A Local and European Dialogue on Urban Margins through Art and Research at Rennes 2



Pictured above: Caroline Cieslik during the opening of the exhibition Savages.

Photo by: Lea Montezin, Rennes 2 Cultural Office

Bringing together photography, critical inquiry, and collective discussion, the project reflects ongoing interdisciplinary approaches at Rennes 2 that engage with the relationships between art, research, and society. *Savages* examines how marginal spaces—often perceived as residual or transitional—can instead be understood as sites of memory, experimentation, and critical reflection.

Developed in collaboration with the EMERGE Alliance, which connects nine European universities committed to exploring geographical and societal margins, the event also contributes to a broader transnational dialogue. It highlights how locally grounded artistic research can inform shared European concerns, fostering new forms of collaboration across institutional and disciplinary boundaries.

As noted during the opening of the exhibition, Rennes 2 Vice-President for EMERGE, Anne Goarzin, emphasised that *“this exhibition becomes both what distinguishes us and what connects us—an opportunity to share a singular artistic approach while fostering new forms of collaboration across the alliance.”*

Part 1: Exhibition – *Savages*

On display at La Chambre Claire until 30 September 2026.

The exhibition brings together over a decade of photographic research documenting the transformation of the Prairies Saint-Martin in Rennes. Once a neglected urban space, the site has gradually evolved into a shared natural environment.

Combining several hundred photographs with historical and theoretical inquiry, Cieslik’s work examines brownfield sites through social, ecological, political, and aesthetic lenses. Her approach highlights the complex interplay between memory, land use, and the shifting relationship between urban centres and their margins.

Part 2: Roundtable – “Writing from the Margins”

A roundtable discussion will take place on 9 April 2026 at 6pm at Le Tambour.

Bringing together members of the Interfriches artists’ collective alongside Simon Blanckaert (University of Mons), Caroline Cieslik (EESAB), Tristan Deplus (Rennes 2), and Marion Nielsen (ENSAD-PSL), and moderated by Justinien Tribillon (ENSAD-PSL), the discussion will address artistic and research practices emerging from peripheral and transitional spaces.

Often perceived as sites of abandonment, brownfield areas are increasingly recognized as spaces of resistance and resilience, hosting diverse forms of human and non-human life. The roundtable will explore how creative and scholarly practices can engage with such environments while preserving their fragile and often ephemeral character.

Streaming and International Circulation

The roundtable will be recorded and documented in a film format. It will subsequently be made available online via the YouTube channels of Rennes 2 (https://www.youtube.com/@universite_rennes2) and EMERGE (https://www.youtube.com/@emergeallianceeu).

This digital dissemination reflects the ambitions of the EMERGE Alliance. Through this initiative, *Savages* will circulate beyond the campus, contributing to a broader dialogue on margins at a European scale.

Photos of the exhibition opening by: Lea Montezin, Rennes 2 Cultural Office

08 April 2026










Putting
the margins
at the heart
of Europe

