

FONDATION VINCENT VAN GOGH ARLES

Communication
& Public Relations:

PIERRE COLLET | IMAGINE
T +33 1 40 26 35 26
M +33 6 80 84 87 71
COLLET@AEC-IMAGINE.COM

ALICE PROUVÉ | IMAGINE
M +06 71 47 16 33
ALICE.PROUVE@AEC-
IMAGINE.COM

VAN GOGH LIVE! SUMMER 2016

PRESS RELEASE, JUNE 2016



Encounter, Reading
& Concert

28.06–12.07.2016

Guillaume Bruère
Ben Okri
Die Polstergruppe

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INTRODUCTION

The *Van Gogh Live!* summer programme at the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles welcomes contemporary artists from various disciplines and forges fresh links with the work and life of Vincent van Gogh. For the fourth edition of this eclectic event, we are hosting three performances that celebrate artistic dialogue, the elegance and richness of poetic language, musical harmony and melodious sounds.

As every year, the Fondation's outside spaces will be adapted to welcome our public at 7.30 PM or later, once the sun starts to set. The terraces will resound with voices, the words of Guillaume Bruère, the prose of Ben Okri and the coffee-machine noises of Die Polstergruppe.

Save the date – starting 28 June!

Bice Curiger, artistic director



EVENING OPENING, 4 –10 JULY 2016

EXHIBITIONS OPEN FROM 11 AM TO 9 PM

“Van Gogh in Provence: Modernizing Tradition”

Glenn Brown: “Suffer Well”

Saskia Olde Wolbers: *Yes, These Eyes Are the Windows*

Admission: full price € 9 / reduced price € 7 / young people & students € 4 / under 12 free

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ENCOUNTER WITH **GUILLAUME BRUÈRE**

TUESDAY 28 JUNE, 7.30 PM

→Patio / Admission free

Bice Curiger, artistic director of the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles, and artist Guillaume Bruère (alias GIOM) met for the first time in 2012, at the Zurich Kunsthaus, in front of Vincent van Gogh's 1889 *Self-portrait with Pipe and Bandaged Ear*. For GIOM, it was the start of a lasting friendship with the Fondation and the city of Arles.

In summer 2013, one year prior to the opening of the Fondation, GIOM came to Arles to present ten portraits inspired by *Self-portrait with Pipe and Bandaged Ear*. He also completed a large-scale colour drawing of a female model in front of the public on the city's Place du Forum. From this live performance was born the portrait *L'Arlésienne* – another explicit reference to Van Gogh. In April 2014 GIOM took part in the inaugural exhibition *Van Gogh Live!*, at which he showed some thirty drawings. The agitated line of these works on paper expresses at once forcefulness and tentative exploration, mastery and rebellion.

His next appearance in Arles was as a highly appreciated speaker at the symposium "Van Gogh–Duchamp" in January 2015.

The Fondation is delighted to welcome Guillaume Bruère back to Arles on 28 June to talk about "My Van Gogh". GIOM, for whom Van Gogh represents the "definitive artist", will be talking about the Dutch master's oeuvre and the role that Vincent plays in his own work as an artist.

About the artist

Guillaume Bruère, alias GIOM (born 1976 in Châtelleraut, France) is a painter, draughtsman, sculptor and performer. He lives and works in Berlin. He studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Nantes and subsequently at the École Supérieure de l'Image in Poitiers, since when he has exhibited in numerous institutions, notably at the Château de Chambord in France, the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles, the MARTa Herford Museum and Galerie der Stadt Backnang in Germany, and with Nahmad Contemporary in New York.

Fragile and impulsive, colourful and liberated, his oeuvre carries with it a dazzling energy. GIOM regularly installs himself in museums in order to reinterpret major works of art directly in front of the original. Colour, the practice of collage, the search for expressivity – all these elements combine to create a unique universe in GIOM's revisitings of canvases by earlier masters, as well as in the live public performances in which the artist demonstrates, to the point of exhaustion, the physical energy that informs his work. More recently, the theatre, dance scenes and a camp for refugees have provided the settings within which he has captured reality in his striking portraits.



Guillaume Bruère in his studio. © Photo: Anton Corbijn

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READING: “STARRY NIGHT WITH BEN OKRI AND VINCENT VAN GOGH”

FRIDAY 8 JULY, 7.30 PM

→Patio / Admission free

→Reading in English

The Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles will be hosting an event that brings together the writings of Ben Okri and the presence of Vincent van Gogh. Ben Okri will be celebrating, in poetry and prose, the spirit of art and the magic of painting.

The evening will be devoted to discussions and readings about art, politics, contemplation, African artistic traditions and Vincent van Gogh. Ben Okri will share his fascination for the work of the great artist as well as read from his poems and his novels on art and artists, *In Arcadia*, *Dangerous Love* and *Starbook*.



© The Independent

About the artist

Born in 1959, Ben Okri is a Nigerian poet and novelist. After spending his early childhood in England, he moved with his family back to Nigeria. At the end of the 1970s he returned to the UK to study comparative literature at the University of Essex. He worked as a broadcaster for the BBC World Service for seven years and edited the poetry section of the London-based *West Africa* magazine between 1983 and 1986. He today lives and works in London.

His works have been translated into more than twenty languages, and his passion for poetry goes hand in hand with his social and political engagement. Having experienced the civil war in his country at first hand, Ben Okri has never ceased to denounce the corruption and military power that hold sway there.

After publishing his acclaimed first novel, *Flowers and Shadows*, in 1980, Ben Okri achieved international recognition in 1991, when he won the Booker Prize with his novel *The Famished Road*. He is also the author of *Astonishing the Gods* (1995) and *Tales of Freedom* (2010). To date he has published ten novels, three books of short stories, two collections of essays and three volumes of poems, the most recent being *Wild* (2012).

Ben Okri is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and in 2001 received an OBE. He has won numerous international prizes, including the Commonwealth Writer's Prize for Africa and the Aga Khan Prize for Fiction, and was presented a Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum.

In tandem with literature, Ben Okri also pursues an artistic career and was in fact a painter before devoting himself to poetry. His deep-rooted connection with the realm of the visual arts finds expression in his writings. Two of his novels are about artists, including *Starbook* (2007), which tells the tale of a prince and a maiden belonging to an artistic tribal community. Many of his poems are about painting and its makers. His latest novel is *The Age of Magic* (2014).

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**CONCERT: DIE POLSTERGRUPPE
WITH STEPHAN EICHER, SIMON BAUMANN, RAINIER LERICOLAIS
AND THEIR GUESTS**

MONDAY 11 & TUESDAY 12 JULY, 9 PM

→Terrace / € 25, tickets available via our website only from 20 June 2016,
subject to availability: <http://www.eticket-fvvgg.com>

"Harmony, melodious sounds and the well-being of our highly esteemed public
have been our priority since 2012!"

Simon Baumann, Rainier Lericolais, Stephan Eicher and their guests invite you
to join them on 11 and 12 July 2016 on the terrace of the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles.



© Martin Suter

1) What if Die Polstergruppe was a town?

It would be La Chaux-de-Fonds rebuilt in Central Africa – at 4° 15' 6" S, 15° 15' 11" E, to be precise.

2) What if Die Polstergruppe was a chord?

It would be A minor.

3) What if Die Polstergruppe was paying homage?

It would be a homage to Vincent; we would play in mono.

4) How should you listen to Die Polstergruppe?

Preferably at sunset, reclining on a deckchair salvaged from the wreck of the Titanic, after a good
dinner at which you've skipped dessert and coffee. Die Polstergruppe will take care of that...

5) What if Die Polstergruppe had an artistic priority?

Our motto: ruthlessly harmonious!

6) What would be the perfect place to spend an evening in company with Die Polstergruppe?

It would be a terrace still lusciously warm from the fierce Arles sun, on which we would be comfortably
installed (a *Polstergruppe* is a three-piece upholstery suite) as night falls, sipping an espresso to
stimulate the mind and sooth the stresses of the day... while the musicians follow a score specially
created for this shared moment.

7) What do I need to create my own Polstergruppe?

52 kilos of sandalwood, 25 litres of velvet, a few colour plates from a forgotten herbal, some horsehair
and cat gut, a professional coffee machine with 4 pistons... and some friends.

EXHIBITIONS FROM 14 MAY TO 11 SEPTEMBER 2016

"Van Gogh in Provence: Modernizing Tradition"

Glenn Brown: "Suffer Well"

Saskia Olde Wolbers: *Yes, These Eyes Are the Windows*

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FONDATION VINCENT VAN GOGH ARLES

35^{TER} rue du Docteur-Fanton

13200 Arles

T. : +33 (0)4 90 93 08 08

contact@fvvga.org

www.fondation-vincentvangogh-arles.org

PARTNERS



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