

*21–23 August 2025  
Azay-le-Rideau,  
Huismes & Beyond*

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

# FREUDIAN BITES



IN THE LOIRE VALLEY, FRANCE



# GENERAL — ASSEMBLY X — FREUDIAN — BITES

“Nature walks, and a sensorial dining journey inspired by the region’s legacy of artistic experimentation.”

You are invited to join Founder of General Assembly Gallery and Residency Melanie Ashton and independent curator and founder of Freudian Bites, Huma Kabacki for an intimate and thoughtfully curated three-day VIP experience in the heart of the Loire Valley. For the first time beyond the acclaimed London supper club series, Freudian Bites brings a unique format of food, art, and conversation into the open landscape of rural France. The programme will specifically be centred around the artist couple Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning where we will be visiting their former home located near Chinon at the Pin farm in Huismes.

This special programme coincides with the General Assembly Summer Residency, where six emerging artists are invited to slow down and tune into their creative flow amidst wild meadows, grape vines and ancient trees. As part of this immersive experience, guests will be offered exclusive access to artists-in-residence, curated visits to cultural landmarks including nature walks, and a sensorial dining journey inspired by the region’s legacy of artistic experimentation.



# HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE



- A private tour of Maison Max Ernst & Dorothea Tanning (Le Pin Perdu) in Huismes, once home and studio to the Surrealist couple, now a site of memory and creative provocation
- A curated dinner hosted by General Assembly in collaboration with Freudian Bites and a local chef, blending terroir with conceptual storytelling, including a dialogue with the artists of the General Assembly residency
- A collaboration between a local chef and herbalist or Huma as an Anthropology student exploring dream symbolism in botany and ritual plant knowledge
- Guided encounters with the Loire's cultural and natural landscape, designed to stimulate both thought and the senses by honoring both Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning

Rooted in care, creativity and the subconscious, this is not just a retreat but a curated pilgrimage, inviting you to digest new ideas, experience artistic process up close, know more about the artist residency and gather around the table in true Freudian Bites spirit.

To register your  
interest or receive  
the full itinerary and  
booking details,

*please contact*

[hello@generalassemblylondon.com](mailto:hello@generalassemblylondon.com)

Spaces are limited.



# FULL ITINERARY

## Day 1

Thursday, 21 August

### Arrival & Introduction to the Surreal Landscape

**15:35** – Guests arrive in Tours Loire Valley via Ryanair from London Stansted or by train (Eurostar/TGV to St Pierre des Corps), collect their cars, and drive to Azay-le-Rideau.

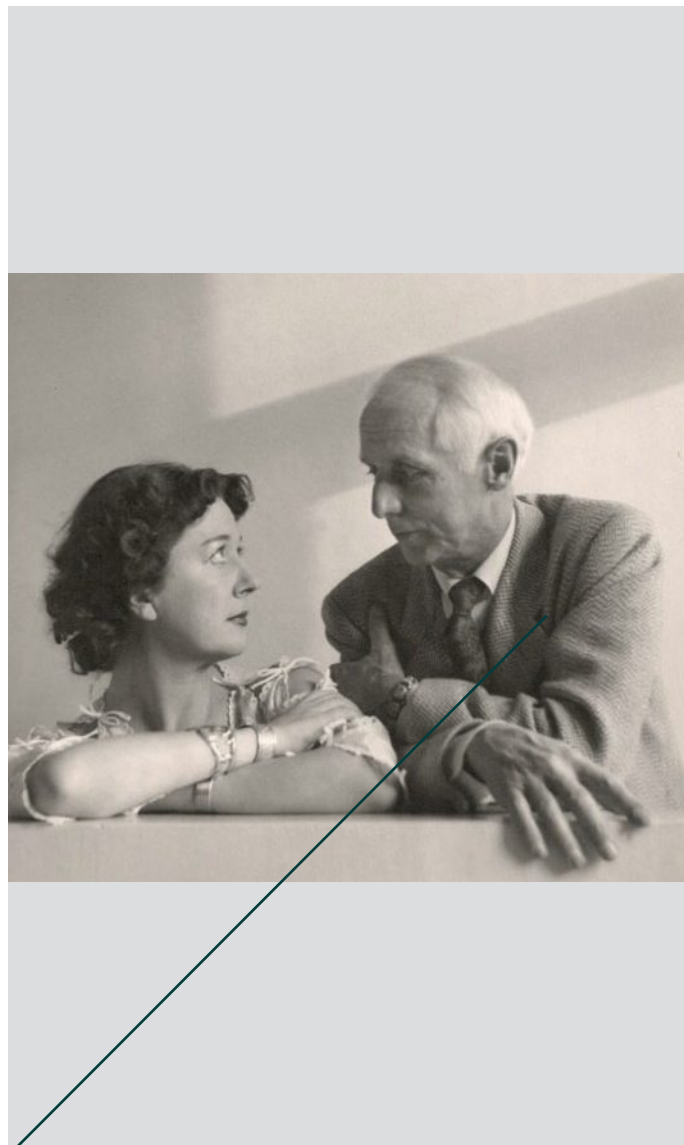
**17:00** – Check-in and settle into the hotels in Azay-le-Rideau.

Recommended stays include:

[Hotel le Grand Monarche](#)

**17:30 – 19:00** – A guided walk and talk through the surroundings of Maison Max Ernst in Huismes. Led by curator Huma Kabakcı or accompanied by a local forager. During the walk, we will slow down, and bring ourselves into step with the cadence and habits of Ernst and Tanning. During this immersive introduction we will trace the walking routes and rituals of these two artists, and explore the Loire's natural and symbolic landscape through surrealist and anthropological lenses.

**19:00 – 21:00** – Aperero & light bites: A casual outdoor gathering with foraged snacks and wine tasting, presented by organic wine-makers Ampelidae, and hosted in partnership with the current custodian of Maison Max Ernst. Through storytelling and sensory tastings, we will dive into the rituals of Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, their love of birds, nature, and the alchemical.





# Day 2

Friday, 22 August

## Dream Landscapes, Collage Thinking & Castle Imaginaries

**11:00 – 14:00** – Late Morning, Brunch & Orientation  
Gather for a relaxed brunch picnic in the gardens of Chateau D'Islette.

This slow morning includes:

- Welcome orientation and dream journaling prompts
- A reading circle with excerpts from Dorothea Tanning's Birthday and Max Ernst's Une Semaine de Bonté
- Group activity: botanical field notes, surrealist writing, collecting and preserving found flora

**Thematic focus:** The Landscape as Subconscious – how place informs dreamwork, memory, and surrealist world-building.

**15:00 – 17:00** – Private tour of Atelier Calder Residency

A guided visit to Calder's former home and studio, now a working contemporary residency. The tour will highlight current artists' practices and a mini walk and talk around the residency grounds.



**17:30 – 19:30** – Free time for rest, journaling, and getting ready. Participants are welcome to explore the Chateau d'Azay le Rideau during this time.

**20:00** – Supper Club: Loire Dreamscapes

Hosted at Melanie's countryside home, this intimate multi-course meal evokes the simplicity of Ernst and Tanning's eating habits while celebrating local produce.

Highlights include:

- A studio visit with three of the General Assembly artists in residence: Ranny Macdonald, Katherine Armitage, and Helen Pavlopoulou
- A welcome botanical cocktail inspired by Ernst and Tanning
- A menu created by the local chef that progresses from elemental (e.g., heirloom tomatoes, olive oil, fleur de sel) to more layered, symbolic dishes
- A hands-on component: making surrealist ink prints with local flora, inspired by Ernst's frottage and decalomania
- Sensory prompts: blindfolded tasting, edible sculptures, and poetic menus

**Setting:** Outdoor garden with a long communal table

**Conversation theme:** *What does it mean to eat irrationally?*

# Day 3

## Saturday, 23 August

### Departure & Closing Ritual

#### Morning – Closing Brunch & Collective Gesture

Our final gathering will centre on a collaborative “feeding” ritual, using leftover ingredients and edible materials in a ceremonial act.

The Closing Ritual Includes:

- Reflective readings on terroir as memory and ecology (with reference to Contemporary Food Anthropologists David Sutton and Heather Paxson)
- A performative or symbolic gesture marking the end of the gathering
- Open conversation on nourishment, place, and return

#### Departure by midday or early afternoon.

Each guest will receive a limited-edition gift: a printed tote, scarf, or artwork inspired by Dorothea Tanning, Max Ernst, or a contemporary artist-in-residence responding to the Freudian Bites Loire iteration.



# PARTNER VENUES & CULTURAL SITES

## Maison Max Ernst – Huismes

The final home and studio of Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, now a center for exhibitions and archival research.

## Chez Max et Dorothea (*Future partner*)

A nonprofit institution dedicated to the legacy of Ernst and Tanning, bridging Surrealism with contemporary art.

## Château de Montsoreau – Musée d'Art Contemporain

Contemporary art museum housing the Philippe Méaille Collection of Art & Language works, in a historic riverside château.

## Atelier Calder – Alexander Calder Residency

Residency and former studio of Alexander Calder, supporting contemporary artists in dialogue with Calder's legacy.

## Ampelidae – Picnic in the Vines

Sustainable vineyard offering natural wines and open-air picnicking amid the vines.

## Bréhémont Brocante

Charming village flea market with antiques, books, and curiosities.

## Les Caves Peintres – Chinon Wine Cellars

Historic underground cellars offering wine tastings and tours beneath the medieval streets of Chinon.

## Fontaine Max Ernst – Amboise

A whimsical and public sculptural fountain created by Ernst, located in Amboise.

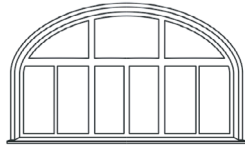
## Château du Clos Lucé

The final residence of Leonardo da Vinci, where he lived and worked until his death in 1519. Now a museum and garden dedicated to his legacy.

## Château du Petit Thouars

A family-run vineyard and estate steeped in history — hosted by Sebastien du Petit Thouars, a 13th-generation winemaker and descendant of a royal botanist.





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