

Josselyn DAVID

PORTFOLIO 2025



My artistic practice takes shape through works and installations that incorporate eco-designed systems, privileging the use of recycled or second-hand materials. My work operates at the intersection of the intimate and the scientific: it draws on personal narratives, expanded through field research and inquiries rooted in the natural and social sciences. By articulating artificial and organic forms, I seek to confront the theatre of humanity with that of nature, and to question the complex relationships we maintain with our environments. Through an exploration of cycles and metamorphosis, my work proposes a sensitive reading of the ways we inhabit the world, in which material becomes the support for experiences that invite viewers to question their perceptions of reality and the frameworks through which it is understood.

After several years of research focused on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), addressing its social, medical, and political dimensions, the advent of the Anthropocene and contemporary health and ecological crises broadened my field of inquiry. My work subsequently shifted toward the processes that regulate the stability of the Earth system, and more specifically toward the eight planetary boundaries defined by Johan Rockström and his collaborators. From these thresholds - now largely exceeded - I develop projects that investigate the causes, interconnections, and consequences of these disruptions. Without adopting a moralizing stance, my practice seeks to redirect attention toward the intrinsic mechanisms within which we live and act, in order to reveal their complexity and fragility.

While material long structured my visual language, my creative process has recently evolved toward a heightened attention to the symbolic dimensions of forms, colors, and visual devices. Material is no longer necessarily central, but now accompanies the conceptual framework of the work, serving a plastic narrative attentive to the mutations, transformations, and disappearances of a living world that is often discreet.

My work thus invites a renewed attention to the processes that traverse objects, environments, and territories, and to a reconsideration of the narratives we construct about them.



Riverscape

2025

Installation, wool, acrylic wool, wood
185 x 253 cm

This work constitutes the first stage of an ambitious research and creation project centered on surface freshwater in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, in France. It was developed as part of the ARCHIPEL residency program, on the inland axis between Lille and Denain, supported by the FRAC Grand Large.

My research, focused on the Scheldt River and all of its tributaries, revealed that nearly all the region's waterways have been canalized. This transformation of the regional hydrological network results from a planning logic that, from the nineteenth century onward, reshaped landscapes to serve the metallurgical industry, coal mining, and intensive agriculture.

Today, these rivers, constrained within artificial channels, rush toward the sea without nourishing the land, causing riverbed incision and long-term structural drought. This phenomenon is exacerbated by climate change. The systematic drainage of waterways has severe ecological consequences, amplifying climatic extremes such as flooding, megafires, and droughts.

Riverscape reminds us that a river is not limited to its visible main channel, but is part of a complex and interconnected hydrological network. This work explores the transformation of a river when humans withdraw from valley bottoms and allow water to reclaim the territory. The anabranching river is then reborn, supported by a keystone species: the beaver. This mammal plays an essential role in reconnecting water to land, restoring ecological balance and strengthening the resilience of ecosystems.

Lorsque tout s'endort, les veilleurs.

2025

Installation, series of three sculptures in black stoneware, wool,

acrylic wool, branches, topsoil

Variable dimensions

« This ensemble brings together three specimens emerging from tufted wool fragments laid on the ground as a watery surface. Each is depicted in a posture emblematic of the species: one swims fully submerged with its head above water; another remains motionless in shallow water, its back and tail emerging; while the last stands upright on the bank, seemingly addressing the viewer. Like a taxidermist, the artist offers an intimate, close-up view of the beaver immersed in its environment, through the use of ceramic and textile practices. He thus creates a fictional encounter in which the viewer can rediscover the animal's features and attitudes, apprehend it concretely, and begin to sketch the outlines of new alliances that must now be forged with this animal otherness.

Baptiste Morizot reminds us that “the current ecological crisis, more than a crisis of human societies on one side and of living beings on the other, is a crisis of our relationships with the living,” and more specifically a crisis of our “sensitivity to the living,” marked by “an impoverishment of what we are able to feel, perceive, and understand.” Guided by these words, Josselyn David seeks here to cultivate this sensitivity by drawing on the poetic and sensory properties of matter. »

Excerpt from *Le vivant au bout des dents*, a text by Licia Demuro written in the context of the ARCHIPEL residency, supported by the FRAC Grand Large.

<https://josselyndavid.fr/actu/>







Les cavaliers de l'apocalypse

2025

Unique series of four screen prints with slip on earthenware,
pewter
34 x 41 cm each

This series draws on the idea of the *horsemen of the climate apocalypse*, a concept first introduced by Johan Rockström and his colleagues, who identified four major threats to humanity: famine and malnutrition, extreme weather events, conflicts, and vector-borne diseases.

In *Rendre l'eau à la terre*, Baptiste Morizot reformulates these horsemen in light of current environmental challenges: megafires, floods, droughts, and biodiversity loss. He highlights the key role of the beaver in combating these disasters. Through its dams, the beaver promotes water retention, transforming arid soils into wetlands capable of mitigating floods, slowing fires, reducing droughts, and creating refuges for biodiversity from which life can re-emerge after catastrophe.

This series imagines a dystopian future in which climate catastrophe is omnipresent, materialized through warning signs similar to the familiar "Fire hazard" signs. The three new signs that accompany it symbolize a world in which such warnings would be everywhere, underscoring the urgency of the ecological crisis and the need for immediate awareness. The beaver forelegs supporting each plaque recall the crucial role of this animal in safeguarding biodiversity and limiting natural disasters.



Traces

2025

Two bas-reliefs in black, sandblasted, and white stoneware
15.5 × 21.7 cm each

« In a play of contrasts and textures, Josselyn David created *Traces*, a series of stoneware bas-reliefs reconstructing photographic details in which the marks left by the rodent in the landscape can be discerned. The hollows carved by the beaver's teeth into tree trunks are revealed through chromatic differences between black, orange, and white stoneware.

Like the animal, the artist scraped the clay soil, revealing lighter underlying layers. While such signs were once tracked by hunters, today, when observed, they are more often interpreted as signs of hope - signs to which the artist pays tribute. »

Excerpt from *Le vivant au bout des dents*, a text by Licia Demuro written in the context of the ARCHIPEL residency, supported by the FRAC Grand Large.





Ce que le bois retient

2025

Series of three screen prints in black and silver ink on 180 g paper, unique edition
62.5 × 110 cm each

In continuity with the stoneware bas-reliefs of *Traces*, this series draws on photographic close-ups taken within the tangled branches of an abandoned beaver lodge. With a diameter of approximately eight meters, the structure suggests the former presence of the beaver on this territory. Probably inhabited for a time, only the wood remains, becoming a bearer of memory, preserving in its texture and entanglements the entire history of a passage: construction, habitation, and abandonment.



Le guetteur

2025

Digital print on 120 g paper

111.5 x 196 cm

This photograph shifts the focus toward the interior of the beaver lodge itself. The image, which seems to open a breach into this intimate space, places the human gaze in a position of waiting and observation, alert to the slightest trace of animal activity. Through this framing, the viewer becomes witness to a deferred encounter, as if awaiting the return of the lodge's inhabitant. The work thus plays on the ambivalence of our relationship to the living: fascination with a hidden presence, coupled with an awareness of our intrusion into a space that does not belong to us. *Le guetteur* resonates with the suspended time of waiting, reminding us that any coexistence with the beaver requires listening, patience, and heightened attention to the subtle signs of its existence.





©Rolan Dropsy

Pelouse interdite

2023

Installation 1/2, soil, rammed earth, lawn, water, horticultural fleece, threads, wood, pump, steel
Variable dimensions

Pelouse interdite is an in situ installation produced during a three-month residency at the Pavillon d'octroi with the Tours-based organization Mode d'Emploi. The residency was supported by the regional call for projects *Transition écologique et résilience* (Centre-Val de Loire). The installation was eco-designed, with approximately 90% of its materials sourced from recycled or second-hand elements.

Spread across two floors, the work invites viewers to reflect on changes in land use, and more specifically on the consequences of urbanization and the gentrification of territories.

On the ground floor, the space is filled with soil taken from a suburban housing construction site, scattered with patches of lawn around six vertical rammed-earth structures. An underground system - consisting of a water reservoir drawing from the Loire River and a pump - creates a programmed irrigation cycle, producing rainfall inside the pavilion. Suspended overhead, a large stitched map made of horticultural fleece traces the topography and both historical and contemporary human-made constructions of part of the municipality of Meung-sur-Loire, the town of my childhood.

(...)



Pelouse interdite

2023

Installation 2/2

Soil, wood, oil on canvas, builder's props, horticultural fleece,
threads, embroidery hoops

Variable dimensions

(...)

Having lived for eighteen years in the same family home, originally located at the edge of farmland in the municipality of Meung-sur-Loire, I have observed year after year the steady increase of new constructions. The fields of my childhood - their rapeseed, roe deer, and hares - have today been replaced by residential neighborhoods and industrial buildings. *Pelouse interdite* is shaped by this transformation and by an image that remains deeply personal to me.

On the upper floor of the pavilion, the focus narrows. Fragments of the fleece map are brought into relief, playing with topographical reality. Through the builder's props, the image of a house under construction evokes the mutation or disappearance of spaces and their biodiversity.

As part of this end-of-residency presentation, the canvas shown on the following page remains unfinished.



les vies passées

2024

Series of eight embroideries on horticultural fleece, nails
30 x 38 cm

This series of embroideries follows the same production process as the large-scale cartography used in the installation *Pelouse interdite*. Reduced in scale, these fragments refocus attention on the places that shaped my childhood. These cartographic elements weave together the histories of Meung-sur-Loire and the transformations of this territory.



Nous ne verrons plus le soleil se coucher sur la grève.

2023

Stoneware, steel, demijohn, pump, servomotor, oyster shell, demineralized water, L.100 x l.100 x h.110 cm

This sculpture operates on the principle of a fountain, in which water circulates in a closed loop over a seven-minute cycle. During the first phase, water gradually fills a large metal basin, progressively submerging the sculpture placed within it. After five minutes of "drowning," the servomotor signals the valve to drain the basin, allowing the water to flow into the demijohn and enabling the sculpture to re-emerge.

Through the use of natural materials rendered inert, the work stages a confrontation between human control and the unpredictability of nature. It presents viewers with a constant oscillation between catastrophe and the world's capacity for resilience.

Video excerpt available on the artist's website.
<https://josselyndavid.fr/nousneverronsplus/>







Les mangeurs de terre

2023
Oil on canvas,
L.200 x l.120 cm

Drawing on a concept developed by Déborah Danowski and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro - the human as an "earth eater" - this painting addresses the anthropogenic exploitation of the Earth's crust, particularly through industrial maize cultivation.

The work bears witness to the consequences of the overexploitation of natural resources driven by monoculture, contributing to the degradation of plant cover and the desertification of territories.

Ce qu'il en reste

2022

Oil on canvas, wax and wicks

Two interchangeable canvases: 100 x 80 cm

Monoliths: P.10 x h.200 cm

Ce qu'il en reste is an installation composed of four sculptures and a painting. The cylindrical form of the monoliths recalls that of ice cores - samples extracted from ice caps that allow the study of past environmental variations, sometimes reaching back hundreds of thousands of years. As a key tool of paleoclimatology, ice cores make it possible to reconstruct the environmental conditions of successive geoclimatic periods and to better understand present and future climate evolution.

Climate warming, however, is causing the retreat of glaciers, leading to the large-scale destruction of this scientific and historical archive.

Here, the sculptures transform and metamorphose - sometimes under the heat of their central flames, sometimes under the greenhouse effect of the exhibition space. Their melting or gradual collapse lends them an ephemeral quality, leaving visitors with only "what remains," while the painting preserves their memory, acting as a portrait of their disappearance.





156 lendemains de pluie

2021

Molded paraffin wax

Variable dimensions

Composed of 156 mushrooms distributed throughout the space, this work refers to the well-known saying "after the rain comes sunshine." Here, the number of mushrooms corresponds to the number of days in a year during which a person living with HIV and undergoing so-called "quadruple therapy" does not need to take medication.

Ol Doinyo Lengai

2021-2022

Paraffin wax on wood, steel base

Variable dimensions, approx. L.80 x h.40 cm

The three *Ol Doinyo Lengai* sculptures were created using a machine functioning as a tool. They echo the unique volcano of the same name, located in northern Tanzania, which emits lava as fluid as water and which turns white as it dries.

Suspended between danger, beauty, and fragility, this dormant material here alludes to HIV lying latent within bodily fluids.





Hypnagogie

2020 - 2021

Wax, pressure cooker, steel, servomotor, Arduino

board, canvas, acrylic paint

L.900 x l.300 x h.87 cm

Thanks to a servomotor controlling the opening and closing of a valve, this performative sculpture generates abstract landscapes by expelling a small quantity of wax every twenty seconds. It is a long process, which comes to an end only once the available wax has been completely exhausted. Once finished, the wax dries and can then be recovered and reintroduced into the machine.

This establishes a continuous cycle of construction and destruction, in which chance and accident are fully integral to the creative process.

Video excerpt available on the artist's website.

<https://josselyndavid.fr/hypnagogie/>

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Born in 1997 in Orléans (France), I live in Tours and have a workspace at the Ateliers de la Morinerie in Saint-Pierre-des-Corps.

I hold a *Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique* (DNSEP), art option, obtained with congratulations from the jury in 2021 from the École Supérieure d'Art et de Design TALM-Tours. During my studies, I worked as an assistant to several artists, including Peter Briggs, Olivier de Sagazan, Vincent Ganivet and Vivien Roubaud. These experiences have nourished my practice and contributed to the development of a relationship to work grounded in experimentation, making, and dialogue between forms.

Since graduating, my work has developed both in the studio and through research and creation residencies. I notably took part in the *Booster* program led by the Tours-based organization Mode d'emploi, as well as in the *ARCHIPEL* program of the FRAC Grand-Large, with public presentations in Denain and Lille. My trajectory has also been enriched by residencies carried out in collective or institutional contexts, as well as by extended research projects at the Ateliers de la Morinerie and within partner structures.

Alongside my artistic practice, I am involved in collective and associative dynamics. In 2020, I co-founded the collective *Bruit Contemporain*, within which I took part, until 2025, in the conception and implementation of projects of creation, residencies, events, and platforms for dissemination and mediation around contemporary creation. In the same spirit of exchange and transmission, I carried out cultural mediation activities, notably at the Château-du-Plessis between 2021 and 2022, working with a wide range of audiences, including those prevented from or distant from the cultural field. I am currently a member of the board of directors of devenir.art, the visual arts network in the Centre-Val de Loire region.

Solo exhibitions

2025 SCALDIS, ARCHIPEL residence, FRAC Grand-Large, EAP, Denain
2025 SCALDIS, ARCHIPEL residence, FRAC Grand-Large, CAPV, Lille
2025 *Untitled*, BLAST residence, Angers
2023 *Pelouse interdite*, Booster residence, Mode d'Emploi, Tours

Group exhibitions

2025 *La céramique et ses états*, Ateliers de la Morinerie, Saint-Pierre-des-Corps
2023 *Bruit s'octroie les Beaumonts*, Les Beaumonts, Tours
2023 *Têtes d'affiche / Concert à vernir*, Fondation du doute, Blois
2022 *Les Vibrations du monde*, Espace Chabrier, Saint-Pierre-des-Corps
2022 */topographies d'une fuite*, L'îlot Sauvage, Niort
2022 *Dissidents de salon : lieu commun*, Ateliers de la Morinerie, Saint-Pierre-des-Corps
2022 *Exposition des usagers*, Château du Plessis, La Riche
2022 *Apparitions 2022*, Chapelle de l'Hôtel-Dieu (Ar[T]senal), Dreux
2021 *Images d'une pensée sauvage*, private barn, Saint-Hilaire-la-Palud
2019 *Oh les beaux jours !* ESAD TALM-Tours
2018 *REP'ART*, Hôtel GOÜIN, Tours
2018 *Dispositifs Paysages*, Véron Eco-museum, Savigny en Véron
2018 *CCCODernier étage*, private apartment, Tours
2018 *Start up my ass*, ESAD TALM-Tours
2017 *Un regard à part*, La Laverie, La Riche

Awards - grants

2025 Research grant for artistic practice, ADAGP

Residencies

Soon

2026 54-day residency, Usine Utopik, Tisy-Bocage

2026 Residency in an agricultural high school, agrocampus de Fondettes

2025 Residency with the Collectif Blast, Angers

2025 Residency ARCHIPEL, FRAC Grand-Large, EAP, Denain

2024 Residency ARCHIPEL, FRAC Grand-Large, CAPV, Lille

2023 Research residency "Booster" with Mode d'emploi, Tours

2022 Research residency at Maison Artagon, Vitry-aux-Loges

2021-22 Residency "Les affluentes" at the Ateliers de la Morinerie, Saint-Pierre-des-Corps, in partnership with ESAD TALM-Tours, CCCOD and the Ateliers de la Morinerie

2018 Creative residency at the Véron Eco-museum, Savigny en Véron

Collective work - associative involvement

2023-26 Member of the board of directors of devenir.art, visual arts network in the Centre-Val de Loire region

2025 Collective creation projects with Bruit Contemporain

2024-25 Design and construction of a GIREL 3E kiln at the Ateliers de la Morinerie, Saint-Pierre-des-Corps
Implementation of the "CUISSON-ÉVÉNEMENTS"

2023-25 Design and implementation of the residency "Pied-à-terre" with Bruit Contemporain, private barn, Saint-Hilaire-la-Palud
Organization of end-of-residency public presentations

2020-25 Founder and active member of Bruit Contemporain, an artists' collective

2023-24 Co-treasurer of devenir.art, a network of visual arts in the Centre-Val de Loire region

2024 Curator for the graduate exhibition of ESAD TALM-Tours 2024, "C'est le réveil qui nous tue", Château de Tours, with Bruit Contemporain

Conferences - workshops - cultural mediation

Soon

2026 Artist working with second-year DNMAD students, Lycée Choiseul, Tours

2025 Conference during the residency ARCHIPEL, FRAC Grand-Large, EAP, Denain

2024 Conference *Être artiste après l'école*, with Eve Champion, as part of the exhibition *C'est le réveil qui nous tue*, ESAD TALM-Tours

2024 Conference during the residency ARCHIPEL, FRAC Grand-Large, CAPV, Lille

2024 Été culturel «*Du récit à l'image en série*», screen printing workshops with the CSC of Mauzé-sur-le-Mignon and the EHPAD Les Glycines of Saint-Hilaire-la-Palud

2023-24 Artist-instructor – program "Les arts à l'école", Maupassant-Montjoyeux school, Tours

2023 Mediator at Les Madères, Olivier Debré's studio, Festival Artchipel, Vernou-sur-Brenne

2023 End-of-residency conference *Pelouse Interdite*, CCCOD, Tours

2023 Facilitator for the Fondation Culture et Diversité, "Égalité des Chances en école d'Art et de Design" program, ESAD TALM-Tours

2022 Art education and cultural action workshop as part of "Apparitions 2022", Chapelle de l'Hôtel-Dieu, Dreux

2021-22 Civic service volunteer in cultural mediation, Château du Plessis, La Riche

Assistantships - collaborations

2019 Vivien Roubaud – assistant for the creation of Sucre cristal n°3, presented during Nuit Blanche Paris 2019, at the inauguration of Km 7 and at FIAC Paris

2019 Olivier de Sagazan – assistant for the production of the performance La messe de l'âne

2019 Vincent Ganivet – assistant for the creation of Silo

2018 Peter Briggs – assistant for the creation of the installation Dhadha, presented in 2019 in the exhibition Biomorphisme at La Friche de la Belle de Mai, Marseille

Education and training

2025 Introduction to stained glass, CERFAV, Vannes-le-Chatel

2024 Training on fundamentals related to VHSS, AFSO Grand Sud

2023 Cycle Arts Visuels, professional training and mentoring for artists

2022 Téléphérique by Maze, professional training for artists

2022 Driving licence (category B)

2021 Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique (art option), with congratulations from the jury, ESAD TALM-Tours

2019 Diplôme National d'Art (art option), ESAD TALM-Tours

2015 Brevet d'Aptitude aux Fonctions d'Animateur