

(...) Pierre Courtois first used the cord technique to repair the roof of his house in Sorinne-la-Longue. The cord, made of cotton and held taut at both ends, is often used by builders, carpenters and gardeners to mark out rigorously straight lines. To the artist, it was a revelation. From 1993 onwards, he freely used the tracing instrument to lash across both the bases of his boxes and the large sewing patterns of his installations. To this end, he used a technique called 'chalk cord.' The string is first soaked in blue indigo powder. Then the artist overstretches it one centimetre above the place to be traced. Pierre Courtois likes to note that at that precise moment the cord is a «trait d'union», a link between two points. The cord is then pulled at its mid-point like the string of a bow. Finally, the artist lets go of the cord which slaps against the surface, leaving a perfect, rectilinear trace. The string hits the surface so hard that the residue of blue chalk impregnates the base deeply. The resulting line is straight and surrounded by a halo of blue chalk with surreal beauty. It is thus both sincerely straight and magnificently unreasonable. Just like an artist born in the month of June in La Roche-en-Ardenne in 1950.

(...)

Olivier Duquenne, 2012

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