughter erupts, and the aspen shivers, meanwhile, a snail: "Like the shell of a snail, our friendship grows by a new ring each year."** One more ring.

The consideration of friendship as a method more than a subject helps us shape this exhibition that will straddle our two art centers and be constructed collectively with the artists, their friends and draw on the energy that drives us resolutely. We thus give full rein to the plurality of voices among which we invite you to add yours.

Friendly regards,
The teams of @RA@ Alsace and Crédac»

*Natalie Clifford Barney, *Les Éblouissantes pensées de l'Amazonie* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1939).

Artists

BORIS ACHOUR with ÉMILIE RENARD

Boris Achour's work draws on the strength of those close to him, as the curator and his long-time ally Émilie Renard attests in her text *Be for Balls (Balls lost and Balls returned)**. At openings of his exhibitions, Boris Achour receives postcards from deceased artists who, nevertheless, continue to feed into his work. In the postcards, senders including Mike Kelley and Gabi Delgado apologized for not being able to make it to his show. For this exhibition, Boris Achour has chosen the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard as the only sender from whom he will receive a postcard each week at @R@. Furthermore, driven by the desire to expand his social circle among the living, Boris Achour offers us his friendship, with his boards *Légions d'amis* [Legions of friends] filled with a multitude of spray-painted pins, which visitors are invited to take with them.

* In the monograph *AB@ B.A* (London: Dent-De-Leone, 2018).

Born in France in 1966, he lives and works in Paris. He is represented by Allen Gallery (Paris).

NOÉMIE BABLET

In five paintings on wood, Noémie Bablet sets out a collection of grids and knots from which slip dots of accommodating and coordinated colors. These paintings, which play on serialisation, sameness and difference, can be read like variations on one theme: that of connection. The knot, ornamentation that evokes both the idea of a careful and affectionate gesture towards an object or others, but also a possible tension, is crafted here with a meticulous, neat pictorial method. Noémie Bablet seems to prefer the packaging to the contents of packets—when desire remains intact. By producing her images on thick wood, she emphasizes the sensuality of the textures and their materiality. This art, of the surface by definition, could also be a metaphor for our professional and social interactions. What happens to affection when it is self-interested and transactional?

Born in 1987 in France, she lives and works in Paris. She recently presented *Abft Akills*, a solo exhibition in *Пиебфтингси* (Germany, 2023).



Noémie Bablet, *People please*, 2023. Acrylic on wood. 88 x 128 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

CAROLINE BACHMANN

Since 2013, Caroline Bachmann has been exploring a form of figurative painting nourished by a conceptual artistic practice. Through portraits, flowers and landscapes—classic subjects of 19th-century European painting—she questions the notions of perception, memory and time. The artist started producing this series of portraits of artists after visiting an exhibition of 20th-century Swiss paintings. Deeply shocked by the lack of portraits and self-portraits of women artists, Caroline Bachmann decided to serve as witness to the existence of her contemporaries, an artistic community united by dialogue and friendship. Driven by the ideas of celebration and giving, this series demonstrates her desire to render others visible and, at the same time, create a unique archive.

Born in 1963 in Switzerland, she lives and works in Geneva. She is represented by the galleries Gregor Staiger (Zurich), Meyer Riegger (Berlin, Karlsruhe and Basel) and Duane Thomas (New York).

ANNA BYSKOV with BERTIL BYSKOV, MARGARET BYSKOV,
CAMILA FARINA and SOPHIE LAMM

Anna Byskov draws inspiration from Natalie Clifford Barney's relationship with her mother, the artist Alice Pike Barney, and her contribution to the 1900 collection *Quelques Portraits—Двиеты де Феиме**, for which Alice produced portraits of her daughter's friend-lovers. Echoing this, Anna Byskov unfurls her constellation of artist friends Camila Farina and Sophie Lamm, her father Bertil Byskov, and her mother, Margaret Byskov whom she brings together to present a series of drawings. Fruit, leaves and snails are sketched during a family walk by a chapel in Denmark, partially buried by sand. These contributions, each with its own frame, are spread across two walls, one at *OR@ Alsace*, the other at *Crédac*, which as communicating mirrors, will be activated during different performances.

* Natalie Clifford Barney, *Quelques Portraits—Двиеты де Феиме* (Paris: Articolor Press, 1900).

Born in 1984 in Ecuador, she lives and works in Mulhouse (France). Alongside her artists collective *somebody*ies*, she participated to the *Biennale für Freiburg 2 (BfF2)* (2023).



Caroline Bachmann, *Παι-Την Perret*, 2021. Oil on canvas. 40 x 30 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

THOMAS CAP DE VILLE

From childhood through to his early years of adulthood, Thomas Cap de Ville meticulously collected and conserved relics that bear witness to his youth during 80s and 90s popular and alternative culture. Since 2011, he began collecting them together in scrapbooks, which he makes with obsessive care, sometimes borrowing from funerary aesthetics. Through them, he keeps archives of a time when friendships were at their strongest, to the point where they shaped identities. He describes friendship as “the bones you’re missing in your body”*. Over the years, he has patiently worked to make what amounts to an anthumous monument dedicated to friendship and personal narrative. Here, memories are encased in layers of plastic, as if under glass, in order to conserve the beauty of a bygone era.

* In Ραυχηρόηρε, Le Confort Moderne, Poitiers, 2021.

Born in 1978 in France, he lives and works in Paris. He is represented by Exo, Exo Gallery (Paris).

CARETTO & SPAGNA

In April, Caretto & Spagna will come to Crédac for a research period followed by a discussion-performance activating different flows of free and energetic exchanges around an oak tree. With this tree facing Crédac’s windows, a place where people pass through, meet, smoke, Caretto & Spagna evoke the Temple and its garden on rue Jacob in the middle of a conversation. Friendship : That Shiver, That Aspen, let’s set off looking for the shiver, the aspen. Together, let’s push open the doors of the Temple de l’Amitié’s garden. Let’s question our interspecific relationships, our existences within the plant community. Let’s live collectively. Around the tree, another tree, the aspen.

Andrea Caretto was born in 1970 and Raffaella Spagna in 1967, in Italy. They work collaboratively since 2002, exhibiting in public and private institutions, in Italy and abroad. Both live and work in Cambiano.

LOLA GONZÁLEZ

Lola González's films are built with the presence of her new friendships blending with older ones. In *Mouradia*, friends, children and older members of her family develop in the daily life of her village, where she turns her house into a space open to all. *Mouradia* is a continuation of her work on invented languages, in the name of friendship, from the text from Chris Marker's film *The Embassy* (1973), which remains strikingly relevant today. Fifty years on, an entire village murmurs the anthem emblematic of the 2018 Algerian youth protests against the regime ruling from "Casa del Mouradia", the presidential palace occupied by Abdelaziz Bouteflika at the time. Haunted by the question of the collective, of alterity and activism, Lola González's films are made "together", "as a family", "in friendship".

Born in 1988 in France, she lives and works in Paris. She is represented by Marcelle Alix Gallery (Paris).



Still from Lola González, *Mouradia*, 2023. Film. Courtesy of the artist and Marcelle Alix Gallery.

ΔΟΝΝΑ ΓΟΤΤΣΧΑΛΚ

Photographer and lesbian activist Donna Gottschalk grew up in New York. In 1969, she joined the Gay Liberation Front. In 1970, alongside other activists, she organized the Lavender Menace to protest against the exclusion of lesbians from the Women's Liberation Movement (MLF). Her work is imbued by friendship and solidarity, two protective bonds. Donna Gottschalk photographed her relatives, brothers and sisters, butch- femme, transgender and gay people, activists, comrades and friends over several decades. Recently shown in the exhibition *Ce qui fait une vie** organized by H  l  ne Giannellini, these images are emblematic of her work, rediscovered on the occasion of her first retrospective at the Leslie-Lohman Museum in New York**.

* Marcelle Alix Gallery, Paris, 2023.

** *Βραβε, Beautiful Outlaws*, Leslie-Lohman Museum, New York, 2018–2019.

Donna Gottschalk is represented by Marcelle Alix Gallery (Paris).

ΤΟΜΜ ΧΑΛΛΕΤ

By creating dialogue between his graphic and sculptural forms, Tom Hallet composes an intimate and political narrative with each exhibition. Each drawing is dedicated to someone dear to him, to a queer icon, or to their aggressors. He thus creates a fantasy world where wounded bodies and landscapes blend. Distress hangs in the air, but desire and germination find fertile ground to embrace the hope of renewal. The organic sculptures contain relics of loved ones, including hair or casts of their personal belongings. Like names integrated into titles of the drawings, these objects summon the presence of loved ones and resemble embodied forms from other worlds, object-thresholds, calling us to enter. Tom Hallet weaves an almost mythical tale about identity, viscerally retracing emotional attachments, love, violence and trauma.

Born in 1990 in Belgium, he lives and works in Brussels. He participated to the exhibition *Digestive Disaster, Lucky Star* during the Brussels Gallery Weekend, Generation Brussels, at Stems Gallery.



Donna Gottschalk, *Helaine on her girlfriend's lap*, Provincetown, 1974. Silver gelatin print. 31 x 20 cm. ed 3 + 1. Courtesy of Marcelle Alix Gallery.

ERIC HATTAN with SILVIA BÄCHLI, RUT HIMMELSBACH,
GUIDO MUNDBAUM, HANNAH VILLIGER and ANNA WEITLER

When Eric Hattan created *Filiale*, an exhibition space for young artists, in Basel on 1981, it was foremost a learning place for him. For this exhibition, Eric Hattan invites five artists who have influenced his own work and with whom he has forged strong relationships. “I’ve learnt a lot from them and seen a lot thanks to them. We were never a group, even though we all know each other and have experienced different intensities of friendship between us. Our histories and paths are different, and we’ve crossed and rubbed shoulders. In the meantime, our relationships have sometimes become less intense, but they never totally disappeared, and they’re not over yet.”* Rut Himmelsbach produced the first exhibition at *Filiale* in 1981. Her official first name was written with an “h”, which she offered as a gesture of friendship to Hannah Villiger, whose first name didn’t originally contain one.

* Propos rapportés de l’artiste, décembre 2023.

Born in 1955 in Switzerland, he lives and works in Basel and Paris. He is represented by Hervé Bize Gallery (Nancy).

DOROTHY IANNONE and SARAH PUCCI

American Dorothy Iannone’s body of work can be understood as a search for “the ecstatic unit”. Carnal, platonic, but also sororal and filial love infuse her paintings, drawings and film and sound works, sometimes censured for their explicit content. Sarah Pucci, her mother, demonstrated boundless love for her only daughter, whose audacity and talent she admired. Made using inexpensive materials but with obvious care, Pucci’s five works presented here—produced from the late 1970s until her death—are examples of the dozens of similar gifts she gave to her daughter. Dorothy Iannone responded to her mother’s ex-votos with magnificent letters overflowing with love. Art, like life, cannot be built alone: the dialogues we maintain with our friends and our loved ones are what makes it rich.

Dorothy Iannone (1933-2022) and Sarah Pucci (1902-1996) were born in the United States. Both artists are represented by Air de Paris Gallery (Romainville).



Sarah Pucci, *Untitled*, 1990s. Beads, sequins, pins, foam. 26 x 26 x 10 cm. Courtesy of Air de Paris Gallery.

YOURI JOHNSON

Youri Johnson is a fictional character, born out of the book *The Secret Art of the Secret War**. He emerges from the book to become the namesake of the sculptural pieces made up of assemblages of almost votive objects, loaded with both a great tenderness and a radical cruelty. In the book, Youri is accompanied by his friend Zamir, a mercenary demon capable of splitting rocks. Zamir is said to have been enslaved by King Salomon and forced to build the temple of Jerusalem before being freed by Youri, who built an altar for him. Youri Johnson invites friends to choose a knife, which will be given to them after being transformed and exhibited. According to tradition, these friends should respond to this gift by giving him a coin, which will then be melted and marked by the blade of the corresponding knife. The pieces will be placed in the Altar to Zamir throughout the exhibition. The daggers will be presented at Crédac.

* Unfinished, unedited book.

EDIT ODERBOLZ

Following her 2018–2019 solo exhibition *Water Your Garden In The Morning* at *ER@ Alsace*, Edit Oderbolz returns to Altkirch with a few snails firmly attached to their twigs, punctuating the exhibition here and there, in direct reference to Natalie Clifford Barney's poem *Au temple de l'Amitié* in which she wrote: "Like the shell of a snail, our friendship grows by a new ring each year"*. At Crédac, she will be evoking the Temple itself with the installation of a lightweight tent, ready to freely shelter the conversations and actions of the art center's inhabitants.

* Natalie Clifford Barney, *Les merveilleuses peignées de l'Amazonie* (Paris : Mercure de France, 1939).

Born in 1966 in Switzerland, she lives and works in Basel. She is represented by Mark Müller Gallery (Zurich).

HATICE PINARBAŞI with ARAM ABBAS, ZAHRA SHAM BETAMOR,
HUGO FERRETTO and ELIF PINARBAŞI

The paintings and rugs are spaces where images appear, highlighting the existence of other spaces of belief, geometry, illusion and interior landscapes. The artist's canvases were produced by soaking household fabrics in natural streams of water with high iron content, which has healing properties. The artist then draws, paints, sews and applies make-up to this skin, upon which unfolds airy patterns suggesting a freedom conquered. A veritable tea room, her installation welcomes visitors and the art of those close to her the chandeliers are the skilled work of her father, the seats were made by the artist's mother, her partner signs the building-paintings on the rugs and a soundtrack was created by a friend. You are invited to appropriate this intimate place dedicated to dialogue and discussion.

Born in 1993 in France, she lives and works in Pantin and Pierrefitte-sur-Seine. She is represented by Gaudel Stampa Gallery (Paris).



Hatice Pinarbaşı, *Lucciola armées* [Armed Lucciola], 2023-2024. Chandeliers with chains, jewels, gleaned keys, flashing green bulb. Variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist.

MARTHE RAMM FORTUN

Marthe Ramm Fortun visited the Natalie Clifford Barney archives at the Jacques Doucet literary library in Paris, where furniture, artworks and documents that once belonged to her are kept. During her research, two boxes of hair burst open, probably Barney's hair extensions, like fragments of bodies preserved among the words. Marthe transcribes extracts of notes that resonate with her own private life, and incorporates them into her own writing. From her discoveries, she creates an installation in connection with three performances that invite the audience to question the emotions that impact the relationship between the artist, the art center and its environment. The first chapter will take place in Altkirch, the second in Ivry-sur-Seine, and the third in the area around rue Jacob, near to the Temple de l'Amitié in Paris.

Born in 1978 in Norway, she lives and works in Oslo. She is represented by Femtensesse Gallery (Oslo).



Marthe Ramm Fortun, *Life Hack: Ice Picked up from Death Notices*. Performance at Liste Art Fair Basel, June 2023. Courtesy of Femtensesse Gallery.

MARNIE SLATER with CLARE MOONAN, JUDITH GEERTS, JESSICA GYSEL, KATJA MATER, MATILDA COBATTI and ROBIN BRETTAR

Marnie Slater creates a collective piece developed with a group of close artist friends. They are in the process of renovating a building in the Molenbeek neighborhood in Brussels, where they will live and work. At the request of the local authority, three gaping holes were drilled in one of the shared walls overlooking the street and a park. As these holes expose the future balconies for all to see, and its occupants to the risk of falling, they plan to make and install metallic grates that will represent the histories, friendships and queer feminist politics that unite them. In response to our invitation, the group will interweave the life of these pieces with the exhibition by creating a version of this piece for the entrance of the @RAD@ garden and presenting the documentation of this creation at Crédac.

Born in 1980 in Wellington, (Aotearoa, New Zealand), she lives and works in Brussels. Performer, writer and editor, she is also member of the artists collective *All the Cunning Stunts*.

SARAH TRITZ

Sarah Tritz's series of drawings unveils her correspondence with a friend that spanned three years. Each envelope—containing a particular mode of communication in the form of a drawing, poem, quotation or a handmade object—nurtures a complicity built around artistic relationships to drawing and the copying of forms, notably popular icons, sketches of children and works of art brut. This heterogeneous body of work constitutes "a writing composed of symbols to be decrypted"*, agreed between them, which a friend's gaze will know how to read. The mode of communication gives the experimental forms produced in the studio a destination without their status being wholly defined. Some of these have led to finished art works. In the exhibition context, the drawings take on a new meaning; they reveal clues about Sarah Tritz's more recent work. In this way, we become the unexpected second recipients of this correspondence.

* Quoted from the artist, December 2023.

Born in 1980 in France, she lives and works in Paris. She is represented by the galleries Anna Barrault (Paris) and Florent Tosin (Berlin).



Sarah Tritz, *Πρωίη 4_Αυτοportrait εν σκευή* [Morning 4_Self-portrait in hollow], 2023. Concrete slab, pillowcase, drawings on paper, salt paste elements. 120 x 200 x 7 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

The art center

@RA@ Alsace is a contemporary art center dedicated to experimentation and creation. Through exhibitions, residencies, publications, and outreach programmes, @RA@ Alsace supports artistic production by promoting the encounter between artists, publics and works of art.

Access and practical information

@RA@ Alsace is open from Tuesday to Sunday, from 2 to 6 pm, and is closed from December 23 to 26 and on January 1. Guided tours are organized every Saturday and Sunday at 3 pm by reservation. Free entrance.

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Partners

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