



VIK MUNIZ x RUINART

Shared roots, an ode to the creative powers of nature and mankind

Founded in 1729, Maison Ruinart is the very **first established champagne house**. Since then, it has never stopped developing and promoting its own **art de vivre**. Ruinart expresses its **commitment to art** by commissioning artists, starting in 1896 when Alphonse Mucha created the Maison's first artwork.

Each year, the Maison has gone on to commission some of the world's finest contemporary artists and designers, giving them **carte blanche** during their residencies to pay tribute to its cuvées, its history, its heritage and its crayères: the impressive chalk cellars that are listed as an Unesco World Heritage Site.

In 2019, the Brazilian artist **Vik Muniz** was chosen to deliver his vision of the terroir and the *savoir-faire* that the Maison is rooted in.

During his **art residency**, that took place at the time of the harvest and in October 2018, Vik Muniz spent many hours in **Sillery**, a long-standing vineyard belonging to Maison Ruinart, and one of the northernmost in Europe, on the Montagne de Reims. He worked alongside **Frédéric Panaïotis**, Cellar Master at Ruinart. Fascinated by nature, he asked Frédéric about the vineyard and was surprised to learn that the Champagne region has a harsh climate that would seem unsuitable for growing crops. However, this **adversity actually brings out the best in the vine**. Just like a survival reflex, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir produce their best fruit under difficult conditions.

Vik Muniz created a series of **6 photographic works** inspired by winegrowers and vineyards, who together, face challenging natural conditions each season. Through the use of organic elements such as pieces of blackened wood, charcoal or chardonnay leaves, his photographs highlight our perception of scale and play with our senses.

He also created an **interactive artistic installation** in the chalk cellars at Maison Ruinart in Reims. It consists of 2,800 bottles of Dom Ruinart, fitted with an advanced LED system. The idea for this work came about during a visit to Maison Ruinart, which the artist described as "a unique and magical place". It combines the tradition of *entreillage*, the age-old process of stacking up by hand the bottles into an orderly pile, with the most innovative technology.

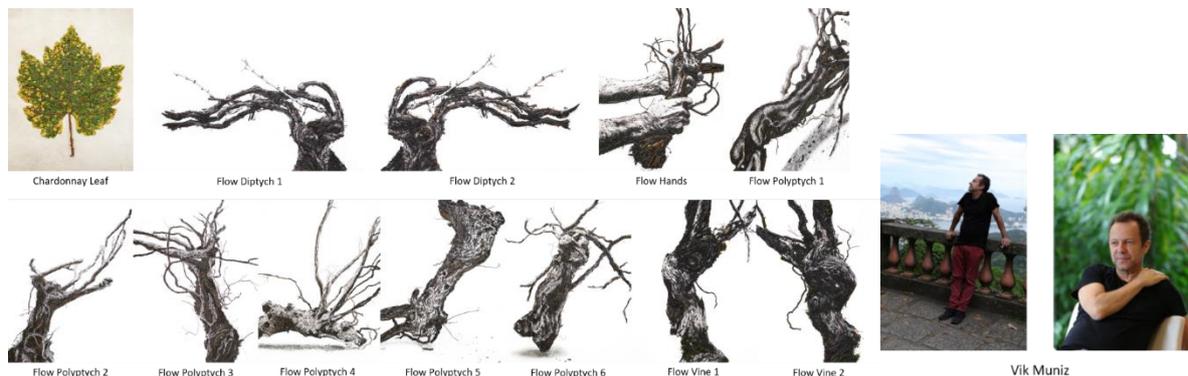
In his 7 artworks for the Maison, Vik Muniz captured the deep relationships between humans and nature, winegrowers and vines, Ruinart and the Champagne terroir; emphasizing the **creative tension** that **transforms adversity into wonder**.

For the very first time, Ruinart started an innovative program named **Food for Art**, bringing together art and gastronomy. The aim is to create culinary experiences inspired by the partnership between the artist selected for the year and the wines of the Maison itself.

The program was inaugurated when artist Vik Muniz joined forces with **David Toutain**, whose restaurant has two Michelin stars, and Ruinart's Cellar Master. They were able to explore common ground and fine-tune a menu based on vegetable roots.

A theme was born from this synergy: **shared roots**.

FULL PRESS KIT & HD IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST



VIK MUNIZ

Born in 1961 into a humble family in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Vik Muniz was granted a scholarship at 14 years old that enabled him to study art while taking evening classes. He learnt to draw and discovered the masterpieces of academic painting and sculpture. After a short time working in an advertising agency, where he took an interest in the powers of imagery and how it is handled, he had an opportunity to go to Chicago in 1984 and then to New York, where he expanded his artistic portfolio. His work became focused on sculpture. His international career began in 1989, with his first exhibition at the Stux Gallery in New York.

Vik Muniz immediately asserted his own personal style through the use of various materials - chocolate, linen thread, dust, sugar, ketchup, garbage, diamonds, caviar, flowers, and much more - to create photographic images that often reference classical painting. Defining himself as a “low-tech illusionist”, the artist explores our collective memory in order to question it more effectively.

His work also has a significant social and political dimension, demonstrated by his *Pictures of Garbage* (2008) series, for which the artist spent three years working at the world’s biggest landfill in Rio de Janeiro. Rubbing shoulders with the *catadores*, people searching through garbage on the lookout for recyclable materials, he reproduced several classic paintings, such as *The Death of Marat*, by Jacques-Louis David. He also shot a documentary about the project, called “Waste Land” which won multiple awards.

Vik Muniz’s various partnerships with brands give him the opportunity to raise money and fund social projects. That’s how he set up an audio-visual school for teenagers in a Rio favela. The artist sees these projects as a way for him to give something back to the community.

MAISON RUINART

The very first champagne house, Ruinart, was founded 290 years ago. With a rich and complex history, the Maison has never stopped developing and promoting its own special art of living, echoing the Enlightenment period during which it was founded in 1729. In a context where French philosophy and culture had great influence, the know-how of Maison Ruinart shone like a beacon.

Very early on, the Maison decided to use the rare and precious chardonnay grape to produce its cuvées. Elegance, purity, know-how and enlightenment were the watchwords for the world's finest champagne house. These qualities are the key to the success of Ruinart’s exceptional wines - both in France and internationally - which are now produced by Frédéric Panaïotis, the Maison’s Cellar Master. Ruinart’s subtle art of champagne making resonates with its commitment to art, echoing the boldness it took to ask the Czech artist Alphonse Mucha to create a poster for the Maison in 1896 that caused a sensation at the time.

Maison Ruinart continues innovating with art, by partnering with 34 international art fairs as well as many art institutions and each year giving *carte blanche* to a renowned artist.

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