

THE  
ART  
*TRAVEL*  
BOOK

40 iconic outdoor artworks

Nadine van den Bosch  
Nienke van der Wal

02.

# Anselm Kiefer

## La Ribaute



Eschaton — Anselm Kiefer Foundation, Barjac, France



On the outskirts of Barjac in southern France, Anselm Kiefer has created *La Ribaute*, a massive artwork built on the grounds of a former silk factory. The site, managed by the Eschaton Foundation (named after a term meaning ‘the end of time’), spans over 40 hectares and includes more than 60 buildings, underground tunnels, towers, glasshouses and vast installation halls. This is not a museum or a sculpture park, but an entire environment shaped by Kiefer’s exploration of history, memory and time.

As a visitor, you are not simply walking through an exhibition but entering a place that feels like a memory made physical. Some parts are open to the sky; others are hidden below ground. You descend narrow staircases into concrete corridors, lit only by small skylights or dim bulbs. Underground spaces resemble bunkers, tombs or abandoned archives. These spaces are not just architectural; they reinforce Kiefer’s interest in the layering and burying of meaning.

Kiefer uses materials like lead, ash, straw, clay and concrete – not for their beauty, but for their symbolism. Lead, for example, is linked to knowledge in alchemy. While it is heavy and difficult to work with, it is also enduring. Straw and ash together reference life and destruction. These materials allow Kiefer to address themes such as post-war trauma, the erasure and rewriting of history, and the cyclical nature of decay and rebirth.

Throughout the site, recurring motifs appear: books made of lead, scorched sunflowers, towers built from concrete blocks. In glasshouses, you encounter a group of sculptures of headless female forms, modelled from dresses. These figures represent women from antiquity or mythology, whose stories have often been silenced or forgotten. Visits to this site are upon reservation through the website only.







## ABOUT JEFF KOONS

Jeff Koons was born in 1955 in York (Pennsylvania), USA. His work is inspired by popular culture, consumerism and the everyday. He is well known for his iconic *Balloon Dog* that has been exhibited all over the world. Rising to prominence in the 1980s, he became one of the most

controversial and celebrated figures in contemporary art, often blurring the boundary between fine art and mass-produced objects. His monumental sculptures invite both awe and debate about taste, value and the role of art in a consumer society.



## Three other European islands with a vibrant art scene

- **MALLORCA, SPAIN**

Mallorca offers a strong art focus, anchored by the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca, where visitors can explore Joan Miró's studios and works in a setting that reflects his deep connection to the island. When visiting Mallorca, don't miss the Cathedral of Palma, known as La Seu, a Gothic landmark with architectural interventions by Antoni Gaudí.

- **CYPRUS**

Cyprus has an evolving art scene with the contemporary art centre NiMAC presenting major exhibitions of Cypriot and international artists. Across the island, seasonal art events and fairs showcase emerging Cypriot artists, while street art throughout Cyprus's cities makes contemporary art a vital part of urban life.

- **MENORCA, SPAIN**

The contemporary art scene in Menorca is led by gallery Hauser & Wirth Menorca, located on Isla del Rey. It features temporary exhibitions by artists such as Louise Bourgeois (p. 198), Rashid Johnson and Eduardo Chillida, as well as a sculpture trail, landscaped gardens by Piet Oudolf (p. 86) and artist residency spaces. Also in Menorca, LÒAC (Alaior Art Contemporani) opened in 2022 in Alaior, transforming a historic building into a contemporary art museum hosting rotating exhibitions with both Spanish and international artists.



Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca

## ABOUT MARC QUINN

Marc Quinn was born in 1964 in London, UK. He is known for his explorations of the human body and the relationship between art and science. Quinn first gained international recognition in the early 1990s as part of the Young British Artists (YBAs) movement. Quinn's practice spans sculpture, painting and installation, often incorporating unconventional materials

such as DNA, blood, water and flowers. His iconic and oversized sculptures challenge perceptions of beauty, physicality and human fragility. Quinn's art provokes dialogue on topics such as body politics, climate change and technology. He continues to push boundaries, questioning what it means to be human in a rapidly changing world.



**Yayoi Kusama, Shine of Life**

## Other things to see at Kistefos Museum

- **BJARKE INGELS, *The Twist***

The centrepiece of Kistefos is *The Twist*, a striking building designed by Bjarke Ingels that doubles as a bridge and a gallery. Its twisted shape spirals elegantly over the Randselva river, creating both a practical crossing and an artwork in its own right. With reflective surfaces and flowing lines, the structure constantly changes character as the light and weather shift. Inside, *The Twist* hosts exhibitions of international contemporary art, making it an unforgettable museum space.

- **TONY OURSLER, *Scat Skat Skatt***

At Kistefos, art truly appears everywhere – yes, even in the bathrooms. Answering the challenge to create the world’s most spectacular toilets, American artist Tony Oursler transformed *The Twist*’s public toilets into a multimedia artwork. Known for his surreal, animated projections and playful approach, Oursler fills the space with sound, light and unexpected images. Commissioned by founder Christen Sveaas, the installation ensures that even your most private moments at Kistefos become part of the artistic experience.

- **YAYOI KUSAMA, *Shine of Life***

Rising out of the dark water, Yayoi Kusama’s *Shine of Life* surprises visitors with a dozen bright red, polka-dotted tentacles. The playful shapes seem at once cheerful and slightly monstrous, reaching towards the sky as if alive. Surrounded by forest and water, the work creates a vivid contrast with its natural setting. Kusama (p. 208) designed the piece especially for Kistefos, bringing her signature patterns and sense of wonder to the Norwegian landscape.



Bjarke Ingels, *The Twist*



# 18.

## Tracey Emin *I Lay Here For You*



Jupiter Artland, Wilkieston, Scotland

Jupiter Artland is a contemporary sculpture garden in Wilkieston near Edinburgh, where artworks by many well-known artists from the United Kingdom (such as Marc Quinn (p. 60), Antony Gormley (p. 180), Anish Kapoor and Phyllida Barlow) are placed amid meadows and woodlands. It is easy to see why Tracey Emin fell for this particular spot when she was invited to create an artwork for Jupiter Artland. Following the winding paths through the woodlands of the approximately 50-hectare park, you come upon her sculpture, nestled among beech trees: a female figure, cast in bronze, stretching around six metres in length.

Her presence feels both powerful and intimate. As you walk up to her, it feels

like you are stumbling upon a private moment. Unlike the usual upright pose of sculpted women, she lies face down, her body arranged in a way that feels private and a bit uncomfortable. It may leave you wondering, Did she fall, is she resting, or, as the title *I Lay Here For You* suggests, is she waiting for a lover, or simply for love?

The surface, first modelled in clay before being cast in bronze, retains the marks of Emin's hands, her touch visible across the folds of the body and the softness of the limbs. Up close, the sculpture is breathtaking in its vulnerability – a rare example of a work so moving that it is felt as deeply as it is seen.



San Rocco

2007

## 20.

# Zhang Enli

## A Cheerful Person



Montabone, Italy

In the hills of Montabone, a small village in Italy's Piemonte region, Zhang Enli transformed the façade of the 18th-century Church of San Rocco into the artwork *A Cheerful Person*. The work was unveiled in 2022 as part of Art Mapping Piemonte, a project that connects contemporary artists with rural locations. Instead of treating the church as a backdrop, Enli turned its very architecture into his canvas.

Approaching the church along the winding road, the painted façade stands out like a friendly landmark. At first glance, the 'face' seems simplistic, almost cartoonish. Using broad, gestural brushstrokes in greens, reds and ochres – colours that echo the vineyards and landscape around Montabone – Enli animated the building's surface. The rose window, arched doorway and decorative details are reimagined as facial features. As you move closer, the image breaks down into brushwork and colour and then transforms again as

you step back. This shifting perception is central to the experience. The small church becomes animated, not through technology or spectacle, but through paint and imagination. From a distance, the church seems to smile. Up close, the face dissolves into sweeping lines and patches of colour that follow the contours of the stone.

Enli conceived of the project during the pandemic years and intended the painting to create a sense of joy and to offer visitors a fleeting smile. It also connects to a wider tradition of artists reimagining rural chapels in Piemonte, such as the celebrated Barolo Chapel. But while that earlier project relied on bold geometry (the signature style of its creators Sol LeWitt and David Tremlett), Enli emphasises spontaneity, using marks that resemble doodles or improvised sketches. The effect is deliberately playful, a reminder of the power of simple gestures to transform mood.





Yayoi Kusama, Narcissus Garden

**36.**

**Richard Serra**  
East-West/West-East



**Brouq Nature Reserve, Qatar**



The exactness of the location of this artwork immediately makes you understand you are in for something unusual. *East-West/West-East* cannot be found on any map, nor are there any signs or even roads guiding you – all you have to go on are the GPS coordinates: N25° 31.019' E050° 51.948'. Do not forget sun cream, water and plenty of petrol for the two-hour drive across the desert near the remote village of Zekreet. The vast stretch of sand is only disrupted by the occasional antelope or camel and – surprise – Film City, a structure once used for scenes in the Hollywood blockbuster movie *Transformers*. At last, you see Richard Serra's artwork emerging in the distance.

Is your mind playing tricks on you? Four enormous vertical steel plates, each around 14 metres high, stand in the desert landscape of the Brouq Nature Reserve. The plates are made from weathering (corten) steel, which creates a rust-like surface that blends with the natural landscape. The plates are placed in vertical alignment with each other, as well as in perfect harmony with the gypsum and limestone plateaus that have been carved over time by wind. The four pillars are placed across a distance of more than one kilometre, challenging your sense of perspective within the open flatness of the desert.

At first, it is hard to comprehend exactly what you are looking at. The tall plates seem otherworldly, as if they have always been there – remnants of an unknown civilisation. While exploring the site on foot, you will notice that the work shifts and changes with each step you take, disorienting you while revealing the desert's true scale and depth as you move around it. More than an artwork, it is a meditative experience that will stay with you.





# 40.

## Yinka Shonibare Wind Sculpture (SG) III



The Norval Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa

*Wind Sculpture (SG) III* is a monumental outdoor work in the Norval Foundation's Sculpture Garden, just south of Cape Town. Towering seven metres high, two and a half metres wide and two metres deep, the sculpture is composed of a steel armature supporting a hand-painted fibreglass cast.

The sculpture is part of Yinka Shonibare's ongoing *Wind Sculpture* series, which seeks to make the invisible visible: capturing the fluid, dynamic motion of fabric caught in the wind and rendering it permanently in solid form. The result is a striking, gravity-defying structure that seems to billow and twist, frozen in time.

What immediately stands out is the use of bold, vibrant colours, meticulously painted to resemble Dutch wax, or batik fabric. These textiles, often thought of as quintessentially West African, have a

layered history: they are originally inspired by Indonesian batik, industrially produced in the Netherlands and embraced in African markets. By referencing these patterns, Shonibare exposes the entangled histories of colonial trade, migration and cultural exchange. The vibrant designs are not mere decoration but a statement about the hybridity of identity itself – how culture is never static, but shaped by movement, adaptation, appropriation and power dynamics.

Set among the indigenous plants of the Norval Foundation's Sculpture Garden, *Wind Sculpture (SG) III*'s vivid colours blaze against the landscape. It becomes both landmark and provocation – inviting viewers to consider how the unseen 'winds' of history, commerce and migration continue to shape who we are, both individually and collectively.