



Christophe Milcent - Sculptor

Rob. And I'm sitting next to the statue of a mother and child with Christophe Milcent, who is the sculptor. Describe the statue for someone who is listening on the radio.

Christophe This statue is a mother with her baby. The material is in iron and the great thing is the love of the mother for the baby. It was very difficult to transmit in sculpture, because in iron you don't discover a sculpture in a.. in a block; you, you, you put each piece, one by one, and it have to be on ???? for it seemed most well possible.

Rob. Did you weld it.. this ?

Christophe. Yes it is all weld. It is made with industrial tubular that I cut and I weld, and at the end we forgot that it's recuperation. For example, the hair of the mother I made with link, steel link for big tubular.

Rob. So it's recycled material as well ?

Christophe. Yes it is all recycled. The iron is always recycled as a metal, all the metals. It is not really rubbish because it goes in industrial foundry it become new iron for make cars, computers, architecture. *N'importe quoi*. Everything *excuse-moi* But sometimes some piece goes to sculpture

Rob. A work of art ?

Christophe. Yes, yes it's that

Rob. It is a sculpture of a mother and child. The place it's in, is something special.

Christophe. Yes, because this park is the Square de la Fontaine in Rostrenen is for the family.

Rob. So it is a family area and you have chosen a subject which is common to every family.

Christophe. Yes you can imagine yourself in your life as a baby, as a mother, as a... perhaps a daughter. Everybody could see someone one time in his life.

Rob. And this sculpture has been bought by the commune I understand.

Christophe. Yes, it was bought in 2013

.....

Rob. Why have you chosen to make horses Christophe?

Christophe. Because when I was young I've got an uncle he's *propriétaire*.....
proprietary (owner) owner, *excuse-moi* he has a horse, *petit poulain* foals, yes. And I
spend many time with this horse. And one other uncle draw in his bedroom many horse
and he worked in a *Haras* (stud). And we go see him on Sundays, visit. In my head, when
I was young boy, I said when I could do, I will do horse, because I like. So it's a, it's a
young boy dream.

Rob. And what does the horse symbolise for you?

Christophe. They have human character, for me. This don't want to go he, he brake.
And this behind as on the picture come to, *excuse-moi, pour pousser*.

Rob. To push him

Christophe. To push. It symbolise the life. Sometime you could stop and other person
say no, go you will succeed, yes. And this, this is a part of character.

Rob. And for you this large one here is hesitant?

Christophe. Yes.

Rob. It wants to be pushed?

Christophe. Yes, because essential in the life sometimes, we don't believe in what we
do. It's not a problem: you just have to, to trust in you and to go.

Rob. Your horses are very impressive. I understand that the Mairie of Rostrenen
has bought a statue from you. It's going to be installed soon.

Christophe. Yes soon, the next week it's will be in front of the Credit Agricole, in the
centre of Rostrenen.

Rob. On the road to the

Christophe. Hippodrome yes.

Rob. Very appropriate !

Christophe. Yes

Rob. And it's good that local artists are being supported.

Christophe. The mayor *encourage*....

Rob. Encourages.

Christophe. Encourages artists, local Brittany artists to create, so he buy one sculpture
per year actually, it's good. We have the luck to have this support in Rostrenen.

Rob And there will be an exhibition in the summer?

Christophe. In the summer it's "Printemps des arts ", it's an exhibition with, I think, 20 sculptors and 10 painters. I think we will present 30 sculptures, and probably 50 or 60 paint.

Rob. Something to look out for.

Christophe. Yes

Rob. You have some visitors; you must see to them. Thank you for the moment.

.....

Rob. We are underneath this statue of the horse. What do you think about it?

Student. It's amazing. It is very lifelike and yeah, really good. It is amazing how he has used materials to, like, get texture.

Rob. Is it about the right size?

Student. It is a bit bigger than life size but I've got quite a small horse so I wouldn't really know.

Rob. How about the rest of you, what do you think?

Student. I think you can just tell how long it took and, like how much planning it must have took to make it so that it, like, doesn't fall over. I think it's amazing.

Rob. Did you hear how long it's taken him to make it?

Student. Only two months

Rob. A lot of work isn't it?

Student. Such detail in, like, a short amount of time, as well.

Rob. Imagine you are going to get the chance to try out.... do some welding this afternoon in the studio. That wasn't planned was it?

Student. No, I don't think so. Yes, it's going to be exciting.

.....

Rob. Can you tell us about this woman ?

Christophe. Yes, it is going to be my next woman! No, my next sculpture.

Rob. It's not finished yet?

Christophe. No it's not finished. I call it the *Face caché*, the Hidden Face because in the universe we know only 5% of the things: The things are only the matter and the light.

And everything is mysterious, so the Hidden Face, it's for all the mysterious thing we don't know.

Rob. It's the Hidden Face.

Christophe. The Hidden Face.

Rob. And the gesture that she has, the gesture?

Christophe. When I realise this it was after the Bataclan the Islam attack in Paris.

Rob. That's interesting. This is the reaction to ...

Christophe. The reaction, because I was very nervous with this Islamic problem, *ça se voir*

Rob. It can be seen

Christophe. Can be seen my nervousity is obvious in the sculpture.

Rob. Because she looks very anxious?

Christophe. Yes, she want to protect.... She want to protect she is aggressive because she's naked!

Rob. She's naked?

Christophe. Yes, for Islamist to be naked is very aggressive!

Student. It's like a really deep message below the actual sculpture, which is interesting. Yeah.

Student 2. It like really symbolises it now. Like when you hear about it you can really, like, see it in the sculpture, like you understand more about it.

Rob. So your message is getting through Christophe.

Christophe. Merci !

.....

Student. *Il coute combien le cheval?* [How much would a horse cost?]

Christophe. *Combien coute un cheval? Je vends à 15k€ le cheval. Ce n'est pas cher parce que je ne suis pas très connu encore.* [How much would I sell a horse for? Well €15,000 each. It sin't expensive because I am not very well known yet.]

Rob. It's not very expensive because he's not very famous - yet. But when he's been on the radio, suddenly the prices will go up.

Student. *Vous sculpez combien depuis de temps?* [How long have you been sculpting for?]

Christophe. *Combien de temps? Très bonne question. Je suis sculpteur à temps plein depuis 2011. J'ai commencé à sculpter le fer en 2003.* [Great question. I've been a full-time sculptor since 2011 and I started sculpting steel in 2003]

Rob. He's been a sculptor since 2011.

Student. How did it take you to learn how to do it? How did you learn how to make it out of the iron and everything ?

Christophe. In my life I didn't have any time study, um, lesson of sculpture; I learn everything alone.

Student. Where do you get the materials from to make it? Is it recycling materials or...?

Christophe. There are societies that support me who give me shute(?) material.

Rob. Industrial waste

Student. That material with the holes in, what's that?

Christophe. It's from an agricole silo. I take this and after I put on a structure that I made before. You the one before, the structure inside. I just to follow the forms on to weld and it's fini.

Rob. And the material with holes?

Christophe. It's punched steel. Sometimes I buy materials I need, because it's difficult to find them.

Student. How heavy are they? Oh my God, really heavy.

Student 2. Oh my gosh it's much heavier than you think it is.

Teacher. 700 kilos.

Rob. You treated the metal after you've welded with some laquer?

Christophe. It's a varnish that prevents rust and corrosion.

Rob. Anti-rust, anti-corrosion.

Christophe. Yes *c'est ça*.

Rob. And now they are going to try some welding.

Christophe. Yes, *c'est possible ? Qui veut essayer?*

Rob. Who wants to try ?

Teacher. Si vous-avez la protection ce qu'il faut?

Rob. Are you going to give it a go? Good for you. So are all you artists at school then as well as language students?

Student. The majority of us.... Quite a lot of us taking art GCSE.

Rob. OK. Have you done anything like this before?

Student. We don't actually. We've done no metal sculpting. We've done sculpting with like card but no metal.

Rob. Well I can understand the difficulties involved with producing something like these horses. I'm going to leave you to get on with it, I think.

.....

Rob. So Isabel and Emily you've just had a go at welding. What was it like?

Student. It was really fun but like because of the helmet it blacks out everything so when the light comes on everything is black so you don't actually know what you are doing.

Student 2. You can see a tiny white light but the rest of the like area is black so you can't really tell what you are doing.

Rob. Have you ever tried anything like this before?

Student. No?

Rob. So you had to come to Brittany to find out what it's like!

Student. Definitely! Yeah, yeah. When you take the sort of metal away from the other metal, everything goes green and when you turn the light back on, everything goes black.

Student 2. And when you've taken the helmet off, it's like whooah! you see how much you've done, even though you can't actually see anything.

Student. Yeah, yeah, and you move a lot quicker than you think as well; like I didn't think I was moving the thing, but apparently I was. I wasn't aware of it.

Rob. You've welded the sculpture to his bench haven't you?!!

Student. Yeah, probably...

Teacher. We come from a very artistic school. We have an amazing art department and our girls are amazingly creative they've won loads of prizes actually. I think they have been very interested by what they have seen today, it will inspire them in the future to create their own pieces of art!

