

# VALLOIS

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## JULIEN BERTHIER

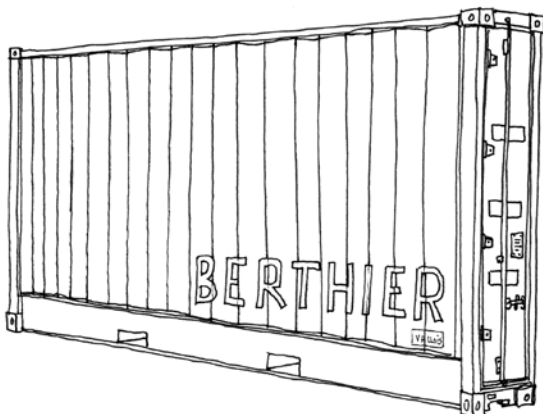
### «AROUND THE WORLD»

Julien Berthier didn't study Architecture, the science of construction and redeveloping urban landscapes. However, his activity as an artist consists of inventing or creating means of construction, mostly using vanishing tricks, illusion, modification and displacement. One surely remembers, in particular, the extraordinary sculpture entitled *F2* (2001, in collaboration with Virginie Yassef), an ambiguous architectural structure perched on top of an exhibition wall, a dwelling with no definite function where only a sound system brought it back to everyday life.

The sculpture entitled *Around the World* will be visible during the Parisian part of its tour. A «classic» parquet floor and the container that holds it, will go on a tour of the world, hoping to gain an «exotic» status through its journey, to change its nature simply by mechanical virtue of the transfer.

Here one thinks of Xavier De Maistre's masterpiece, *Journey around my room* (1795), in which the reactionary writer humorously displayed his general distain in a parody of his withdrawal from the world during the revolutionary era. Beyond the parodic aspect, one detects in this famous Journey the double renewal, which constituted the romantic revolution: the advent of the ego and the explosion of the idea of race. In contrast to the general vogue for accounts of adventures and travels, Xavier De Maistre asserted a firm immobility. While his contemporaries travelled across the world in order to describe it, he made a point of being satisfied with the limited tour of the parquet floor of his room. Well... one should imagine that this famous parquet floor, surveyed by Xavier De Maistre; this symbol of hesitancy and lack of curiosity, this avowed mark of political reaction in denying exoticism; this polished, middle-class and immobile parquet floor, is the one that Julien Berthier plans to send all over the world, stage by stage. This is an idiotic bet, but nevertheless the attempt to make the sections of parquet travel across the world, proves to be an important and necessary marker in the mythology of territorial Art, between Robert Smithson's *Nonsites* and Jean-Pierre Raynaud's real-estate operations.

Jean-Yves Jouannais



GILLES BARBIER / MIKE BOUCHET  
JOACHIM MOGARRA  
JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2007

VIRGINIE YASSEF / VINCENT LAMOUREUX  
MARCH - APRIL 2007