



Photos Eric Sander

La couleur des éléments par Stefan Lafort et Joachim Wurster (Allemagne). Un jardin rigoureux qui joue sur la puissance du rouge des végétaux, de leurs contenants et sur le mouvement de l'eau.



## Chaumont With Flying Colors



Ultra Violet par Marie Trifany Hamon Delgado, Florence Mottes, Anne Elise Hamon, Pierre Alexandre Marchevet et Eric Gentils (France). Un jardin qui joue avec les limites perceptibles de la couleur.

Michel Pastoureau, a leading expert in the history of color, presided over the panel of judges of the Festival International des Jardins de Chaumont sur Loire. A little over a dozen contestants were selected among the professionals and five from the schools. Five "Green Cards" were awarded, namely to Patrick Blanc the designer of the vertical garden, and to artist Christophe Cuzin who uses drawings and color in spatial situations.

It would be difficult to report on all the buzz around the Chaumont sur Loire chateau as it has become the new International Events Center which positions it on the European map of research centers. It hosts more and more prestigious contemporary art exhibitions: a chef runs its restaurant and Sylvain Bigot thanks to his collaboration with Philips is in charge of lighting it up. The fame of the building strengthens that of the Festival which since its creation in 1992 has continued in its innovation efforts and support of research in garden design.

This year the color theme has inspired an experimental vegetable which reinvents itself with extinct indigenous species. On the internet one can view a symbolic simulation of the evolution of a garden which is governed only by natural dynamics in order to communicate possible scenarios derived from a completely ecological design using techniques that support it. Another point to be noted in the area of innovation is the comeback of Patrick Blanc who in 1994 presented the first perennial vertical garden. Although his invention saw the light of day at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, this botanist considers Chaumont as the launching pad of his international recognition. Since that time Patrick Blanc has also been experimenting with ceiling gardens and for this festival's edition, by folding a giant leaf onto itself he developed the concept of a vegetable cave.

The color theme also justified the invitation extended to Christophe Cuzin, a painter who for the past few years has abandoned canvasses and who paints only in concrete spatial situations. Therefore this was for him an ideal opportunity to create a composition on the ground with lines of colors which is in the same vein as his paintings with color patches, except for the foliage incursion. However, in his very research the artist has stopped confusing the surface of a canvas with that of a garden a long time ago. On the other hand, we may very well deplore that confusion in the composition of the Jardin Tableau by Xavier Marie and Mona Robert which was selected among the competing entries.

The panel of judges presided over by the famous color historian Michel Pastoureau was particularly taken by the installation by the Deco Cornette Studio. Although Odile Decq is known for her flamboyant use of colors in architecture here her project goes in the opposite direction with a black non-vegetable garden. In fact, everything in her garden is artificial, starting with the pretentious black monochrome scheme through which the architect posits that a garden is an enclosed plot of land in nature for the body to walk around in. This beautiful architectural project is in contrast with the childish proposal by Christophe Robin, a hair colorist whom one fails to understand why he was asked to design a garden in the first place.

Festival International des Jardins de Chaumont sur Loire through October 18, 2009. [www.domaine-chaumont.fr](http://www.domaine-chaumont.fr)