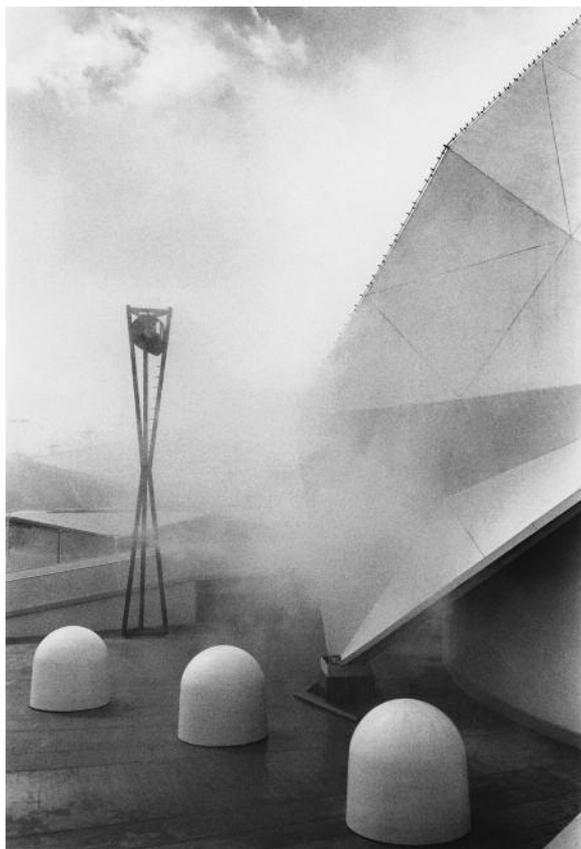


# Robert Breer

The Floats



Press release

**CAPC**  
musée d'art contemporain  
de Bordeaux

## Robert Breer

19 November 2010 - 27 February 2011  
In the nave of the CAPC

**This autumn the CAPC is to play host to the collection of Floats by American artist Robert Breer. This is a premiere. For three months, these quasi-minimalistic and historic floating sculptures are to have the run of the museum's nave, triggering the stirring vision of an unfixated exhibition between mobile-sculpture convention and silent debutants' ball.**

Robert Greer was born in 1926. For some 60 years, he has been building an undisciplined oeuvre whose watchwords are weightlessness, gliding and fluid movements. Associated successively with several French and American avant-garde movements of the 1950s, the artist at first devoted himself to experimental film and abstract painting. In 1965, he attached small wheels to one of his structures, which he placed on the ground. And so there began an epic floor-level journey for *Tanks*, *Rugs* and other *Floats*, showing scant regard along the way for the minimalistic sculpture, plinths and the conventional static aspect of exhibitions.

The Floats - or floating sculptures - that Robert Breer took up producing again at the end of the 1990s, emerged in 1965. The word "float" meaning something floating - a marker, fishing float or buoy - and which also describes those carnival vehicles whose pretend wheels give them the appearance of floating above the tarmac, enabled Robert Breer to apply this principle to works of a new genre. Primary shapes, neutral colours and, for the most recent, an industrial aspect, the *Floats* were then made with polystyrene, foam, painted plywood, and, more latterly, out of fibreglass. At first glance, these simple structures appear immobile. In fact, they are moving, imperceptibly, within the

space they inhabit. Motorised and on mini-rollers - which raise them slightly above ground, giving them an air of weightlessness - they glide unbeknown to the visitor, following random paths that are interrupted by the slightest obstacle that they encounter. Stemming from the autonomy of movement characteristic of *Floats*, this liberty indicates the presence of a kinetic eye that proliferates the points of view, not so much on the work itself but on what it passes through and into which its colour merges.

Robert Breer's sculpture is a contemporary of the minimalistic geometric forms that symbolised the 1960s, along with the numerous experiments imbued with the spirit of *performance*, which appeared within the sphere of influence of John Cage and Merce Cunningham - artists frequented by Robert Breer on his arrival in New York. But during the 1960s, these *Floats* were not taken seriously. Were they? And would those glib critics of the ascendancy of the minimalistic sculpture of that period have been able to do so?

So it was to be another three decades before they made another appearance, again in New York, with the same energy and relevance, this time in collective exhibitions with artists of another generation. And, just as they did in the 1960s, the *Floats* disrupted the measured order of exhibitions, projecting the visitor into a state of utter confusion, unable to tell which it was - out of the works of art, the building or himself - that had really moved. In the nave of the CAPC, the first ever meeting of thirty-odd of these pieces will imbue this experience with a quite exceptional intensity.

**Exhibition curator:** Alexis Vaillant,  
Chief curator at the CAPC

## Events

### Conférence

Pierre Bal-Blanc  
Wednesday 24 November 7pm  
In the nave of the CAPC  
€5, free for members

### «Surtout ne fermez pas les yeux»

Robert Breer's films by Bertrand Grimaud  
Association Monoquini, Bordeaux  
Auditorium  
Wednesday 8 December 7pm  
€5, free for members

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### Other exhibitions

*CAPC, ou la vie saisie par l'art*  
Until 21 November 2010

*BigMinis, Fetishes of Crisis*  
19 November 2010 - 27 February 2011

*Jean-Paul Thibeaudeau : Méta-archives 1*  
(Fragmentary and enigmatic Anarchives)  
7 October 2010 - 27 February 2011

## CAPC

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capc@mairie-bordeaux.fr  
www.rosab.net  
www.capc-bordeaux.fr

### Access by tram

B line, CAPC stop  
C line, Jardin Public stop

### Schedules

11:00 - 18:00 / 20:00, Wednesdays  
Closed on Mondays and public holidays

### Guided Visits

Saturdays and Sundays  
By appointment, for groups  
Tel. +33 (0)5 56 00 81 78

### Le Salon

14:00 - 18:00 / 20:00, Wednesdays  
Closed on Mondays

### The Library

14:00 - 18:00  
From Tuesday to Friday  
Tel. +33 (0)5 56 00 81 59

### Café Andrée Putman

11:00 - 18:00 / 20:00, Wednesdays  
Closed on Mondays and public holidays  
Tel. +33 (0)5 56 44 71 61

### arc en rêve centre d'architecture

Tel. +33 (0)5 56 56 78 36  
info@arcenreve.com

### Exhibition partners

Château Chasse-Spleen  
20 minutes  
Mouvement

### CAPC partners

The Regent Grand Hôtel Bordeaux  
iConcept  
Air France  
Lyonnaise des eaux  
Wit FM

front page  
**Robert Breer**  
*Floats, 1970*  
Osaka  
Photo: Shunk-Kender  
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