

TEMPLON

II

Press release

December 17, 2025

PHILIPPE COGNÉE

Éclats

January 15 — February 28, 2026

Opening on Thursday 15, from 5 pm to 8 pm



Sentinelles 1, 2025, wax painting on canvas, 150 x 110 cm - 59 x 39 1/4 in. – Photo © Philippe Cognée's studio.

Following on from the retrospective show of his work at Musée Paul Valéry in Sète (2025) and the acclaimed exhibitions at the Bourdelle and Orangerie museums (2023), where he alternately delved into the domestic grace of flowers and the wildness of forests, painter **Philippe Cognée** now returns to a core theme of his work: **architecture as a metaphor for the human condition.**

Architecture, like life, is fragile: it rises, cracks, collapses, and returns to the earth from which it came. Cognée's paintings have always been still lifes, meditations on the fragility of the world. At the Galerie Templon in Brussels, the artist presents three new ensembles that explore this reflection on the perishable beauty of things.

The first body of work, consisting of **32 charcoal and acrylic drawings on Arches paper**, brings forth uncertain architectures, drawn from a visual collection but detached from any

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direct reference. Reduced to their essential structures, they morph into carcasses, grids and canvases—graphic variations where the harshness of charcoal clashes with the fluidity of acrylic. The scratched and lacerated surfaces create tragic landscapes, with a dramatic tension that counters any impressionistic lyricism.

In the series “**Traverser la ville**” (Crossing the City), executed in oil on wood, Cognée literally attacks the material. With blows from blunt tools, he brings forth hieroglyphic, almost abstract images, where architecture is reduced to silhouettes, ghosts, shrouds.

Finally, a series of **encaustic paintings** perpetuates the artist's fascination with vibrant blurring and pigment sparkles. These works, both luminous and melancholic, celebrate the fragile splendor of reality and elevate architecture to the status of memento mori, a reminder of the passing of time and the impermanence of bodies.

Philippe Cognée's biography

Born in 1957, Philippe Cognée works in Nantes and Paris. A Villa Medici laureate in 1990 and Prix Marcel Duchamp finalist in 2004, Philippe Cognée spent many years teaching at the Paris Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts, where he trained a new generation of young figurative painters. His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions: MAMCO-Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Geneva (2006), musée de Grenoble (2013, 2022), Château de Chambord (2014), Fondation Fernet-Branca (2016), Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire (2020), Chapelle de la Visitation à Thonon-les-Bains (2022), musées Bourdelle, de l'Orangerie et de Tessé (2023), and musée Paul Valéry à Sète (2025).

His art also features in a great many museum collections: Centre Pompidou, Fondation Cartier, Collection Louis Vuitton, Museum Ludwig (Cologne), Museum Voorlinden (Netherlands), Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne and Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature (Paris).

Philippe Cognée has been represented by Galerie Templon since 2002.