

**Oijha – Art and Ethics from Antarctica**

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**Press release**

## **THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF FRANCE IN ANTARCTICA**

**« GAMMA – Growth of Antarctic Mindful Modern Art »**



*« Adélie Land welcomes for the first time contemporary art  
in a brave and innovative perspective ».*

Cécile Pozzo di Borgo, Prefect, High Commissioner  
of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF)

*« Oijha did it :  
to bring the visitor to feel the spectacular and powerful energy of this polar environment ».*

Dr. Yves Frenot, Director  
of the French Polar Institute (IPEV)

*"This exhibition, located in the very core of the Dumont d'Urville station, echoes and resonates  
with the spectacular beauty of the frozen landscape around us".*

Serge Fuster  
Head of the Adélie Land District

## 1 Abstract :

The GAMMA event « Growth of Antarctic Mindful Modern Art », is a contemporary art exhibition initiated by the French visual artist Oijha, **with the partnership of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF) and the French Polar Institute (IPEV)**. It takes place in the Dumont d'Urville scientific station, Adelie Land, Antarctica, year-round 2017.

This exhibition is **a dream come true to share the polar experience and the universal values of the Antarctic, dedicated to peace, science and environmental protection**. Oijha relies on her experience as a PhD in international law for Antarctica to promote the beauty and the fragility of this unique place on Earth. After several missions to the poles and 15 years at the service of the Antarctic law and diplomacy in France and abroad, Oijha makes the choice of contemporary art as a tool to promote what she considers as a treasure for Mankind : the Southern Ocean and the Antarctic continent. Committed to this cause, **she is the first artist to make Land Art in the Arctic and the Antarctic : with circles of pure gold on rocks – the lastest one being finalist of the Berlin International Social Art Award 2017**.

Hence, on the 7<sup>th</sup> January of 2017, the GAMMA exhibition embarks onboard the polar ship *L'Astrolabe* to reach Adelie Land, where it is welcomed by the members of the 67<sup>th</sup> French Expedition. Dedicated to the women and men working for Antarctica, GAMMA is a minimalist art expedition, made of seven paintings as a tribute to this unique region.

Because nothing compares to the vertigo of being in Antarctica, **Oijha also want to share the human adventure, gathering the impressions of the wintering members of the Dumont d'Urville station on their sensible experience of Antarctica. These impressions are collected in a booklet currently under press.**

The GAMMA exhibition is part of this History where art and science walk along towards the common goal of initiating Man to the beauty of the world. As a pionneer art expedition, it is an invitation to poetry and a powerful too to promote the intrinsic values of Antarctica.

**At the beginning of 2018, the GAMMA exhibition will embark onboard the new icebraker *L'Astrolabe* to reach Hobart in Tasmania, and then France and Europe, where it will be open to the public.**

Dates and places of the GAMMA exhibition 2018 to be released in: [www.oijha.com](http://www.oijha.com) and [facebook.com/oijhafromantarctica](https://facebook.com/oijhafromantarctica)



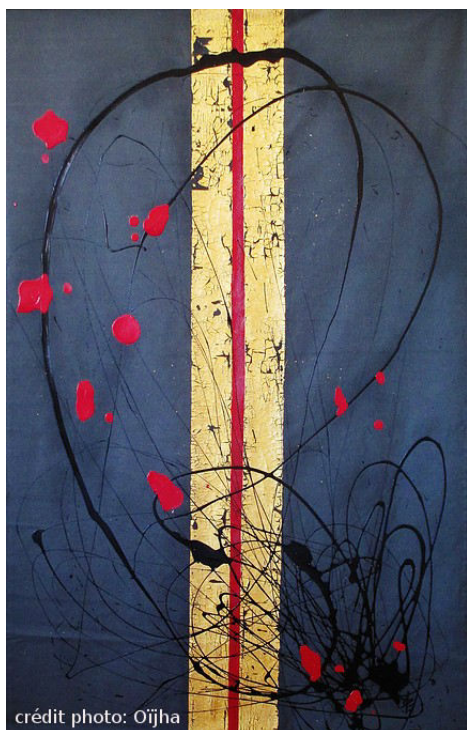
*Location of the GAMMA exhibition,  
Dumont d'Urville station,  
Adelie Land, Antarctica.*



« Antarctic consciousness »  
Pure gold on a rock  
Adelie Land, Antarctica



« Arctic Consciousness »  
Pure gold on a rock  
Ilulissat, Arctic



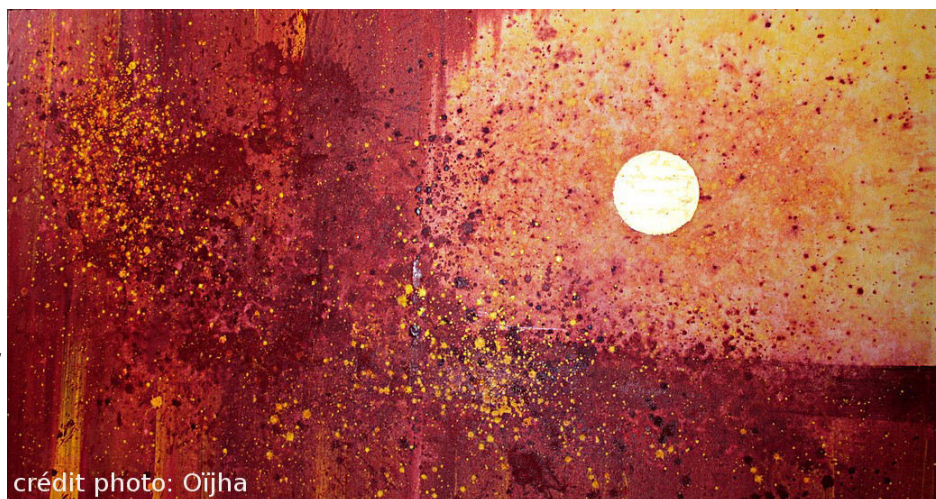
crédit photo: Oijha

« Introspection »  
Pure gold and acrylic on canvas  
96 x 154 cm



crédit photo: Oijha

« Selfie – Timeframed »  
Pure gold and acrylic on canvas  
215 x 150 cm



crédit photo: Oijha

« Ilulissat IV »  
Pure gold and acrylic on canvas  
90 x 160 cm



## 2 Selection of press releases and interviews (in French. Also in : [www.oijha.com](http://www.oijha.com)) :

**"The GAMMA exhibition in Dumont d'Urville Antarctic", French Southern and Antarctic Lands - TAAF, 2017.**

**Berlin International Social Art Award, official finalists book, 2017.** Antarctic Consciousness, 2017.

**"An exhibition of Modern Art in Antarctica", Institut Polaire Paul-Emile Victor - IPEV, 2017.**

**"The "GAMMA" exhibition in Dumont d'Urville",** blog, Head of Adelie Land District, 2017.

**"Art work from Oijha for the TAAF",** Le Monde Philatélique 19 janvier 2017, Pierre Jullien.

**"Appointment of the new Head of Adelie Land District",** TAAF, 2014.

**Interview "Ann-Isabelle GUYOMARD dances on canvas",** Centre of Research in Arts and Conservation Heritage of Toulon, A. Antolini, France 2014.

**Interview "Ann-Isabelle GUYOMARD, artist and researcher, makes a unique link between Art and Science",** CRACP, A. Antolini, Toulon, 2011.

## 3 A partnership of excellence : the TAAF and IPEV institutions :



[www.taaf.fr](http://www.taaf.fr)  
[www.institut-polaire.fr](http://www.institut-polaire.fr)



Adelie Land is the sector of Antarctica claimed by France. It is administrated by the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF), while science and the logistics are directed by the French Polar Institute (IPEV). These institutions work together to maintain peace, science and environmental protection in Adelie Land. This sector is administrated by a Head of District.



Thanks to these partners, the GAMMA exhibition has reached in January 2017 the Dumont d'Urville station in Adelie Land.

**The TAAF and IPEV manage the Dumont d'Urville polar station** : located on the Petrels Island, archipelago of Point Geologie, 5km away from the Antarctic continent. During winter (from March to November), the station shelters 30 persons (the wintering team) working for logistics and science. The station is composed of 50 buildings : a social mainroom, bedrooms, laboratories and technical rooms. These installations are adapted to the harsh weather conditions, with temperatures between 0°C to minus 35°C, long polar nights and catabatic winds sometimes over 300km/h.

Five time per year, during the austral summer when the ocean is free from the ice, the *L'Astrolabe* reaches the Dumont d'Urville station, 2700 km away from Hobart. **The former *L'Astrolabe* has done her last voyage in Adelie Land in February 2017. The new *L'Astrolabe*, baptised in Concarneau, France, last July, will replace her for the next rotation in October 2017.**

#### 4 Curriculum vitae Oïjha

Name Ann-Isabelle Guyomard alias Oïjha  
 Birth 18th of March, in Caen, Normandy, France  
 Contact and website [contact@oijha.com](mailto:contact@oijha.com)/ [www.oijha.com](http://www.oijha.com)



#### Personal exhibitions (selection) :

**"GAMMA – Growth of Antarctic Mindful Modern Art", mixed techniques on canvas, Dumont d'Urville station, Adelie Land, Antarctica**

"Reunion Island consciousness", Land Art, Reunion Island, 2017.

"Junee River consciousness", Land Art, Tasmania, Australia, 2016.

**"Antarctic consciousness", Land Art, Adelie Land, Antarctica, 2015.**

"Dance on canvas", mixed techniques on canvas, O'Baya, Saint Pierre, Reunion Island, 2015.

"Eskif", mixed techniques on canvas, CheZot, Saint Joseph, Reunion Island, 2014.

**"Ilulissat", Land Art, Greenland, Arctic, 2012.**

"Cathédrale", performance, EDMC, Toulon Cathedral, France, 2011.

"Ravages", mixed techniques on canvas and Land Art, Galerie du Carrousel, Toulon, France, 2011.

#### Awards

**Berlin International Social Art Award, Finalist 2017, « Antarctic Consciousness », Land Art.**

**National Excellence Prize in Law of the Sea, Chancellerie of the Universities of Paris, French Prime Minister M. François Fillon, 2011.**



**"Talent of Arts" Award, Centre of Research in Arts and Conservation Heritage, Toulon, France,**

2011.

**Public collection :** [Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises](#), Saint Pierre, Reunion Island.

**Publications (in French) :**

[The environmental protection of Antarctica](#), thesis of PhD in International Law, University of Nantes, France, 2010.

[The protection of the cultural heritage of Antarctica](#), in The Cultural Heritage of Mandking, Academy of International Law, The Hague, Leiden/Boston, pp. 687-727, 2007.

**Education**

**2012-2017:** Company « Accords Klan Destin », contemporary dance, direction T. Jourdain, Reunion Island.

**2010-2011:** Centre for Research in Arts and Heritage Conservation of Toulon, Edition des Musées et de la Culture, direction A. Antolini.

**2006-2010:** Company « Taille Unique », contemporary dance, direction Françoise Chedmail, Nantes University.

**2003-2010 :** PhD in International Law for Antarctica, direction J-P. Beurier, University of Nantes, France.

## 5 Biography of Oïjha :



*The visual artist Oïjha, Dr. Ann-Isabelle Guyomard, with M. Michel Rocard, former Prime Minister of France, and Ambassador for the Poles. French delegation to the 37th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, Brazil, 2014.*

**Dr Ann-Isabelle Guyomard, alias Oïjha, is a French contemporary artist, altogether scientific and artistic, body-related and spiritual.** She grew up in Norway and is fascinated by polar regions. In 2010, she graduates as a Doctor in International Law for Antarctica from the University of Nantes (France). **The French Prime Minister Mr François Fillon grants her PhD thesis with the National Excellence Prize in Law of the Sea (2011).** Oïjha uses her knowledge and skills to create **Land Art both in the Antarctic and the Arctic.** Influenced by Andy Goldsworthy, her art is a tool to promote environmental values as she organizes photographic exhibitions, publishes on the protection of the Cultural Heritage of Mankind (The Hague), and makes sculptures using natural and industrial materials. The colors of her paintings relate to polar environment and deep sea. She also uses pure gold leaves to play with the light and as a symbol of transcendence. In 2011, she is awarded "Talent of Contemporary Art" by the Research Center in Arts and Heritage Conservation, Toulon (France).

### *Polar Dynamic*

Pure gold and acrylic on canvas, 2016

Museum of the French Southern and Antarctic  
Lands, Reunion Island



As a PhD, she continues to **work with the administration of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF, Reunion Island) and cooperates with the French Polar Institute (IPEV), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Paris), the former Prime Minister, Ambassador for the Poles, late Mr Michel Rocard, the Secretariat for the Antarctic Treaty (Buenos Aires) and the Commission for the Conservation of Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR, Hobart)**. Art is nonetheless the core of her life. She joins several contemporary dance companies and develops a unique body language, directed by the choreographers F. Chedmail, C. Amato and T. Jourdain. She performs her own plays every year at the International Dance Festival of Reunion Island. In 2015, her exhibition "Dance on canvas" shows new paintings with large canvas on which the dancing body is used as a tool, after Yves Klein, but also with dripping movements after Jackson Pollock. In her studio, she builds big size canvas and includes natural elements to the large quantities of paint. The chromatics is polar and deep, the movement is minimalist, powerful and precise, the use of pure gold remains.

In 2016, she graduates from the School of High Studies in Sophrology (Paris) and explores the inter-related physical and spiritual dimensions of the human, following the perception "the body is the consciousness, the consciousness is the body". This intimate and transcendent approach gives birth to sculptures of human organs in state of ecstasy - like in her polar experience: in the nine sculptures of "Antarctic Organic - Feminine", **the tissues, the members and the bones turn into gold and link the profane and sacred sides of the human**. In this minimalist conception, the human being is no more than its vertical axis, a columns, a gold circle on the ground between Earth and sky, a door to the inner infinity of its own self. Oïjha redefines the concept of the human in time and space, melting altogether its energy and body, ready for an exploration in its infinite small parts - intracosmos - and infinite large universe - extracosmos. She goes into research, dance and painting with the objective of revealing the consciousness of being polar and organizes in 2017 **with the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF) and the French Polar Institute (IPEV) the first exhibition in Adélie Land, Antarctica: "GAMMA - Growth of Antarctic Mindful Modern Art"**. **She is finalist of the Berlin International Social Art Award 2017** for her Land Art work "Antarctic Consciousness", presenting a gold circle on a rock of Adelie Land.

She produces a complete body of work which demonstrates an overall signature with **the "Oïjha's gesture": a unique, wide, powerful and precise movement in polar colors with pure gold**. The use of large canvas enables an immediate dance expression and makes a link between the visible and the invisible, the energetic and the body. It deals with the universal intimacy, our common core as humans and the perpetual movement inherent to life. Her minimalist style enables the silence and the raise of what exists here and now, in solitude. As her art is about perceiving the infinity within two breaths and the enjoyment of senses, she gets inspiration from Marina Abramovic and Ma Liuming while performing contemporary dance plays.

**For Oïjha, painting, creating Land Art and dancing all come from the same source** and are translations of a same state of being. Following the iceberg symbol, she explores the link between the consciousness and the subconscious in many paintings, such as "Contact" where a thin layer of



gold meets an immensity of undiscovered gold, her "Polar Selfies" as large paintings of dance on canvas, and her "Underneath" marine blue collection. Her femininity is expressed in a version of "The Origin of the World" after Gustave Courbet and Lucio Fontana, where a long cut in a red canvas is covered with gold. In many paintings, a gold circle represents the human consciousness in its vertical axis, the footprint of the link from the inner Earth to the universe through the human body. It is all together a door to the inner self and the outter space, as well as light turned into matter. **After Pierre Soulages, Oïjha recalls that light comes from the abysses.**

## **6 Art statement : « A polar experience giving birth to universal intimacy » :**

"I am a polar artist. I grew up in Norway where I started sculpture and contemporary dance. I dedicated my art and research to the protection of Antarctica and I acted as an International Lawyer to defend its values of peace, science and environment. I traveled to the Poles to create Land Art works and back in my studio, the polar colours are the ones I use. In my dance performances, I continue to tell my Antarctic stories.

Antarctica is not only a place but a state of being, a system of perception, a sensitivity. After the French explorer Dr. Jean-Louis Etienne, **the polar experience "brings the human to connect with its own intimacy"**.

At the beginning is the sensation. Before any thoughts, before any representation, there is this immediately true information which is my anchor. **I want to represent the consciousness of being in its polar intimacy**, its history, color, taste, smell, sound and texture. The sensation invites me to think with all these dimensions. The emotions come after, and then the gesture which unite sensation and emotion in a single act. Being a polar artist means to me dancing with the polar matter as a result of these layers of information. The gesture is the synthesis of this experience, the ultimate simplification, what remains of this organic and emotional process. I receive and I show with my body, my body-consciousness as united entities. My gesture is unique in a state of grace. **It is the dance of the inner.**

After the iceberg symbol, I often target the links between the conscious and the subconscious, with the use of deep dark blue and black colors. I also talk about the expansion and suspension of the body in ecstatic states. **Gold is the light turned into matter.** It is the footprint of the human vertical axis, all together a door to our own inner infinity - intracosmos - and the infinity of space - extracosmos. As such, gold is also used as a column in the selfie painting "Underneath", or as constellations in the nine sculptures "Antarctic Organic - Feminine". I also use gold to highlight the shore lines, where it represents **the frontier between worlds, the sensitive line, the permeable junction**, like my skin. I see an identification between my own system of reference and the nature around me. Whatever I use, painting, dancing or Land Art, it is an **organic transcendental**

**art** where pristine nature is my mirror and where there is no real difference between this ice spark and the perception I have of my ethmoïd.

**There is much joy in the experience of the senses with the consciousness of being a human, specially in Antarctica.** My body is limited, my consciousness is unlimited and I use these tools to explore the human feelings, because life is nothing else than a will to pulse, the urgency of being rather than the Nothing.

In my exploration, several masters guide me always: Yves Klein, Pierre Soulages and Marina Abramovic. In the polar infinity, I want to tell the story of being, the consciousness of being human". Oïjha.

**7 The GAMMA exhibition : the seven paintings (also in [www.oijha.com](http://www.oijha.com)) :**

<b>Painting</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<i>Introspection</i> 	Pure gold and acrylic on canvas 96 x 154cm.	Dance on canvas. Column of pure gold raising from the abysses, around which is dancing a dark and happy entity. Thinking of a possibility of being for our own Self, beyond the surface agitation, out of the known world, in the deepness of our consciousness. Verticality of the human axis between Earth and Space.
<i>Extraspection</i> 	Pure gold and acrylic on canvas. 96 x 154cm.	Dance on canvas, Projection of pure gold entities from a luminescent deep source. Reflecting a silent and anchored joy, expanding through the universe. About our ability to embrace the world with the most precious and light part of our consciousness. About the invisible suspension of the atoms.
<i>Selfie - Timeframed</i> 	Pure gold and acrylic on canvas 215 x 150 cm.	Dance on canvas. Encounter of the polar and tropical colours with pure gold inclusions. Link between different worlds : a possibility in the very center of the Self where this combination can only exist. An echo to the experiences in life in extreme environments, the ethical choices and the permanent movement as the sign of life.
<i>Under the surface</i> 	Mixed techniques on canvas. 105 x 150cm	Abstract representation of the « Glow » painting. Telling a story of the Deepness. Peaceful consciousness of being alive in the Universe. Echo to the cosmos of the marine infinity, the space infinity, the consciousness infinity. About energy before matters. A state of being without will nor research.
<i>Prayer II</i> 	Pure gold and acrylic on canvas. 100 x 100 cm.	To pulse a thinking, a prayer, a wish from the extreme environment of Antarctica, where Man is nothing but the very essence of human. About the essence of this wish, its sweetness, its poetry surrounded by harshness and deprivation. About beauty enhanced by solitude. About communication with Mankind out of Antarctica.
<i>Glow</i> 	23,75 carats gold, acrylic and ink on canvas. 118 x 152 cm.	Figurative representation of the painting « Under the surface ». Telling the story of the deepness. Peaceful consciousness of being alive in the Universe. Echo to the cosmos of the marine infinity, the space infinity, the consciousness infinity. About energy before matters. A state of being without will nor research. A meditation with the body.
 <i>Ilulissat IV</i>	Pure gold and acrylic on canvas 90 x 160cm.	Gold circle in a desert environment (version worm colours). Echo to the Land Art works made in Antarctica and the Arctic. Footprint of the vertical axis of Man, its individuation, its consciousness of being and making choices amongst the Human community.