The Frost Art Museum at FIU (a Knight Arts grantee) put together an interesting exhibit in its “Tour de France/Florida.” In collaboration with the Consulate General of France and the France Florida Foundation for the Arts, it gathered up artworks from French artists that normally reside in private collections. That allows for a broad and interesting grouping, as the theme is simply what has been created by the hands of French-born artists and collected by a private individual.

This means “Tour” includes well-known and internationally acclaimed artists, as well as emerging and relatively unfamiliar names. So we have the great Sophie Calle represented and also the likes of Christian Boltanski and the esoteric ORLAN (who has been shown locally at the Helene Lamarque gallery in Wynwood). There was also an emphasis to show works from French artists who have a connection to Florida or who live here. All together, 30 artists make up “Tour.” As the director of the museum Carol Damian commented, these works tell particular and personal tales, as for whatever reason they caught the eye of an individual and weren’t presented or curated by an institution. “These works belong to private individuals and were chosen for their own reasons, not because of a museum’s acquisition or exhibition process.” There are paintings and sculpture, but also a number of text-based works, again adding an intimate touch to the exhibit.

The museum decided to highlight it all with a unique all-day symposium, on Saturday, Jan. 21, where artists, enthusiasts, teachers and collectors can discuss the offerings. As a sampling, the day will include: performances by two artists, who are associated with the Fluxus movement, following the panel discussions. At noon and 5:30 p.m., Joël Hubaut, mixed-media artist, musician and poet will perform, and at 6 p.m., Jacques Halbert, of the
“Eat Art” movement, presents an edible performance dinner “A Table: Life is a bowl of cherries…” “I wanted to bring artists from France to perform and to put the exhibition in context,” said Martine Buissart, the show’s curator. “Viewing live performances of this caliber is a rare opportunity.”

“Tour de France/Florida” runs through March 18 at the Frost Art Museum, 10975 S.W. 17th St., Miami; 305-348-2890.

For more information on the entire exhibit and the special symposium, go to the Frost events page, http://thefrost.fiu.edu/event.htm. An all-inclusive ticket for the 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. symposium, lunch, “Eat Art” performance dinner and Tour de France/Florida exhibition curator’s tour and cocktail is $50 per person. Discounted student tickets are available for $5 with valid student ID; jlettsom@fiu.edu.

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