

Méjean for Milieu

Sonic field work (75 min), Sophie Krier, 2025

" I sometimes see in the eyes of a horse the inhuman beauty of a world before the passage of man."

- Bartabas

" The dream is a singular mode of presence. What it deposits in us of living or disappeared beings, animals, objects, lights, spaces, has the force of an apparition. The question is whether we can welcome it, whether we can come closer to the dream-like enigma of the world, whether we can accept what the genius of the dream is calling us to: conversion. (...) The dream opens up the possibility of another temporality, one that is vertical and yet cuts across this life, this time."

- Anne Dufourmantelle

Can we imagine a way of being in the world that would be a form of 'co-birth', of being born together? And if the horse could belong to itself, what would it have to teach us? I came to the residency to meet these equids known as Przewalski, after the Russian explorer of Polish origin who "discovered" them in 1881. Considered extinct in the wild since 1969, these stocky-looking horses, with their bay coat and bristly mane, have been the focus of numerous rehabilitation programmes since the 1990s.

Today, a herd of 41 horses, made up of individuals that survived in captivity, roam in semi-liberty over 440 hectares of the Causse Méjean (megio in local dialect; make sure you let the i deepen the 2nd syllable).

" When I'm with horses, it's like there's a gap in time. They put us in the present, in the here and now. And we're going to find that again with the Przewalski (...). They bring people together, and in that sense I say they are a link between the past and the future. They constantly ask us about the place of the living, of the living... They don't fit neatly into the boxes we've designed for them. And that's something we find throughout their story. " - Hélène Roche

It is said that Méjean means middle. What would it be like to write from the centre? I came to write on the Causse, and along the way I felt like writing *with* the Méjean: letting myself be carried along by the many voices and ways of knowing that inhabit it. It's to this other form of listening, wandering, open, that this account invites you.

[Click here](#) to play the – French spoken – audio file.





References (french language)

- « [Vivant parmi les Vivants](#) », a film by Sylvère Petit (Films d'Ici, 2023)
- « [Faire Ecole Dehors](#) », a podcast by Anne-Lise Lizicki (la Cham, épisode #2, 2025)
- « [Le cheval, toute une histoire](#) », a film by Jean-Baptiste Sauret (MSH SUD - Association Takh, 2025)
- « [D'un cheval l'autre](#) », Bartabas (Éditions Gallimard, 2020)
- « Mongolie rêve d'infini », Michel Setboun (Éditions La Martinière, 2002)
- « L' intelligence du rêve », Anne Dufourmantelle (Éditions Payot & Rivages, 2012)

Images

The Takhi during a sanitary watch in the summer enclosure at Le Villaret (October 2024) / field sketch / research presentation at Le Four à Pain, Sophie Krier, 2025

Credits

This audio field work was produced with the support of Le Four à Pain (Lozère) as part of a forthcoming artistic publication entitled Turning the Gaze Inwards: Being Horse, to be published in the Field Essays series (Jap Sam Books) that I have been directing since 2008.

Special thanks to Marie Descourtieux, and to the voices behind the creation of this work: the Takhi, the free horses who pass on history; the Takh association for the preservation of Przewalski's horse and its team: Jean-Louis Perrin, Sébastien de Carton Grammont, Anne Laure Faquet, Julie Morrisson, Pauline Joinnault, as well as Hélène Roche and the participants in the ethnology course run at Takh in April 2025; the Hippographies team, a research project carried out in the Archéologie des Sociétés Méditerranéennes research unit, CNRS, Université Montpellier Paul-Valéry: Armelle Gardeisen (project leader), Audrey Roussel (post-doc researcher), Julien Bochu (mediation); David Nadeau-Bernatchez, Edwige de Feraudy, Jacques Bret, Pedro Prazeres, Mouna Ouafik and Nicolas Gabriel; Thomas Plassard, wind rider; Dominique Laroche, Aven Armand association; Daniel Pacaud, baker and fire keeper; the Moulin de la Borie and its miller Guillaume Xueref; Anne-Lise Lisicki, in charge of education engineering at the Institut Agro, Florac campus; Jean-Claude Robert; Émilie Séverac and her precious allies, dogs and donkey shepherds: Uno, Neige, Lingot and Oréo.