

GUILLAUME BARTH

1985



Elina, 2015, photograph of the salt and water sculpture, 300 cm in diameter, Bolivia © Guillaume Barth - *Elina* is an imaginary planet created from salt bricks using traditional techniques of the Aymara Indians, a people of Bolivia, north of the vast salt desert. Guillaume Barth spent 3 months realizing his project, unfolding into a ephemeral sculpture (*Elina*)



Elina, Guillaume Barth at Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire, 2025 © E. Sander

More than ten years ago, the Aymara community of the village of Taha, bordering the Salar de Uyuni desert in Bolivia, lent a portion of its land to the artist Guillaume Barth so that he could realize a dream.

The sculpture Elina was conceived as a form of healing, where the invisible becomes visible and helps restore a balance between opposing forces. It tells the story of life cycles, evokes creation myths, and above all was designed as an act of care — a “planet on the planet for the planet” and for all beings who inhabit it.

To honor the promise made to the Taha community, a journey is being organized in March 2025, ten years after Elina’s appearance, to present them with a translation of the publication in the native Aymara language and to share the sculpture’s secret.

The reactivation of the project in 2025 is carried out and supported thanks to the Jeanne Bucher Jaeger gallery in Paris, in order to convey its universal message.

Today, more than ever, the great Bolivian salt desert is caught in paradoxical challenges: it is both a place of remarkable biodiversity and ecosystems, and a site of extraction and economic exploitation of lithium, of which the salar holds the world’s largest reserves. Lithium extraction is damaging the landscape and significantly reducing vital water reserves for the populations living there, alongside local crops such as quinoa, chia, and amaranth — seeds of the future rooted in a sustainable agricultural model.

May the notion of care and healing, originally invoked in the sculpture, help awaken awareness and contribute to the protection of the sacred territories of our planet Earth.

Véronique Jaeger



From the salt deserts of Bolivia to the reindeer peoples of Mongolia, from Quebec to Senegal via Iran, Guillaume Barth’s work, characterized by “an attentive capacity toward the elements of the living world,” engages in dialogue with ancestral civilizations and rituals. “A gesture of re-harmonization, an act of reconnection between humans, the cosmos, and the living,” **it naturally aligns with the theme of repair highlighted by ART Paris 2026, under the direction of Alexia Fabre.**

Exhibition view, group show, *Avènement*, centenary of the gallery, 2025, Galerie Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris, Marais © Hervé Abbadie, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbonne

Guillaume Barth was born in 1985 in Colmar and lives and works between Sélestat in Alsace and Amatlán de Quetzalcoatl in Mexico. He graduated from the Studio National des Arts Contemporains du Fresnoy in 2021 and from the Art program at the École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Strasbourg in 2012.

He is the recipient of the Martel Catala Foundation Prize for the Nouvelle Forêt book project in 2023, the Talents Contemporains Prize from the François Schneider Foundation in Wattwiller, France, in 2019, the Bullukian Foundation Prize in Lyon, France, in 2017, and the Théophile Schuler Prize in France in 2015. He participated in the 61st Salon de Montrouge in Paris, France, in 2016.

His works have been exhibited in various countries across Europe, as well as in Iran, Canada, China, and most recently in Mexico.



Portrait of Guillaume Barth in front of his work *Cercle de Crocus Sativus for Avènement, 1000 Saffron Flowers* © Vincent Rola, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbon

From April 26 to June 28, 2025, the gallery dedicated its first exhibition to him, titled *Elina 2015–2025, the Promise to the Aymaras*, celebrating the 10th anniversary of his ephemeral sculpture *Elina* in the vast salt desert of Bolivia, the Salar de Uyuni.

Following this exhibition, Guillaume Barth was invited to the Biennale d'Issy from September 17 to November 9, 2025, in Issy-les-Moulineaux, and to Chaumont-photo-sur-Loire from November 23, 2025, to February 22, 2026.

From January 23 to May 10, 2025, Guillaume Barth is presented at FRAC Champagne-Ardenne in Reims in the exhibition *Il y a un trou dans le réel*. Guillaume Barth will give a lecture titled "Message for the Sun" at the Meudon Observatory on Thursday, April 23, at 12 p.m. From May 30 to October 3, 2026, the artist will participate in the 16th edition of the Bex Arts Contemporary Art Triennial, centered on the theme "Geniuses of the Place." The artist has been invited to participate in the group exhibition *Is That All There Is?* (Curators: Frédéric de Goldschmidt and Grégory Lang) from April 21 to July 11, 2026, at Cloud Seven, Brussels.

My ideas take shape in different places, in original forms that seem to drift apart, but on closer inspection, their invisibility overlaps in a single whole. For the past decade, the formal and semantic forces that emerge from my sculptures - simple forms and forms of nature, motifs of the sphere, the cycle and openness, the phenomenon of absorption and visual reflection, geographical exploration, realized fictions, transcultural narratives, inscription in landscapes, appearance and disappearance, flowering and rooting - have been trying to make sense through an approach that is as sensitive, reflexive as it is artifactual. It is characterized, above all gesture, by an attentive capacity for the elements of the living world.

Guillaume Barth, 2023



Guillaume Barth, *Elina 2015-2025, the promise to the Aymaras, 2025*, Galerie Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris, Marais © Hervé Abbadie, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbon