



Régis Perray

*340 grammes déplacés... during Levitated Mass by Michael Heizer*  
Dust from the vault of the Chartres Cathedral  
West Coast, Nantes, France, Feb 29 - Mar 10, 2012

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OBSART | Observatoire du Land Art

Curators:  
Mélanie Marbach, Marc de Verneuil

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## **A transatlantic action echoing the pharaonic displacement of Michael Heizer's 340-ton boulder to LACMA—the largest art museum in the western United States.**

Observatoire du Land Art, true to its spirit of transmitting, pays tribute to Michael Heizer, a key figure of Earth Art. *Levitated Mass* montage, scheduled for Spring-Summer 2012 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), brings on the pharaonic displacement of a 340-ton<sup>[1]</sup> granite block that will permanently be placed over a 456-foot trench extending behind the Resnick Pavilion of the museum. Heizer's artwork—unique in that it offers the public, in the heart of the city, the experience of a space on the scale of his earthworks made in the desert<sup>[2]</sup>—contrasts with the image of the *Man with the Golden Bulldozers*, cloistered in *City*, his secret compound.

To witness this beau geste—too poorly advertized by the European media—Observatoire du Land Art has naturally thought about Régis Perray in order to perform a symbolic action on the French scale, with one of his mini construction machines, that would echo the American event. To the invitation to move a small pebble during the temporary levitation of the big rock, the artist immediately responded by converting the material:

“My proposal will be 340 grams of dust coming from the legendary vault of the Chartres Cathedral, a place that is younger than Heizer's rock, but older than the history of the United States.”

This action follows on *Centre d'entraînement pour retourner au Pilat et à Saqqara* (the transportation of 30 tonnes of sand during 45 days in 2001 as an attempt to move the largest dune in Europe), *Dans le désert il n'y a pas que des pierres* (an activist gesture performed in front of the Giza Pyramids in 1999), or *Le dumper et les pierres de la cathédrale de Chartres* (2009-2010). And although Perray works on a different scale from Heizer, the idea of displacement, the obsession with working the ground, the trauma of World War II (the death camps for the one, the atomic tests for the other) are many commonalities justifying this convergence.

So from February 28 onwards, a nearly 300-foot-long transporter specially designed for the occasion will move Michael Heizer's monolith—a slow journey referring to the convoys of Ancient Egypt—from the quarry of Stone Valley (Riverside County, California) to LACMA. For about 10 days, while the huge transporter travels every night across the western United States, Régis Perray will move every day, in western France, 340 grams of dust from the Chartres Cathedral, with his new toy, a Volvo BM dumper specially bought for the occasion. He will use photography to reveal his displacement.

His action, both delicate and intimate, is meant to convey that which will take place in the United States, in the spotlight of California, with his own keen sense of humor. This transatlantic echo will confront both projects while putting several dialectics into perspective: size and scale (nano/giga, France/USA), time (night/day, synchronous/asynchronous<sup>[3]</sup>), nature vs. culture... and finally, history. When Michael Heizer goes back to work on *City*—an “archaeology of the future” inspired by lost civilizations—Régis Perray will continue his own “archeology of the present”—scouring the world by his modest actions—as an attempt to revive the memory of our ancestors.

Mélanie Marbach and Marc de Verneuil

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<sup>[1]</sup> Equivalent to 308.44 metric tons.

<sup>[2]</sup> For that matter, the artist seems to mention his seminal work, *Double Negative* (1969-1970), whose two dimensions, 456 x 15 meters, are reused in feet.

<sup>[3]</sup> It so happens that the 9-hour jet lag between the sites causes the two actions to be practically simultaneous.

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### Michael Heizer

*Displaced/Replaced Mass*, 1969.....[link](#)

*Double Negative*, 1969-1970.....[link](#)

*City*, since 1972.....[link](#)

*Levitated Mass*, 2011-2012.....[link](#)

- International press review.....[link](#)

- Videos, photos, maps, plans.....[link](#)

### Regis Perray

*Dans le désert il n'y a pas que des pierres*, 1999.....[link](#)

*Centre d'entraînement pour retourner au Pilat et à Saqqara*, 2001.....[link](#)

*Le dumper et les pierres de la cathédrale de Chartres*, 2010.....[link](#)

« Dust Memories », group show at SI, New York, 2003.....[link](#)

« On Earth as it is in Heaven », Jean-Marc Huitorel, 2006.....[link](#)

« Les Bouts du Monde », Gourvennec Ogor gallery, Marseille, 2012.....[link](#)

Follow the **340 grams of dust** | Follow the **340-ton rock**

[www.regisperray.eu/news](http://www.regisperray.eu/news) | [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org)

### Retrospective

*340 grammes déplacés... during Levitated Mass by Michael Heizer*, 2012.....[link](#)