ALMINE RECH

Ryan Schneider
Ceux qui nous guident / Last Human Teachers

Jun 27 — Nov 23, 2025 | La Citadelle – Centre d'art & Musée, Villefranche-sur-Mer, France

A primal, almost sacred tension between hand and matter. A way of inhabiting gesture, of exalting it until it leaves its mark. At La Citadelle, Ryan Schneider devised a journey that unfolded through the gardens, inner courtyards, and ramparts, as well as within a chapel—inhabiting the hidden corners of the monument from June to November 2025.

The project sprang from a desire that has driven La Citadelle and its art center since 2022: to offer an artist a space for creation rooted in both a region and a historic site—a fertile playground for exploration and encounters. Ryan Schneider's residency at La Citadelle during May and June 2025 allowed for a complete immersion, both physical and spiritual, into the atmosphere of the place. Here, the artist scrapes, carves, strikes wood and stone in a visceral confrontation with matter. Some works were born in the Joshua Tree desert, where the artist lives. Others emerged within the very walls of La Citadelle, in rhythm with Mediterranean days, shifting shadows, the wind, and the filtered light cast through ancient stones.

Bronze, carved wood, totemic forms—each piece tests the limits of its material and extends an ancestral gesture, one that binds humanity to nature, to spirits, to intimate points of reference.
The exhibition offers a sensory passage, an inner journey as much as an outer one. The monumental figures marking the path seem to stand watch, to observe, to enter into dialogue with the ancient stones of La Citadelle. In the vaulted chambers, a video projection revealed the intimacy of the process: the wood giving way, splinters flying, the sculptor's sweat—traces of a dream of form, of a struggle between materials.

This marks Ryan Schneider's first exhibition in Europe. The dialogue between his singular practice and the monumental presence of the site gives rise to a rare, inhabited, organic proposition—an invitation to slow down, to see differently, to feel.

— Camille Frasca, curator

Ryan Schneider's solo exhibition at La Citadelle will showcase over forty works spread across more than three hectares. The gardens, courtyards, and interior spaces of La Citadelle will offer a unique journey where creative energies converge. This dynamic experience will first be embodied by the artist himself, who works intensively with sculpture-carving, scraping, and forcefully shaping wood and stone, sometimes translating his gestures into bronze, constantly questioning the limits of the material.
The exhibition will also present a mix of works created in Joshua Tree -where the artist resides-alongside new pieces produced during his residency at La Citadelle. Some sculptures will have been crafted with the assistance of a robotic sculptor, challenging the role of the creator and exploring the power of unexpected collaborations. This exhibition will merge the monumentality of La Citadelle with the exceptional work of Ryan Schneider, offering audiences a first-time discovery of his art in Europe.