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Photo' med 2017

MARSEILLE
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FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI
VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
FRAC PACA
MUCEM



Envisioning Cities

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

With the support of the Ministry Culture and Communication, the City of Marseille and the Lebanese Tourism Board

Since the XIXth Century, photography has had a constant affinity for cities. The city is a classic subject. In all likelihood, this is because the invention of photography coincided with the rise of urbanization. In any event, photography has borne witness to every phase of the development of cities: from the city still intermixed with countryside, jovial and picturesque, home to convivial scenes, as photographed by Robert Doisneau or Willy Ronis, to the contemporary international city, incredible in its contrasts, juxtaposing magnificent and costly feats of architecture with endless drab outskirts. No inhabitants dwell here but only what Sartre calls a “plurality of solitudes.” These transformations of the city went hand in hand with an evolution of photographic practices: under the influence of the Bechers, the subjective approach of humanist photography gave way to an objectivist approach, neutral and methodical, famously represented by Stéphane Couturier or Andreas Gursky. This movement became so dominant during the 90s that it buried all dissent, casting aside such photographers as Ferruccio Leiss in Venice or Mimmo Jodice in Naples, to the point that a great critic, Dominique Baqué, could write in 2004 that their approach was “historically irrelevant.”

However, just as every display of power eventually begets a countervailing power, all artistic hegemony quickly meets resistance. Surely it is no coincidence that this resistance has been strongest among Mediterranean artists. Here, art simply reflects the economic and cultural divide between northern and southern countries. While the German and American schools favor clinical photography, many Mediterranean artists privilege an approach based on sensation. This is what I have sought to show by means of this series of exhibitions dedicated to Tangier, Algiers, Beirut, Eboli and Marseille. Even when they borrow from the stylistic codes of the Düsseldorf school (rigorous framing, sharp and precise images, frontal compositions, a serial approach etc.), Anne-Françoise Pélissier, Giasco Bertoli, Hicham Gardaf, and Joe Kesrouani never reject a certain poetic vision. Their view of a city or a place remains deeply personal. Alain Gualina and Yves Jeanmougin, meanwhile, resolutely lay claim to a tradition of depicting day-to-day life, warm-hearted and nostalgic. Their photographs recall those of Marc Riboud or Édouard Boubat, two classic artists represented in previous Photomed festivals. Maude Grübel and Mickael Soyez interweave urban scenes, portraits, details and landscapes, thus achieving a form of

lyricism, while Sirine Fattouh varies her perspectives as if the general look of a city could only be captured through fragments. Antoine D’Agata and Franck Déglise, for their part, have opted for the intimate, for images that are inseparable from the path of their own lives.

Bernard Faucon, too, bears witness to his life in three videos focused not so much on cities as on roads: what these videos hold in common with several photographers exhibited here is the tight knot they weave between the image of the world and the image of oneself—between the act of depiction, which belongs to the visual arts, and the act of narration generally associated with fiction. Which is to say that fiction often makes its way into photography, whether urban or otherwise, and it should come as no surprise that many contemporary writers have kept a camera near their pens. Hervé Guibert was one such writer. From Andalusia to Palermo, by way of Rome and Elba, he was, in his own way, a Mediterranean photographer, seeking not so much a conjectural truth of the world as a shifting truth of the self, which is to say, a truth of desire. In the end, isn’t that the fate of every voyaging artist, or of every curious traveler who happens upon the rows of images in a photography festival, while wandering through a vast city?

Giasco BERTOLI	<i>Tennis Courts</i>	FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI - 05/07 • 13/08
Antoine D'AGATA	<i>Atlas</i>	FRAC PACA - 01/07 • 13/08
Franck DÉGLISE	<i>On the Road to Algiers</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08
Sirine FATTOUH	<i>Images of Relinquishment</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08
Bernard FAUCON	<i>videos My Roads I, II, III</i>	MuCEM - 25/05
Hicham GARDAF	<i>Tangier</i>	FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI - 05/07 • 13/08
Maude GRÜBEL	<i>Jardin d'essai</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08
Alain GUALINA	<i>Dopo Eboli</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08
Hervé GUIBERT	<i>Life as Fiction</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08
Yves JEANMOUGIN	<i>Algiers</i>	FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI - 03/06 • 02/07
Joe KESROUANI	<i>Beirut</i>	FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI - 05/07 • 13/08
Sebla Selin OK	<i>City Experiments</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08
Anne-Françoise PELISSIER	<i>Beirut, or the Silence of the Gods</i>	FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI - 05/07 • 13/08
Mickael SOYEZ	<i>Marseille Day by Day</i>	VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE - 17/05 • 13/08

Villa Méditerranée

17/05 > 13/08

Franck DÉGLISE - *On the Road to Algiers*
Sirine FATTOUH - *Images of Relinquishment*
Maude GRÜBEL - *Jardin d'essai*
Alain GUALINA - *Dopo Eboli*
Hervé GUIBERT - *Life as Fiction*
Sebla Selin OK - *City Experiments*
Mickael SOYEZ - *Marseille Day by Day*

On the Road to Algiers

Franck Déglise

by **Guillaume de Sardes**
Exhibition co-curator:
Soraya Amrane

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 • 13/08

Franck Déglise's connection to Algeria is deeply personal: his father, born in Algeria, had to return there while he himself remained in France as a young child. His explorations of Algerian land and light are therefore a search for origins, whose intensity keeps them from descending into the picturesque. Anyone looking to see Algiers as "the white city" under azure skies should look elsewhere than in Franck Déglise's photographs. His frequent recourse to black and white reinforces the impression of a brooding sky found in some of his photos. Further, the semi-urban no man's lands, the factory landscapes, and the railroad tracks lead us astray: where are we, really? On which side of the Mediterranean? Algiers could just as well be Marseille, our chosen city. Geography shifts, like the city itself. The photographer captures buildings that we must puzzle over to determine whether they are abandoned, half destroyed, or still under construction. A fleeting urbanization parallels a search for identity.

In Algeria, Franck Déglise is always on the road. From Annaba to Algiers by way of Kabylie, he passes through cities and countryside, attentive to the places and even more attentive to the persons. The human richness of his on-location portraits recalls the greatest humanist photographers, Koudelka, for example. But this Algerian road trip's strongest affinities might lie with the work of Michael Ackerman: intimate, resolutely unconventional, blazed with faces that bear the marks of time. As in Ackerman, the arrangement of the images in a series is essential here: this group of persons, that urban landscape, this tree would all lose their meaning individually. The cohesiveness comes from the movement itself, through the flux of sensations that also mixes black and white and color, focus and blur... Isn't this the very flow of our days, which the photographer—by the diversity of his choices—seeks faithfully to reveal?





On the Road to Algiers
© Franck Déglise

Images of Relinquishment

Sirine Fattouh

2017 Prix Photomed-Instut Francais du Liban

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 • 13/08

At first glance, Sirine Fattouh's photographic wanderings through Beirut—awarded the 2017 *Prix Photomed-Instut Francais du Liban**—might seem to fall into the category of “Urbex”: we push through an unhinged door, we pick our way through rubble, we discover a nearly intact house, protected by blinds that haven't been opened in years... Nevertheless, the artist in no way seeks to present a “sleeping beauty” city. Her metropolis, on the contrary, bustles with the perpetual, incoherent movement of destruction and reconstruction. The construction vehicles she shows busily at work clearing a field or digging a foundation look like uncanny starved insects devouring the city.

Beirut, through the lens of Sirine Fattouh, is a city of contrasts. From afar, she presents an almost conventional skyline, interrupted only by a single crane on the horizon. As we approach, however, street by street, lot by lot, an impression of chaos begins to prevail. Fattouh reveals the absence of any inkling of an overall plan, a lack which gives rise to the most absurd juxtapositions. Directly against a set of traditional buildings spared by the war—with their more reasonable height and warm colors—rise towers as cold as the concrete of which they are made. A brutal verticality assaults a sky which has been nothing but hospitable—a thrust exaggerated by the pretensions to originality of the architects who harden lines instead of softening them. True originality returns only by means of the natural world, represented in Fattouh's photographs in all its overwhelming energy, down to the most unexpected nooks and crannies.

Faced with her compatriots' failure to rebuild the city on a human scale, Fattouh implies that the only alternative to rushing ahead at breakneck speed like America or Monaco lies in the pre-human: trees stand as ironic rivals to towers, or, at the end of a little cove, an almost maternal grotto breaks open the geological substratum to receive from below the revolutionary energy of dreams.

* This prize is awarded each year to a Lebanese photographer living in Lebanon. The previous winners are **Serge Najjar** (2014), **Karim Sakr** (2015), and **Bilal Tarabey** (2016). In 2017, the jury was composed of Richard Dumas, Philippe Heullant, Éric Lebas and Guillaume de Sardes.





Villa Méditerranée - 17/05.13/08



Jardin d'essai

Maude Grübel

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

Exhibition co-curator:
Soraya Amrane

Exhibition co-produced with
Le Château d'Eau (Toulouse)

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 • 13/08

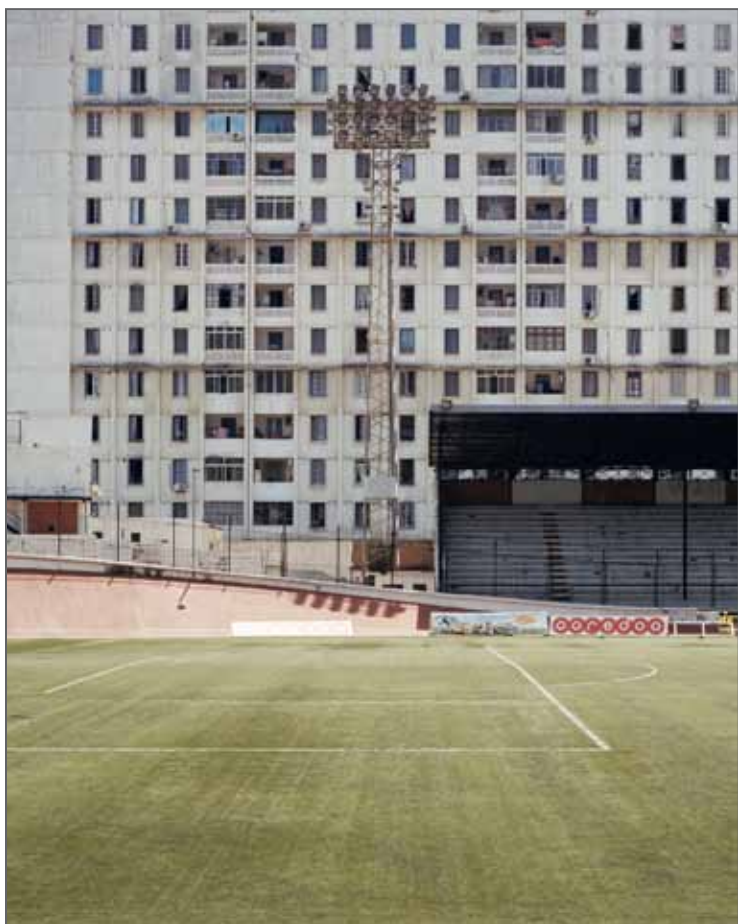
The title *Jardin d'Essai* [Test Garden] was taken by Maude Grübel from the name of the Botanical Garden of Algiers, established in the Hamma district in 1832. Certain of the photographs that compose this series were made there. But for this young photographer from Marseille, it was also a way to emphasize the experimental quality of her work. Indeed, this work does not fit into any particular rubric of contemporary photography. At the very most, one might see it as an attempt to renew the documentary genre. It is a renewal because Maude Grübel rejects all theatricality and all discourse, in favor of inwardness and impressionism. Nevertheless, her vision of Algiers is far from neutral: empty streets, abandoned roller coasters, a decrepit caryatid, a few rare figures photographed from behind—all of these lend the series a nostalgic air. Time seems to flow more slowly here. Some young people have taken the time to carve their names in the triangular leaves of a yucca: "Selma and Amir," "Hania," and so on. While making out the letters, one cannot help thinking of the youth of Algiers described by Kamel Daoud as a bored generation. Surely the attention that Maude Grübel brings to bear on exterior flaws is only a delicate way of suggesting the texture and cracks of a soul.



Jardin d'essai
© Maude Grübel



Jardin d'essai
© Maude Grübel



Villa Méditerranée - 17/05.13/08

Dopo Eboli

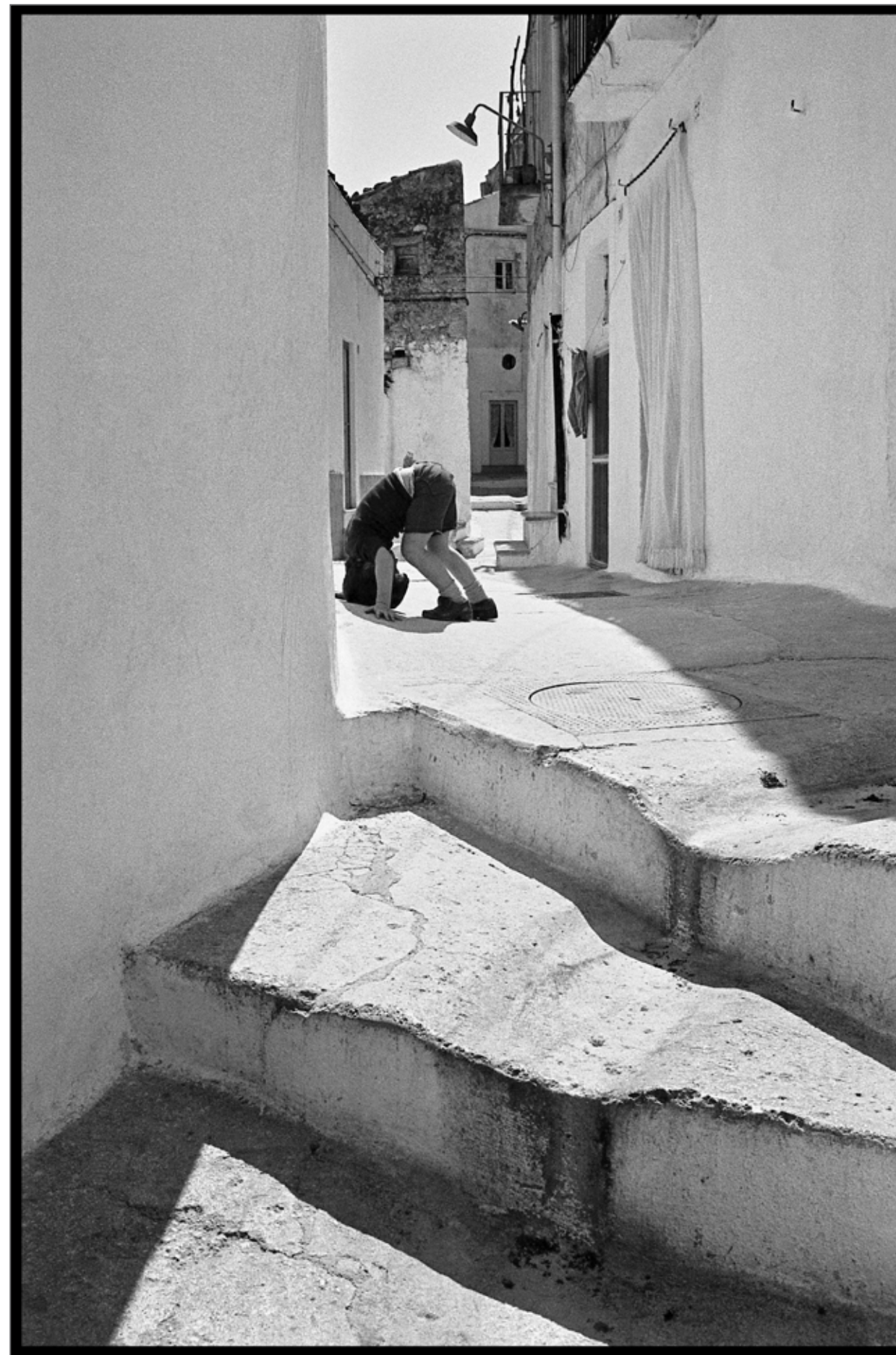
Alain Gualina

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 - 13/08

Eboli is the town in southern Italy that Carlo Levi—exiled to the region by the rise of fascism—would forge into a symbol of the grandeur and misery of the deep Italian South in his novel *Christ Stopped at Eboli*. Alain Gualina, who has always been fascinated by the relation between societies and their surroundings, could not ignore the harsh lands that lie “beyond Eboli.” He has captured what most strikes the voyager: the intense whiteness, blinding, that flashes from the low houses with exterior stairs and whitewashed walls. But this whiteness is like a theatre curtain: it is weirdly peopled with a whole little childhood world, isolated pranksters or bands of little devils who, for their part, never hesitate to brave the noonday heat. Wiser, the mothers and especially the grandmothers hang back on thresholds or in window recesses. The old women’s somber dresses participate in the play of strongly contrasted shadows that reconfigures these villages, meeting here and there with colossal traces of past glory, always a little age worn and grassy.

All contrasts are violent in southern Italy. The terrain of Apulia and Sicily, as shown by Gualina, is sharp peaked and gullied. Villages perch willy-nilly at the summits or on the mountainsides. Cultures take root as best they can, covering the landscape with a carpet of checkered colors; dark lines of trees run along the seams; an isolated farm at times punctuates the whole. The pictorial quality of these photographic journeys undertaken in the 1970s is striking: in their seductive austerity founded on intense black and white, they recall the backgrounds of Trecento paintings. As Emilio Sereni once noted, the Italian landscape no longer exists independent of its artistic double. Nevertheless, that is no reason to reduce the inhabitants of these barren lands to the status of animated figures. Alain Gualina’s humanism restores to them their beauty and their dignity.





Villa Méditerranée - 17/05 .13/08

Monte San Angelo,
Puglia Region, Italy
© Alain Gualina

la vie comme fiction

Hervé Guibert

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

Exhibition produced in partnership with the Galerie Cinéma (Paris)

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 • 13/08

In parallel with his novels, Hervé Guibert could have built fictional narratives out of his images, like the series by Duane Michals that he admired. But just as he never sought far afield for the themes of his books, he never wanted to photograph any other places than those in which he lived, nor any other models than the women and boys whom friendship or love brought into his company. This does not mean, however, that one can deny the fictional dimension of his work. In his self-portraits, the constant presence of a filter between his body and the gaze of others reveals that the subject, who is unmistakably Hervé, is also someone else. The handkerchief laid over his eyes, the spectacular veil draped as a mosquito screen that transforms a makeshift bed into a strange décor—all of this shatters familiar appearances and introduces a hint of doubt.

His friends, too, appear at once familiar and unknown. "Isabelle," with whom Guibert maintained an intense relationship, is the very beautiful actress with delicate features and deep eyes whom everyone at the time admired—but have we ever seen her on screen the way she appears under the camera lens of her friend? Dominique Sanda, her eyes closed in light, remains the heroine of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* while playing another role here. Each of them becomes a character in a story that the author reveals only in the briefest of glances, leaving us to fill in the blanks. Mathieu (Lindon), Eugène (Savitzkaya), and Thierry play opposite them in supporting roles, to comedic effect at times, as in the double portrait dressed in tuxedos with Patrice Chéreau, shot at Cannes for the presentation of *The Wounded Man*—a photograph whose playful irony emphasizes the hazards of passing from a film set to the human comedy.

In this photograph, the hotel room is a stage, just as the Villa Médicis is not only the site of a pleasurable sojourn but also a theater in which the residents, like statues, have each struck a pose. In other words, it is no longer entirely the French Academy in Rome, but already the "Spanish Academy" that figures in his 1989 novel *L'Incognito*. Even the retreat that was closest to his heart, the hermitage of Santa Caterina—to which he asked to be taken for his final resting place—passes through this transformation. Here, too, the photographer Hervé Guibert never relinquished his relation to reality structured by a slight perturbation, as constant as it is conscious. Like Chateaubriand, his greatest dream would have been to retreat to a hermit's cell—but "a cell with a view of a theater."



Dominique Sanda
© Hervé Guibert



Autoportrait au mouchoir
© Hervé Guibert



herve guibert

City Experiments

Sebla Selin Ok

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

Exhibition produced in
partnership with SIGMA

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 - 13/08

At a time when globalization is on everyone's mind, it was only fitting to offset this panorama of Mediterranean metropolises with images from a distant region, to test whether local differences are truly a thing of the past. Tokyo, an often-photographed city, offered ideal ground for this experiment—a Tokyo twice as distant, here, for it is seen through the eyes of a young Turkish photographer Sebla Selin Ok. More accustomed to reflecting on personal identity than on cities, Sebla Selin Ok approached the universe of the big city from an impressionist perspective. The series is entitled *Self/Subject*: these images do not so much attempt to give the spectator an idea of Tokyo (or of Nara, Kyoto, Osaka, and Yokohama, intentionally intermingled) as they seek to share the vision of this artist whose images capture large enigmatic fragments of urban reality.

The results of this city experiment cut both ways. Certain of Sebla Selin Ok's images correspond to the canon of the Japanese picturesque: we see traditional buildings and examples of an art of the garden that we recognize at once. But the play of reflections, which sometimes enriches an image to the point of blurring it, shows that nothing can be taken for granted. Many of these samples of urban Japanese reality could have been collected in Los Angeles, Buenos Aires or Berlin. Nothing in the world resembles a skyline more than another skyline. Highways look the same anywhere. Even the celebrations have largely relinquished their idiosyncrasies in favor of the customs of a global Las Vegas. Sebla Selin OK does not so much show us the spaces of a specific city as lead us into a neighborhood of the global megalopolis. The talent with which she stages this contemporary city invites the viewer to leave aside the too-facile pose of wistful anti-modernity and start looking instead. Look closely and feel—let yourself be overwhelmed by the atmosphere of these cities.



Villa Méditerranée - 17/05.13/08



Marseille Day by Day

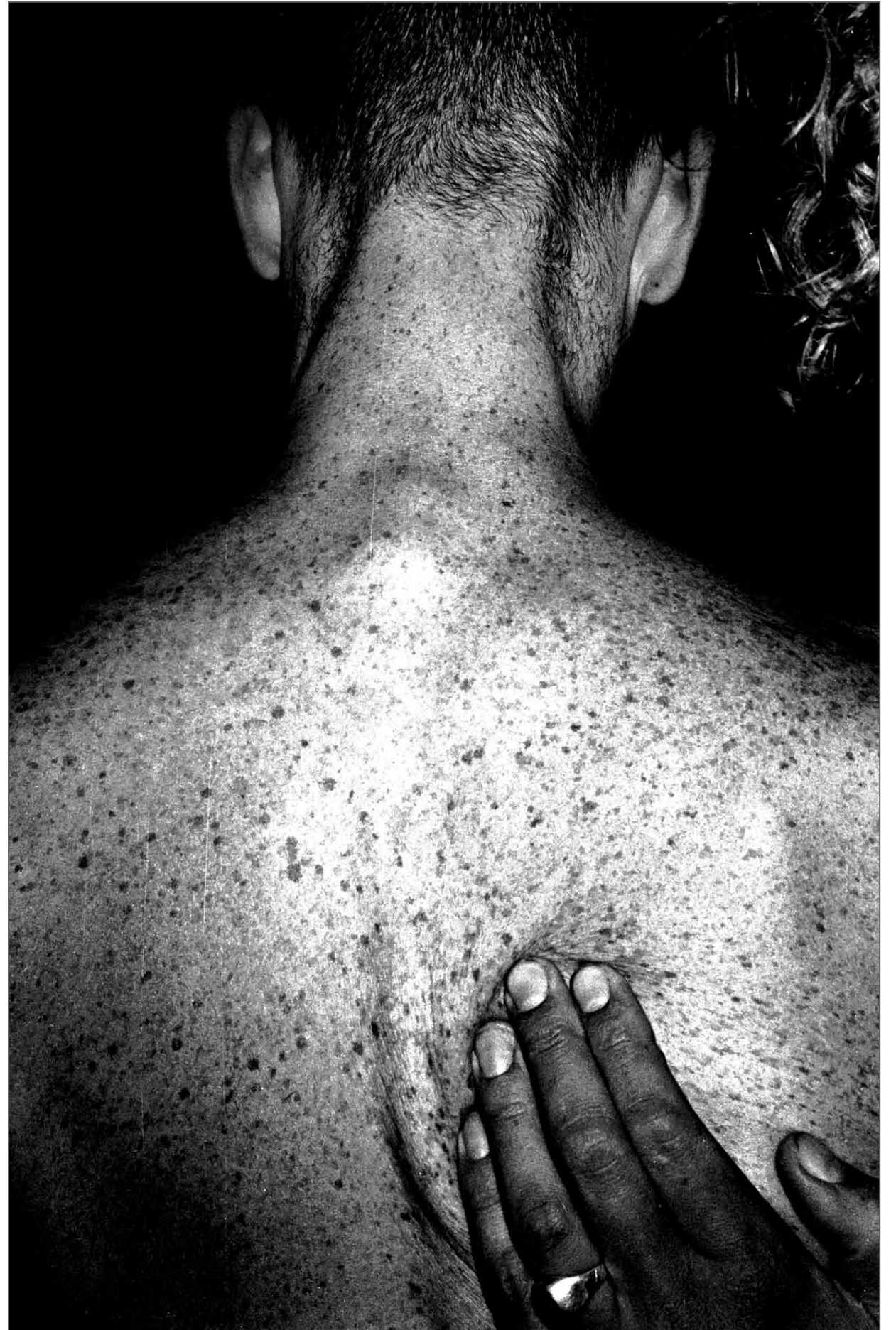
Mickael Soyez

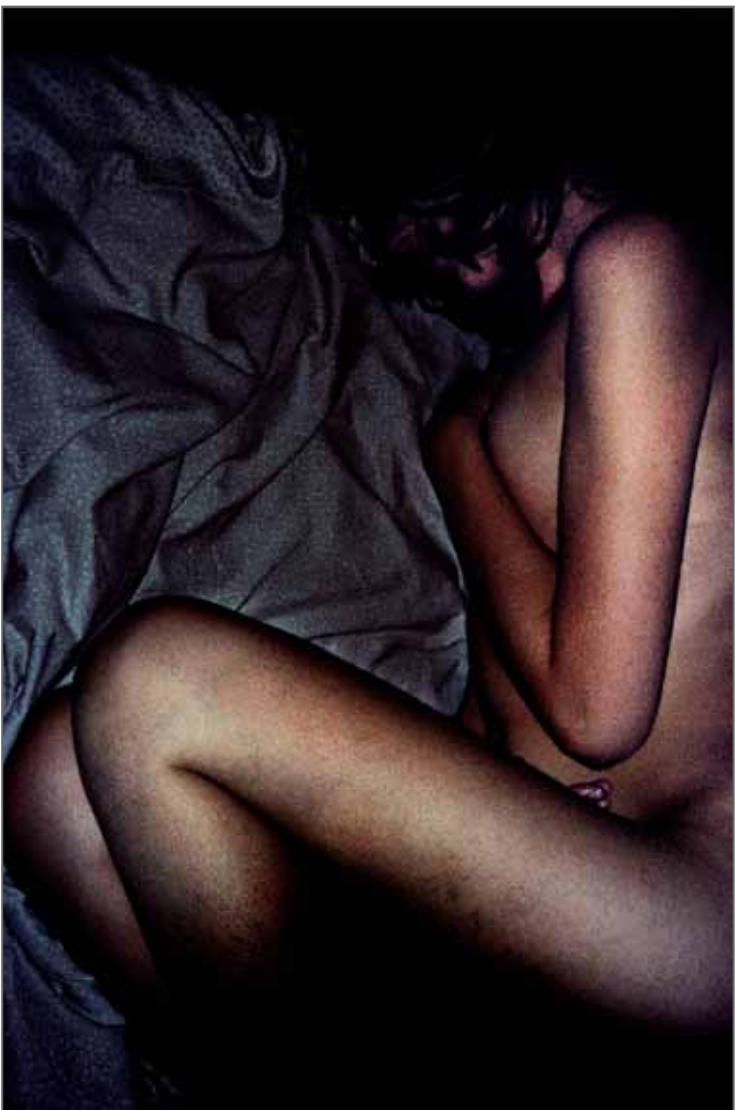
by **Guillaume de Sardes**

VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
17/05 • 13/08

Portraits, nudes, landscapes, cityscapes in color or black and white: the very material of Mickael Soyéz's daily life affords him the subject of his images. These images are blurred, misframed, overexposed, grainy. The influence of Nan Goldin, Anders Petersen, Antoine D'Agata, JH Engström is apparent in the work of this young photographer from Marseille. But one could do worse, as far as role models go.

The interest of Mickael Soyéz's work lives, first of all, in its profound stylistic unity, and, second, in the way it calls into question the notion of a photographic "subject" by focusing on all the most ordinary (and, therefore, the most overlooked) things: cinema seats, piles of books, an old mattress set against a tree, etc. Not only does he focus on subjects that lie outside the common artistic lexicon, he also bears witness to them in a way that alters their significance. Mickael Soyéz invests the most banal objects and scenes with an intensity and imaginative potential that exceeds their function or their common meaning. By photographing boulders in harshly contrasted black and white, for instance, he lends them an intriguing, highly graphic quality. He draws our eye to unexpected details that most people would no doubt have missed. His approach accords with that of Jason Evans who, in the series *New Scent*, photographed the silt on a sewer grate after a thunderstorm. In this way, Mickael Soyéz manages to reinvest the world with splendor.





Friche la Belle de Mai

03/06 > 02/07*

05/07 > 13/08

Giasco BERTOLI - *Tennis Courts*

Hicham GARDAF - *Tangier*

Yves JEANMOUGIN - *Algiers**

Joe KESROUANI - *Beirut*

Anne-Françoise PELISSIER - *Beirut, or the Silence of
the Gods*

Tennis Courts

Giasco Bertoli

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI
05/07 • 13/08

The Italian-Swiss photographer Giasco Bertoli was born in Ticino, close by the Italian border, and now lives in Paris. He made his name through his work for many international fashion magazines. People have called his work “cult,” so strongly did it correspond to—and, at same time, help define—the photographic style of the 90s: a direct and raw style inspired by daily life, of which Juergen Teller and Corinne Day are the best-known practitioners. Like them, Giasco Bertoli created—alongside his commissioned works—a number of more personal photographic series. The most emblematic of these is *Tennis Courts*. Since 1999, Giasco Bertoli has been photographing tennis courts along his journeys, especially in various Mediterranean cities (Tangier, Toulon, Venice, Capri, etc.) with a preference for courts that have been abandoned, overrun by weeds. His approach thus accords with that of the Japanese artist Yoshiko Seino, who often selects as her subject places where nature has begun to reclaim its dominion. The difference is that Giasco does not principally seek to show us the revival of nature in spite of the negligence of humans, but rather to make us feel the dreamlike aspect of empty spaces. And indeed these large-format photographs summon ghosts. Looking at them gives rise to reminiscences: the scene with the mimes playing a game of tennis at the end of Michelangelo Antonioni’s *Blow-up* (1966), the match barely shown in Vittoria De Sica’s *Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970) or the extremely disturbing conclusion to the game played on the shores of Lake Annecy in *Claire’s Knee* by Eric Rohmer. Thus, we shouldn’t be surprised to hear Giasco Bertoli say that his images are influenced by films. Films, in his eyes, are as real as life itself.



Tennis Court, Tangier, 2015
© Giasco Bertoli



Tennis Court, Toulon, 2012
© Giasco Bertoli

Tangier

Hicham Gardaf

by Guillaume de Sardes

FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI
05/07 • 13/08

Few cities have captured the imagination of writers as strongly as Tangier. As Paul Bowles writes in *Without Stopping: An Autobiography*: “*Tangier struck me as a dream city, [...] rich in prototypal dream scenes.*” This is indeed the Tangier that Hicham Gardaf has photographed. The images of this young Moroccan artist hold a certain silence, a strangeness reminiscent of dreams: a little girl dressed in a soaked, blue-grey gown, sky colored, and a red vest stands before a rubbish heap planted with an improbable pale pink parasol. Her slight hunch signals a certain concentration, perhaps a fear. But what could she be looking at? The question remains unanswered. In a café with opalescent green walls, a seated man with a fine mustache and very straight posture looks toward a window admitting sunlight. Here, too, the exact meaning of the scene escapes us. The atmosphere of these two images, and of many others, recalls that of the best of Hopper’s paintings. Time seems to stand still, and all action gives way to inwardness. This affinity with Hopper appears also in the treatment of light, the sense of color, and a clear predilection for stark compositions in which a single character appears among calm surroundings.

Hicham Gardaf’s images belong to what has been called “tableau photography,” a genre descended from XIXth-century Western figurative painting. And yet they distinguish themselves from this genre by their absence of drama and visual exaggeration. Stripped of theatricality, they tend toward the neutral—lending themselves to multiple interpretations—or even toward abstraction. Paul Bowles would have said they make you dream.





Series *Tangier*
© Hicham Gardaf



Friche la Belle de Mai - 05/07 .13/08

Algiers

Yves Jeanmougin

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

This exhibition was produced by Métamorphoses with the support of the Regional Council of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and the Departmental Council of Bouches-du-Rhône, as well as the cooperation of the Friche la Belle de Mai, Leica Camera and the French Institute in Algiers.

FRICHE LA BELLE MAI
03/06 • 02/07

Yves Jeanmougin's Algiers photographs were made at two distinct times: the black-and-white ones in 2003; the color ones in 2011-2012. Almost a decade stands between them, and yet nothing seems to have changed. How long has Algiers displayed this mixture of the rich splendor of bygone years and a hint of wear? We see Algiers and its bars with impeccable chrome presided over by an ageless boy always wearing a perfect white vest; Algiers with its terraces from which to gaze at the sea. And yet there is nothing self-consciously antique about this metropolis whose modernist constructions have aged badly, like everywhere else, but whose inhabitants never cease to invest its spaces with new forms.

The photographer Jeanmougin—attentive to how one generation lives with another—offers us the image of a city filled with young, sensual bodies. Adolescents and youths abandon themselves to the universal passion of football, adopting the familiar poses of *tifosi*. Their older siblings look on indulgently while taking advantage of the mild night to palaver on street-side terraces. Born in Casablanca, now living in Marseille, author of numerous series on the Maghreb, Yves Jeanmougin has no trouble slipping amicably into a way of life common to all the large seaside cities around the Mediterranean.

The sea is always close at hand in this Algerian series. The sea encompasses the city that slopes to its shores; it issues an invitation to journeys that sound more like a promise than an exile. In the blue fullness of summer, the ruffles of surf confirm that this is the South. And when the winter wind blows, it gives the wharfs an almost ocean feel. Jeanmougin, who is a major figure of photojournalism, has left behind its constraints here to record—with a keen and complicit eye—a certain art of being in the world that seems to be holding up against the opposing forces of history.



Algiers
© Yves Jeanmougin



Algiers
© Yves Jeanmougin



Algiers
© Yves Jeanmougin

Beirut

Joe Kesrouani

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

Large format, exquisitely precise, and technically flawless, Joe Kesrouani's images of Beirut at first seem to belong to one of the most common currents of art photography: neutral landscapes. This objective photographic aesthetic took hold at the beginning of the 90s in reaction to the "neo-impressionist" works and paintings of the 80s. Largely influenced by the pioneering work of Bernd and Hilla Becher, it serves as a means of freeing oneself from personal perspective. The most famous representative of this school of photography—often characterized as "German"—is Andreas Gursky. Among those working specifically on cities, Naoya Hatakeyama and Axel Hütte have earned the art world's esteem.

Joe Kesrouani's images superficially recall these celebrated predecessors. And yet they are different if one looks at them closely: they have neither quite the same severity nor quite the same cold aesthetic, objective and impersonal. Something else pierces through in Kesrouani's work. His taste for thunder-stricken skies, for strong contrasts and lighting effects—are these not manifestations of a romantic sensibility of the sublime? Joe Kesrouani would thus stand balanced at the middle of a line running from the Düsseldorf school photographers to the painter Caspar David Friedrich.





The Concrete Wall, Beirut
© Joe Kesrouani

Beirut, or the Silence of the Gods

Anne- Françoise Pélissier

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

FRICHE LA BELLE DE MAI
05/07 • 13/08

Anne-Françoise Pélissier, a regular frequenter of Beirut, has photographed the city since the mid-1990s, when the withdrawal of the militias marked the end of a long civil war fought along religious lines. Her images forcefully demonstrate that visual intensity has nothing to do with pathos. On the surface, nothing could be calmer than this post-combat world. A slack sea stands supremely indifferent. On the deserted shore, a few long-since useless parasols parcel the horizon with their ridiculous vertical lines. Even the ships lie at anchor. The sky, too, is uniform. Never has it seemed so empty. The day after bloodshed is the time of the Gods' indifference. The memory of battles lives on in one of the most familiar commonplaces of war images: a wall riddled with bullets, its plaster all fallen. Not everything has been overthrown or destroyed: a Ferris wheel, souvenir of happier days, shows up everywhere, unmoving. But the rich heritage of one the most beautiful capitals of the Mediterranean has paid heavy tribute: a toppled marble pillar serves as a metonym of all the gutted and annihilated villas.

An extraordinary silence reigns over Anne-Françoise Pélissier's Beirut—a Holy Saturday silence. Complete solitude seems to be the rule here. Concrete, steel, and the natural world—these are the characters, arranged according to the austere laws of geometry. One recalls the great bare walls of Lewis Baltz, though with less austere moralism. In the very absence of humans, of gazes and voices, Pélissier cradles a kind of vibration—these abandoned spaces give the uncanny feeling that someone has just passed through. Might it have been a ghost, beneath a light gauze like that which covers the palaces? Or a sleeping worker? This world, left to its own devices but not bereft of promise, is above all a world of poetry.



Beirut, or the Silence of the Gods
© Anne-Françoise Pélissier



Beirut, or the Silence of the Gods
© Anne-Françoise Pélissier

Frac Provence-Alpes- Côte d'azur

01/07 > 13/08

Antoine D'AGATA - *Atlas*

Atlas

Antoine D'Agata

by **Guillaume de Sardes**

FRAC PACA
01/07 • 13/08

Marseille is Antoine D'Agata's native city—he was born here in 1961 and made his first photographs here in the 90s. Certain photographs from that time were collected in one of his earliest books, *Home Town*. The photographs are black and white. They speak of wandering, of sex and drugs—of crossing boundaries. They transgress the lines of proper behavior and societal norms, but especially the line that usually separates photographer and subject. As Antoine D'Agata says, he “*wanted to live with the people whom photography, until then, had only observed.*”

Fifteen years later, in 2014, he made *Atlas*, a 76-minute film devoted to prostitutes from all over the world, postmodern Piéta figures wavering between ecstasy and suffering. Here, too, he transgresses limits: those of the photographic medium. These are fixed frames, but the video allows him to record movement and, above all, voices—voices in every language, which give *Atlas* a universal dimension, testaments to a disturbed and heartrending beauty. This film is presented here through a series of stills. Viewing these in parallel with his first images allows one to trace the evolution of a style: the casting aside of blurred black and white in favor of sharply focused color.

Bringing together in a single exhibition these two bodies of work—made more than 15 years apart—also allows one to trace an implicit outline of Antoine D'Agata's artistic journey: “*When I was young, I can't count how many nights I spent in the streets; and sooner or later the streets stopped interesting me so much. I went into bars and into rooms. The spaces got tighter and tighter. Then I focused on bodies. And then I moved from the sex act to the few seconds when the face tenses up. In Atlas, I tried to move on to something different while staying true to myself. Discovering my camera's video mode helped me; it opened up new spaces.*” So, from street photography to video art. But even though his visual means and intentions have altered, Antoine D'Agata's work over the years still incessantly poses the same question: what are we to make of the impure relation between documents and intimacy?



MuCEM

Screening
25/05

Bernard FAUCON - videos *My Roads I, II, III*

Videos *My Roads I, II, III*

Bernard Faucon

par **Guillaume de Sardes**

MuCEM SCREENING
25/05 at 19:30

Bernard Faucon is known as one of the most significant French representatives of the “tableau photography” genre. His images are staged, obeying compositional principles akin to those of classical painting. They speak of childhood, of lost time, of the impossibility of truly coming close to another being. This richly poetic work began in the mid-70s and ended in the mid-90s—twenty years of photographs concluding with a series entitled *The End of the Image* and a vast retrospective exhibition at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie.

And yet Bernard Faucon has not stopped making images. He has been working now on a several-hour long art video, in which a succession of landscapes follow one another, filmed all over the world: in Provence, of course, the place of his birth, but also in Cuba, Peru, Egypt, in Vietnam, Korea, and elsewhere. At times the framing is fixed, at others times mobile, shot from a moving car. Hence the title of this video: *My roads*. But this title shouldn't be taken too literally. *My Roads* also means my journeys, the paths I have chosen: while these images shot over the course of his journeys stream past, Bernard Faucon tells his story. In a voice-over, he speaks of his childhood and his friendships: with Jean-Claude Larrieu, Hervé Guibert, Christian Caujolle, Pierre Wermer, and others.

This eminently nostalgic work is still in progress—the three videos presented here are thus a foretaste of what's to come. They also stand at the crossroads of several genres. As Bernard Faucon says: “*No longer really a photographer, more or less a videographer, I have become again what I always was, something of a poet, impelled by own inner necessity.*”



Photo' med

2017

MARSEILLE
17 MAI / 14 AOÛT

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VILLA MÉDITERRANÉE
FRAC PACA
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