

# Sailing to create, art in motion

## Naviguer pour créer, l'art en mouvement

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**ABSTRACT.** Science has always been a source of inspiration for artists. In this spirit, the Tara Ocean Foundation works closely and organize exhibitions with artists to cultivate fresh perspectives on its scientific expeditions and on the Ocean itself. Through residencies aboard the Tara schooner and Tara Polar Station, artists can harness their unique vision and creativity to capture and reinterpret the richness of the Ocean, the essence of scientific exploration, and the rhythms of life at sea. The goal is to awaken public awareness of the Ocean's beauty and essential role in our world.

**RÉSUMÉ.** Science et connaissance ont toujours été une source d'inspiration pour les artistes. C'est dans cet esprit que la Fondation Tara Océan collabore étroitement et organise des expositions avec des artistes, pour cultiver un autre regard sur ses expéditions scientifiques et l'Océan. En résidences artistiques à bord de la goélette et la station polaire, à travers leurs regards uniques et leurs créativité, ils capturent et réinterprètent la richesse de l'Océan, la recherche scientifique et la vie quotidienne à huis clos. L'objectif est de sensibiliser le public à la beauté et l'importance de l'Océan.

**KEYWORDS.** Artists, residencies, science, public awareness, oceans, pollutions, Tara Foundation.

**MOTS-CLÉS.** Artistes, résidences, science, diffusion du savoir, oceans/ pollutions, Fondation Tara.



*Conversation métabolite by Antoine Bertin.  
Photo ©Fondation Tara\_104\_bfougeirol 2025*

## One Ocean, Many Stories..

Knowledge has always been transmitted through stories. From the discovery of new territories and the establishment of the first commercial maritime routes in the 16th century, to the great scientific expeditions like Darwin's, tales of exploration and seafaring adventures have shaped and spread our understanding of the world. Our personal relationship with the Ocean reflects the incredible diversity of cultures across the globe. These perspectives — whether marked by anxiety, serenity, or awe — are rooted in the intimate, often mysterious connection each of us shares with this vast and largely unexplored realm.

The Tara Ocean Foundation (1) is not only a hub for scientific research through its expeditions (2), but also a platform for artistic exploration (3). Thanks to the enduring commitment of agnès b. and Etienne Bourgois, more than 50 artist residencies have taken place aboard the schooner since 2004 (2). Men and women from diverse backgrounds have set sail to document and interpret the richness of the ocean through their unique creative lenses — sharing insights into the scientific work undertaken on board.

Among the first to embark on this journey were renowned artists such as Pierre Huyghe, Xavier Veilhan, and Sebastião Salgado.

### Creativity Without Borders

Artistic residencies aboard the schooner offer a journey of discovery. Each artist must adapt to the unpredictable rhythms of the sea, using its ever-changing environment as inspiration to build, reflect, and complete their work. Painters, illustrators, photographers, sculptors, writers, sound artists, and filmmakers all contribute to revealing what often remains hidden — offering fresh ways to perceive the Ocean. Rather than categorizing this artistic abundance by subject matter, the editorial vision of the residencies is shaped around five major themes: **Living**, **Landscapes**, **Pollutions**, **Sensible**, and **Travelogues**.

Under **Living**, Christian Sardet & The Macronauts's Plankton chronicles installation : *Ballet du Plancton* (4), Manon Lanjouère's *Particules* (5), and Aurore de La Morinerie's *Cells & Salps* (6) reveal the microscopic life that forms the basis of our ecosystem.

**Landscapes**, as seen through the eyes of Nicolas Floc'h (7), Yann Bagot (8), and Emmanuel Régent (9), offer windows onto the marine world — each using photography, intricate line drawing, or ink to portray different oceanic vistas.

Through the lens of **Pollutions**, works by Samuel Bollendorff (10), Laure Winants (11), and Robertina Šebjanič (12) make visible the often-invisible threats facing the ocean, confronting us with the environmental challenges of our time.

In **Sensible**, Elsa Guillaume's *Slices* (13) navigates the boundary between attraction and repulsion, while Noémie Sauve (14) highlights coral's delicate fragility — set against the subtle soundscapes of Antoine Bertin's *plankton voices* (15).

Finally, **Travelogues** — through video diaries, illustrations, paintings, and photographs — trace the transformation of each artist through their experience at sea. These works remind us that they all originate from a shared stage: the Ocean itself.



*Left: Heliogravures - Aurore de la Morinerie*  
*Right: Un monde sculptural - Cécile Fouillade – SIQOU.*  
*Photo ©Fondation Tara\_104\_bfougeirol2025*



*Plankton Ballet – Christian Sardet & The Macronauts.*  
*Photo ©Fondation Tara\_104\_bfougeirol2025*



*Les larmes de sirènes – Samuel Bollendorf offers a dialogue between the beauty of seascapes and the sad reality of samples taken on site.*  
*Photo ©Fondation Tara\_104\_bfougeirol2025*

## Art in Common, at the Heart of Social Ties with the Ocean

A landmark exhibition « **La Grande Expédition** » at Le Centquatre (104) in Paris (16) and the publication of *L'Art et la Science pour Révéler l'Océan* (17) by The Eyes Publishing offered the public a chance to experience singular creations born of these residencies.

The goal was to reconnect us with the ocean, reveal its hidden biodiversity, underscore its central role in regulating the climate, and confront us with the pollution that threatens it — all through the eyes of artists.

The works also posed deeper, universal questions:

- What is humanity's relationship with life?
- How do we leave our mark on the landscape?
- What invisible forces endanger living beings?
- Can we perceive the ocean through the senses?

Today, sharing these questions is essential. By doing so, we open a collective dialogue about the future of the Ocean — and of life itself.

To reach broader audiences, the Tara Ocean Foundation is bringing these artistic visions to venues across many regions, making the ocean's story accessible to all.



*Part of the representation of the Ocean and the expeditions of the schooner Tara as seen by the artists collective Ensaders. Photo ©Fondation Tara\_104\_bfougeirol202*

A new chapter opened in Nice with the exhibition « **Becoming Ocean** » (18), at the Villa Arson, co-produced by Villa Arson (19), TBA21–Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (20), and the Tara Ocean Foundation.



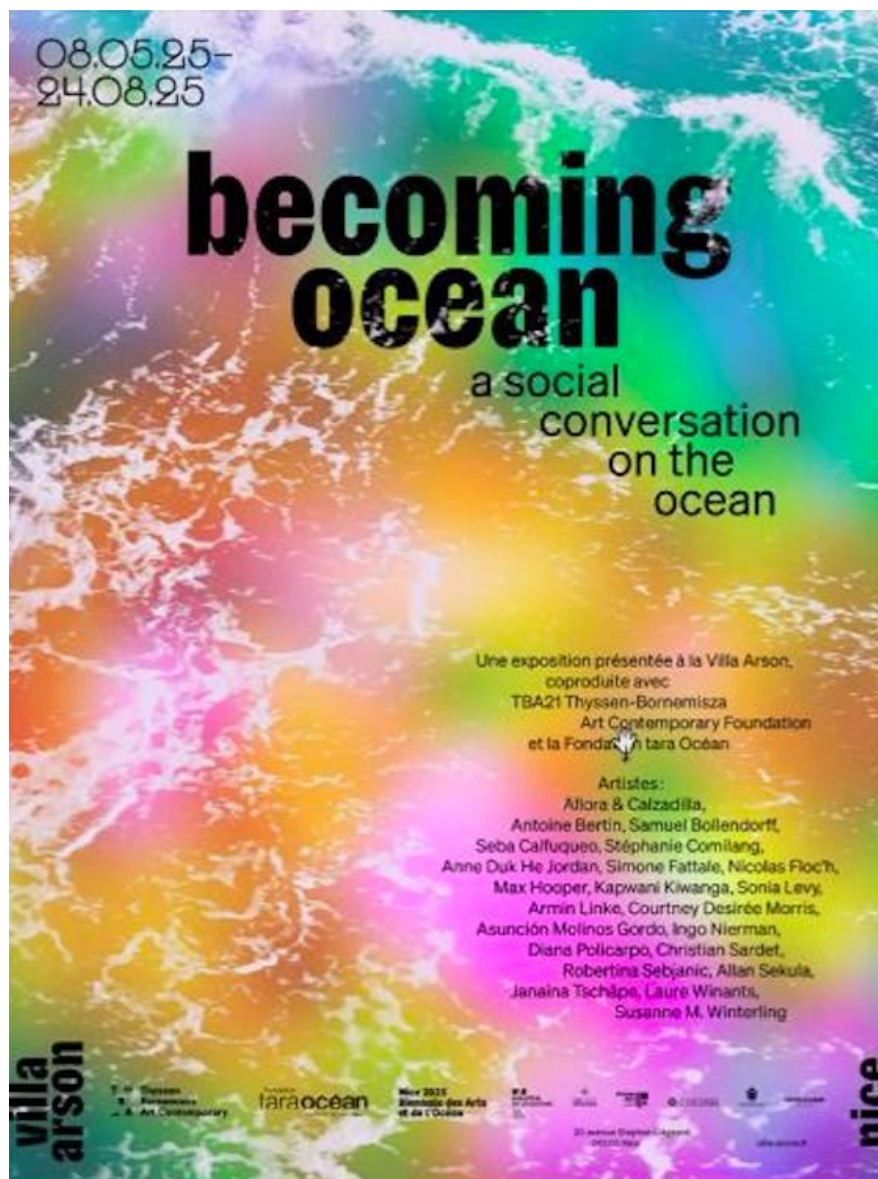
The remarkable exhibition echoes the 3rd **United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC)** (21), which takes place in Nice in June 2025. It brings together the voices of diverse artists to reflect on the Ocean's present and future.

The exhibition is one of 11 events taking place in the city of Nice's 6th **Biennale des Arts** (22) – « **La Mer Autour de Nous** », a title in homage to Rachel Carson's famous book « The sea around us » (23). All events are centered on the Ocean and two monumental works by artists associated with the Tara Ocean Foundation have taken center stage in the city of Nice on this occasion (23).

Nicolas Floc'h, artist, navigator, and diver, presents a light installation on the façade of the Bellanda Tower, tracing the swirling patterns of the Gulf Stream, which connects the Gulf of Mexico to Europe.

Emmanuel Régent's *CETACEA* unfurls along the Nice harbor breakwater, using a line of blue light to mark the presence of cetaceans and dolphins near the Pelagos Sanctuary —reminding us of the invisible inhabitants that traverse these waters.

Both works resonate with the pressing issues discussed at the UN summit **UNOC** and the **One Ocean Science Congress** (21, 24), illuminating the necessity of ocean protection.



*Becoming Ocean exhibition at Villa Arson in Nice*



*Nicolas Floc'h neon light installation « Gulf Stream, 2017-2025 »,  
Bellanda tower in Nice. Photo Nicolas Floc'h*



*Emmanuel Régent « CETACEA » light line installation (with Miraceti),  
Nice Harbor. Photo Emmanuel Régent*

## **New Residencies on the Horizon**

In 2026, new territories of artistic exploration will emerge. Once again, painters, illustrators, photographers, sculptors, writers, and audiovisual artists will be invited to propose projects aligned with the Foundation's scientific missions.

March 2026 will see the continuation of the **Tara Pacific mission** on coral ecosystems, while the Foundation's new vessel, **Tara Polar Station** (25), will embark on a stationary expedition into the Arctic Ocean — delving deep into the workings of the climate system. As always, artists will accompany the voyage, offering their interpretations of these fragile and vital environments.

Onboard the vessels of the Tara Ocean Foundation — the **Tara schooner** and the **Tara Polar Station** (26) — each residency becomes an act of creation and reflection. The ships are both laboratory and studio an ever-evolving environment where art and science converge.

Scientists and artists alike seek to understand and translate the ocean's mysteries. Though their methods differ, they share a common goal: to awaken a deeper collective awareness of the Ocean's essential role in sustaining life on Earth.



*The vessels of the Tara Ocean Foundation.  
Photo @ Fondation Tara Océans Valentin Lauféron*

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