

# PHARES

Artwork by **Milène Guermont** received the following distinctions:  
**COP 21 (Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)**  
**PARIS FOR THE CLIMATE** and **International Year of Light** launched by **UNESCO**



## DESCRIPTION

**PHARES highlights the oldest monument of Paris.**

*PHARES* is a truncated pyramid formed by 320 isosceles triangles made of aluminium, each equal in dimension (12 ft. high) to the *pyramidion* (the golden cap of the Obelisk) on Place de la Concorde.

Just as the Obelisk symbolizes a **passage from Earth to Sky**, *PHARES* transforms gradually in color: from grey at the base to gold at the top, where it merges with the exact color of the *pyramidion*.



*PHARES* is a "beacon of light" in the maritime sense; and since it is also covered with a wave of car headlights, it is therefore a "**beacon of headlights**": "un phare de phares" in French.

*PHARES* illuminates the Obelisk, both metaphorically and physically, thanks to L.E.D. headlights, which use 70% less energy than the previous generation. *PHARES* is only 2% of the Obelisk's weight. It is protected by a patented thorny lemon tree hedge. The perfection of one moment is not any more important than one of the next day.

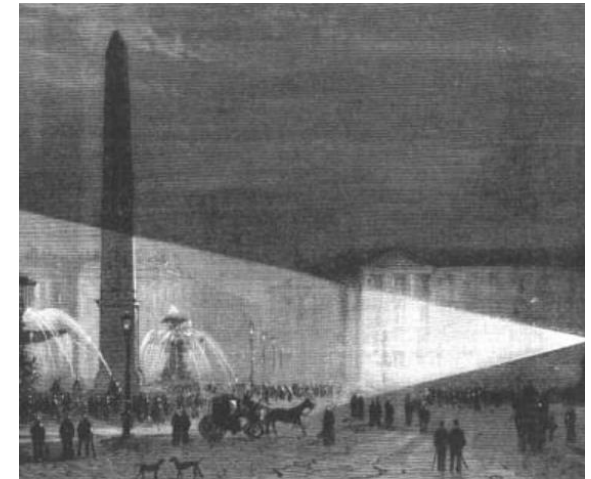
***PHARES* underlines the necessary energy transitions.**

For Valentine's Day 2016, passers-by could transmit their heart rhythms directly into *PHARES* via a built-in sensor, and then see it sparkle as it replicates their heartbeats in real-time.



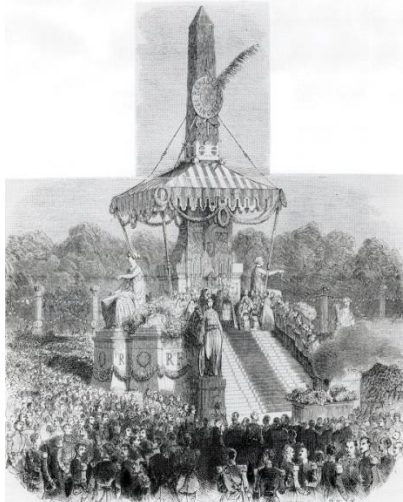
## FROM PAST TO MODERNITY

- The Obelisk is the **oldest monument of Paris** (linked to the principal mission of UNESCO).
- The pyramidion was originally made with the alloy **electrum** (a word derived from "elektron", root of the modern word "electricity"). Electrum ... electricity ... light of **PHARES**.
- **PHARES** is a **phare de phares**: a "beacon of headlights" in French. It also relates to the *pharos* of Alexandria (that was one of the 7 wonders of the Ancient World).
- The Place de la Concorde is where **the first test of public lighting in the world occurred**.
- The Place de la Concorde was also the largest construction during the **Age of Enlightenment**.
- The Place de la Concorde celebrates the naval expertise of France with the Hôtel de la Marine (Naval Ministry), its fountains **celebrating inland and maritime navigation**, and its **prows of ships** (which also evoke the emblem of the City of Paris).
- This plaza is also characterized by the flow of cars seeking their way around the central island. With **PHARES**, the notion of headlights that "open the way" echoes with the **illuminating and life-saving beams** of a lighthouse.
- The street Rue Royale separates the **Automobile Club** of France on the West from the **Naval Ministry** on the East. So **PHARES** creates a symbolic bridge between these two universes: the car and the sea.
- The most characteristic aspect of this Parisian square is its delimitation by **"emptiness" on three sides just as a lighthouse by the sea**.



1843, First test of public lighting in the world

So, the triptych of criteria for a world heritage site (**exemplary nature, universal value, transfer to future generations**) is respected.



1849, 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday of the French Republic



1998, Football World Cup



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2015, International Year of Light & COP21



## DISTINCTIONS



## SUPPORTED BY

- Presidency of the French Republic
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development of France
- Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy of France
- Ministry of Interior of France
- Ministry of Culture and Communication of France
- Egyptian Embassy in France
- Paris Region
- Paris City
- Réunion des Musées Nationaux - Grand Palais
- Jean-Paul Viguier (member of France's Architecture Academy, commissioned to imagine the Champs-Élysées of 2025, MCP UD Harvard)
- David Caméo (President of the creation department of the Comité Colbert, Executive Director of Arts Décoratifs)
- Jean-Noël Reinhardt (President of the Champs-Élysées Committee)
- Pierre Cornette de Saint-Cyr (Auctioneer, former President of Palais de Tokyo Museum)
- Alain Niderlinder (Historian, Curator of the exhibition "The Obelisk's trip" at the Musée de la Marine of France).

## CALENDAR

- **October 2015**, *PHARES* is installed on Place de la Concorde within one week.
- **22 October**, for the first time *PHARES* illuminates the Concorde, it is at the rhythm of the heartbeat of the Ambassador of Egypt in France.
- During the FIAC and the COP21, *PHARES* lights up to the rhythms of the heartbeats of passers-by thanks to a built-in sensor.
- **February 2016**, the Eiffel Tower, the Montparnasse Tower and *PHARES* illuminate at the same rhythm of one heartbeat.
- **June**, *PHARES* leaves Paris.
- **3 October**, *PHARES* is the only artwork shown at UNESCO Headquarters for the final report of the International Year of Light.
- **June 2017**, the international travel of *PHARES* receives the patronage by the French National Commission of UNESCO.



## MILÈNE GUERMONT

Owing to her education both as an artist (Ensad) and as an engineer (Ensiacet, Brown University, Mines), Milène, born in 1981, combines **innovations** (patents pending; prize from the French government) with the power of **poetic imagination**.

Her sculptures made of Polysensual Concrete react (sound, light, vibration) according to your magnetic field if you touch them.

Her artworks, from just a few grams to several tons, belong to private collections and are integrated into public buildings or landscapes such as: *THE ARK OF MONET* (Le Havre), *INSTANTS* (Utah Beach), *CAUSSE* (Montparnasse Cemetery in Paris).

Her work has been exposed at Art Basel Miami, Art Paris, New Art Center New York, Salt Lake Art Center, National Archives of France, Nuit Blanche, Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Fine Arts Museum of Caen, Mineralogy Museum Mines ParisTech, Cartier Foundation, French Pavilion of the International Exhibition ASTANA 2017, Trinity House (London), UNESCO, Centre Pompidou, ...

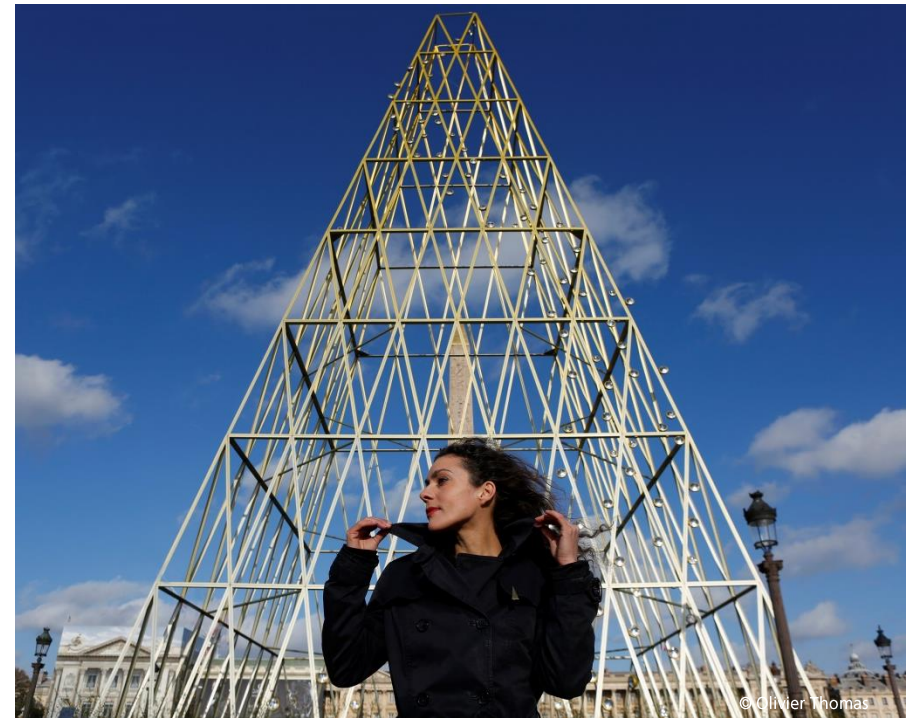


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Since 2017, Milène has been chosen to be the voice of France at the World Fed. of Engineering Organizations, UNESCO's partner.

DOSTYK, LONDON MORNING, KAZPRAVDA, ALHAYAT, BURO, LE POINT, L'ŒIL, L'OFFICIEL, ARTS MAGAZINE, OUEST FRANCE, LE PARISIEN, FRANCE CULTURE draw her portrait.

CNN, LE MONDE, NEWSARTTODAY, A NOUS PARIS, AMA, BEAUX ARTS MAG, FRANCE INTER, FRANCE 2 speak about her work.



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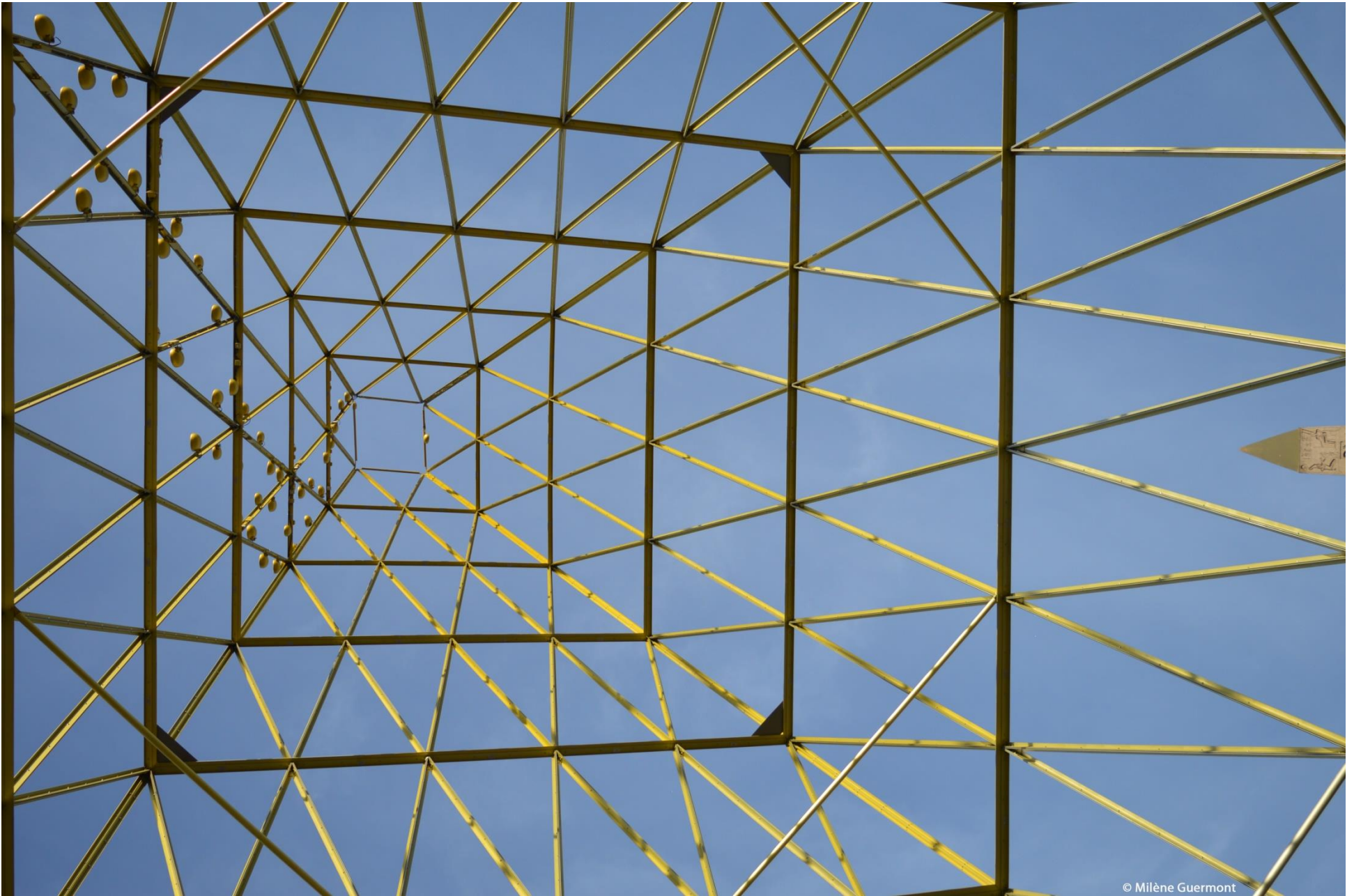
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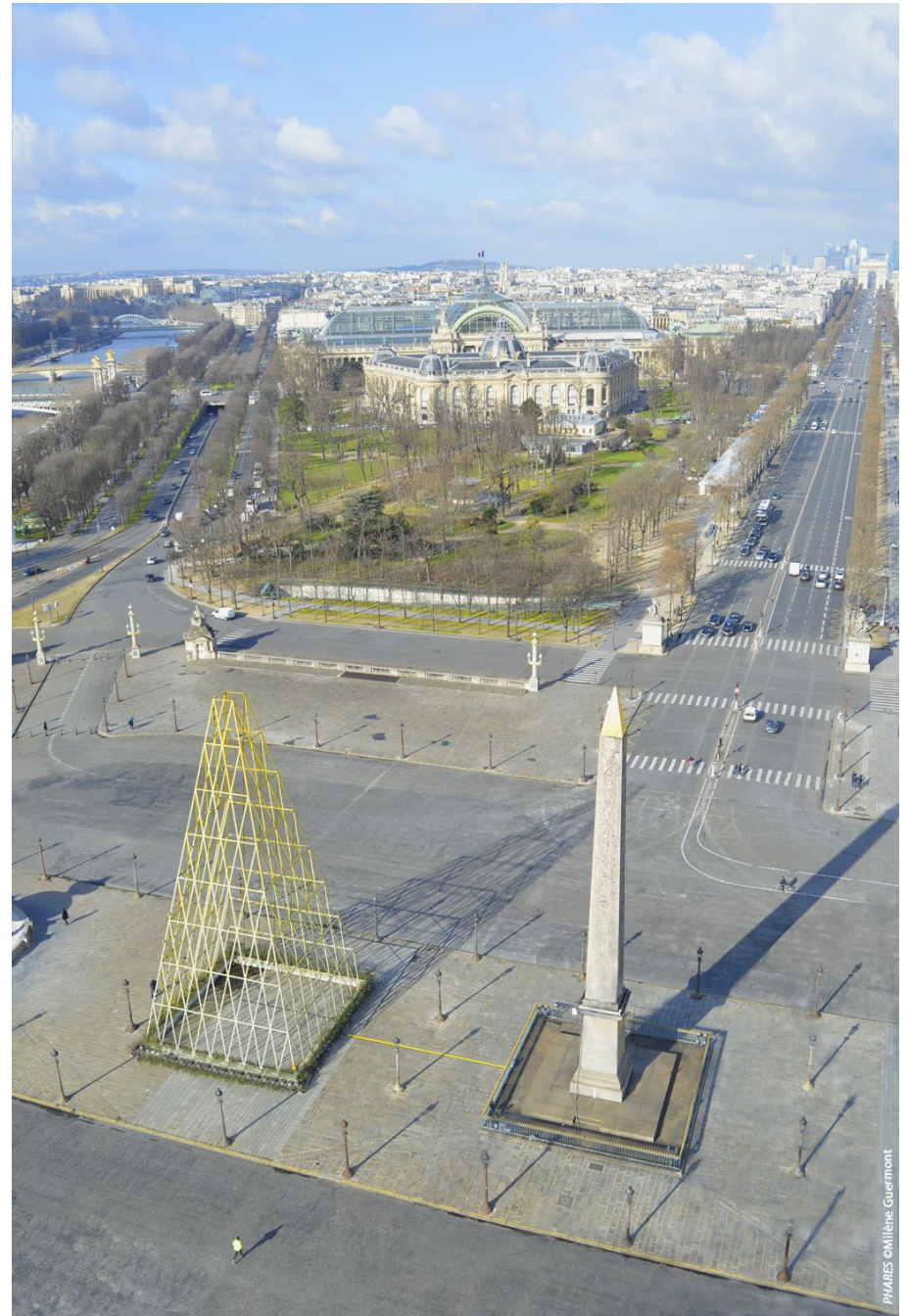


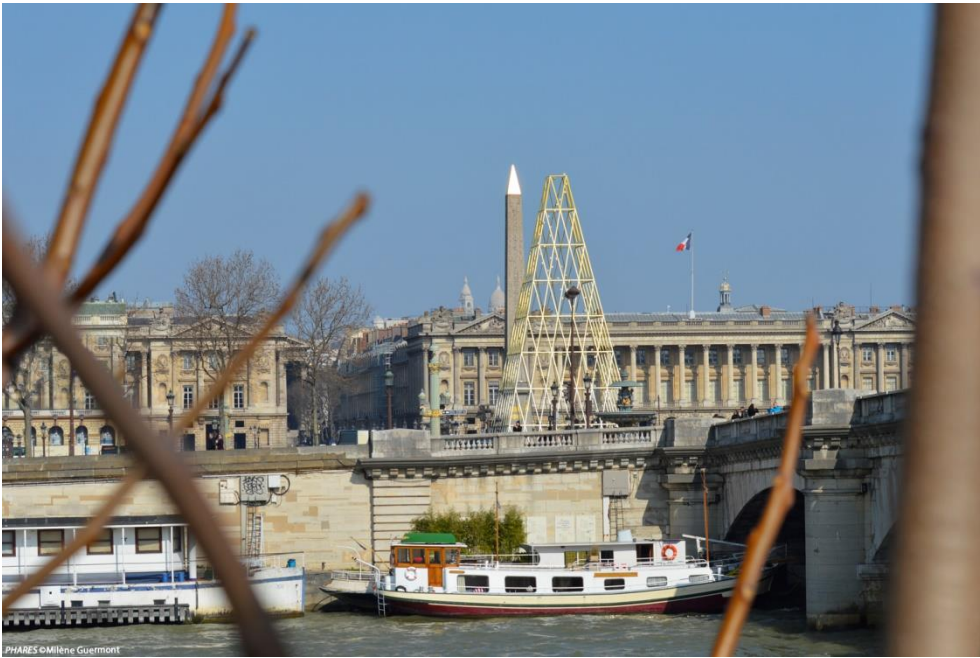


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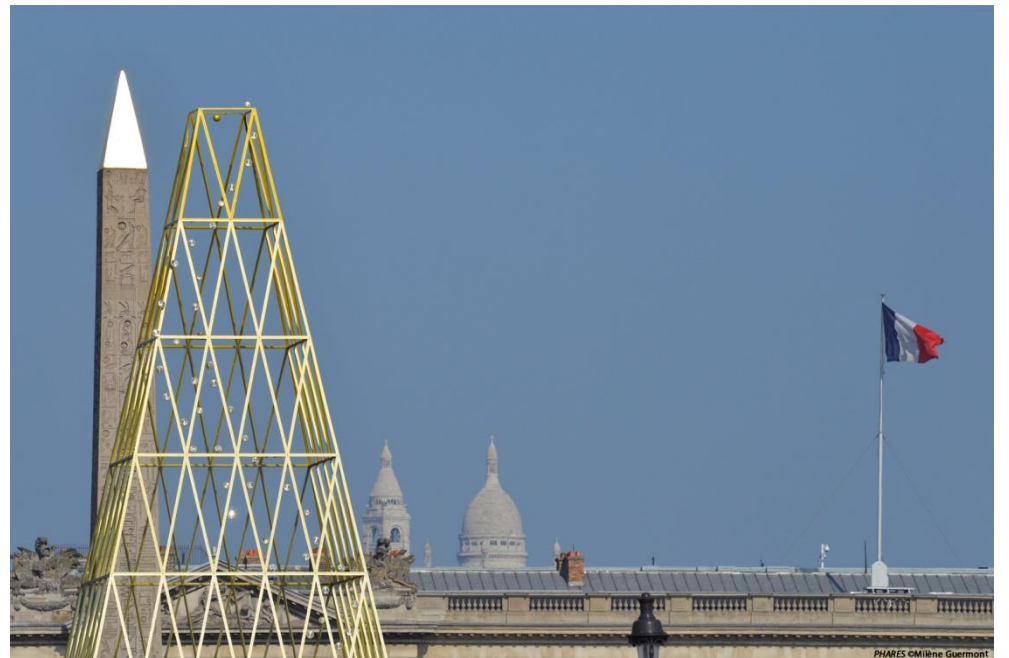
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