

Born in 1917 at Saint-Maurice-d'Ételan (FR)
 Dead in 2006 at Stigny (FR)

1936-1938

After his secondary education in Le Havre and Savoie, Pierre Bettencourt attended Paul Valéry's poetry course at the Collège de France in Paris from 1936 to 1938. During this period, he discovered Proust, Rilke, Kafka and also developed a passion for theater.

1941

In 1941, he buys a hand press and begin to publish his own texts as well as those of Henri Michaux, Antonin Artaud, Francis Ponge, Guillaume Apollinaire and Jean Dubuffet in small print runs in his family's house, which was occupied by the Germans at the time.

1946-1947

Travels to Corsica, Algeria and the rest of Africa, by land to Nigeria, Niger, the Belgian Congo, by sea to Zanzibar, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion and Djibouti. Upon his return to Paris in 1947, Pierre Bettencourt meet Jean Dubuffet in Henri Parisot's bookshop.

1951-1952

Travels to Oceania, including two months in Tahiti, then to India in Ceylon, Sikkim, Ellora and Ajanta.

1953

Following a stay with Jean Dubuffet at Saint-Michel-de-Chaillol in 1953, he produces his first high reliefs, which became his trademark. Composed of unconventional materials (coffee beans, eggshells, stones, pine cones) his assemblages stage a fantastical universe where Eros and Thanatos rub shoulders. His numerous trips to Africa, Oceania, India, Mexico and Egypt nourish his passion for vanished civilizations and feed his work in return.

1957

Travels to the United States and Mexico, then visits Cuba, Haiti and Martinique.

1959

Trip to Egypt where he visits the mastabas of Sakkara, the great Thebaid, Abu Simbel, Dandera, Abydos.

1962

Visit to the temples of Angkor where he hunts butterflies. He then travels to Hong Kong, Japan, Jakarta and Bali. Marriage with Monique Apple in June 1962 with Jean Paulhan as witness.

1963-2006

In 1963, with his wife, the author and visual artist Monique Apple, he moved to Stigny in the Yonne, where he continued his work until 2006. He will carry out his literary work, his drawings and his high reliefs at the same time.

EXHIBITIONS

1956

René Drouin, Paris (FR)

1961

René Drouin, Paris (FR)

1964

Daniel Cordier, Paris (FR)

1967

Emilio Arditti, Paris (FR)

1969

Galleria del Naviglio, Milan (IT)
 Maison du Tourisme, Auxerre (FR)

1970

Galerie Nord, Lille (FR)

1971

Galerie Arditti, Paris (FR)

1972

Galerie Nord, Lille (FR)

1975

Galerie Paul Ambroise, Paris (FR)

1976

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, Palais Saint-Pierre (FR)

1977

Galerie Nord, Lille (FR)
 FIAC, Grand Palais (FR)

1978

Galerie Daniel Gervis, Paris (FR)

1979

Maison de la Culture de Metz (FR)

1984

Galerie Beaubourg, Pierre Nahon, Paris (FR)
 Le Bleu du ciel, Vézelay (FR)

1985

Galleria del Naviglio, Milan (IT)

1987

Galerie Caroline Corré. Paris (FR)
 Galerie Lucien Bilinelli, Bruxelles (BE)

1990

Donation Daniel Cordier, Musée National d'Art moderne (FR)
 Nouvelle biennale de Paris, Centre Georges Pompidou (FR)

1991

Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Nantes (FR)
 Centre d'Art Contemporain du Château de Tanlay (FR)

1993

FIAC, Grand Palais (FR)
Les obélisques, Galerie Baudouin Lebon (FR)

1998

Galerie Baudouin Lebon, Paris (FR)

2004

Abbaye de Saint-Germain, Auxerre (FR)

2008

Espace Berggruen. Paris (FR)

2022

Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris (FR)

2024

Galerie Christophe Gaillard & Galerie Patrice Trigano,
Paris (FR)

COLLECTIONS

Abbaye d'Auberive

Collection Ceres Franco, Montolieu

Centre National des arts plastiques, Paris

MAC's Grand Hornu, Belgique

Musée national d'Art Moderne - Centre Pompidou, Paris

Musée des Abattoirs, Toulouse

Musée de Grenoble

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes

Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Saint-Etienne

Métropole

Musée d'art contemporain de Strasbourg