

In **Lecture verticale (Vertical Reading)** (1982) a bird's skull dominates the box's various compartments. Undeniably, there is something 'sacred' about this work. A veil has been placed over the skull. At the centre of the box a plumb line puts the whole ensemble into place. It starts at the veil at the top of the box, goes down past a small geographical map and finally arrives at a mini pyramid at the bottom. The pyramid emphasises the esoteric nature of the composition. Again we find the leitmotif of eggs of birds of prey on the left. On the right, a photograph of a parachutist evokes the aerial universe, whilst a field mouse's nest (containing the bird's prey!) refers to the underground. We have highlighted that the plumb line crosses a geographical map. In fact, the line across the map goes right through Sorinne-la-Longue, in the province of Namur. Pierre Courtois had never paid any attention to this detail. By a stroke of luck or the hand of destiny, it is the precise location where he would choose to buy an old farm two years later.

Olivier Duquenne, 2012

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