



château de monthelon



2 en amont de l'amont



Leave your everyday life
Let yourself fall into darkness
Forget your thoughts
Peel off, layer by layer
Look with your ears, inside
Attentive
Awakened





en amont de l'amont

Nothing is happening.
 There is nothing to hold onto,
 No point of reference. Only the absence of that
 which reassures.
 "The Emptiness", in other words, maybe
 "Before the source"?





en amont de l'amont⁴

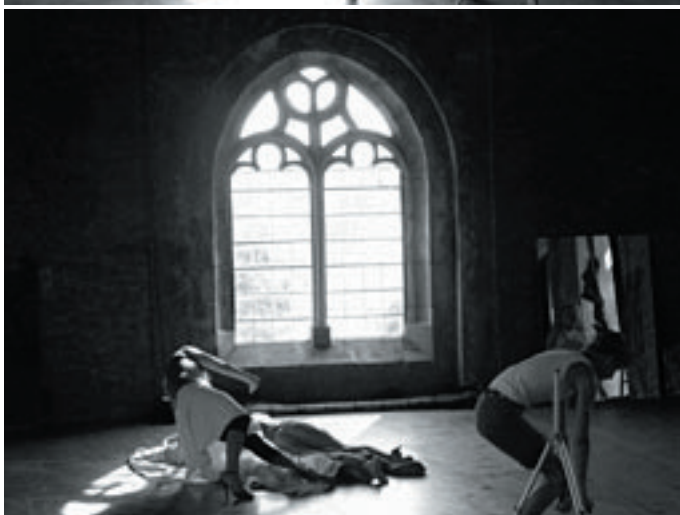
Nothing is easy to grasp, to define, to possess in this unknown place.
This dark place



Château de Monthelon

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en amont de l'amont



We have dived in here, without defenses, and with
no hope of being elsewhere, no relief in sight.
Uncomfortable as we are, we begin to feel at home
here.





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What is difficult to us changes color, a word, a taste, a tone,
a gesture, a mouvement...
Inspiration comes one drop at a time,
Intuition becomes visible.

Ueli Hirzel, january 2008



Château de Monthelon



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One of the outcomes of our first meeting of the Orientation Committee of Monthelon in July 2007, was the simple formulation of a common question ,
how do we define research and creativity?



The general notions remain obscure, at times even tabou, surrounded with a sort of cloak, words like Inspiration, Genius are used, we speak of transcending the pain of creativity, we speak of a mythical momentum, that comes, and goes. But in everyday life the artist's confrontation with him/her self is real, demanding. It can be heavy, precarious, destabilizing.





The question we are the most concerned with is: What is the creative process? How do we go through it? What are the ideal conditions to sustain and accompany that process?

Research always begins in the same place, in the emptiness. That same emptiness where we wander unprotected, accompanied only by ourselves, facing only ourselves. It is a very rare thing to meet with the wonderful, or the marvellous, but every now and again we do brush up against one or the other...



There does exist a creative force so furtive, ephemeral that it is incontrollable. A « wild wish to do » as Jacques Brel sings.

But there is also an experience that is shared by every creative person, The Risk. It is of course a subjective, sometimes even invisible risk, but it is very real. Creators can be compared to scientific researchers, or adventurers, the explorers of the 20th century, always daring to go one step further, and in this way expanding, and expanding the map, to add unknown territories.

But without losing ourselves, we have no chance of finding ourselves; and being lost is one of the most intimate, solitary and painful revolutions on earth.





1/1 en amont de l'amont

« Inserting circus techniques (into the creative process) has never been so difficult.(...)It's as if the usual recipe doesn't work, not like it should, not like it used to. And images for images sake is no more interesting than technique for technique's sake. We're more and more demanding, which doesn't lighten the task.(...) All of this makes a sack of knots in our head, oblige us to talk and talk, to try anything, to throw out everything...see what's left! This week I had the very real impression of having nothing left to say, of being empty, incapable of having even one idea. Which is how I come to the conclusion that nothing is ever acquired, that we will stay forever vulnerable as long as we try to stay honest with ourselves ».

(JPL april 2007)



Der Austausch persönlicher Erfahrungen kann ermutigen
Sharing these experiences can be encouraging. Sometimes
it takes only an exchange, a few words with another artist, to
get past that blocked spot, to take that one step that takes
us further, instead of running in mad circles around our-
selves, in poor, panicky imitation of our own creative selves.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO A CREATIVE
PROCESS?

Desire, perserverance, courage, rigor and fragility are in-
dispensable.

To go into the creative process is to leave behind so much...
start from zero. If we know where we're going, then we
haven't actually left anything.

Taking time with yourself, a lot of time, accepting to explore
your own limits.

en amont de l'amont
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WHAT CONTEXT IS HELPFUL TO ENCOURAGE AND
SUSTAIN THE CREATIVE PROCESS?

One that will permit the artist to quit the everyday
life for a given amount of time, to change habits,
to leave behind the material worries that distract
and consume. To be surrounded by people who are
going through a similar process and to have the
possibility of exchanging on the differences and
similarities of the process.

Silence, nature, an immense sky and limitless
horizon...

Château de Monthelon





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As well as technical support, space,
construction possibilities, help building.
Last but not least, the possibility to relax!



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Monthelon is above all a PLACE; with a geographical , historical, stone reality!

It is a place where things can happen. It is a place that welcomes artists in residency. The only thing that is asked of the artist in return, is to Pay attention to Monthelon. Like the physical law, of equal and opposite force, the more you are close to it, the more you give it, the more it gives back, the more is possible. These are the times that Monthelon opens completely and allows astounding research and exploration to take place.



Monthelon is a place for developing, preparing and realizing artistic ideas and of various ambitions as well genre-overlapping constallations.



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Conception



Also seminars, conferences or “Think-Tanks” containing political, social or philosophical issues may take place as well as mediations of conflict-handling.



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Upon a hill, secluded and uninfluenced by urban distractions, lie a number of buildings and facilities providing suitable conditions for collective and individual “work in residence”.

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Conception



Monthelon disposes of an infrastructure enabling theatre-, dance-, music-, performance-or circus companies to work on their projects.

Groups of a about 20 persons can accommodated. Supplementary ten persons can find place for realization of their individual projects.

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The infrastructure covers: individually equipped accommodations (community - bedrooms, single-, double - bedrooms) perhaps caravans.

Infrastructure



- sanitary installations (10 toilets, 6 showers, 2 bathtubs)

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- professional kitchen-equipment

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Infrastructure



- Speisezimmer



Château de Monthelon 24



Infrastructure

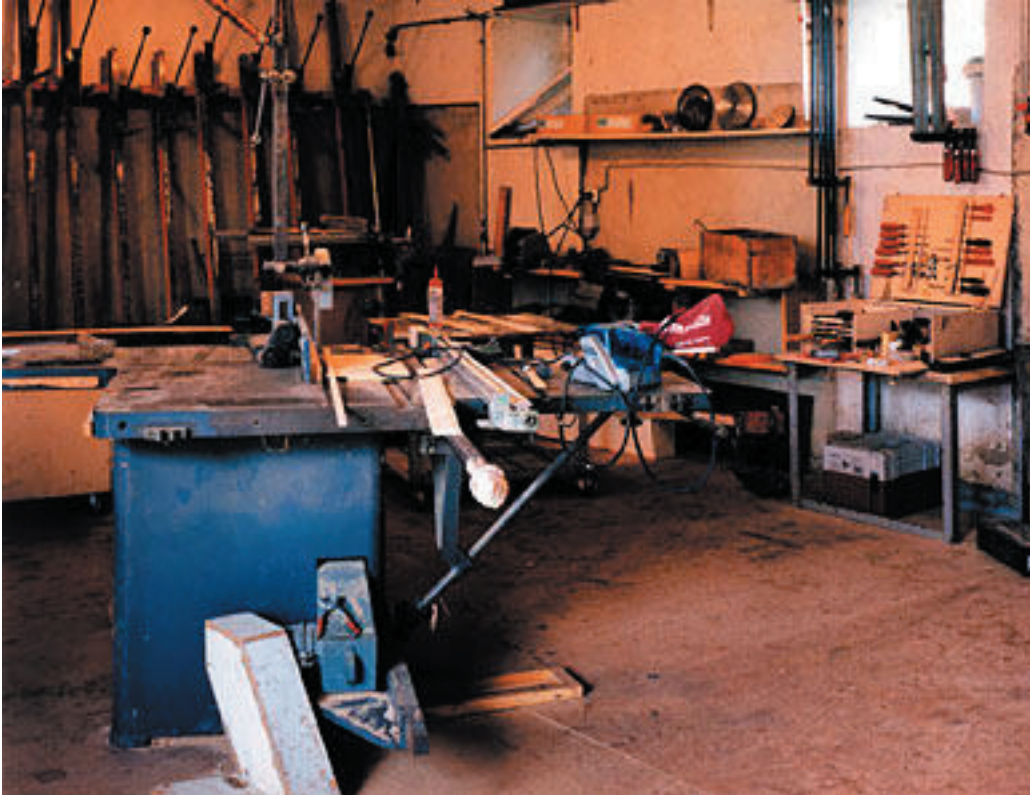
- dining room
- day-rooms,
- library and videotape-library

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Infrastructure





Château de Monthelon²⁶

- tailor's workshop,
- metal - workshop,
- joinery,



Infrastructure

- stonemason's workshop
- electronic studio including fragmentary soundstudio-equipment
- varios studios

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- large room for body-work / meditation

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Infrastructure

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- theatre / rehearsal-room including basic technical equipment

Infrastructure





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- office facilities with internet acces
- costume deposit
- grand piano



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- circus tent including devices and equipment
- swimming pool

Infrastructure





Château de Monthelon₃₂

- picturesquely situated on a gentle range in one of the least populated regions of France, in Burgundy, Department Yonne, part of the Montréal community



Geographic location



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- excellent international train-connections,
- TGV direction Paris - Dijon, station Montbard,
- direct connection to airport Charles de Gaulle, Dijon and Lille (with connections to London, Bruxelles, Berlin a.o.)
- A 6, highway - exit Avallon, route Paris - Lyon

Traffic connections





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The stay at Monthelon and its duration are bound to the project.

Artists and cultural creatives of various nationalities live here in an atmosphere of mutual relations, tolerance and openness.

A central point of residential life at Monthelon is joining a get-together for the evening meal.

The conditions for the stay at Monthelon will be set on account of record provided by the applicant and in conversation with the managers.



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Château de Monthelon was first mentioned in the records during the eighth century. Marauding knights of the cross devastated the castle during the 13th century. It's reconstruction and consolidation as a county took place as the duchy of burgundy gained strength.





Château de Monthelon₃₆

During the french revolution in 1789-95 rebelling peasants destroyed the estate which was again reconstructed only after world war two.

Subsequently it was used as a nursery, later as children's holiday-home run by a worker's union.

The transformation of the buildings into a production - space for artists projects began in 1989 after the estate was aquired by Eva Bruderer and Ueli Hirzel.





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During the fifteen years of Monthelon's existence about 600 artists from 21 different countries have been working at Monthelon on 208 projects.

Monthelon has been inhabited by an average of six persons per stay working on projects plus the managers and their guests which are not registered in this account.

The duration of residence per person averaged tonemonths

Bilanz 2008

Création spectacles de cirque	7
Création spectacles solo et solo de clown	4
Recherche numéros de cirque	6
Création danse	7
Littérature	2
Création théâtrale	2
Travail sensibilisation physique	2
Création performance	2
Création musique	2
Installation arts plastiques	1
Recherches / histoire	1
Recherches / sociologie	1
Vidéo, écriture scénario	1
Théâtre de rue	3
	1

Statistics

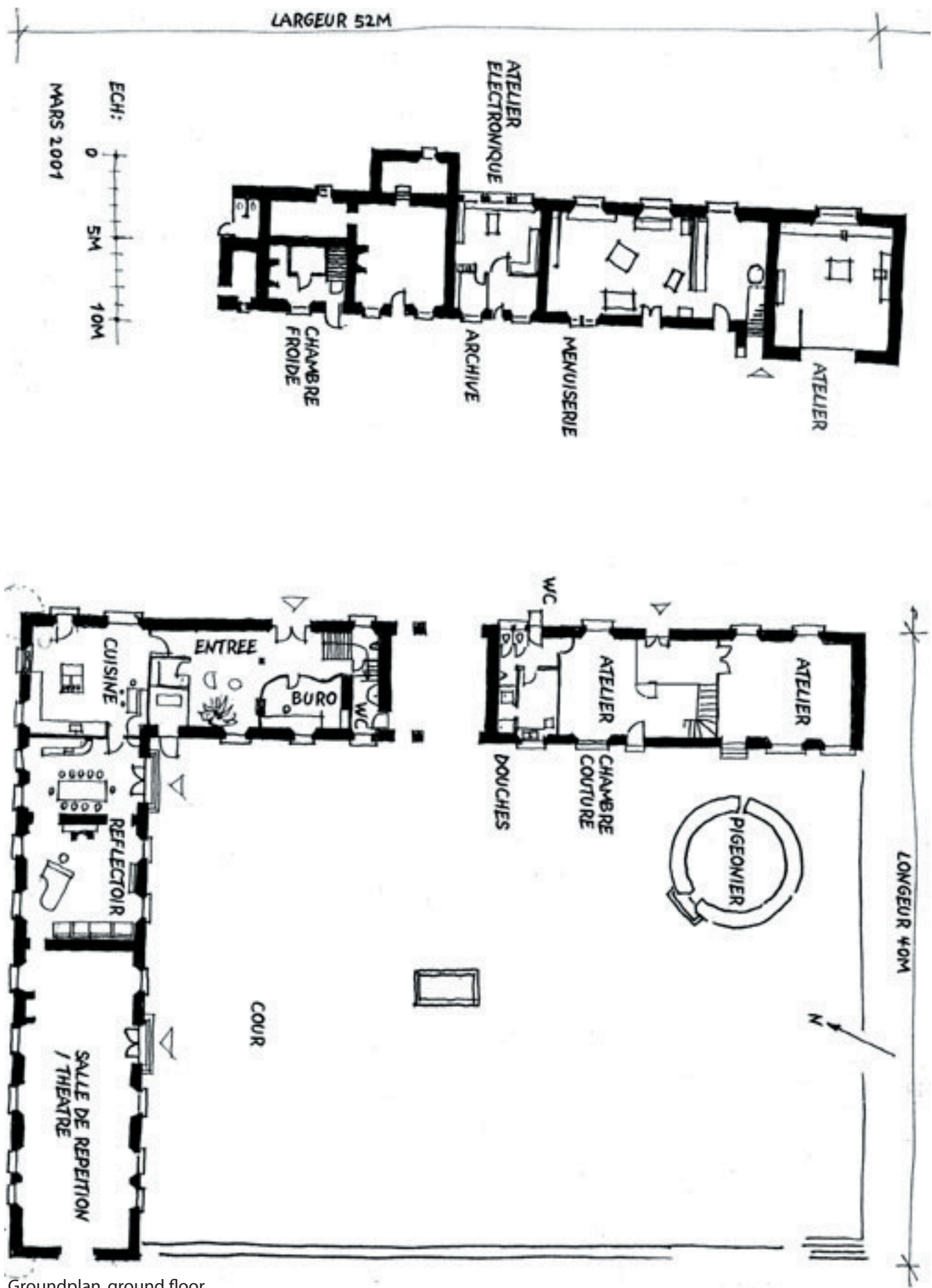


In direct consequences of projects that were realized at monthelon since 1990 there have been eleven families totaling 31 persons including 21 children which were born during this period that have settled in the nearer surroundings.

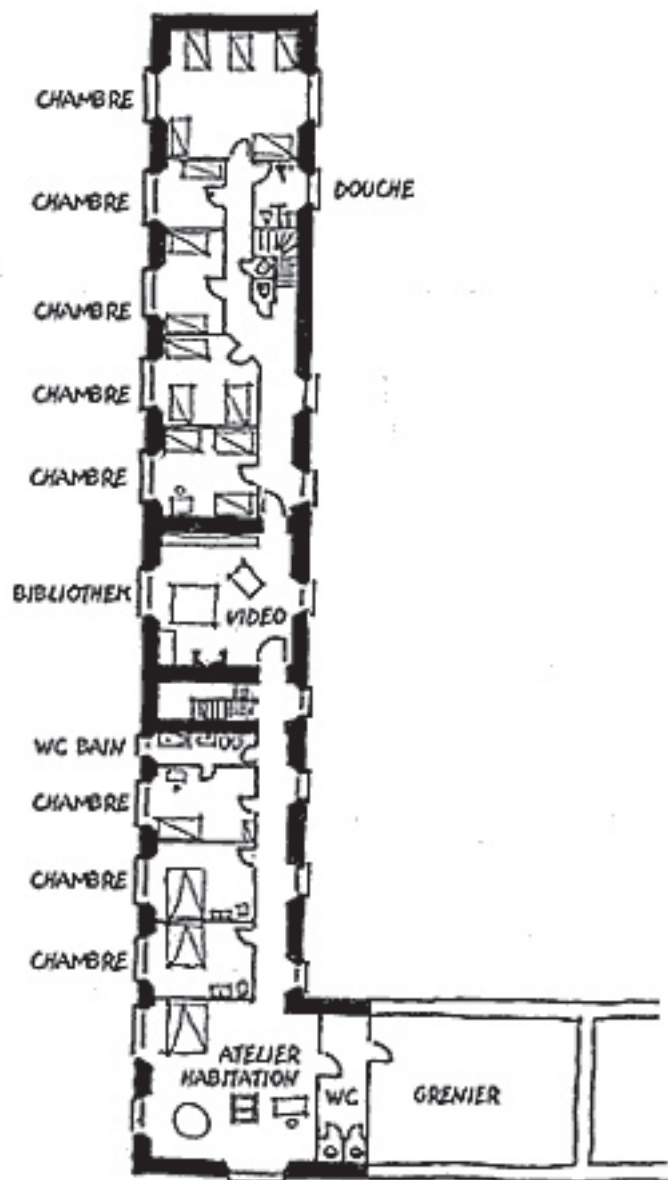
Fifteen buildings, resp. estates were aquisited, reconstructed and redecoreated.

In close cooperation with local craftsmen scenes were built, caravans were restored as well as stage equipment and accessories were developed - having considerable effect on cultural and economical development in the region.





Groundplan, ground floor



groundplan, second floor



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adresse & contact

Ueli Hirzel

Château de Monthelon

F - 89420 Montréal

tel (0033) 3 86 32 18 24

fax (0033) 3 86 32 19 00

cirque@monthelon.org

France

graphic design : su alois

