ALMINE RECH

FORCES VIVES

Jun 16 — Nov 11, 2024 | Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval, Hauterives, France

The *FORCES VIVES* exhibition was born of the discovery of photographs taken by Lee Miller during her visit in 1930s, and the strong desire to work with one of the most fascinating artists: Claire Tabouret.

An artist with an incredible destiny, Lee Miller was at once the muse of the greatest artists, a model and a war photographer. In the summer of 1937, Lee Miller, who was living in Egypt at the time, visited Europe alongside Roland Penrose, a surrealist artist and exhibition curator whom she had met a few weeks earlier.

The couple visited the south of England, before crossing France to join Dora Maar, Pablo Picasso, Paul and Nusch Eluard in Mougins on the Côte d'Azur.
On the way, they stopped at Hauterives to discover the Palais idéal, where Lee took a series of photographs. In October 1937, Lee Miller returned to Egypt, far from Roland Penrose who was returning to England. Two photo albums were made to commemorate the first summer they spent together, carefully preserving all the images of the Palais idéal inside. Exhibited for the first time, these photographs tell a page in the history of art and photography at the Palais idéal, and reveal the intimate and personal bond that linked the work of the postman to one of the most famous photographers of the 20th century.

Claire Tabouret's project for the Palais idéal is an experiment in time.
Born during the confinement, the dialogue with the artist around the postman has resulted in the creation of several works specially designed to echo the story of the postman Cheval.

Driven by her sensitivity to the passage of time and the vulnerability of human relationships, Claire Tabouret's artistic practice is punctuated by periods of productive urgency and silent reflection, animated by patinas of layers, fabrics and broad brushstrokes. Her palette is suspended somewhere in the ether between the synthetic hues of make-up and the subdued tones of earth, referring simultaneously to the natural and artificial ingredients of representation.
Among other creations for the exhibition, Claire Tabouret is producing for the first time a tapestry specially woven in one of Aubusson's most prestigious workshops... and a fountain echoing Ferdinand Cheval's wish.

In her introductory text on Lee Miller (published by Editions Delpire), Kate Winslet uses the title ‘Force vive’ to describe the woman whose role she played on screen. In dialogue with the Lee Miller archives, we thought that this title could clearly be extended to Claire Tabouret and, beyond that, to the postman Cheval.

— Frédéric Legros, exhibition curator and Director of the Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval