

Villefranche-sur-Mer, France — *The Absurd and the Dreamlike*, a major new exhibition by Belgian artist Arne Quinze, will open in summer 2026, running from June 20 to October 31 at the historic Citadelle de Villefranche-sur-Mer. For this large-scale project, Quinze has invited Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos to collaborate on an extraordinary ensemble of works exploring the poetic, the surreal, and the unexpected.

In the spirit of Jean Cocteau, whose legacy is deeply embedded in Villefranche-sur-Mer, the exhibition dissolves the boundaries between the rational and the fantastical, embracing the absurd, the poetic, and the dreamlike. Every space becomes a living canvas, reconnecting history, art, and nature, and inviting visitors into a realm of reflection, curiosity, and wonder.

Curated by Selcan Atilgan, founder of ARTSA Consultancy and presented under the direction of Camille Frasca, the exhibition unfolds across the citadelle in both monumental outdoor installations and intimate indoor environments, setting the stage for Quinze and Vasconcelos to craft a unique and extraordinary narrative that immerses visitors in *The Absurd and the Dreamlike*.

British curator Clare Lilley is Guest Curator, shaping the exhibition's editorial framework and authoring the principal curatorial texts.

Within this realm of *The Absurd and the Dreamlike*, Joana Vasconcelos enters into dialogue with Arne Quinze through an electrifying artistic vocabulary shaped by duality, rupture, and transformation. Her practice brings the domestic into the public sphere, liberating objects traditionally associated with intimate, private interiors and projecting them into open, exterior spaces. In doing so, she challenges long-standing perceptions of inside versus outside, private versus collective, and intimate versus monumental. By introducing handcrafted elements and domestic objects into outdoor environments and playing with dimensional dynamics, she creates an absurd and dreamlike dialogue that transforms familiar items into unexpected experiences. Through elements of surprise, she disrupts the ordinary, ushering the everyday into the surreal.

Visitors will encounter monumental sculptures, immersive installations, oil paintings, video and sound works. The exhibition will also debut joint works by Quinze and Vasconcelos, interweaving their distinct artistic worlds.

Opening: Summer 2026

Date: June 20 – October 31

Location: Citadelle de Villefranche-sur-Mer – Centre d'Art & Musée,
Villefranche-sur-Mer, France

Artists: Arne Quinze and Joana Vasconcelos

Curatorial Credits

Selcan Atilgan is a curator and art advisor, and the founder of ARTSA. Her curatorial practice focuses on the development of large-scale, site-specific exhibitions and cultural experiences that explore the relationship between contemporary art, narrative environments, and place-based storytelling. Through ARTSA, she collaborates closely with artists, institutions, and private partners to conceive and realize ambitious projects across diverse cultural contexts.

ARTSA is an international art consultancy founded by Selcan Atilgan, specializing in art advisory, collection building, and the development of pop-up exhibitions, sculpture parks, and large-scale installations worldwide. ARTSA works closely with artists, institutions, and private partners to support the realization of ambitious, site-responsive contemporary art projects.

Camille Frasca is the Director of La Citadelle in Villefranche-sur-Mer. A specialist in modern and contemporary art history, she previously served as a project officer at the Musée National Picasso–Paris, where she coordinated the *Picasso–Mediterranean* program, bringing together more than 70 institutions across 10 Mediterranean countries. She notably curated *Picasso and the Family* at the Sursock Museum in Beirut and developed several projects presenting the work of contemporary artists from different generations and practices in dialogue with Pablo Picasso. At La Citadelle since 2021, she has been working toward the reopening of the museum’s permanent circuit and curates contemporary artist residencies in dialogue with the historic monument. She regularly contributes to art books and specialized exhibition catalogues, with a particular interest in the history of the Mediterranean and in the intersection between visual arts and the performing arts.

Clare Lilley is a distinguished British curator, writer, and art advisor, renowned for her leadership in contemporary sculpture and public art. She served as Director of Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP), one of the UK’s foremost international sculpture institutions, where she oversaw major exhibitions, acquisitions, and strategic initiatives over a career spanning more than three decades. Lilley’s curatorial practice emphasizes large-scale, site-responsive projects and public-facing art experiences, including her decade-long role as curator of Frieze Sculpture in London’s Regent’s Park.

She has collaborated with internationally acclaimed artists such as Ai Weiwei, Yinka Shonibare CBE, James Turrell, Joana Vasconcelos, and Giuseppe Penone, and has contributed extensively to exhibition catalogues, essays, and critical writing. Beyond curating, Lilley has advised major cultural institutions, served on prestigious art boards and committees, and championed initiatives that connect contemporary art with broad audiences. Her work reflects a deep commitment to the intersection of art, environment, and public engagement.

Instagram: @arnequinze, @joanavasconcelosatelier, @lacidelle_vsm, @_artsa.co, @selcanatilgann @camillefrasca @clare.lilley

Press Release

General Contact Info

ARTSA Consultancy

Rabia Eylül Demirelli

Project Manager

rabia@artsa.co

+90 530 383 53 96

IC Insight Communications

Jasmine Spezie – Adèle Godet

adele@insightcommunications.cc

+33 01 42 84 19 09

+33 06 30 79 44 80



ARNE QUINZE studio

Evin Esen

Executive Assistant & RP

evin@arnequinze.com

+32484976832

JOANA VASCONCELOS studio

Diana Monteiro

Executive Assistant & RP

dianadofmonteiro@gmail.com

+351932893065

LA CITADELLE centre d'art & Musée

Carolin Payan

Assistant Director

caroline.payan@villefranche-sur-mer.fr

Contacts for visuals and press trip information:

presse@villefranche-sur-mer.fr