

The Abode of Chaos - Cultural significance assessment

In order to assess the cultural significance of the Abode of Chaos as comprehensively as possible, we have based our study on a wide variety of sources: historical, artistic, sociological and architectural studies of the site, written, radio and television reports, and comments by signatories of the petition to save the site. The diversity of the sources used allows us to cross and federate the viewpoints of very diverse actors, from a wide range of socio-professional categories and different levels of proximity – or distance – with the cultural milieu or the work itself. Among these sources, let us particularly mention the "singular architecture" file directed by the SEMPER architectural office in 2020¹ (SM3), the complementary historical study carried out by the Akhesen office in 2021² (SM5) and the book "Honte à vous"³ (Shame on you), first published in 2008 and reprinted nine times since then, gathering 1,827 comments written by signatories of the petition, from nearly 450 different professions (SM6 and excerpts in appendix to this text).

The consultation of these sources reveals a very wide range of heritage values recognized for the site. In order to categorize these values, we have chosen to work based on the framework proposed in 2016 by L. Harald Fredheim and Manal Khalaf in their article "The significance of values: heritage value typologies re-examined"⁴. The originality of this framework is to propose three successive stages in the evaluation process, aimed respectively at identifying **what** the heritage in question is, the reasons **why** it is valuable and, finally, at qualifying the values (**how much**). This framework, which is both inclusive and concise, seemed to us to be particularly appropriate in the context of this very complex site since it limits the categories of values while being very comprehensive.

What is the Abode of Chaos?

The first stage, in which the "features of significance" are identified, is borrowed from Stephenson's "cultural value model", developed in the context of cultural landscapes of New Zealand. It takes into account not only the material elements (**forms**) but also the **relationships** and **practices** inscribed in these landscapes.⁵ It is particularly suited to complex sites as the Abode of Chaos, where these three dimensions must be taken into consideration in order to grasp the full significance of the site.

¹ SEMPER Architecture (N. Detry, dir.), Agence Akhesen (R. Rivière, collab.), *La Demeure du Chaos - Abode of Chaos. Architecture singulière*. 2021.

² Agence Akhesen, *La Demeure du Chaos Saint-Romain-au-Mont-d'Or. Étude historique du temple de Saint-Romain-de-Couzon*, April 2021.

³ *Honte à vous! Par les signataires de la Pétition pour sauver la Demeure du Chaos*, 9th edition, Editions Musée L'Organe, 2018. Excerpts from this book, which are useful for heritage assessment, are appended to this text. Other excerpts supporting the "Underrepresented heritage" section of the application are part of the "supplementary materials" (SM6bis).

⁴ L.H. Fredheim, M. Khalaf, "The significance of values: heritage value typologies re-examined", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 22, no. 6, 2 July 2016, 466-481,

⁵ J. Stephenson, "The Cultural Values Model: An integrated approach to values in landscapes", *Landscape and Urban Planning* 84, no. 2, 6 February 2008, 127-139

Forms

As a "total work of art" (*gesamtkunstwerk*), conceived as such, the site as a whole is a feature of significance, carrying aspects of values recognized by both the public and experts. It is neither feasible nor relevant for this study to make a complete inventory of the material elements composing the site: together with its architectural and natural components, it hosts more than 6500 works of art, among which about 4500 sculptures in raw steel and 1800 portrait murals⁶. Behind the appearance of disorder, perceived at first glance by the visitor⁷, a careful observation of the plan of the domain reveals an organic composition based on a geometry linked to alchemy and a series of "repetitive artistic gestures" (SM3.2). Among these, let us note the 9 Vanities (giant aluminum skulls), the 99 "alchemical sentinels" (assemblies of steel blades in the shape of a triangular prism) or the 27 containers which punctuate the site, in dialogue with the vegetation and the water. Furthermore, monumental sculptures such as "Ground Zero", the "Organic fountain", the Bunker, the "Ash bearers", the "Firebird", "Underground", "the Nail" or the "Big meteorite" mark the place. All installations, once in place, are subject to evolution and welcome in their turn new sculpted or painted works, as well as numerous inscriptions, echoing the news in real time. For example, two existing "alchemical sentinels" recently welcomed the portraits of the couple of German researchers of Turkish origin, Ugur Sahin and Özlem Türeci, founders in 2008 of the company BioNTech and initiators of the vaccine against COVID-19.

The buildings on the site are part of this ensemble and therefore contribute to its overall value. These vernacular constructions, built with local materials, were transformed many times since the 17th century, especially in the late 19th century. Initially restored by Thierry Ehrmann, they are since 1999, one with the works that envelop them, cover them, cross them, fill them (SM3.3). Let us mention, among many other interventions, the hundreds of murals, the scarifications of the walls, where "meteorites" are punctually included, the additions of material sealing certain bays or still, monumental works such as the "Organic Temple", mass of concrete occupying the major part of the original space of the large living room and "Overground", fragment of an oil platform dominating the roof and helping to evacuate the hot air from the servers buried in the site (SM4). At the same time art, architecture and heritage, the buildings of the site are carriers of additional value aspects and will thus be the subject of specific paragraphs below.

The same applies to the remains of the Protestant temple and the necropolis which adjoins them, discovered in 2004 during preparatory work for the installation of an artwork, in a remote corner of the domain opportunely invaded by brambles (SM5). Both the Reformed Church and the researchers have confirmed that the remains were those of the ancient Temple of Saint-Romain-de-Couzon. The Regional Archaeology Service of the Regional Directorate for Cultural Affairs authorized the clearing of the 9-meter-thick mass of earth, which it interpreted as an element of concealment: the earth would have been brought by wheelbarrow by the villagers between 1685 and 1750 so the remains would be forgotten.

Relationships

The artworks of the Abode of Chaos are inseparable from the context to which they are grafted: on the one hand, the limit between works of art, architecture and nature does not exist – architecture being itself transmuted into an artwork – and on the other hand, the ensemble draws part of its strength and meaning from its location within a traditional suburban village and on the site of a former Protestant temple. The whole site has a palimpsest character where the strata of a sometimes traumatic, sometimes appeased, and constantly evolving history are successively written. The relationship between works of art, the archaeological site, existing buildings and the village are therefore features to be preserved to the same degree as the material components considered separately.

Practices

The Abode of chaos is not only a collection: it is above all a living heritage, a place in constant evolution, a place of continuous creation in response to current events. This living creative practice is an essential element of its identity to be preserved; the site is continuously updated and it would not be imaginable at this stage to freeze it under penalty of modifying fundamentally its nature.

⁶ To grasp the richness and diversity of the artworks, we refer to the bilingual book : *La Demeure du Chaos - The Abode of Chaos. Opus IX*, Musée L'Organe, 2013 (SM4) as well as to the *catalogue raisonné* produced in 2006 (which is of course not the most complete given the constant evolution of the site): *La Demeure du Chaos, 9 décembre 1999 - 2006: Catalogue raisonné tome 1*, Musée L'Organe, 2006.

⁷ For a general view of the site, see the website (<https://www.demeureduchaos.com>), the Flickr collection (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/40936370@N00/albums/>) and SM4.

thierry Ehrmann regularly involves other artists in the realization of the artworks of the site: let us mention the architect Rudy Ricciotti for the Bunker and the artist Ben Vautier. Similarly, the continuous public's contribution to constructing the meaning of the place is an integral part of its intangible dimensions. In addition, the practice of creative reuse of recycled materials is a real hallmark of the Abode of Chaos.

Why is the Abode of Chaos valuable?

Departing from the long lists of value typologies as produced by administrations or organisations in charge of heritage, Fredheim and Khalaf propose to limit the framework to four "aspects" of value: **associative, sensory, evidentiary** and **functional**. A study of the sources as mentioned above, focusing on explicit and implicit assessments produced by the experts and the public, reveals that all aspects are relevant (see the summary table in the appendix of this document). Within the discourse of the public, the associative and sensory aspects are the most mobilized, the associative aspect being fed by an extreme diversity of connections raised by the site.

Associative aspects

Under the term "associative aspects", Fredheim and Khalaf group all "those that express significant connections" with people, events, places, traditions, objects, etc., including fictional ones.⁸ This aspect is particularly emphasized with regard to the Abode of Chaos, whether it relates to the tangible elements of the site (forms) or the intangible elements (relationships and practices), as defined above.

Forms

Both the public and experts see in the Abode of Chaos what can be called a "mirror of the Anthropocene": climate change, the consequences of globalized trade, the exhaustion of resources, terrorism, war, intolerance, are embodied there without concession. This aspect runs through all the components of the site, materializing in the murals, the inscriptions, the monumental sculptures, the wounds inflicted on the architecture, the recycled materials and the obsolete objects diverted and reused. The examples are far too numerous to list; let's mention, among many others, "Ground Zero", which echoed in real time the terrorist attack against the Twin Towers in 2001, a real shock for thierry Ehrmann; the containers, denouncing the catastrophic consequences on a planetary scale of cheap globalized trade; the portraits of political and religious leaders and dictators, but also of scientists and contemporary thinkers, altogether composing a "de-captioned history of the world" (SM4). Each of these events and actors is reflected in the mirror of the Abode of chaos and contributes to the overall message. Drawing its origins from a Masonic board presented by thierry Ehrmann to the Grand Lodge of France (Grande Loge de France GLNF) in 1985, the work as a whole is crossed by multiple references to "chaos theory" and alchemy – like the 99 "alchemical sentinels", made of crude steel, and positioned on the site's spots of hot energies. So within the apparent darkness expressed by the site, the chaos that it reflects is seen as the "materia prima" of a possible new beginning (SM4).

As far as the transformed buildings are concerned, in addition to the associations mentioned above, several testimonies from "Honte à vous" (SM6) see in them a questioning of the relationship between heritage and contemporary art, between memory and future, outside the beaten track of administrative frameworks, or even a look beyond the appearances of the polished world of privileged suburbs (see examples in appendix to this text).

Representative of the vernacular architecture of the region, the existing buildings also anchor the site in history and in local typologies; but in this respect, it is the remains of the Protestant temple and their necropolis that present the most interesting associative aspect. By recalling the consequences of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), among which the destruction of the temples, the massive exile of the Protestants and numerous massacres, the remains constitute a "difficult heritage", linked to a dark episode of history, just like those recounted by the Abode of chaos.

Relationships

The relationships between the different components of the Abode of chaos, as well as its relationship to the context, only reinforce these associative aspects of the value of the whole. Thus, the confrontation of the interventions with a simple vernacular building and its gardens, in sum banal, similar to so many others, makes the message of the artworks all the more percussive and disturbing, much more than if they had been conceived on a virgin ground, or in an urban

⁸ Fredheim, Khalaf, op. cit., 473.

wasteland. The same can be said of the site's relationship to the residential housing developments that have gradually enveloped the site, especially since the late 1960s. The confrontation of the raw reality of the Abode of Chaos with the banality of a seemingly peaceful environment, where the darkness of the world is only observed through television screens, which can be turned off with a click of a remote control, makes its effect all the more powerful and meaningful. The interventions on the existing buildings, burned, scarified, covered with portraits and inscriptions, and where culminates "Overground", are impossible to ignore and arouse irrepressible associations with the violence which marked the 20th century and still marks our time.

For many signatories of the petition, the problems met by thierry Ehrmann since 15 years, in front of conservative town planning rules, make echo to famous scandals, such as the construction of the Eiffel Tower or Beaubourg in Paris, which aroused strong criticism before being fully integrated into the Parisian landscape and even representing the city by metonymy. Moreover, the narrowness of the point of view of the communal authorities, refusing to see in the Abode of chaos, a work of art in its own right, recalls famous trials such as those of Whistler against Ruskin in 1878 or Brancusi against the USA in 1927, or dark concepts such as "degenerate art".

As already suggested above, the relationship between the work and the Protestant temple is particularly powerful in terms of associations. As the Protestants of the 17th century, thierry Ehrmann represents a discordant voice, disturbing the agreed discourses and the established order. Like the Protestants, he exposes himself to the destruction of the material expression of his discourse: if the administrative conflict in progress is not resolved, the Abode of Chaos could join the ruins of the Protestant Temple in the rank of the vestiges of disturbing opinions.

Practices

Although relatively unclassifiable, thierry Ehrmann's creation process is regularly associated with those of other figures or artistic movements. The comparison with the "Ideal palace" of the Postman Cheval is recurrent, as well from the experts⁹ as from the general public (see appendix). As the Postman today famous, but misunderstood during his life, thierry Ehrmann builds a universe which is full of references, by using recycled materials. Kurt Schwitters' *Merzbau* is also a reference impossible to circumvent and besides, claimed, sharing with the Abode of Chaos the same critical expression of the defects of the society, by using its waste, and invading until the heart of the intimate space of the artist (SM3.2). In addition to these recurring references, other comments collected in the book "Honte à vous" (SM6) connect the Abode of Chaos with deconstructivism, art brut or pop art: just like Andy Warhol's Factory, the site welcomes other artists in a spirit of sharing and collective creation.

It also appears essential to us to particularly underline the filiation of thierry Ehrmann's work to the surrealist and Dada movements. As the homepage of the "Research center for studies of Surrealism and its Legacies" stresses it, "surrealism occupies a unique position in the intellectual and cultural history of the twentieth century. Marking the crisis in post-Enlightenment thought and active in every sphere of creative life, it has been at the heart of debates about modernism and postmodernism"¹⁰. Between 1978, date of the publication of the "Architectural Design" issue on "Surrealism and Architecture"¹¹, introduced by Dalibor Vesely, and 2009, that of the issue XXIX of "Mélusine" directed by Henri Béhar and dedicated to the same topic¹², the question of the place of architecture within the movement became crucial. Undoubtedly, it was in the architectural field that the contestation of rationalism manifested itself most urgently. At the turn of the 21st century, a great change of perspective took place. From "a weak integration of the architecture in the surrealist thought", to quote Dalibor Vesely, we ended up stating with Anthony Vidler that "in spite of the obvious oblivion in which the surrealists left it, the architecture can seem to offer the most fertile medium for a surrealist practice"¹³. For us, there is no doubt that the Abode of Chaos is indeed one of the most beautiful expressions of the surrealist movement. Truly surrealist architecture is rare and this permanent artistic construction site is a true manifesto: a defense and illustration of thought freed from the control of reason. If the Abode of Chaos was to be destroyed,

⁹ J. Rasle, E. Le Roy, *Avec le Facteur Cheval*, Paris, Musée de la Poste - Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 2007.

¹⁰ The University of Manchester, *The AHRB Centre for Studies of Surrealism and its Legacies*, [https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/projects/the-ahrb-centre-for-studies-of-surrealism-and-its-legacies-project\(9182d222-4cfe-489b-a944-4998933b322c\).html/papersofsurrealism/journal1/index](https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/projects/the-ahrb-centre-for-studies-of-surrealism-and-its-legacies-project(9182d222-4cfe-489b-a944-4998933b322c).html/papersofsurrealism/journal1/index), consulted April 12th, 2021.

¹¹ "Surrealism and architecture", *Architectural Design* (AD Profiles 11), 2-3, 1978.

¹² H. Béhar & E. Rubio, *Mélusine n°29: Le Surréalisme sans l'architecture*, L'Age d'homme, 2009.

¹³ A. Vider, "Fantasy, the Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture", *Papers of Surrealism*, issue 1, 2003.

the surrealism – totally claimed by thierry Ehrmann – would lose for sure one of its “most fertile medium”.

Of course, this ongoing creative process involving the site does not fall under the classical approaches of conservation-restoration, as enshrined in historical regulations and charters, such as the Venice Charter or the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. However, as researchers in the field of heritage, we see in them an ultimate and thought-provoking expression of the current questioning of European heritage practices inherited from the 19th and 20th centuries. These practices alone are no longer sustainable in the face of current challenges related to climate change, economic crises, and the diversification of actors involved in the making of projects. This transmission process of an increasingly diversified heritage, now encompassing a large part of the environment, far from the selective inventories of the mid-20th century, cannot be thought with the only concepts from the past. Through the emerging concepts of “post-preservation”¹⁴ (DeSilvey), “experimental preservation”¹⁵ (Otero-Pailos) and “counterpreservation”¹⁶ (Sandler), the world of heritage is progressively opening up to new open-ended approaches, respectful of the diversity of the narratives carried by the buildings or sites and the way in which they are experienced and interpreted by their current users according to their contemporary questioning. In this sense, one of the associative aspects of the Abode of Chaos’ value is to shake up reference points and principles and to question the way in which our relation to the past and to memory is materialized in our choices of intervention on the existing heritage, in the context of the current crises.

Finally, the practice of creative reuse, which is at the core of the Abode of Chaos, resonates with contemporary challenges in terms of rational use of resources, reuse and recycling. thierry Ehrmann’s work is quoted in an essential French book dealing with recycling in architecture “La poubelle et l’architecte”, by Jean-Marc Huyghen¹⁷. Here also, even if recycling and heritage seemed, until recently, to belong to very distant disciplinary fields, the recent reflections on “heritage and waste” show that a reconciliation is underway¹⁸.

Sensory and emotional aspects

In Fredheim and Khalaf’s framework, the “sensory aspects of value”, are “sources of pleasure”¹⁹. After reading all the comments gathered in the book “Honte à vous” (SM6), we decided to extend this criterion to “emotional aspects”, as many comments insisted on this point, which had no place elsewhere in the evaluation framework used (see appendix). As Laurajane Smith points out in “Emotional heritage”²⁰, visitors are not passive audiences for curatorial and interpretive messages, but rather agents. They can therefore be seen as partners in the creative and heritage-making processes.

Many of the adjectives used by visitors of the Abode of Chaos are on the fringe of sensation and emotion: beautiful, fascinating, sublime, sensational, masterful, majestic, spectacular, pure and true, grandiose, the site is also surprising, disturbing, impactful, troubling. It causes joy as well as sadness and makes one shiver, feel free, choked, blown away, turned inside out (SM6 and examples in appendix to this text). Architectural wounds convey strong emotions related to a state of war, strongly contrasting with the apparently peaceful environment. Reused materials have a powerful expressive potential, aesthetically as well as emotionally. No one comes out untouched especially since, unlike most museums, the public is free to wander through the works, to touch them, to confront them, which abolishes the distance between visitor and work. The Abode of chaos is experienced rather than simply looked at or perceived.

From the sensory point of view, the relationship of the site with the village is controversial. On the one hand, the Abode of Chaos is visually integrated into the neighborhood by the size of its buildings and its enclosure walls, responding to traditional typologies. On the other hand, the

¹⁴ C. DeSilvey, *Curated Decay. Heritage beyond Saving*, University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

¹⁵ J. Otero-Pailos, E. Fenstad Langdalen, Th. Arrhenius (ed.), *Experimental Preservation*, Lars Müller Publishers, 2016.

¹⁶ D. Sandler, *Counterpreservation. Architectural Decay in Berlin since 1989*, Cornell University Press, 2016.

¹⁷ J.-M. Huyghen, *La poubelle et l’architecte. Vers le réemploi des matériaux*, L’Impensé/Actes Sud, 2008, 54.

¹⁸ In January 2020, the *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management ad Sustainable Development* has dedicated a whole issue to “Heritage and waste”. See for example: S. Huuhka, I. Verstergaard, “Building Conservation and the Circular Economy: a Theoretical Consideration”, *JCDSD*, 10, 1, 2020, 29-40.

¹⁹ Fredheim, Khalaf, op. cit., 473.

²⁰ L. Smith, *Emotional Heritage. Visitor Engagement at Museums and Heritage Sites*, Routledge, 2020.

artworks create a contrast of color and language, justifying the conflict with the City Council. But if some of the site's detractors consider it simply "ugly", many contributions to the book "Honte à vous" emphasize on the contrary that, for some others, the Abode contributes to the "charm" of the village, and helps to avoid monotony and standardization. Many also consider the ensemble to be much better integrated into its context than many recent residential or commercial developments, which, however, do not raise any protests.

Evidentiary aspects

The general public is of course less sensitive than the experts to these aspects of value, i.e. "those that provide evidence for conducting and communicating research"²¹. However, several testimonies rightly point out that in the future, the Abode of Chaos will be a record of our times, of our mistakes, a compendium of history for future generations or archaeologists of the next centuries.

From our point of view of researchers in the field of heritage, the Abode of Chaos is a wonderful object of study. As an "extreme specimen" for several issues in the contemporary study of art and heritage (conservation of artworks, documentation of complex and evolving heritage sites, digital mediation, etc.) it is likely to raise or anticipate new questions applicable to other sites and to contribute to solving them.

The remains of the Protestant temple are also important from the evidentiary point of view. Even if they are reduced to wall ends, traces of the demolished building, they are nevertheless precious given that the vast majority of 16th and 17th century temples in France have disappeared and are poorly documented: "the few that remain, generally because they were used for other purposes, are probably not the most representative"²². These remains, which although included in the work of the Abode of Chaos, are not damaged by this cohabitation, therefore constitute a resource for the study of this architectural typology and more locally, a difficult episode of the history of the region and the village.

Functional aspects

In addition to being a museum, the Abode of Chaos is also the residence of thierry Ehrmann and his family, as well as the workplace of the 72 employees by Artprice.com (mostly (art)historians) and the Server group. The buildings thus house living spaces, offices, computer servers, and part of the collection of 540,000 art sales catalogs, dating from 1700 to the present day, constituting the database of Artprice.com.

Although Fredheim and Khalaf underline that "functional aspects of value should not (...) be conflated with benefits of use derived from other aspects of value"²³, the Abode of chaos is so atypical that it seems useful to us to raise the diversity of the functions that it fulfills to its visitors. Of course, like any art museum, the Abode of Chaos has a cultural function. But in this respect, the site presents a series of specificities. First of all, it is one of the few contemporary art museums in France to offer a fully free admission, which contributes to a policy of access to culture for all. This probably contributes to explain the great diversity of visitor profiles, which would not necessarily be found in other places at the same time (schools, institutions, medical centers (art therapy), artists, businessmen, unemployed, retirees, associations, tourists, etc). In this way, the site encourages social diversity and tolerance. Through its suggestive but uncaptioned artworks, the Abode of Chaos leaves open the interpretation of the site, and thus involves its audience in the construction of its meaning. It is therefore a powerful tool for critical reflection, where everyone can project their own questions on the contemporary world. Through the presence of the Protestant Temple, the site is also a place of memory, where Protestant pilgrims are welcomed.

In regard to its relationship with the village, the resolution of the current conflict with the Town Hall would allow the Abode of Chaos to fully fulfill its function as a tool for cultural and economic development in the region, through a project built in common. In a more anecdotal register, the New-York Times had already noted, in 2006, a form of "artistic contagion" among certain neighbors²⁴.

²¹ Fredheim, Khalaf 2016, p. 474.

²² Yves Krumenacker, "Les temples protestants français, XVI^e-XVII^e siècles", *Chrétiens et sociétés* [En ligne], Numéro spécial I | 2011, online since September 29th, 2011, consulted April 14th, 2021, <http://journals.openedition.org/chretienssocietes/2736>

²³ Fredheim, Khalaf, op. cit., 474.

²⁴ J. Tagliabue, "It's His House, But, Village Traditionalists Ask, Is It Art?", *The New York Times International*, July 19th, 2006.

A unique contribution

The last step in Fredheim and Khalaf's framework is qualifying "how much" the features of significance of the site are valuable. Having considered the various aspects of site value, we would like to emphasize one value qualifier in particular: rarity. In spite of the richness of the associations which it arouses, and the numerous possible connections with other current sites or themes, the Abode of Chaos is really unique in the world. The project of thierry Ehrmann and its implementation on a site charged with history can neither be replicated nor moved, and are irreplaceable contributions to contemporary culture.

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Cultural significance assessment - Synthetic table

Elements/Aspects		Associative	Sensory-Emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
Forms	Whole site	<p>“Mirror of the anthropocene” (climate change, globalized trade, terrorism, war, scarcity of resources, intolerance, etc)</p> <p>Chaos theories, alchemy, freemasonry</p>	<p>Beautiful, fascinating, sublime, sensational, masterful, majestic, spectacular, pure and true, grandiose</p> <p>Surprising, disturbing, impactful, troubling</p> <p>Causes joy, sadness, makes one shiver, feel free, chocked, blown away, turned inside out</p> <p>Possibility not only to see, but also to touch and to feel</p> <p>Expressive potential of recycled materials</p>	<p>Trace of our century for future generations, testimony to a regrettable passage in history, condensed memory</p> <p>“Extreme specimen”, object of study in contemporary art heritage</p>	<p>Free museum, meeting of diverse audiences, tolerance</p> <p>Residence for artists</p>
	Transformed buildings	<p>Relationship between heritage and contemporary/ living creation</p> <p>History of the village</p>	<p>Beautiful, unconventional</p>		<p>Offices of Server Group and artprice.com</p> <p>Residence of the owner/artist and his family</p>
	Remains of protestant temple	<p>Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and its consequences</p> <p>Difficult fate of minority heritage</p>		<p>Few vestiges of protestant temples remain in France</p>	<p>Place of memory, Protestant pilgrimages</p>
Relationships	Works of art / architecture and nature	<p>Contrast between vernacular architecture and dark works of art as a denunciation of the current state of the world</p>	<p>Architecture and works of art are part of a same perception; architectural wounds convey strong emotions related to a state of war</p>		
	Abode/village	<p>Opposition to the “bourgeois” and “conformist” environment</p> <p>Reveals of the crude reality of the works in a seemingly quiet and peaceful environment</p> <p>Other artistic scandals (non conformist works of art, buildings like the Eiffel Tower, Beaubourg, etc, “degenerate art”, famous trials (Brancusi, Whistler)</p>	<p>Contrast with the traditional « golden stones » architecture (unity of volumes, contrast of colors)</p> <p>Against monotony and conformism, much less disturbing than new allotments, commercial buildings, garden gnomes, etc</p> <p>Contributes to the charm / the stamp of the village</p>		<p>Touristic impact and incomes for the cafés, restaurants, shops, etc</p> <p>Brings contemporary culture in the suburbs</p>
	Abode/ Protestant Temple	<p>One was destroyed in the 17th century, the other is currently threatened to be destroyed, because both express opinions that disturb the established order</p>			
Practices	Living creation	<p>Postman Cheval's Ideal palace</p> <p>Other works of art or artistic trends (surrealism, art brut, visionary art, deconstructivism, self construction, ready-made, pop art, industrial art, ...)</p> <p>Other artists (Ben Vautier, Rudi Ricciotti,...)</p> <p>Counterpreservation / post-preservation</p>			<p>“Artistic contagion” (neighbors)</p> <p>Public engagement / agency, the absence of captions leaves the interpretation open</p> <p>Critical reflection tool</p>
	Creative reuse	<p>Reusing what already exists is a key challenge of our times</p> <p>Work of artists such as Kurt Schwitters, Noah Purifoy...</p>	<p>Expressive potential of reused materials, aesthetically and emotionally</p>		

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects		Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
Forms	Whole site	<p>“Mirror of the world”</p> <p>“it is the physical expression of a complex part of our mind, the one that allows each of us to make the difference between obscurantism and knowledge, between forgetfulness and consciousness and between madness and reason” (75854)</p> <p>“A vision of the world through art that may not please everyone, but that does not leave indifferent” (74996)</p> <p>“Any provocative, disturbing and critical approach to the state of the world is necessary and often heralds an unmistakable artistic intention” (65837)</p> <p>“This house is only the reflection of our daily self-mutilation. Let's stop the hypocrisy of all those who wallow in the simulation or sublimation of an 'ideal' life that has become a chronic, schizophrenic and uniform paranoia in the name of common sense, of morality. Uniformity of the world in a single principle, in a single homogeneous substance or in a single genetic code. The rational in contempt of the real” (65051)</p> <p>“A lesson in humanity! A realistic vision of a world that only sees profit !” (58164)</p> <p>“Here (at last) is a real reflection on today's world ” (54896)</p> <p>“Art is not limited to painting flowers and sculpting jugs. Moreover there is a very strong message here that denounces the shit that is invading the world. So stop playing the ostrich and believing that everything is fine. By systematically banning everything, we are prevented from living!” (50289)</p> <p>“The reflection of a society does not disappear once the mirror is broken” (48843)</p> <p>“I was very impressed by the realism of this work” (48489)</p> <p>“A work so destructuring, a contemporary materialized memory that looks so much like our world.” (47104)</p> <p>“We read or see every day, all these scenes in our daily life, attack, war, accident, why we should be shocked now, maybe because we do not live it so closely...” (44672)</p> <p>“Scary? Is it honest to sanitize the consciences, with big blows of idyllic and pink candy images, whereas Thierry Ehrmann makes only expose the reality of the world in all its truth. How many of all the censors are there, to enjoy on Sunday evening, within their home tended of satin, in front of an American super production promising future chaos, abominable and unbearable to view, for sensitive souls???? How much???? While they are completely unable to look in face, the figurative of a world which exists there, right now, there, now” (43797).</p> <p>“I consider this work more than grandiose, it is necessary, it is the reflection of our society. Even if it is hard to accept, for some” (32770).</p> <p>“ If this work shows only the social and historical chaos reflecting the simple content of our society, it is therefore normal that it disturbs and disturbs the eyes of passers-by who see our failure ” (21536).</p>	<p>“Impossible to remain insensitive to this disturbing art, but which touches something buried deep inside... Thank you” (69460)</p> <p>“Such a place that gives off so many emotions cannot disappear by the will of some and in opposition to others” (54990)</p> <p>“The grandeur, the poetry of this work fully justifies its existence. It is certainly a very great work of art, despite what some people think, and the embarrassment that it may cause does not justify its destruction”. (54211)</p> <p>“I have seen this "house", it makes me shiver, but the talent and the spirit found their place there, whatever the tastes and the opinions. In the name of freedom of expression, of critical thinking, we must preserve this place and protect it as such!” (53261)</p> <p>“It is too late to turn back. The "Abode of Chaos" has lived too long to disappear today, because it is an unheard of concentration of "masterpieces", whose vocation would be to rise to the rank of our heritage. Its deep symbolism, very objective of its time, must challenge us and stimulate our concerted reflection. I totally understand that this house can provoke some disapproval, but certainly not blind and primitive hatred and violence” (48965).</p> <p>“The originality, the audacity, the dark beauty, the capacity to astonish, to move, make the Abode of Chaos a work of art to be unquestionably preserved in of our collective heritage.” (47099)</p> <p>“A work that mirrors our humanity in peril - the emotion is there but it is not the one that transcends you and if this work allows you to touch the depths of the psyche to better rebound then yes this work deserves to exist - there are realities that are not beautiful to see but that give you food for thought” (46814)</p> <p>“a magnificent place that is the talk of the town” (46549)</p> <p>“Even though I am not fond of contemporary art, I have to admit that the Abode of Chaos is a work of art, debatable of course, but a work of art” (46536).</p> <p>“I think your house is very beautiful, it is a real work of art” (45907)</p> <p>“I entered this chaos (as one lands on earth), not knowing what to expect. Of that day, August 11, 2007, I don't remember anything other than this house. I was so overwhelmed by it that I had the impression that it was the only thing I could think of, like an evidence, a realization. This work for me cannot be explained, it has to be lived. The emotions provoked by “The Abode of Chaos”, I will not be able to forget them...” (39969)</p> <p>“So much boldness and beauty in this work... bravo!” (38836)</p> <p>“This house is the most fascinating place I have ever seen! It's a mix of genius, and madness! Full of details and beauty! Why destroy such a place!?” (36238)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is extraordinary, no house is more impressive than this one!” (32655)</p>	<p>“a trace of our century” (75019)</p> <p>“The works produced in the Abode of Chaos are full of anguish, doubts, in short, chaos... It seems to me that they reflect our current society, in the same way that paintings from the Renaissance or the 18th century bear witness to the habits and customs of their time. In this sense, the Abode of Chaos is a trace for future generations” (13443)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is in my opinion a reflection that says a lot about our society and if archaeologists from another millennium discover it, it will be quite a discovery.” (11609)</p> <p>“The artistic expression of the house corresponds to the reality of our time. Whether it disturbs or not... there will always be a trace of our history whatever the form of expression used. That is why I want this place to remain” (9665)</p> <p>“It would be a shame if my grandchildren could not discover this site and meditate on what it represents for their generation and those to come” (9634)</p> <p>“An extraordinary work. Heritage of our time. To preserve for future generations, absolutely. Some creations are above our laws and those who claim to apply them to the letter” (9627)</p> <p>“Bravo to all the artists for daring to take another road, and that one day we all, together, may see this work as a testimony to a regrettable passage in our history... but here I am optimistic. If I dared, I would say that all the massacres and genocides of the world do not prevent the current wars, and that this Abode of Chaos will bear its name so well when it falls, with the rest of the world, from an excess of blindness, victim of a destruction as general as chaotic, since the whole earth will be then only chaos!” (8937)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is only the artistic mirror of the tortured souls of our notables. Destroying it would eliminate the memory of the grave consequences of their reckless actions. Carefully preserving the past allows every civilization to progress. Future generations will be grateful to be able to see the mistakes of their ancestors” (3366)</p>	<p>“shows a truth that nobody wants to see” (75328)</p> <p>“it is also there to make think a little about the human race” (75035)</p> <p>“Let's stop being hypocrites and dare to look at ourselves” (65989)</p> <p>“It is imperative that La Demeure du Chaos remains in place, as a testimony, a warning, a vaccine against the diseases of existence” (68814)</p> <p>“this house has become a renowned place that intrigues, leads to curiosity and reflection” (47456)</p> <p>“These works show us a vision of our society that everyone refuses; fragility and instability. Thank you for opening our eyes”. (46482)</p> <p>“Museum bringing a new look on our environment and on the international news“ . (42727)</p> <p>“Having discovered the hardness of their heart and their fear of their possible capacities of mass destruction let us bring them in the softness of the ugly to rediscover the treasure that is peace... with Thierry Ehrmann !!!!!!!” (39461)</p> <p>“To propose to put into form, into image an imaginary version of Chaos is to lead the spectator to question the stakes of the violence resulting from the collective: to what extent are we responsible for the unimaginable and could we avoid it today?” (20683)</p> <p>“There is a necessity to see and hear things that shake us up! It is the best way to remain vigilant, attentive. The art is a cry. The good taste is the enemy of the art” (7246)</p> <p>“To show war in this way (other than through the protective glass of a television set), to show men in this way by bringing together all the darkest and most incomprehensible things they have done, perhaps you will shake up the sleeping consciences of our so peaceful France!” (2835)</p> <p>“Let's not deprive ourselves of this freedom of expression and questioning, let's not lock ourselves in our golden stone walls” (2800).</p>

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
	<p>“The Abode of Chaos is only the representation of the Chaos of the world, it is not responsible for it, nor does it apologize for it. On the contrary, this place is a testimony, which makes the horrors of the "world in progress" more tangible than on television, in real size. It is our states that build these tanks, airplanes and helicopters for combat. Tanks fighting other tanks, helicopters shot down, violent deaths, this is the daily lot of many countries. The Abode of Chaos is only a harmless representation of this, a lucid testimony that leads us to take the measure of what our civilized world generates. Let us disarm the world, and preserve the Abode of Chaos so that we do not forget!” (28890)</p> <p>“I think that those who want its destruction do not accept to see in the Abode of Chaos what our world is becoming and that it has come to this because of people who, like them, think first of themselves and their comfort and do not care much about others. Obviously it must be hard to see what we have allowed to happen out of selfishness concentrated in a place that is also a work of contemporary art” (23672)</p> <p>“It is certainly the most open site on our world. And also the most realistic, chaos, war, violence are the daily television of all but obviously not for some, it is time that these people open their eyes and become tolerant, ps: I would like to have a neighbor like that it is not commonplace” (12287)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos bears witness to the development of the complexity of society in the image of the universe releasing the equivalent amount of entropy due to the evolution of systems becoming more complex! Why deprive ourselves of a standard "measure" of complexity?” (9709)</p> <p>“Continue your action, a little provocative, but ambitious. It has the merit of showing the dark side, very real, of our world. Non-conformism is scary, and your work has the merit of raising questions”. (9093)</p> <p>“For my part, I rank this city of Chaos at the top of the systematic representation of human misery” (8467).</p> <p>“A brilliantly disturbing idea, since it sends back to man the image of Chaos for which he is responsible but which he refuses to see. Finally, this chaos is the work of all of us! We are all artists: turn on your TV to contemplate the creation of the planetary disaster. And tell yourself that this is only the beginning!” (6360)</p> <p>“Men are capable of suing artists or people who reproduce the world around us in a pacifist way, and conversely of remaining silent when genocides are perpetrated live in front of their television sets.” (5482)</p> <p>“ It doesn't bother anyone to see the real chaos on the 8 o'clock news with real deaths, to feel powerless in front of these images. On the other hand, we have the impression that the media, the politicians, ... have put a copyright on the world... forbidden to reproduce... to talk about it... are we really free ? ” (4038)</p>	<p>“This is a moving work of art and let those who disagree throw the first stone at me!” (39215)</p> <p>“Mr. Mayor should be proud to have this house on his commune it is a real pleasure for the eyes”. (30187)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is the work of art that has made the strongest impression on me in a while” (27966).</p> <p>“I like to go to this house, I like its atmosphere, the freedom of action that reigns, it is a place out of time, a bit like a temple. The Abode of Chaos is full of stories and television memories. I'm disappointed that my little boy couldn't visit it, he who says "chaos" when he looks at the poster I put up in the entrance, he who loves shape, color, who lives in a manga, he who knows what dying means. I would so much like to see again this beautiful dripping concrete, these chains hanging, these trucks that seem to have come out of the green sun, and in the middle, this weed that makes its hole, the cat that purrs in the old Porsche, the dog that comes to smell my hand. I feel good there, me, at the Abode of Chaos, for all this and much more.” (27102)</p> <p>“This home is absolutely beautiful!!! There is nothing else to say... I find it so beautiful, I don't even have the words to describe it...!” (26281)</p> <p>“In addition to the freedom of expression that this site represents, it is also a magical place where the artistic spirit reigns in every corner. It is extraordinary, thank you!” (23504)</p> <p>“I find this approach courageous. In these times when death is trivialized and ignored (Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Darfur, Sudan ...), I think that a work like this has the merit of waking us up and challenging our ability to feel emotions, joy, sadness ... I find that a work like this one has the merit of waking us up and questioning our capacity to feel emotions, joy, sadness... The energy wasted to destroy what we do not like or what is different from our values we would do better to use it to learn to build and love” (23495).</p> <p>“It would be totally stupid to destroy this pure wonder” (22409)</p> <p>“it is time for art and especially criticism to evolve in its turn, especially when we see the beauty and expressionism of certain portraits, the originality of sculptures” (21476)</p> <p>“I like to walk in the Monts d'Or with my friend and I have every time the need to make a tour in this house... It fascinates us by its mystery and I can also tell you that we feel "strangely well" there: maybe it comes from its origin... and then, there is always someone nice to come and inform us” (13424).</p> <p>“Only cathedrals touch me as much as the Abode of Chaos”. (12419)</p> <p>“troubling, very troubling” (10777)</p>	<p>“The Abode of Chaos represents, in fact, one of the most beautiful examples of how contemporary culture can represent the reality of life and society. In other words, if you destroy it, it is like destroying the Lascaux caves. The Abode of Chaos must continue its life and must remain as a testimony of contemporary society for future generations” (8851)</p> <p>“A cruel reality that imposes itself on the eyes to wake up the escaped or ignored consciences. An urgent message for a humanity in danger. If there is legislation to erase the traces of this cry of horror, will there be equally effective measures to stop this process of self-destruction of our vast world? Let's hope that this work will not be ephemeral and that generations will be able to visit it as a testimony of a youthful and irresponsible civilization that has become wise” (3779)</p> <p>“Condensed memory of history to save!” (5424)</p>	<p>“I would find it a pity to erase the representation of what man does in the world, it disturbs the "right-thinking"? So much the better if it bothers them to see the chaos of the world in which we evolve and the image of the earth, of our world in the short term, then maybe they will do something to change it, to make it all a bad memory. Maybe this work of art can change the world or it is only the very realistic vision of an enlightened man about the end of the world, what will happen if man does not change... I'm not trying to be original, but this vision, this work of art that everyone will talk about is perhaps to be put in parallel with a young man named Ram Bahadur Bomjan who tries to bring peace simply by the power of his meditation. This young man disturbs as much as the Abode of Chaos or even more if we believe the number of websites dedicated to him. One evolving in the "modern world and using all the technologies" and the other in the most total destitution surrounded by humble and poor people. Maybe I'm an enlightened person, but I like to think that these two men have the power to change the face of the world and that their detractors only contribute to make them publicity, which is great because maybe it will make humanity evolve. This house must remain standing, we must not change it...” (5018)</p> <p>“It is important to keep a memory alive enough to build, to hope and avoid repeating” (5084)</p> <p>“Simply "great"! And besides, for once, the art is integrated into a working structure, so it lives” (5521).</p> <p>“This work invites us to reflect on the world around us but also on ourselves. Realistic or pessimistic, everyone will have his own opinion but in both cases our perception is turned upside down. I spent an exceptional moment. Thank you” (46914)</p>

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
	<p>“Thank you very much for participating in the shaking up of the conventions of a dusty and rotting world with its watered-down and mawkish allure. Such a domain of plastic productions and so many themes of reflection, should lead us to consider differently "our" world and the idea that we make of it. That Thierry is crazy or a clever businessman should be the least of our worries (...). I find most of the works and subjects proposed relevant and in perfect adequacy with our agonizing post-humanist era. If this kind of character and universe provokes for most of the population anxiety, anger or simple rejection, they arouse in me curiosity, a real interest in relation to the history of art and men and corresponds to the vision that I have of the world. Cynical plastic artist and quoting me in a post romantic state of mind, the questions that I would like to ask to the detractors of Thierry and his associates would be: "what disturbs you in these plastic productions, is it not simply that they can represent a condensed vision of a violent world, inhuman by many aspects (but which functions) to which we participate and allow to extend each day? Are you innocent to the appearance of this kind of productions in the form of assembly of objects, of pigments assembled in a collection of suffering? All this universe is familiar to me and this Abode of Chaos is not foreign to me. That's not why I live in a morbid environment. Most people are in stasis, they don't make sense of their distress and the suffering of the planet and are content to isolate themselves in drugs, television... each to his own opium. Beyond the discourse "beautiful, not beautiful, I like, I do not like" (basic and without real interest!) Should it not be replaced by the meaning of the step of this man, the direction of our lives, the changes (I will not speak about evolution) of our species and more generally the new role of the art in the 21st century?" (3876)</p> <p>“In Jerome Bosch's polyptych "The Garden of Delights", the panel on the right presents hell. The Abode of Chaos is the hell of our society; it is therefore indispensable” (27838)</p> <p>“In a world of real physical destruction, don't we have other things to do or to repress than to want to strip with Karscher the simple and disconcerting reproductions of reality !!! The black, the death, the chaos do not shock in the media, but they unleash the spirits in the art... the war kills, the art makes live” (3698)</p> <p>“I think this house is a reflection of today's news. If this one should be destroyed, then the media, the news, the newspapers should be censored!” (4270)</p> <p>“Not since Louise Bourgeois have I seen a more legitimate installation in relation to the current state of our society.” (4123)</p> <p>“The art is not that of the clean one, that of the beautiful and the order. A work marked by the opposition of entropy to the creative energy, is not that the essence of the universe?” (4095)</p>	<p>“The Abode of Chaos is a very beautiful work of art, original, uncompromising, free, everything is perfectly neat, the theme of terrorism, war, social violence is very interesting, aesthetics is superb ...” (11263)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is like a rose, at first we are a little afraid of it, but if we look closely, we discover the thousands of beauties that it wants us to feel beyond its thorns... the generosity of its owner's heart as well as his goodness, just like the rose; it protects itself by showing its thorns. We find here, in this fantastic house, all that burns in each of us”.</p> <p>“The beauty of Chaos put me K.O.” (9225)</p> <p>“Thanks for this place full of emotions!” (9057)</p> <p>“It's great, sublime, charming, challenging and so realistic ...” (8462)</p> <p>“It is shameful to attack a house so rich in emotion, I saw in your house a real concentrate of art we get lost we are free, I love the style of this house and again why see so many problems when the presence of a masterpiece in his city on the contrary we should be proud. One takes pleasure to look, one escapes one launches out in multiple œillades to be on not to lose anything of this house. We recognize paintings (Ben), ruins (the two twin towers) but above all we let our imagination run free. I am still young perhaps to understand the extent of the things but what I know it is that the Abode of Chaos is certainly not a rubbish” (5722).</p> <p>“A breathtaking work, the house of our dreams” (4979)</p> <p>“This is simply magical!!!” (4972)</p> <p>“If these visions of Chaos are strong, it is partly because they produce a tangible physical reaction on its spectators where the media virtualize and trivialize all forms of violence, thus encouraging passivity and denial.” (4123)</p> <p>“One should not judge a work of art such as "The Abode of Chaos" on its "visual envelope" but on the effect that it provokes as one discovers it. ...» (4121)</p> <p>“Thank you for the for the eyes, your work gives off something very strong” (4032)</p> <p>“Unreal and stimulating” (3914)</p> <p>“My children often ask me to stop in front of your house "to see" they tell me. I want to specify that nothing in this place shocks them, nothing frightens them, they are only 5 years old. On the contrary, they are very interested... they wonder, they see, they touch... they simply accept what each one expresses, in whatever way. I hope that as they grow up they will keep this open-mindedness and tolerance to which you contribute through your art. Thank you for helping them to grow in the respect of the thought of others” (3956)</p> <p>“It's a big picture in the open air, you have to look at it with children's eyes” (3531)</p>		

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
	<p>“I wanted to show you all my support for the preservation (that's a lot) of the Abode of Chaos and that you can continue to create this special destruction. A true artistic oxymoron, your approach is the most original, anchored in the present, disturbing and above all successful although in perpetual evolution in contemporary art. No need for a decoder, the messages are striking, clear and brutal, and allow the visitor to put himself in perspective in relation to a world reality that it is so easy and comfortable to forget. For me, the home is not an island of chaos in the middle of our gentle countryside, it is the rich regions of Europe that are an island of illusion in the middle of an ocean that resembles, violence of reality added, your collective work.” (3693)</p> <p>“In the world where we live nowadays, Thierry Ehrmann's Abode of Chaos constitutes a rather Cartesian and thoughtful mirror of our society. His vision of Chaos is certainly minimalist compared to the reality of war, vandalism, destruction of nature, and other human manifestations. Everyone is involved. No law on earth can prevent this violence which is and will always be part of our daily life and this since the beginning of time. The utopians of which the elected representatives of Saint Romain au Mont d'Or are part are not aware of the world in which they live.... Why run away from reality? The easy way is to see it through the cathode ray tube or the press... ... the plastic art implemented by Thierry Ehrmann constitutes an essential piece to the puzzle of our world. And better still a concrete testimony of our time! To finish, open your eyes !! That will make you good, ... thank you for this contemporary work which deserves a maximum of respect...” (3376)</p> <p>“Entropy is unquestionably of this world. One can even speak of organized entropy, even if the two terms seem antinomic. Indeed, through my work as a journalist, I have become convinced that "crazy" people in power, obsessed with eugenics and the need to manage chaos, are conspiring to destroy a large part of this world, of what they consider to be waste: us, the "common people". Thus, the Abode of Chaos is a mirror in concentrate, minus the scent of true unjust pain, of what is happening and what will happen. I don't know if this is visionary art or an emotional play on the present. Whether one likes it or not, the freedom to express the reflections of the currents that run through this world is paramount. We must preserve it. Otherwise, we will become, in case of censorship, willing victims of mind control. Am I exaggerating? Hardly!” (3084)</p> <p>“Dear friend, I am sending you a beautiful definition, by Edgar Morin, of the term "chaos" "What is the idea of chaos? We have forgotten that it was a genesis idea. We only see destruction or disorganization. But the idea of chaos is first of all an energetic idea; it carries in its flanks bubbling, flaming, turbulence. Chaos is an idea before distinction, separation and opposition, an idea of indistinction, of confusion between destructive power and creative power, between order and disorder, between disintegration and organization, between "ubris" and "dike". And what appears to us, from then on, is that the cosmogenesis operates in and by the chaos. Chaos is exactly what is inseparable in the double-sided phenomenon by which the universe at the same time disintegrates and organizes itself, disperses and polynucleates itself... what is chaos is the organizing disintegration.” (3844)</p>	<p>“I work in an architectural firm! Certainly the rules of urbanism are not respected, but why prohibit an artistic expression such as the Abode of Chaos. This property is not aesthetically beautiful, but the symbolism of these scenes of death, is grandiose. Gentlemen this is art!!!” (3514)</p> <p>“Your house, or rather your artwork, felt exactly like a huge punch in the face. It tears, it wakes, it makes you think... it's superb!” (3499)</p> <p>““Beauty will be convulsive or it will not be” said André Breton. Your home is of this order and makes a strong impression on me” (2831).</p> <p>“This house turned me upside down, shocked me, completely challenged me! It is a masterpiece that everyone should be able to contemplate! Thank you again for what it made me feel!” (21062)</p> <p>“Because beauty should not have only one definition.” (14995)</p> <p>“It is rare to see such pure and true art. I was blown away while contemplating this masterpiece”. (13586)</p> <p>“Suggestion: why not add nauseating smells, polluting gases or greenhouse effects? Maybe smell is the only sense you dare not transgress? The most disturbing?” (4023)</p>		

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
Whole site	<p>Other works of art/artistic trends</p> <p>Palace of the Postman Cheval; Musée Robert Tatin, House of Picassiette, Fabuloserie, Schwitters' Merzbau, H. Giger, Rosa Mir Garden (Lyon, Croix Rousse), House of Jean Linard in La Borne (Cher), House covered by Arman of washing Machines in Vence, Houses of Ben (Nice) and J.P. Reynaud (demolished)</p> <p>“Indispensable and resistant, disembodied and heady at the same time, it embodies the manifestation of an open, chaotic and "trans-urban" art, transculture too, because halfway between low and high culture// David Lynch's camera dv meeting a posthumous piece of the WTC, or Kubrick galloping in the sublime reconstituted rubble of his fabulous "full metal jacket"" (39467)</p> <p>“Thanks to all the artists of the 20th century for their fights and the surrealists who fought to enlighten us on the teachings of an art still misunderstood today. It is up to us artists of the future to fight the "machine" of the new world order, the one that tries to flatten us at every step towards knowledge.” (35197)</p> <p>“This house is the perfect representation of the artistic movement of deconstruction. It is a masterpiece...” (11227)</p> <p>"War destroyed the Merzbau, peace will not destroy the Abode of Chaos" (8509)</p> <p>“Excellent synthesis of post-apocalyptic science fiction culture and industrial art.” (7128)</p> <p>“I understand that some residents may be outraged by such a work under their windows, but is it worse than TV? Can we imagine destroying a work of art? Is it the only representation of Chaos? Aren't Munch's scream or Picasso's Guernica more representative of Chaos? It seems to me that we must learn to live with our time and not forget what constitutes it. The Abode of Chaos perpetuates the work of artists who, like everyone else, have the right to express themselves...” (5168)</p> <p>“So if France is only turned towards the past, let's remember Ferdinand Chatelain's humorous garden, the house of the one who paints, the sculpted rocks of Abbé Fouré, the Palais de Cheval, Nek Shand's Stone Garden in Shandigar, Charles Billy's Jardin de Nous Deux, without forgetting Niki de Saint Phalle's Tarot Garden, which are now part of the classical and territorially profitable culture. Art brut said Dubuffet; art of life and freedom I would add about the predecessors of the Abode of Chaos”. (3948)</p> <p>“What right do a few reactionaries have to decide to restore what should remain the temple of art brut?” (3211)</p> <p>“When I was very young, I kept a powerful visual memory of driving past the home of Morales, the iron artist from Port de Bouc. This break from convention and formatted thinking that I immediately felt has always stirred my guts. To be unique and free, and to have the right to have one's own vision of what one perceives of the world is the only true freedom.” (3210)</p>			

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
Whole site	<p>Other artistic scandals</p> <p>non-conformist works by Braque, Courbet, Duchamp, Gaudi, Van Gogh, Warhol, Niki de Saint-Phalle (cyclope of Milly-la-forêt), Dali, Les Fleurs du Mal, les chants de Maldoror, Tinguely, Picabia, Francis Bacon, René Roche, Jean Dubuffet, Boléro of Ravel</p> <p>Eiffel tower, Beaubourg, Defense Arch, Buren columns, Pyramid of the Louvre (Paris), Maison bulle (Pierre Cardin)</p> <p>“Here we are back in the 19th century when Baudelaire was published abroad, pursued by all the reactionaries of the time!” (74891)</p> <p>“This is a continuation of the story of Brancusi's bird, which was refused the qualification of a work of art when it was exported to the United States, only because the state wanted to recover taxes.” (13585)</p> <p>The trial of Whistler against Ruskin (7823)</p> <p>“Remember all the fuss we heard about the construction of Beaubourg ... today it is the most visited site in Paris. Alas, we are not very far from the Taliban who proceeded to destroy the Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan or the destruction by the Azeris of Armenian tombstones in Azerbaijan. It also reminds me of the sinister ideology that considered modern art as degenerate art” (6249).</p> <p>“As for urban planning rules, look at some cities... in the 60's in Grenoble (I'm from Grenoble, nobody is perfect!), epic campaigns about contemporary buildings or sculptures cut the city in two... the architects were called Wogenscky, Anger or Novarina, and the sculptors Lipsi, Gilioli, César, Viseux or Calder, not to mention Pignon-Ernest or Vasarely... go on. You will win. And in time, Saint-Romain will do you justice, despite what some may think”. (3904)</p> <p>“That some do not understand this art, it is conceivable, but it is nevertheless, and the justice decided in this direction, a work of art with whole share. As Galileo would have said in these circumstances, "and yet, it turns". Destroying the Abode of Chaos is like burning Jewish works of art during the Second World War: it is a crime against art, and more broadly, against the advancement of humanity. For it would create a jurisprudence that would forever denigrate the right of an artist to create the unconventional. How can we evolve then, if we nip any new art form in the bud? It is not only the Abode of Chaos that we are defending in this fight, it is art as a whole. Fight, you will win because your cause is just” (3767).</p> <p>“And if the neighbors of the cave of Lascaux had prohibited the drawings on the walls etc etc etc.” (9086)</p>			

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Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
	<p>“A hundred years ago, a hundred kilometers from home, a man was subjected to the mockery and misunderstandings of his neighbors. At that time, people did not go to court, especially in the countryside, but they had the right to destroy the work that was disturbing. A few years later, a certain Breton classified the work as the first work of art brut. Then in 1969 the first minister of the culture of our history Mr. Malraux classified this construction historic monument. Thus "le fada" as he was called entered the great family of recognized artists. You have surely recognized who I am talking about: the Ideal Palace of the Postman Cheval. And yet in the region of Hauterives people did not appreciate the delirium of the man who was going to contribute to the development of this small village in the north of the Drôme. I am sure that the grandchildren of your current detractors will understand your vision of our contemporary world, and will appreciate it at its true value.” (2855)</p>			
<p>Transformed buildings</p>	<p>“As for the will to preserve old stones, which we can, at first, only approve of, a second reflection leads us to wonder about the decadence of a society that sacrifices creation and the future by seeking at all costs to preserve the past. Let us remember that our most beautiful castles and manors have been redesigned by their owners over the centuries. Otherwise, architecture would have remained as a mound surrounded by stakes” (46993)</p> <p>“The house would have passed through the centuries without being of much interest to passers-by. It was of little architectural interest. Now it stands out and questions ... Let the questions live” (3275)</p> <p>“At a time when people are tortured in the shelter of housing estates, when mutilated bodies are buried in the gardens of bourgeois houses, at a time when the furniture market is soaring in indecency, artists destroy a beautiful "home" with courage and modesty, and the unthinkable concentration of fears and doubts is revealed. The facades finally wake up” (3183)</p> <p>“What a chance for this small post office to cross the centuries and to find itself immersed in our sweet world news” (2983)</p> <p>“Although the original house was beautiful I find it fascinating what it has become. It's amazing, I can't wait to come and visit. It's a real picture of what the world is like and the people who are embarrassed by this art are those who don't want to look at themselves. There are more serious things to do in this world before we get involved in this kind of thing” (4796)</p>	<p>“This property was just as beautiful before as it was after receiving this aesthetic touch. Originality scares our society, we often prefer to comfort ourselves in the conventional” (3983)</p>		

Selected translated excerpts from “Honte à vous”

Elements/Aspects		Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
Relations hips	Site/village	<p>“It was necessary to expect such an upheaval. A banal photo on a door would have left people indifferent but here you disturb them in the sun, sheltered by their golden stones. The war, the death it is so far that it matters all the dead but let us hide therefore what disturbs!!!” (39549)</p> <p>“Touching the golden stone is already an act! Let's be curious!” (13667)</p> <p>“I think that if this house had been transformed in Vénissieux or Vaulx-en- Velin, everybody would have found this way of expression normal, but in the Monts d'Or it is disturbing....” (13259)</p> <p>“As for the environment that the Abode of Chaos is supposed to denature, they would do better to focus on much more urgent and concrete problems of our time. The small aseptic and well arranged villages are of a moroseness...” (74996)</p> <p>“Subversive art and social housing have one thing in common: we don't want to see them in rich neighborhoods. We know that this compartmentalization of the territory is at the origin of the fractures in our society, so let's not let the notables live in bubbles” (45767)</p> <p>“Art is made to disturb, to question, to ask questions and find answers. I invite the detractors of the Abode of Chaos to visit the latter and there they will appreciate just leaving the house to find themselves in this magnificent village and its beautiful houses with golden stones. In the meantime, they will have learned about the world they live in” (39512)</p> <p>“Following a hike in the area I visited your home and was enthused by the work and by your courage to stand out from the quiet, bourgeois and conformist habits of the inhabitants of this place!” (22055)</p> <p>“If the obscure side of the site can shock, it forces to the reflection each one in front of the "beautiful work" of the man and of the determination which he shows to destroy himself. Such a set, well placed in a museum would be applauded... It is perhaps that which reinforces the sensations felt during the visit. To see the bourgeois tranquility and the cruel world around us collide is interesting” (20402)</p> <p>“A concentrate of world problems that must be seen... (even in the beautiful districts)” (14999)</p> <p>“Like any world view, it is disturbing. Even though the Abode of Chaos represents a violent and composite world, it has the honor of making our environment seem more peaceful while giving us a warning about our contemporary history” (9681)</p> <p>“Remind your obviously obtuse mayor that the Beaubourg site in Paris is less than 200m from the rue Quincampoix, one of the oldest and most protected streets in Paris” (8367)</p>	<p>“Finally a place that does not distort the landscape” (43531)</p> <p>“Following the broadcast of a television report, I am obviously committed to your side for the development of a rich and diverse living environment and against the sclerosing monotony of the institutional concretors. Bravo and courage” (28186)</p> <p>“Better the Abodes of Chaos than all the tasteless constructions that invade our countryside!” (3578)</p> <p>“I too am shocked, scandalized by the horrors that are built at the exit of the villages and that are called "allotment" in the purest rules of urbanism” (3492)</p> <p>“This artistic utopia does not alter the landscape, the view, the site, of the citizen who lives in St Romain” (74943)</p> <p>“Let people do what they want with their house. When all the cities will be the same when all the villages of France will have a Bouygues house of pastel pink color. We will be beautiful. No to standardization” (39497)</p> <p>“I sincerely hope that your approach will be recognized and that your work will be saved. You have my sympathy and support. Nb: I think that the artistic contagion of the village is a very good thing” (20781)</p> <p>“I support the Abode of Chaos for everything it stands for and I don't think it bothers the good people of this village that much, it is rather an additional attraction for a town that without it would lose some of its charm” (20654)</p> <p>“even if it is clear that the freedom of some stops where that of others begins, personally, I do not see how this work affects the surroundings!” (12056)</p> <p>“The second option may be that you consider the Abode of Chaos to be a work of art but that the work in question bothers you and, above all, does not match the pretty plasterwork of the houses in the village of St Romain” (11234)</p> <p>“It is a beautiful representation of the world, a black spot in a village that we want to destroy to ignore these problems that surround us. The main problem is that this house is located in Monts d'Or, if it would be located in Vénissieux nobody would say anything”. (10177)</p> <p>“This is a work of art in all its splendor! When I see all this, I feel like a fascination, I am completely attracted to this masterpiece, it is disturbing. In short, mission accomplished! Hats off to the artist” (10107)</p> <p>“Whether or not one adheres to this art form, the Abode du Chaos does not leave one indifferent. It is out of step with the site, with the rest of the village. What about the Dali museum in Figueres? Would the Spanish be more tolerant?” (4915)</p>		<p>“At the stage of this day, with the fame, the affluence of the visiting public, it is necessary that the residence remains and continues its action. It would be a shame for the town hall of St Romain and the collective not to take advantage of this heritage to make St Romain known and loved by the people of Lyon and other visitors. This event is worldwide” (74851)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is a place of culture which brings to each visitor a grandiose and surprising entertainment as well as an artistic culture and an open-mindedness, in addition to that the village of Saint-Romain-au-mont-d'Or could benefit from the economic spin-offs which could make them benefit from the numerous visits by creating stores and cafés or restaurants instead of wanting to destroy it; this is why it is absolutely necessary to save it” (46649)</p> <p>“The Abode of Chaos is an asset to the city...” (45991)</p> <p>“I really don't understand the interest for the municipality to want to get rid of a work that attracts so many visitors and could become the support of a peripheral economic activity” (12059)</p> <p>“I also agree on your request of your homepage thank you to respect the peaceful neighborhood of the village ...” (10438)</p> <p>“I feel that the Abode of Chaos attracts tourists, curious and others, as much as the famous Paul Bocuse. Instead of fighting it, the city council would do better to integrate it into its cultural program” (74876)</p> <p>“Mr. Mayor instead of complaining you should thank the Ehrmann family and all the people who contributed to this project because thanks to them St. Romain has become a much more attractive city which is, logically, positive!” (5397)</p>

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Elements/Aspects	Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
<p>With the village</p>	<p>“One of the unfortunate consequences of local democracy is that it tends to establish mediocrity as the rule of life, the goal for an elected official being that nothing should disturb the cultural lethargy of his constituents. No more risk-taking, no more innovation; it is the absurd reign of "we must do as before, as what is around". Why not the creation they say? But not in my backyard. I don't necessarily agree with the aesthetic choices of the Abode of Chaos, but it doesn't matter, it represents a breath of oxygen in the Monts d'Or that suffocate from conformism, from the so-called respect of old forms. Take heart! You are in the realm of life, in the bubbling, the initial chaos from which sometimes emerges a meaning which the sad sires who want your demolition have never even perceived the existence” (9700)</p> <p>“It is acceptable for some people to have chaos in certain parts of the world, but it is inadmissible to have an artistic vision of it next to their homes!” (7455)</p>	<p>“They are the great-grandchildren of the voyeurs of the Hottentot Venus who, in the name of good taste and a certain moral order, want to destroy all contemporary artistic attempts. If, in the name of this good taste one were to destroy this work, let's destroy all the houses “sam suffit” and “do mi si la do ré” which disfigure our peri-urban landscapes. Courage, the fight is not finished... Death to the idiots!!!” (5209)</p> <p>“Even if I understand the content of the dispute and the passions unleashed, it is time to rethink the basics of architecture, art and urbanism. I am 26 years old and I am saddened to see the poverty and anachronism of all the constructions that I have seen erected. I thank and support Mr. Ehrmann and his collective for this courageous artistic action. Why is Barcelona one of the most attractive, active and pleasant cities in Europe, besides the climate? Why do I cry when I leave the historical heart of our cities when I cross landscapes of fenced masonry houses, private or public housing estates of mediocre quality with monotonous shapes and colors, commercial and industrial sheds? Why...? In spite of everything, I understand that our elders feel hurt all the more deeply that their most beautiful architectural achievement lies in the renovation and protection of heritage. A 17th century residence against hundreds of thousands of hectares of countryside. A slap against a stake driven into the heart. Can we improve the urbanism of our country around this example and trust the thousands of architects who only dream of an explosion of creativity, like a new spring. Ps: I want to specify that I am not an architect, nor even a student in this field but in finance and react to this subject because it appears strategic to me for the well-being of our global economy” (5194)</p> <p>“A magnificent Abode of Chaos. Amazing artist who gives to St Romain an exceptional character, a hell of a stamp! I love it...” (4675)</p> <p>“This changes the old village and makes a very modern village with a lot of admiration” (4555).</p> <p>“it is important to create a precedent by having the Abode of Chaos recognized as a work, for more artistic freedom, to go beyond certain bourgeois concepts of beauty, propriety, architecture or urbanism. Are Disneyland, Futuroscope (...) in conformity with these concepts of urbanism, or do they simply generate enough money to be applauded?” (4233)</p> <p>“I find that this house does not spoil the village at all, on the contrary it brings something more, this house is a work of art, why works of art are exposed in the middle of the city while this house cannot be a work of art. If this house has to become like it was before, the house of happiness which is in front of it must also become like it was before” (4034)</p>		<p>“As far as the beauty of the site is concerned, I won't comment, in any case it's not worse than anything else (garden gnomes, anonymous and uniform pavilions, etc...), on the other hand, the mayor and his advisors should rub their hands of the exceptional tourist development that this Abode of Chaos will cause (or should cause): it's up to you, dear Thierry Ehrmann, to make yourself indispensable by encouraging the movement of visitors of all kinds, through tourist visits well relayed by the press. But I know that you know how to do that!” (4803)</p> <p>“The art I love is medieval and Renaissance art. I had been disgusted with contemporary art by uninspired "works". The Abode of Chaos pleasantly surprised me and makes me want to discover more. You can see from the outside, without entering a closed exhibition room where you feel uncomfortable. You can come whenever you want, on the spur of the moment, bring your friends. I don't understand the fierce opposition to the Abode of Chaos. On the contrary, I think it is a great asset for the village of Saint-Romain. Before the Abode of Chaos, who knew about Saint-Romain? Thanks to the Abode, hundreds of people come to visit this charming village, which is now known all over the world. I live in Collonges where the environment has been irreparably damaged by a factory which, since 1980, has not ceased to "grow" insidiously, both in terms of surface and height, with more pollution, noise pollution 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, exceeding the limits authorized by law, and the destruction of the magnificent landscape of the Saône valley. So, I'll trade: let them put the Collonges factory in Saint-Romain, I'll take 10 Abodes of Chaos in Collonges” (8466)</p>

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Elements/Aspects		Associative	Sensory - emotional	Evidentiary	Functional
		<p>“The Abode of Chaos in my village of more than a thousand inhabitants where everything seems quiet where I grew up inside there is threat, war of the big ones of my glance of teenager, I observe, but I do not have judgment in this classified village where reigns the golden stone skilled artists came to make them bleed has blow of pickaxe and jackhammer they killed an old residence. A whole mystery that hides behind. The Abode of Chaos that rises to the top. I don't know how to grow up in the face of this. They paint on the walls like they paint pictures. How to grow up in front of this. Sadness of a society where one cannot think. Largesse of spirit unceasingly threatened. Ehrmann defends his work, he has rebelled so much. As one protects the child who has just arrived”. (5511)</p> <p>“It is obvious that such artistic work makes sense in a precisely bourgeois and "clean" environment” (5360)</p> <p>“Life is a mixture of black and white. You always have to break the monotony of a monochrome painting. That's what you're doing, that's all. I don't think you're violating the planning code, you're not making a vulgar shopping center. This mansion is a full-scale artistic work, and the context in which it is located, is an effective way to attract tourists to the area: they may be for or against this phenomenon, but they will all come to see it anyway. Interesting concept, a gem of contemporary art.” (5004)</p> <p>“St Romains au Monts d'Or would probably like to remain a quiet village, but the world is not quiet; the Abode of Chaos shows this in a slightly too disturbing way but, it seems, with talent” (4800)</p> <p>“If only the Abode du Chaos were located in Longwy, an ex-steel town, beaten by rain in autumn, snow in winter, sun and rain in summer, the dramatic dimension of the work would have blossomed on acres forgotten by all but the workers in the hollow of their memories” (4309)</p>	<p>“I was thus more than pleasantly surprised, and to say the truth, delighted, to see that there were still a few people who dared to really push the limits in what I would call: the era of mediocrity. I am therefore not surprised that, once again, the distressing banality of our world is trying to make this creaking monument disappear, a flame of entropy titillating the fears of the right-minded. Personally, I am wholeheartedly with you in this process, and would add that if there were something to destroy, it would be these horrible soulless houses, surrounding like panicked antibodies this tumor born of creativity” (3315)</p> <p>“Let everyone do what they like at home, or in the name of a so-called aesthetic coherence and urban harmony, let's prevent the biggest discount brands from polluting the most beautiful avenues of French cities, gradually turning some beautiful neighborhoods into discount shopping areas. But when there is a commercial issue, the storefronts can be fuchsia pink in the middle of the city, we understand the elected officials...” (3541)</p>		<p>“This is a fabulous opportunity for tourism and cultural development, we should take advantage of it” (8485).</p> <p>“The discovery of art for free, whereas nowadays all museums are paying. Destroying the Abode of Chaos would be the end of a service to the discovery of other things” (46544)</p> <p>“My parents are from St Romain so I was born here and when I was a child this town was empty, without any animation. Now this village is more animated because you can see different people walking around to visit St Romain and the Abode of Chaos” (4558).</p>
Practices	Living creation	<p>“By launching out in the project of destruction/chaotic reconstruction of his house, Thierry Ehrmann has vitalized the commune by enriching it of an exceptional "work in progress" which arouses spontaneous creative reactions on behalf of other residents. If the debate is public, the creative field has also gone beyond the realm of the "private". The Demeure du Chaos is becoming a symbol of Saint Romain, all the more Like the Palais Idéal of the Facteur Cheval (which was almost destroyed because it was judged to be out of the ordinary), Hauterives has become a reference point in the French cultural landscape” (2814)</p>	<p>“On the one hand, I find Mr. Ehrmann's artistic expression in total adequacy with the violence and cynicism of our time. On the other hand, one could ask oneself in what way the Abode of Chaos would disfigure the urban environment more than the mediocrity of many modern buildings in the area? Is it the strength of the expression that bothers? Lyonnais, rejoice, because here is one more reason to attract tourists and encourage them to visit this magnificent city and its region. Lyon now offers a strong artistic expression from the 16th to the 21st century. It is fabulous! The Abode of Chaos should be visited as a living evolutionary museum and above all not be destroyed” (5210)</p>		<p>“So that the spaces of exchange and cultural and intellectual emulation can be the fact of alternative and popular initiatives. Let us continue to resist and multiply the manifestations of subversive artistic expression, let us continue to evade the conventional, watered-down forms of art which, by eating excessively and shamelessly at the rack of subsidies and political correctness, are bland and empty of any message. To support a place like the Abode du Chaos is an act of militancy and is indispensable” (53227)</p>