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NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC NARRATIVES

THE EYES 8

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This print is offered by Picto Foundation
and Kourtney Roy, Azimut, Tendance Floue

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PORTFOLIOS

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC NARRATIVE: A CHALLENGE FOR THE GAZE

Introduction / Michel Poivert

Doctor in Art History and photography expert



“The metaphor of the gaze has for long absorbed the photographer’s practice and enforced a law upon him: to be an eye, an impeccable and imperious eye prescribing to others what they should have seen. There is, with Duane Michals, ample effort [...] to get rid of the ethical burden of the gaze: he aims at annihilating what could be referred to as the ocular function of photography.”

Michel Foucault, « *La pensée, l’émotion* »,
in *Duane Michals, Photographies de 1958 à 1982, 1982.*

When Michel Foucault sums up the art of Duane Michals, he dismisses the orthodoxy of the photographic gaze for an aesthetic that mixes writing and the image. So, what is today the topicality of photography turned narrative? Do contemporary photographs, understood in their artistic practices, care for the narrative dimension of the image? Is the photograph today more literary than literal? Is the photographic narrative asserting itself to the fore, next to all the other “augmented” experiences of post-photography? Is it not at the crossroad of documentary and experimental photography?

A brief step back in history: have the inventors – the Frenchman Hippolyte Bayard and the Englishman William Henry Fox Talbot – not shown the way to the photographic narrative? Bayard’s famous *Self-Portrait as a Drowned Man* (1840) is indeed an enigma, with the text on the reverse accounting for the story of the fictional suicide of an unlucky inventor who is no other than himself, setting the scene in the realistic context of the Parisian morgue that was then open to visitors. From the outset, Bayard places the photograph as the element of an autobiographical narrative inspired by the dramatic aesthetic of Romantic theatre.

What is there to be seen in images? A question that seems to haunt Talbot: for each example of photographic practice, the images on the pages of his catalogue of inventions, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844–1846), are faced with a text that reaches far beyond the mere explanatory notice. Some of these adopt a literary and fictional nature when they invent reading scenarios or offer theoretical reflections about the image.

Clearly, from these origins, the possibilities for rallying text and image do not serve only the prescription of meaning but also photography’s openness to inventive reading. One hundred years later, adding textual to visual at the time of the avant-gardes was one of the Surrealists’ mode of photographic creation, playing at confusing the registers of enunciation and using that confusion as fertile ground for poetic and visual experiences. Then, consider the following generation, that of conceptual practices in which the narrative and the production of images are bound together, as with Robert Smithson. This elementary genealogy shows that there are still historical “peaks” at which the photographic narrative seems to meet a will to tell something by means of the image – fictional or documentary – without unearthing the longstanding conflict between the readable and the visible. Are we experiencing one of these “peaks” of the photographic narrative?

HUMAN SCIENCES: AN AESTHETIC MODEL?

Supplanting the fictional or autobiographical models, the human sciences became a benchmark, although we could not expect any poetic promise from them. History, sociology, anthropology or even geography... the knowledge about man... have these not for nearly 200 years limited photography to its illustrative and evidence value? Does an artistic approach have anything to do with data sheets and pages blackened with studies appealing only to rational thinking?

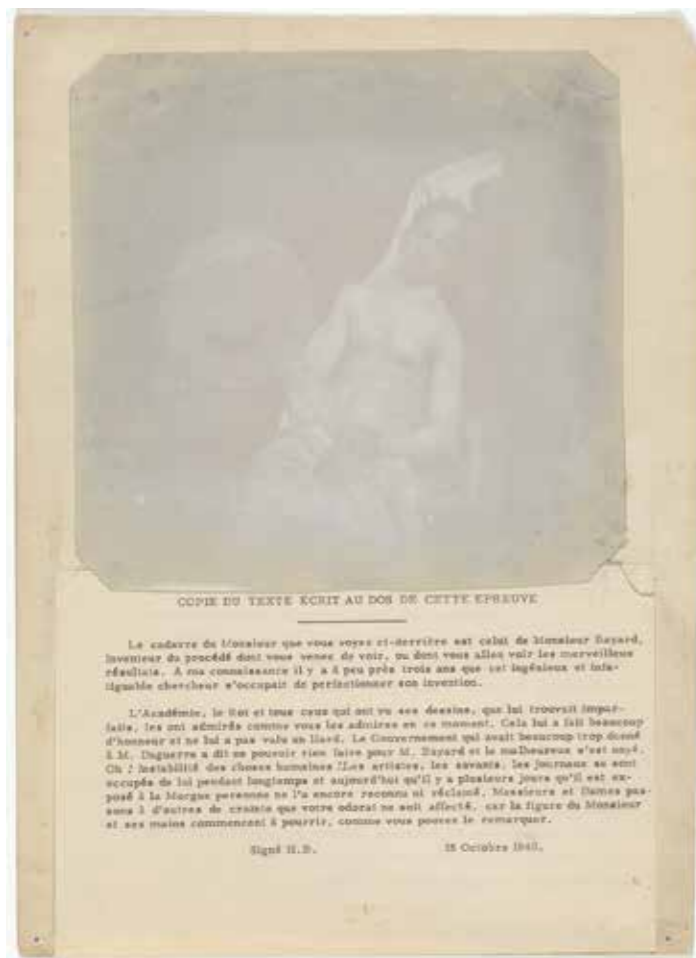
And yet, the human sciences model has been explored aesthetically for many years by a few artists, and it actually seems that photography is a perfect operator to subvert forms of knowledge into artistic forms: the human and social sciences deliver an economy and a tradition of the readable and the visible perfectly integrated with our culture. First, the famous notion of “document” gave photography the means to frustrate the order of knowledge by disguising the codes of the rational, but that was only the first step. It only required investing in that tradition and these forms of discourse to lead it to the rhetoric of forms.

Are the human and social sciences enjoying a renewal of interest in the eyes of photographic artists? For Stéphanie Solinas, Laia Abril or Christian Vium, the forms of the study, of the investigation, of the display – toying with the mythical values of evidence, of “data” relentlessly showing text–image interactions – are perfect drives to narratives and particularly effective fictional contexts.

Midway between conceptual and literary practice, the work adopts the shape of an installation, a book, a didactical sequence, an explanatory sign and any other variant of a knowledge-flavoured display. Thus unfolds a full textual-visual rhetoric in a clever game by which the use of images is no longer solely rigorously functional but also aesthetic. And this is clearly unrelated to what the post-modernist generation called “parody” or “simulacra”. Quite to the contrary, photographers invest in forms and adopt attitudes to reveal their aesthetic and discursive potential: to produce and not only to reproduce.

THE LITERARY OF THE VERNACULAR

One of the most tangible clues to an actual photographic narrative is the inflation of vernacular images in the work of artists. Whether through appropriation or a vernacular-tinted realization (found, amateur, technical or administrative), these images operate in iconographic complexes: installations, editions or any other form by which they function as actors on the stage of an image narrative, most often associated with titles and texts that convey an imaginary configuration. Different from the “historical” conceptual methods (Hans-Peter Feldmann, for example),



Hippolyte Bayard.
 "Self-portrait as a Drowned Man", 1840.
 Direct positive on paper.
 Société française de photographie's collection.



these vernacular images are not only given as collected elements delivering their poetry under the shape of seriality, or inversely, parataxic chaos; in the cases of Isabelle Blanc & Olivier Hilaire or Lorenzo Tricoli, they are part of true scenarios in which the image is like a recovered archive that delivers the poetry of a buried world.

Mostly, the vernacular inflation is a sign of consensus about the desire for narrative. The true fetishism that surrounded the notion of the document in the years 1990 to 2000 gave way to a frenzy for the "vernacular" that concentrates the values of the times: reconciliation of the "high" and "low", celebration of the anonymous and the amateur figures, of the poetry of the surrealistic found object, of the primacy of the editorial gesture over the shooting genius; in short, the full terms of what philosopher Jacques Rancière calls in *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* (2004) "the assumption of the ordinary", by which photography has played the role of vector following the literary invention of the banal and the anonymous as emblems of the modern.

And it is precisely because these values converge that the vernacular functions as an admirable drive to narrative. Over the prosaic, anything can be pinned under the fiction or the performative experience, relinquishing to a long-gone past the figure of the author: vernacular produces narrative as a result of the void that it leaves in place of the author. Orphan images are only waiting for new parents to make them talk, deliver intentions on their own account, invest their corpus of images. Long abandoned like decommissioned venues, they are here recommissioned (in the double sense of novel function and affect input) for an artistic and poetic proposition.

On closer inspection, the photographic narrative is often built on the fertile grounds of the vernacular image and the devices of knowledge. Nothing exclusive there. The case of Carlos Spottorno, who invests in the cartoon form to tell the story of contemporary migrations, is as such strikingly singular. Others, like Jean-Christian Bourcart, as a result of accomplished literary expression, adjust their own images to their narrative, recalling the literary ambition of the photographic essay. Under the title of "The Camera as Essayist", was the magazine *Life* not publishing a true manifest on 26 April 1937? To the eyes of the editors, "the photographic camera is not merely a reporter. It can also be a commentator. It accounts for but also comments on. It is able to interpret and present. It can describe the world as would a 17th-century essayist."



THE TRUE TRUTH'S STORIES

Concept /
Isabelle Blanc & Olivier Hilaire



Following the collapse of his ideal world prompted by the discovery of photographs, young Mr Truth became entirely obsessed with a quest for truth: What is hiding behind the gloss of images, whether public or private?

“The True Truth’s Stories” is a collection of photographic short stories based on the codes of the literary volume: preface, chapters, epilogue, character, narrator. They are based on true stories or inspired by reality for an interplay between true and false. The interplay establishes a dialogue between views realized for the project and archival images often historically unrelated to the event considered. The photographs included come from Mr Truth’s fictional collection found in a library and presented by a fictional narrator, Ariel Babel.

The stories evoke collective fears (conspiracy theories, millenary fears, popular beliefs) born from the interpretation of images – or their absence. Assuming the principle that photographs in themselves evince nothing, we are convinced that their function as language stems from the context – historical or formal. We translate that principle through a variety of narrative, plastic, cinematographic and documentary writings that induce questioning about the status of images. These various processes generate stories made of ellipses, to be reconstituted by the reader.

“The True Truth’s Stories” comprises nine short stories, including “An Unknown Evil”, presented here.

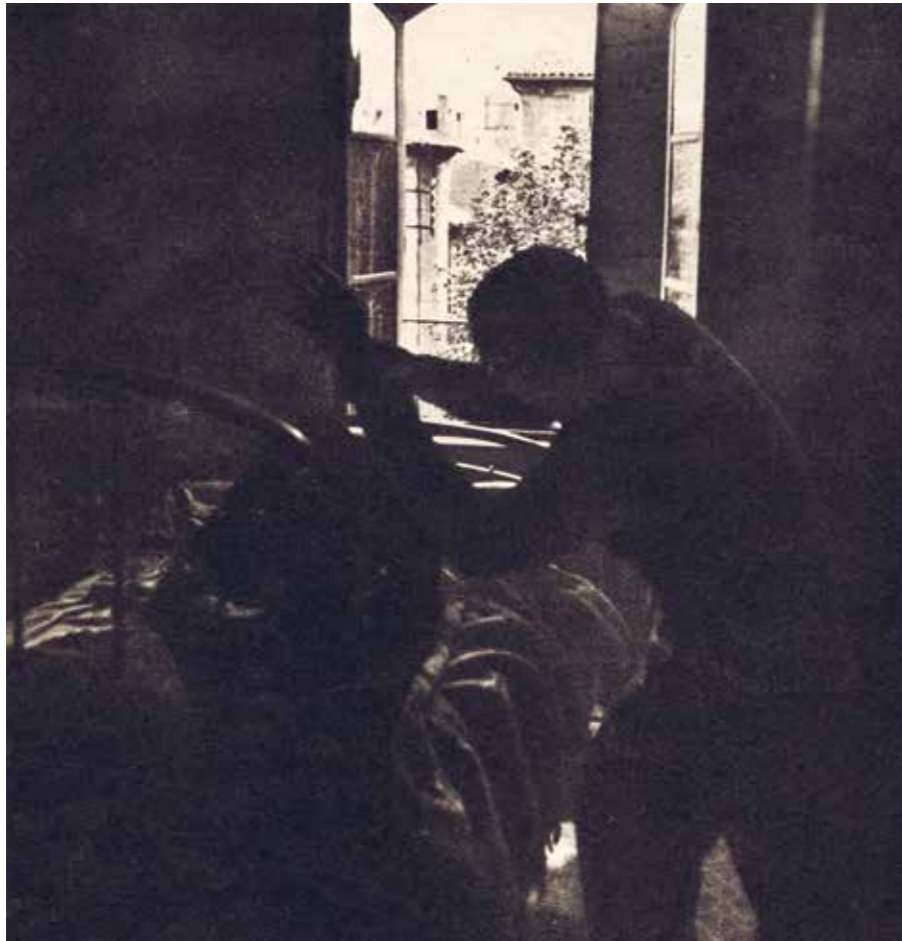
BLANC & HILAIRE

French-Swiss photographer and director Isabelle Blanc explores narrative limits by borrowing from the visual arts, cinema and literature.

Olivier Hilaire first devoted himself to consulting and artistic direction before developing his work as a visual artist. Based on history and memory, he revisits events by mixing manuscript and iconographic archives.

“The True Truth’s Stories” was nominated for the Prix Elysée, and an extract was presented at the Rencontres d’Arles in 2017 in the installation “Des Mondes Meilleurs”.

On the 16th of August, the town is hit by an epidemic of extreme proportions.
Hundreds of people are mysteriously taken ill.



On the night of 25-26 August, the sick go mad.



An assumption suggests flour intoxication by some fungus.



2009. CIA documents about LSD experimentations are declassified.
Pont-Saint-Exsprit is mentioned in them.



Carlos is in Bucharest in October 2015. He attends a summit of heads of state. From Bulgaria to Estonia, they are all members of the EU. Recent members. The old Soviet Bloc. Until then, they had agreed to refuse quotas for refugees. This time and from their platform, they demand greater presence from NATO in view of Russia's "aggressive" attitude. We have been preparing our next trip for some time. The scenario has changed: we now want to travel to a border that resonates with the drums of a new Cold War. Russia invaded Ukraine. It annexed Crimea. There is conflict at the gate of the EU and fear reaches the East. An opportunity surges: NATO is manoeuvring in Lithuania, steps away from Belarus.

It is November. Carlos and I planned to meet there. Two days before the meeting, Europe receives a blow that will have dire consequences.

THE CRACK

Photos / Carlos Spottorno

Text / Guillermo Abril



Over a period of three years from 2013 to 2016, photographer Carlos Spottorno and reporter Guillermo Abril received regular commissions from *El País Semanal*, the weekly magazine of the important Madrid-based daily newspaper, to document the outer borders of the European Union. From the Spanish enclave of Melilla in Morocco to the edges of Finland and Russia, beyond the polar circle, via the Italian island of Lampedusa or Greece, they covered thousands and thousands of kilometres. Their work coincided with the migrant "crisis" which led them to cover it. But such is not the main issue at stake in their project. Indeed, the point is to question the notion of border and to consider the perception of the residents of these regions as well as the geopolitical stakes involved. Their conclusion is that there are multiple cracks threatening Europe and its neighbours.

At the end of the journey, Carlos Spottorno decided to make a book. Wishing to reach out to audiences beyond the mere photography community, he decided to adopt the codes of the graphic novel. To that end, he applied a digital treatment to his images in order to "flatten" them and bring them closer to drawing, while Guillermo Abril filled the frames with the words of their experience. It was an immediate success. The first Spanish edition was out of print within three weeks and the book is now available in French, German and Italian. The authors unassumingly invented a new photographic narrative mode able to appeal to the general public.

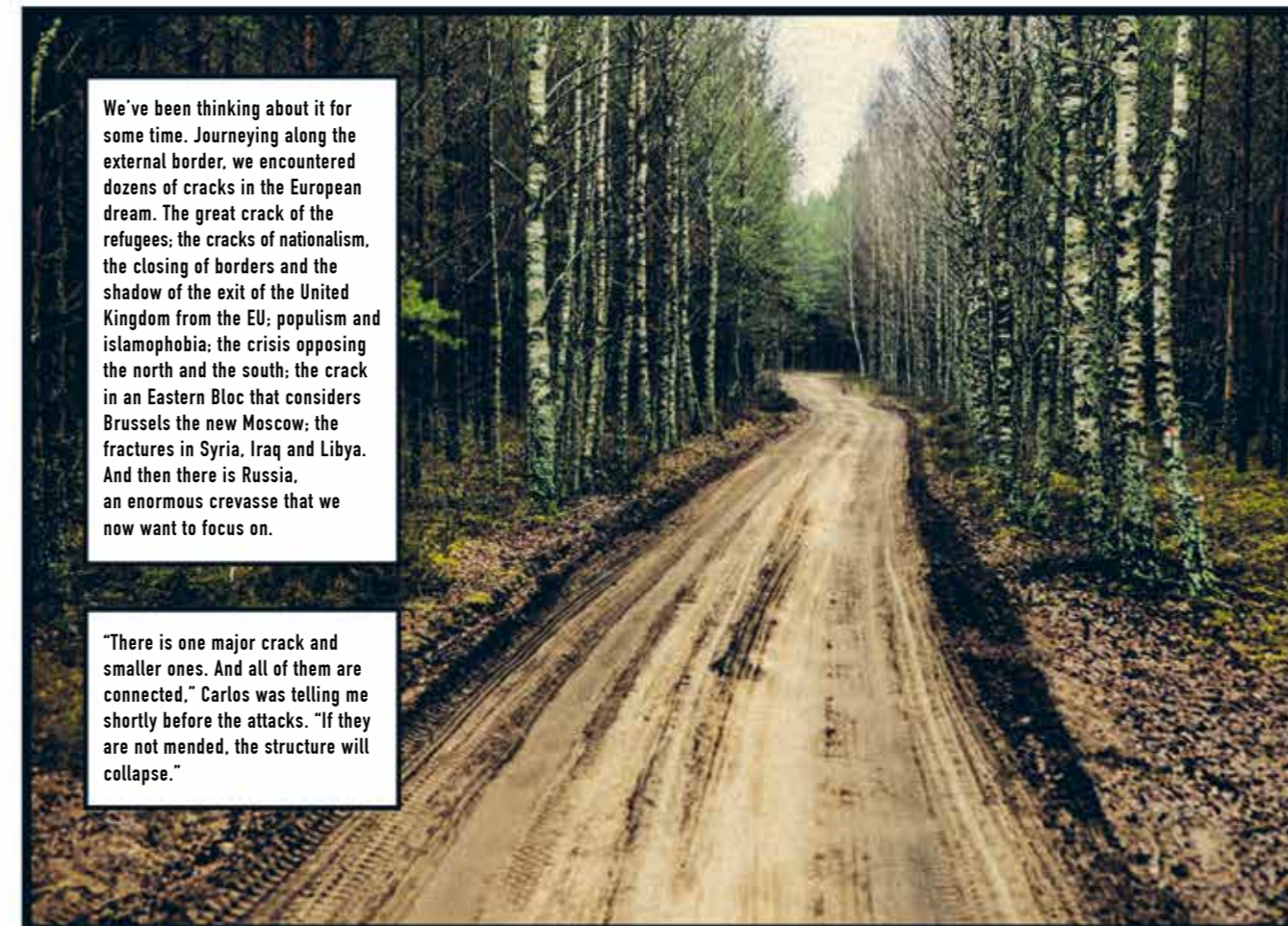
CARLOS SPOTTORNO

Born in Budapest in 1971, Carlos Spottorno is a Spanish documentary photographer. He graduated in Fine Arts, and in 2001, after a career in advertising, switched to photography. His work has been published through various outlets, especially in *El País Semanal*. He exhibited at Photobook Museum in Cologne, FOMU in Antwerp and DongGang International Photo Festival. He published *China Western* (2010), *The Pigs* (2013), *Wealth Management* (2014) and *La Grieta* (2016).



Carlos is having dinner in Paris when the waiter reports a shooting happening nearby. He runs back to his hotel, looking around in fear of an encounter with a run-away terrorist. He writes to me. Everything is all right. He follows the events hidden away in his room.

I tell him: "This is the crack."



We've been thinking about it for some time. Journeying along the external border, we encountered dozens of cracks in the European dream. The great crack of the refugees; the cracks of nationalism, the closing of borders and the shadow of the exit of the United Kingdom from the EU; populism and islamophobia; the crisis opposing the north and the south; the crack in an Eastern Bloc that considers Brussels the new Moscow; the fractures in Syria, Iraq and Libya. And then there is Russia, an enormous crevasse that we now want to focus on.

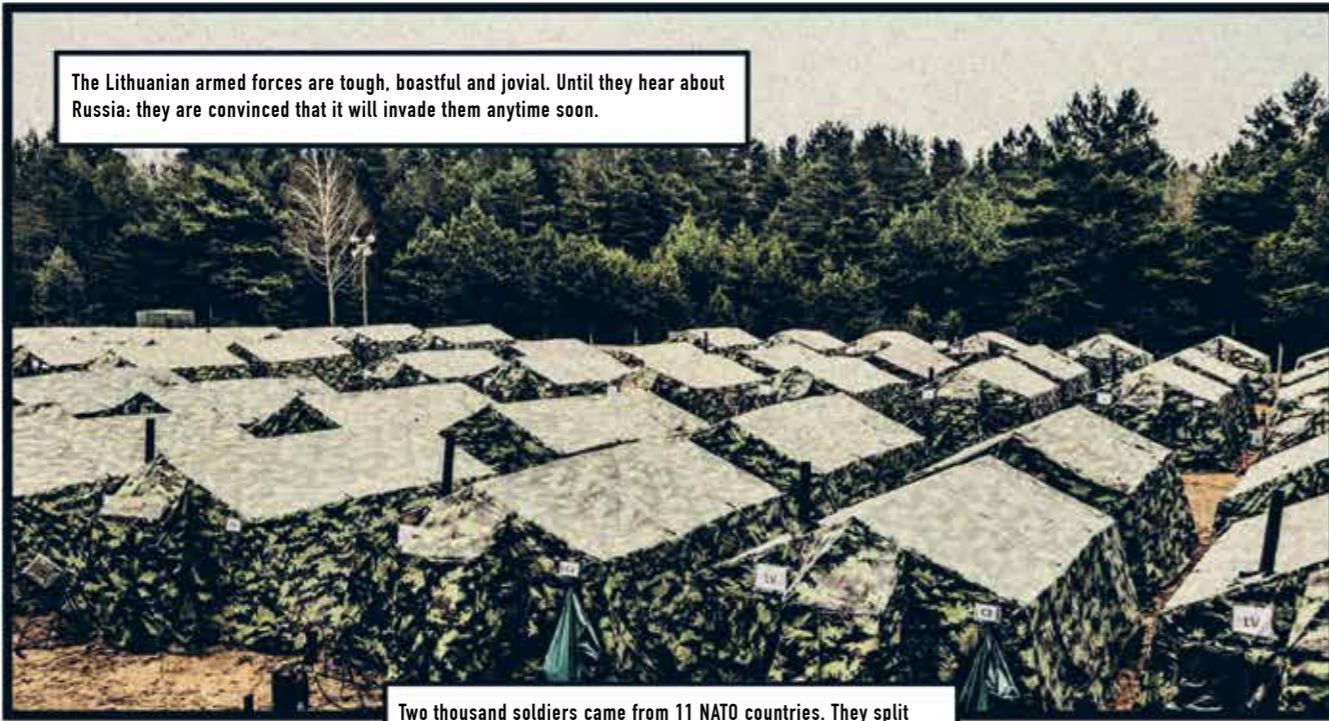
"There is one major crack and smaller ones. And all of them are connected." Carlos was telling me shortly before the attacks. "If they are not mended, the structure will collapse."



The structure is Europe. Its 70 years of peace. The freedom. The absence of borders. Everything that makes it the aim of those who are escaping barbarism.

Our heads are pounding with questions when we reach Pabradė. We drive to a base located 8 kilometres from Belarus. The thermometer indicates 4 degrees, and artillery shots can be heard in the woods.

The Lithuanian armed forces are tough, boastful and jovial. Until they hear about Russia: they are convinced that it will invade them anytime soon.



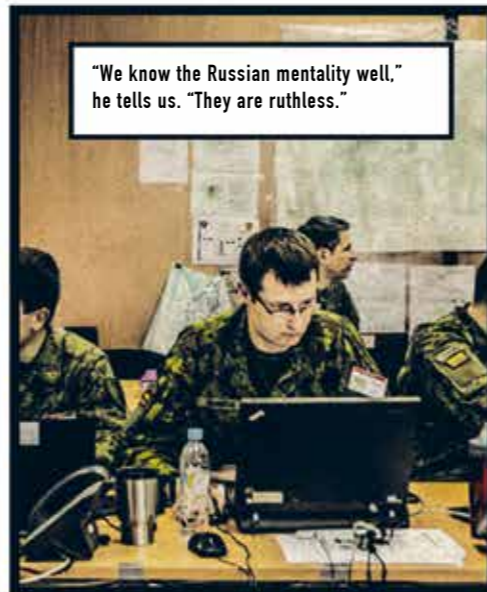
Two thousand soldiers came from 11 NATO countries. They split into two groups for the exercise: attackers and defenders.



Mantas Adomenas is a conservative MP. And a volunteering reservist. His grandfather fought against the Red Army. And he endured Soviet life in his very flesh. He graduated from Oxford with a thesis about the Pre-Socratics. He enrolled after the "events" in Ukraine.



"We know the Russian mentality well," he tells us. "They are ruthless."



The army's enemy is fictional. It is located east and is called Redland. They want to invade a territory that once was theirs with the help of the FMA, an imaginary separatist militia. They've designed an emblem suspiciously similar to Russia's.



FREEDOM MOVEMENT ARMY (FMA)

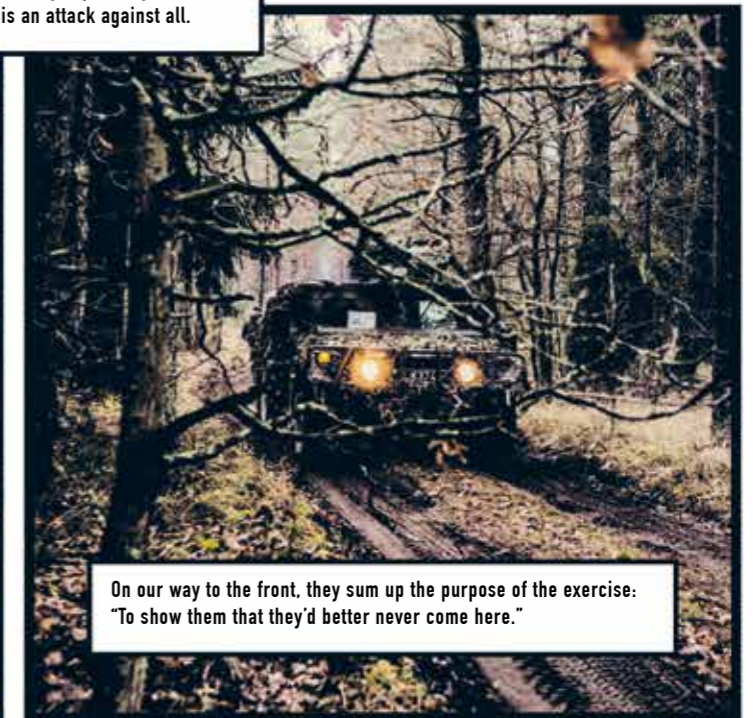
FMA OBJECTIVES:

- Gain autonomy from AMBERLAND and join LATGALA Republic
- Destabilise the security situation
- Gain local population support for AMF
- Recruit new fighters from local REDLAND minorities
- Re-establish the influential power of the AMF political party

In the propaganda and psychological operations room, everything recalls Ukraine and Crimea.



Redland has invaded a "fictional" country, Amberland. It is a member of NATO. Yet, they repeatedly tell us that an attack against an ally is an attack against all.



On our way to the front, they sum up the purpose of the exercise: "To show them that they'd better never come here."

Lithuania and the rest of the Baltic countries were among the first to leave the Soviet boat in 1991. Once the western limit of the USSR, they are now the eastern border of the EU. And NATO's fierce allies.



For these people, to talk about the past means evoking very real ghosts. Our guide is sometimes passionately patriotic.



"If the Russians come, I'll fight to my last breath and I'll take many along with me."



They ask us whether we are Russian spies. It's a joke ... or is it? In spite of their cheerfulness, they trust no one.

When they open up, they clearly state their vision of Russia. Making it clear to us why they are asking for allied troops.



They talk about KGB prisons and their weakness for the old Empire. "We've only known two calm periods: in the 16th century and when Yeltsin was drunk."



They feel trapped between Belarus and Kaliningrad, a military enclave in the hands of Russia since 1945.

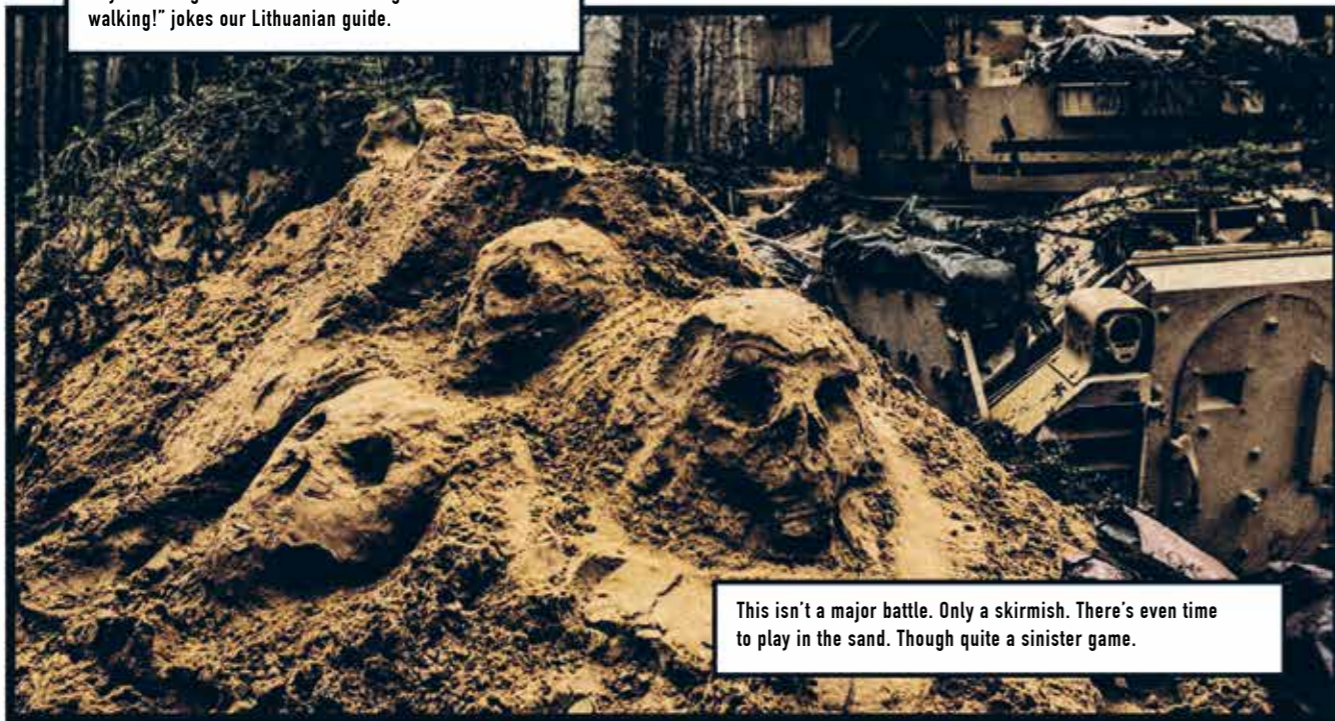


What guarantees do they have that they won't end up like Crimea?



The war has started and we come across Bradley tanks on a hill. The Americans spent the night in their bellies. They are defending and monitoring the roads while drones are spying and Hungarian jets are humming in the sky.

This is not real war. The weapons only shoot laser beams. Anyone who gets hit must leave the fight. "Dead man walking!" jokes our Lithuanian guide.



This isn't a major battle. Only a skirmish. There's even time to play in the sand. Though quite a sinister game.

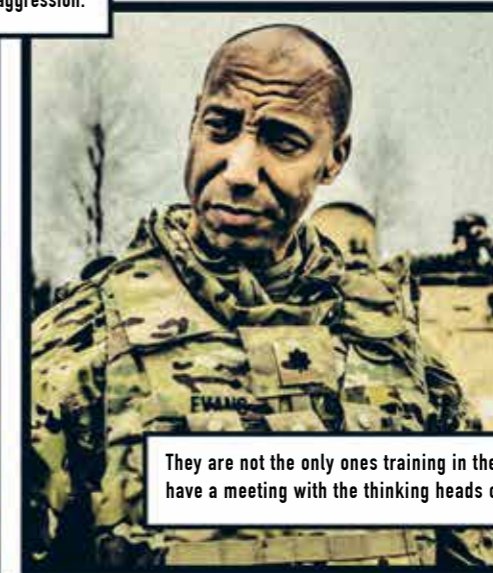


The Americans are in command. Their men and tanks are part of a contingent recently deployed in the East.

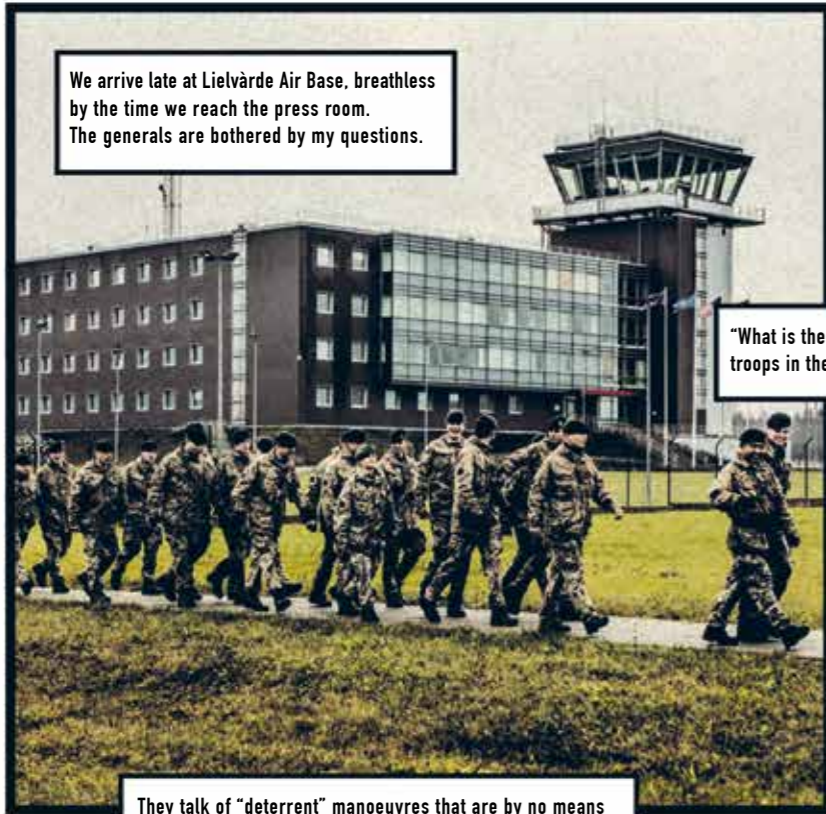
NATO's response to the Russian moves in Ukraine. And to its increasing presence on the international stage: Putin just sent troops to Syria.



"It is a dream come true to be here, working with our allies to prevent Russian aggression."



They are not the only ones training in the East. Further north, we have a meeting with the thinking heads of the alliance in Latvia.



We arrive late at Lielvārde Air Base, breathless by the time we reach the press room. The generals are bothered by my questions.



"What is the relationship between the increase in NATO troops in the East and the Russian presence in Syria?"



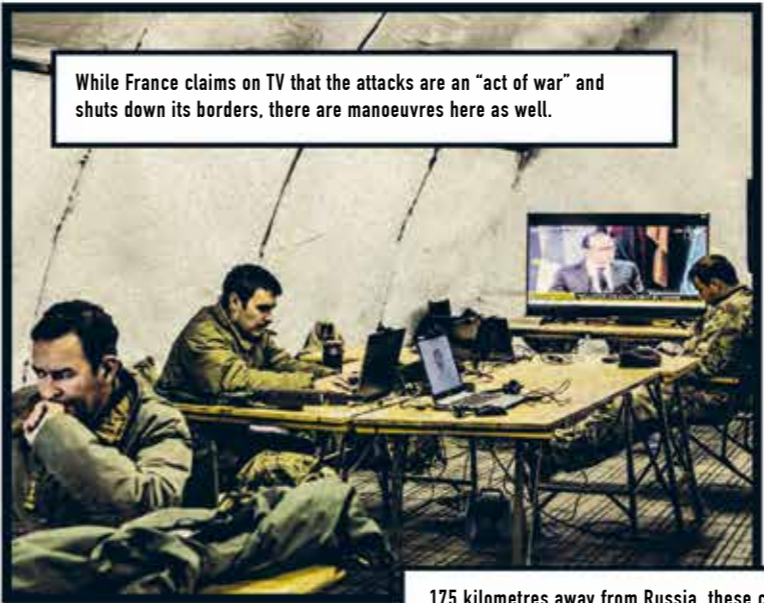
They talk of "deterrent" manoeuvres that are by no means a "threat". No change from the official rhetoric.



Here, they are testing a new rapid deployment force: 5,000 soldiers mobilizable in 48 hours. It was created in the wake of the crisis in Ukraine.



The exercise gathers the "brainpower" of the North Atlantic, those who take decisions and generate classified material.



While France claims on TV that the attacks are an "act of war" and shuts down its borders, there are manoeuvres here as well.

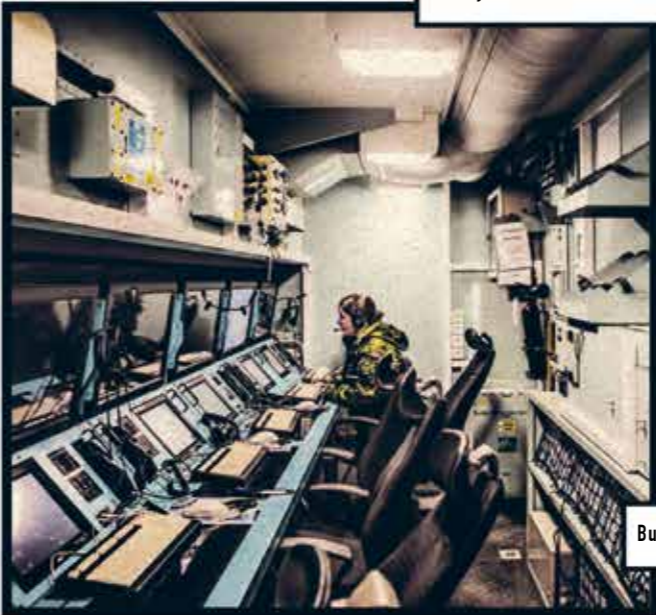


175 kilometres away from Russia, these containers receive data from the AWACS, a plane with a huge radar on its back.

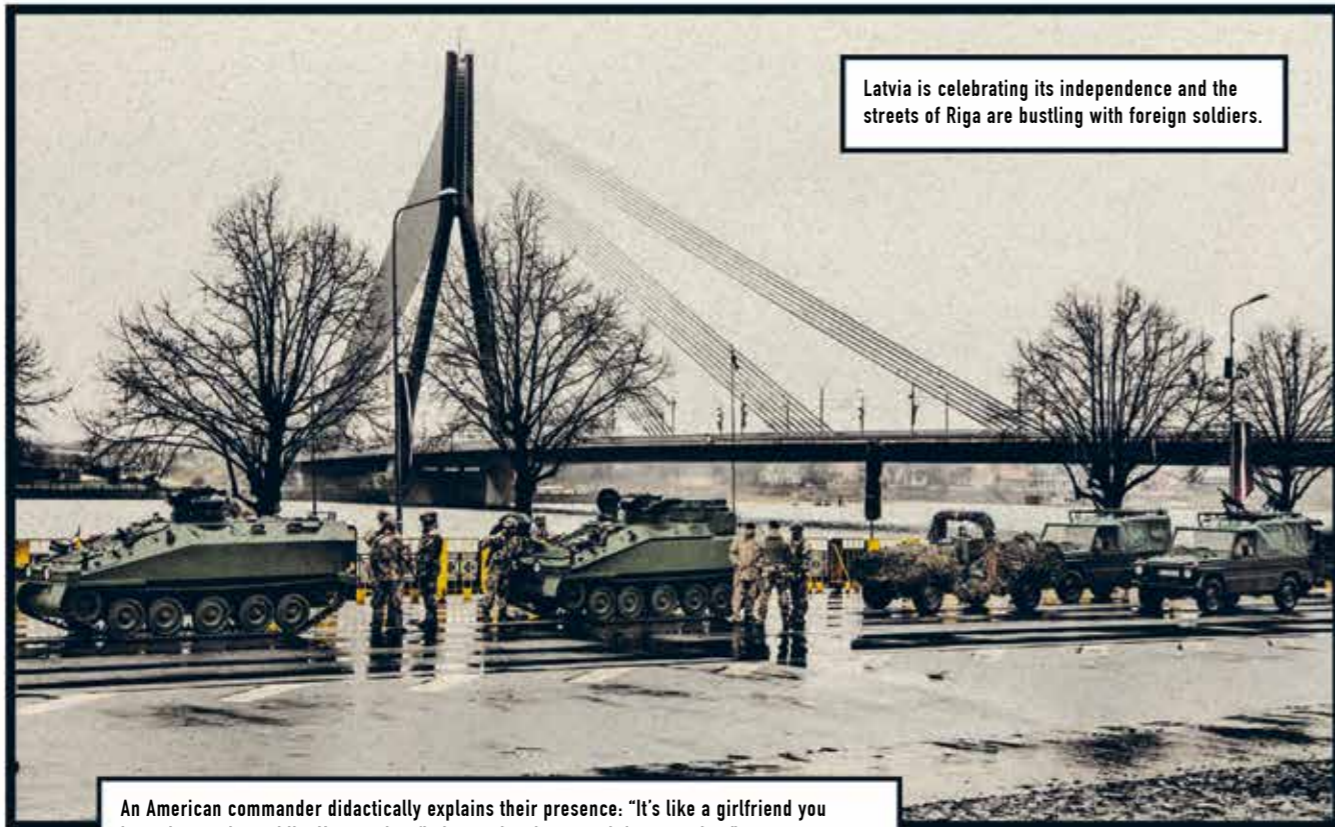


Today, a Russian fighter jet entering European air space was intercepted.

This is no longer a game. A week later, one of NATO's key members, Turkey, shot down a Russian jet on the Syrian border.



But our hosts prefer to show us something else. It's time for the great parade.



Latvia is celebrating its independence and the streets of Riga are bustling with foreign soldiers.

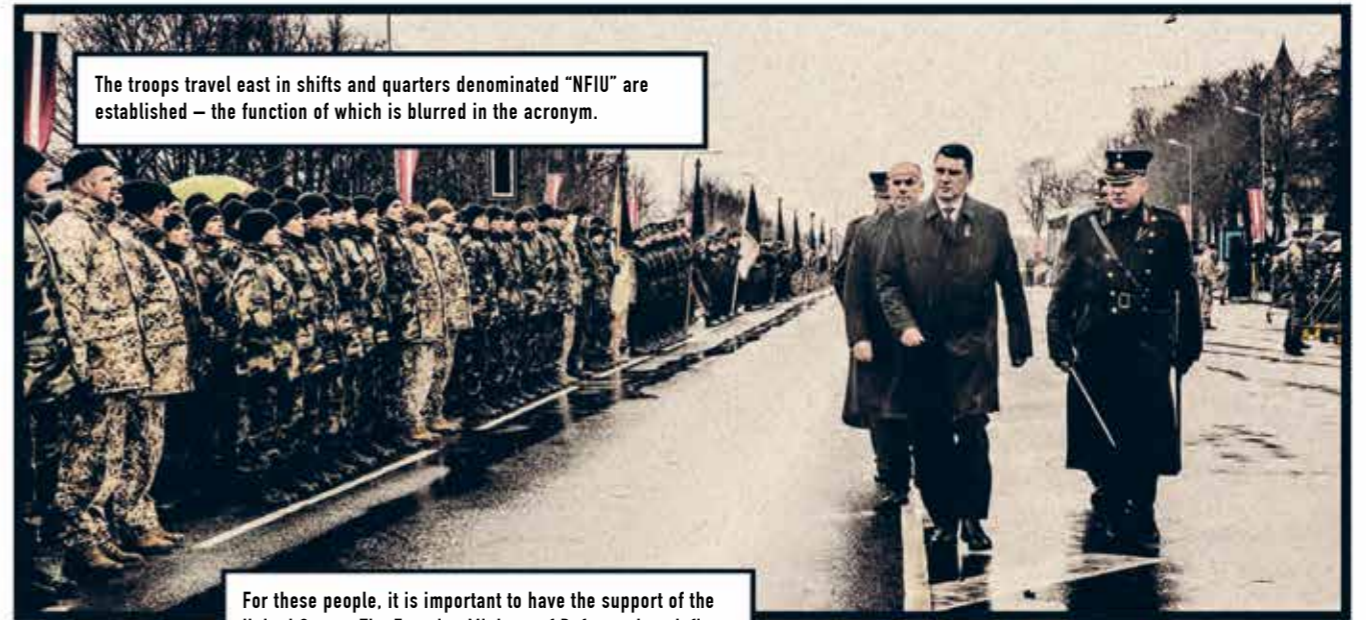
An American commander didactically explains their presence: "It's like a girlfriend you haven't seen in a while. You need to find a weekend to spend time together."



Couples therapy seems to work.



The Baltic states are small countries with miniature armies. And an agreement with Russia forbids the presence of permanent NATO bases. But there are always ways and means.



The troops travel east in shifts and quarters denominated "NFIU" are established – the function of which is blurred in the acronym.

For these people, it is important to have the support of the United States. The Estonian Ministry of Defence thus defines the status quo: "It is a Cold War in new clothes."



It's not so clear from watching the parade. Some uniforms have barely changed.



And while the British are raising their banners, only few anticipate the earthquake of Brexit and its military consequences in Europe – and for NATO, already threatened by candidate Trump in the United States. We wonder about the repercussions of this new crack.



It is now time to leave. We wrote down in our notebooks the Canadian military contacts met in the Lithuanian woods. They told us that they had just sent troops to Ukraine. They are based on the border. This fits our project perfectly. We inform the office and they welcome the idea. We are again getting ready for a quick trip. This time, to the rearguard of a country at war.

DOMINIQUE LAMBERT

Si j'étais une couleur, je serais le bleu
 Si j'étais un animal, je serais un chien
 Si j'étais une chanson, je serais Que la montagne est belle → FERRAT
 Si j'étais une peinture, je serais une aquarelle
 Si j'étais un mets, je serais une raclette
 Si j'étais une odeur, je serais le sringat
 Si j'étais une époque, je serais la renaissance
 Si j'étais une langue, je serais l'espagnol
 Si j'étais un complexe, je serais la timidité
 Si j'étais une qualité, je serais serviable
 Si j'étais un défaut, je serais vaniteux
 Si j'étais une occupation, je serais la peinture
 Si j'étais un malheur, je serais le mort
 Si j'étais une personne célèbre réelle, je serais Louis XIV
 Si j'étais une personne célèbre de fiction, je serais Goldorak
 Si j'étais un lieu, je serais la montagne
 Si j'étais un moyen de locomotion, je serais l'avion
 Si j'étais une heure, je serais 20 heures
 Si j'étais un objet de toilette, je serais le gant
 Si j'étais un film, je serais le Titanic
 Si j'étais un vice, je serais voyeur
 Si j'étais un monument, je serais une pyramide
 Si j'étais un fait scientifique, je serais la découverte d'un vaccin
 Si j'étais une saison, je serais le printemps
 Si j'étais une arme, je serais le pistolet
 Si j'étais un des quatre éléments, je serais la terre
 Si j'étais un végétal, je serais le blé
 Si j'étais un supplice, je serais la guillotine
 Si j'étais un bruit, je serais le clapotis
 Si j'étais un vêtement, je serais le slip
 Si j'étais une faute, je serais un manquement aux règles
 Si j'étais un jeu de société, je serais le scrabble
 Si j'étais une boisson, je serais le vin
 Si j'étais un fait historique, je serais la libération de Paris
 Si j'étais une superstition, je serais le préage
 Si j'étais une façon de mourir, je serais En dormant
 Si j'étais une devise, je serais Ne pas remettre à demain ce que l'on peut faire le jour même

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Document à renvoyer

DOMINIQUE LAMBERT

Concept /
Stéphanie Solinas



How can identity be defined, and what does it cover? Is it intrinsic or a social construction? And thus a narrative? These questions are essential to the work of Stéphanie Solinas, and quite logically, she extensively worked on Alphonse Bertillon, the inventor of criminal identification.

For the series "Dominique Lambert", she selected the most common mixed-gender first name, which is also the 27th overall most common first name, and associated it to the 27th most common last name, thus playfully establishing a "study population" of Dominique Lamberts in France. She wrote each of the men and women a letter asking them to complete a "Chinese portrait" which was then submitted to an "advisory committee" of prominent personalities (psychologist, police officer, etc.) for a written interpretation of these. She then asked artist Benoît Bonnemaison-Fitte to sketch a portrait for each of the textual portraits of the Dominique Lamberts. From these, a police investigator created a series of photo-fits. The artist then tried to find models displaying obvious resemblances to the photo-fits and photographed them. Finally, the Dominique Lamberts who agreed to take part in the process were asked to produce a passport photograph in order to validate or invalidate the intuition and knowledge used to establish who they are. Through a pseudo-scientific protocol, what Stéphanie Solinas reveals is the fictitious, arbitrary – and in the end, unworkable – character of any attempt to define identity.

STÉPHANIE SOLINAS

Stéphanie Solinas graduated from the École Normale Supérieure Louis Lumière and holds a PhD in Plastic Arts. She has developed a multi-faceted practice that examines the act of seeing and its limits. Her work has been exhibited at the Rencontres d'Arles, FraenkellAB in San Francisco and Foam in Amsterdam. She has published *Dominique Lambert* (2010/2016), *Sans titre, M. Bertillon* (2012) and *Déserteurs* (2013) (RVB Books). In 2017 she is in residence at the Villa Medici, French Academy in Rome.

Left:

Chinese portrait completed by Dominique Lambert 014.191.

If I were a colour, I would be blue / If I were an animal, I would be a dog / If I were a song, I would be "Que la Montagne est belle" (Ferrat) / If I were a painting, I would be a watercolour / If I were a dish, I would be Raclette / If I were a perfume, I would be Seringa / If I were a time period, I would be the Renaissance / If I were a language, I would be Spanish / If I were a complex, I would be shyness / If I were a quality, I would be helpful / If I were a flaw, I would be unforgiving / If I were an occupation, I would be painting / If I were a misfortune, I would be death / If I were a famous person, I would be Louis XIV / If I were a famous fictional character, I would be Goldorak / If I were a place, I would be the mountain / If I were a vehicle, I would be an airplane / If I were an hour, I would be 8 p.m. / If I were an item of toiletry, I would be a washcloth / If I were a movie, I would be Titanic / If I were a vice, I would be a voyeur / If I were a monument, I would be a pyramid / If I were a scientific fact, I would be the discovery of a vaccine / If I were a season, I would be spring / If I were a weapon, I would be a gun / If I were one of the four elements, I would be Earth / If I were a plant, I would be wheat / If I were a torture, I would be the guillotine / If I were a sound, I would be the sound of water / If I were a garment, I would be underpants / If I were a mistake, I would be a failure to follow the rules / If I were a game, I would be Scrabble / If I were a drink, I would be wine / If I were a historical fact, I would be the Liberation of Paris / If I were a superstition, I would be an omen / If I were a way to die, I would be while sleeping / If I were a motto, I would be "Do not put off till tomorrow what you can do today".

Portrait of Dominique Lambert O14.191
established by the Advisory Committee for the Description
of Dominique Lambert (A.C.D.D.L.), from the Chinese portrait.

Dominique Lambert is a 47-year-old man.
He is finicky and meticulous.
He has freckles on his face and fair skin.
His hair is white, but it was red when he was younger.
He is clean and shaven.
His nose is slightly upturned.

Dominique Lambert est un homme de quarante-sept ans.
Il est tatillon et méticuleux.
Il a des taches de rousseur sur le visage, une peau claire.
Ses cheveux sont blancs, mais il était roux étant plus jeune.
Il est propre et rasé de près.
Son nez est en trompette, légèrement.



Portrait of Dominique Lambert O14.191
drawn by Benoît Bonnemaison-Fitte, painter,
from the written portrait established by the A.C.D.D.L.



Portrait of Dominique Lambert 014.191
established by Dominique Ledée, police investigator at the
Criminal Identification Bureau (Paris), from the sketched portrait.



Portrait of Dominique Lambert O14.191
executed by Stéphanie Solinas, portrait photographer,
from the photo-fit.



Envelope containing the passport picture of Dominique Lambert 014.191,
author of the Chinese portrait.



THE WAKE, RE-ENACTING THE SPENCER AND GILLEN PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

Photos /
Christian Vium



Christian Vium.
"Kendrick". Amoonguna, Northern Territory.
June 2014.

Francis James Gillen, "Young Man Arunta Tribe".
'Arunta An nippikka'. - Male. Institution:
South Australian Museum.

In 2014, Christian Vium from Denmark became interested in the research conducted by ethnologists Francis Gillen and Sir Baldwin Spencer, whose archives on the Aboriginal peoples of Australia between 1875 and 1912 are the most extensive.

The young anthropologist-photographer used their work as a starting point for a contemporary dialogue about the way we see and represent "the other". He travelled on-site with a selection of Spencer and Gillen's photographs and used them as a foundation from which to photograph, in turn, the descendants of the original subjects. His purpose is both to reconstitute the original images in the proper locations where they were initially taken, and to invite the new generations to pose like their ancestors did.

Using photography as collaborative practice, Christian Vium seeks to establish a dialogue. He creates a space in which the "living" posing before the camera are invited to connect with past representations.

Bringing the past face to face with the present, Christian Vium exposes the harsh reality. His portraits presented in diptychs shed light on the deplorable living conditions of Aboriginals in Australia, a community whose life expectancy is on average 20 years lower than that of the other citizens. Christian Vium thus delivers a precise and concrete account of this population and their condition over time.

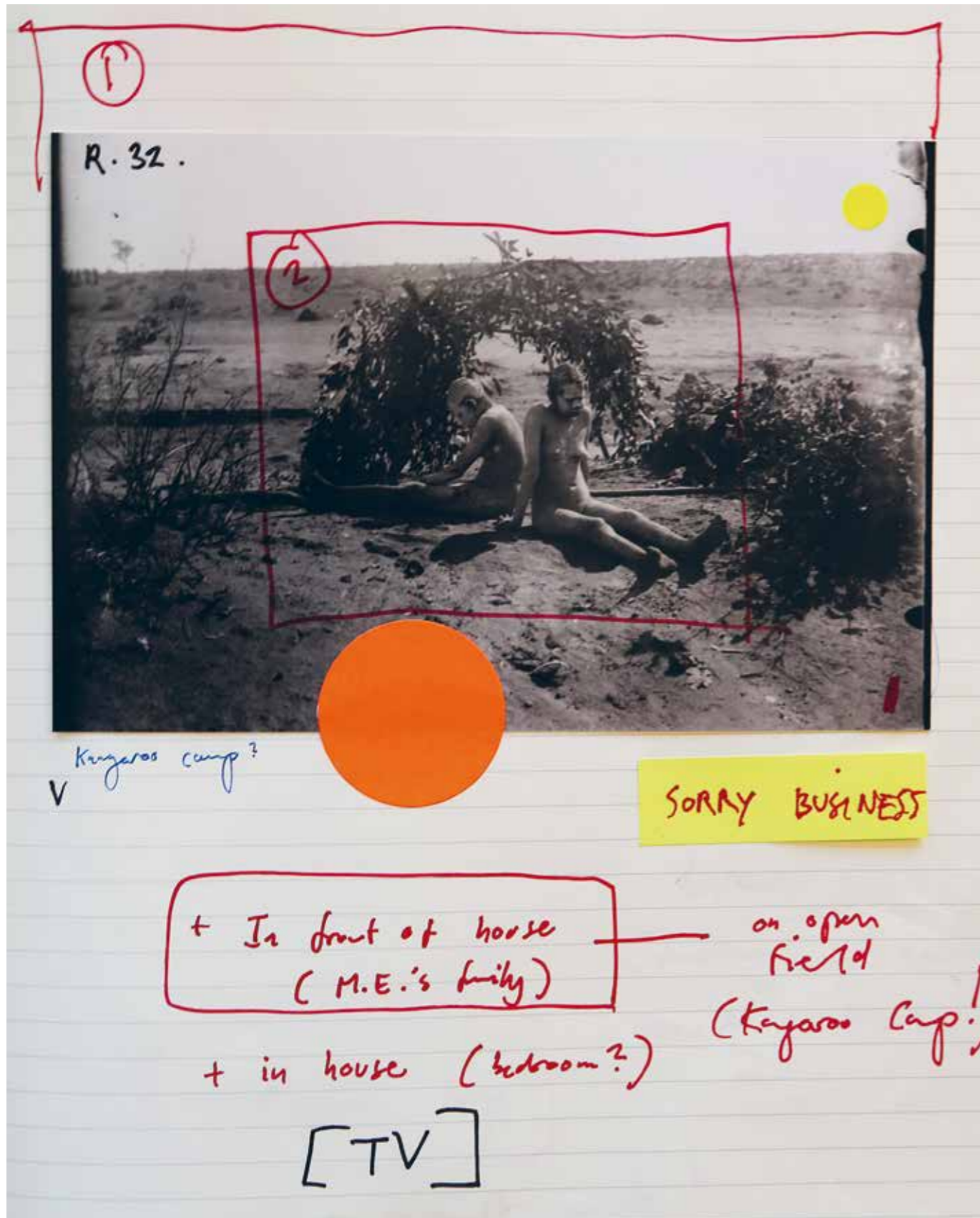
CHRISTIAN VIUM

Born in 1980 in Aarhus, Christian Vium is a Danish photographer, filmmaker and anthropologist, working on long-term projects anchored in participatory observation and in-depth collaboration. Foam Talent 2015, recipient of the HSBC Prize for Photography 2016, he has exhibited his work in many countries. In 2016 he was nominated by the Royal Danish Academy of Science and Letters for his research, received a two-year postdoctoral research grant and published his first monograph, *Ville Nomade* (Actes Sud).

Forthcoming exhibition: "Other Images – Other Stories: Reversing the Colonial Gaze", Moesgaard Museum, Aarhus, Denmark, Feb. 2018.

The series "The Wake" is part of Christian Vium's long-term research project "Temporal Dialogues" funded by the Danish Research Council. "The Wake" was mentored by JH Engström and Margot Wallard at Atelier Smedsby.

The photographs of Sir Baldwin W. Spencer and Francis J. Gillen are from the collections of Museums Victoria and South Australia Museum. The repurposing of the images and the views expressed in the work are those of the author alone and in conjunction with community consultation.



Christian Vium.
 "Roseanne and Lynette".
 Amoonguna, Northern Territory,
 June 2014.

Sir Baldwin W. Spencer and Francis James Gillen, "Two widows with cropped hair and covered with white pipe clay sitting under a shelter they built themselves", Tennant Creek, Central Australia, 16 - 17 August 1901. Institution: Museum Victoria. The original has been repurposed, cropped and over-written by Christian Vium in 2014.



Christian Vium, "Cemetery". Alice Springs, Northern Territory, May 2014.



Francis James Gillen, "Arachiotta poles and Apulla ground". Lartna ceremony. Arunta. Circa 1895, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Institution: Museums Victoria.

Christian Vium.
"Healing session".
Amoonguna, Northern Territory,
June 2014,

Christian Vium, Photograph. Half plate. No glass plate exists.
Original print. Institution: Museums Victoria.
The original has been repurposed and over-written by Christian Vium in 2014.





Christian Vium.
"Marie", Amounguna,
Northern Territory. June 2014.

Francis James Gillen,
"A young woman of the Warramunga Tribe".
Institution: South Australian Museum.
The original has been repurposed and over-written
by Christian Vium in 2014.





ON ABORTION

Photos /
Laia Abril



Today, despite medical and technical developments, more than 40,000 women die every year from abortions. Millions of women in the world remain reticent to abort – for religious reasons or simply because of legal bans or social coercion. Many are minors and victims of rape. They are forced to carry out their pregnancy under extreme and risky health conditions.

Laia Abril's series "On Abortion" documents and conceptualizes the dangers of and damage caused by lack of access to abortion. It is part of the artist's long-term project *A History of Misogyny*, a visual, documentary and political research work based on historical and contemporary comparisons.

Laia Abril started the project in 2013, when the Spanish government approved a bill aiming to limit abortion to cases of rape or risks to the mother. If the law had passed, its effect would have sent the country back 30 years, closer to Poland, where abortion laws are among the most restrictive in Europe. The bill was dropped and the law only imposed parents' consent for minors to consider abortion.

"On Abortion" is not so much about the experience of abortion as such as it is about its repercussions on women who don't have legal, secure and free access to it and who are forced to use dangerous alternatives, potentially causing physical and mental harm.

LAIA ABRIL

Born in Barcelona in 1986, Laia Abril is a Spanish photographer. After pursuing studies in journalism in Barcelona and photography in New York, she enrolled on Fabrica's artist residency, where she worked at *Colors Magazine* as a creative editor and staff photographer for five years. She is currently working on a long-term project called *A History of Misogyny*, the first chapter of which, "On Abortion", received the Premio Revelación PhotoEspaña and the Madame Figaro – Rencontres Arles Award, and is being published by Dewi Lewis Publishing in 2017.

Forthcoming book: *On Abortion*, Dewi Lewis Publishing, autumn 2017.

Forthcoming exhibitions: "Las 17", CaixaForum, Madrid, September 2017 /

"On Abortion", City of Women, Ljubljana, October 2017 /

"Menstruation Myths", Photoreporter, Saint-Brieuc, October 2017.



Magdalena, 32, Poland

It was December 17, 2014. I took a pregnancy test and it came out positive. I am gay - I don't want to talk about how I got pregnant. I don't know for sure if my grief for the abortion is over, if I left it all behind. I think about it once in a while, and sometimes I cry. Not much, though, and not because I regret it. I don't. I know I made the right choice, and the only possible one. It was the hardest experience in my life. I am a different person now. And I'm proud of myself.



After the pills, I took several showers, and changed my sanitary napkins often. We watched Stardust with Claire Danes and Robert De Niro. They always sooth me. I mostly slept through the next day and night. But the bleeding didn't stop. I became a bit worried, so I phoned my doctor. It seemed I hadn't fully purged, he said, and advised that I take another set of pills. He also prescribed antibiotics. The second time was a horror. I was literally giving birth. I was exhausted, but even after that, clots of blood remained in my uterus. A procedure called "curettage" would be needed to get rid of them.



But I was traumatized. I remember lying in bed two days before I took pills, with my hand on my belly, thinking that it would be nice to be able to keep that pregnancy. I cried so much the day I took the pills and told Tomo how much I did and did not want to do it at the same time. How much irrational sadness I felt, even though I didn't want to have a kid, not then, and probably not ever. It was hormones. But it was also something more than that; you can't really talk about it unless you've had the experience yourself. I grieved for some time after.



Lucía, 37, Chile

It happened when I was 24. I had been sexually assaulted, and I found out I was pregnant after just four or five weeks. At that time, abortion in Chile was illegal under any circumstance [even when the mother's life was in risk]. Getting it done was a hell of a process; I was afraid the so-called doctors who did it would botch the job or kill me and cut me into pieces. But in the end, everything went well and I threw a party to celebrate with the people who helped me.



I was lucky my mother is a feminist and I have a good network. But the only doctor we knew was in prison, and so I did not know the people who actually performed my abortion. The whole procedure turned out to be not very medical. You have to go alone and bring €500 in cash. You end up in someone's house and you don't know the exact address. The nurse doesn't dress like a nurse and her nails are painted. You never meet the "doctor" beforehand. I remember these huge statues of saints, and posters of Jim Morrison and Homer Simpson. They gave me tea with tons of sugar and contraception pills from the '60s.



I remember thinking that my fetus was the size of a plum pit, and wanting to cover my vagina with my hand for a couple of days. After the surgery, despite being stunned by sleeping pills, and knowing that stranger had reached into my body and taken something from me, I felt relieved and satisfied. But in an illegal situation, you never stop being vulnerable. Two months after my procedure, I recognized that same clinic with a kind of retrospective panic; it was being dismantled on television by the police. I prayed they wouldn't find any information about me. I hadn't just risked my life, but my freedom.



Marta, 29, Poland

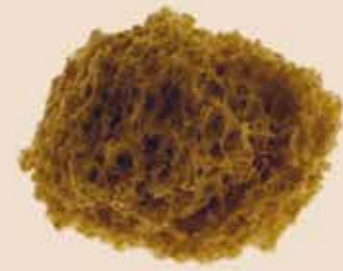
On January 2, 2015, I traveled to Slovakia to have an abortion. [In Poland, abortion is illegal except in cases of sexual assault, serious fetal deformation, or threat to the mother's life.] I was too scared to take DIY abortion pills alone. What if something went wrong? So I decided to get a surgical abortion in a clinic abroad. I felt upset about borrowing money for the procedure, and lonely and frustrated because I couldn't tell anyone what was happening. The hardest part was facing my boyfriend, who opposes abortion. All the same, I felt stronger and more mature afterwards.



I got pregnant during Christmas, then I had to wait a few weeks before I could make the trip. I was so anxious to avoid the process and save the money, that I first tried to end the pregnancy myself. The night before departing, I took a bath in very hot water and swallowed many aspirin to induce miscarriage. I wanted to feel stronger than the law. But I did not succeed because I was afraid of hurting myself. When I packed for the 15 hours trip, I took only underwear, this nightdress that I hate and €445 to pay for the procedure (all the money I had at that time).



I was seven weeks pregnant when I finally made the trip. I waited at a gas station in Krakow, and then jumped into a van with two other pregnant girls. We drove about three hours into Sliac, where there's an abortion clinic that specializes in welcoming Polish women. All in all, the experience took almost 15 hours without incident. I called my (now ex-) boyfriend from the road, and he begged me to not do it. When I mentioned the stuffiness and throng, he answered me: "That seems right, murderers should be treated like cattle."





CAMDEN

Photos / Jean-Christian Bourcart
Drawings / Joe Sacco. Texts / Chris Hedges



In their book *Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt*, journalist Chris Hedges and cartoonist Joe Sacco meet Americans who live in areas affected by a ruthlessly capitalistic system. They lead us to the dark spaces where society's rejects survive in the United States. In five chapters, they describe the economic, social and environmental disaster caused by the over-exploitation of land and man.

The second chapter deals with the decline of the city of Camden, New Jersey. In the outskirts of Philadelphia, the city is nothing but a field of ruins in the hands of gangs and drug trafficking since the departure of the big industries. A descent into hell since the 1950s, to which corrupted politicians have mostly contributed by accepting bribes and embezzling.

Later, French photographer Jean-Christian Bourcart, who lives in the United States, decided to visit Camden to make up his own mind. His book *Camden*, which was awarded the Prix Nadar, shows the residents' harsh daily reality in a city that was estimated to be the most dangerous in the USA in 2009 and 2010.

"This is absurd. I was just searching the web for the most dangerous city in the USA. I wanted to discover again the strange energy that you feel in a place where the rules and social constraints are weakened or removed." This is how the photographer begins the presentation of his series. And later: "A sense of freedom mixed with danger. I wanted to know if it was still possible to connect with other people, no matter the distance, their appearance. Camden, New Jersey, two hours away from the city of New York and across Philadelphia, was at the top of the list. I discovered the face of ordinary poverty hidden behind the stigma and the stereotypes. People in Camden are tough but their laughter is sincere. After being robbed by a prostitute, she gave me a ten-dollar bill so I could return home."

Widely awarded and published, these graphic and written, then photographic stories seem very complementary and constitute strong vectors for a reality ignored by the powerful and abandoned by the media. Eschewing preconceptions and lifting the walls between schools, the dialogue suggested between these different forms of writing is part of our search for new formats able to stimulate and focus citizens' attention on the world's true faces.

JEAN-CHRISTIAN BOURCART, CHRIS HEDGES & JOE SACCO

Born in Colmar in 1960, Jean-Christian Bourcart has lived in New York since 1997. His works evoke fragments of contemporary world stories, combining enquiry, experience and analysis while exploring different forms. Exhibited worldwide, he was awarded the Polaroid Prize, the World Press Photo Award, the Gilles Dussein Prize, the Jeu de Paume Prize, the Niepce Prize and the Nadar Prize. Chris Hedges was born in 1956 in St Johnsbury, Vermont in the United States. As a war journalist, he covered most of the conflicts in recent decades, from El Salvador to Kosovo, including Iraq, mainly for *The New York Times*. Pulitzer Prize winner in 2002, he is the author of a dozen books. Joe Sacco was born in 1960 in Malta and lives in the United States. He is considered to be the father of the comic strip, offering a new approach to the world today. *Palestine* (1996), *Footnotes in Gaza* (2010) and *Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt* (2012) have earned him numerous awards.





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Supreme m'explique que si un noir et un blanc sont ensemble dans la rue, soit le blanc est un junkie et le noir un dealer, soit le blanc est un flic et le noir un indic. Il critique ma façon de m'habiller, de parler. Il dit que je fais peur aux gens. Il dit qu'il va m'appréhender.

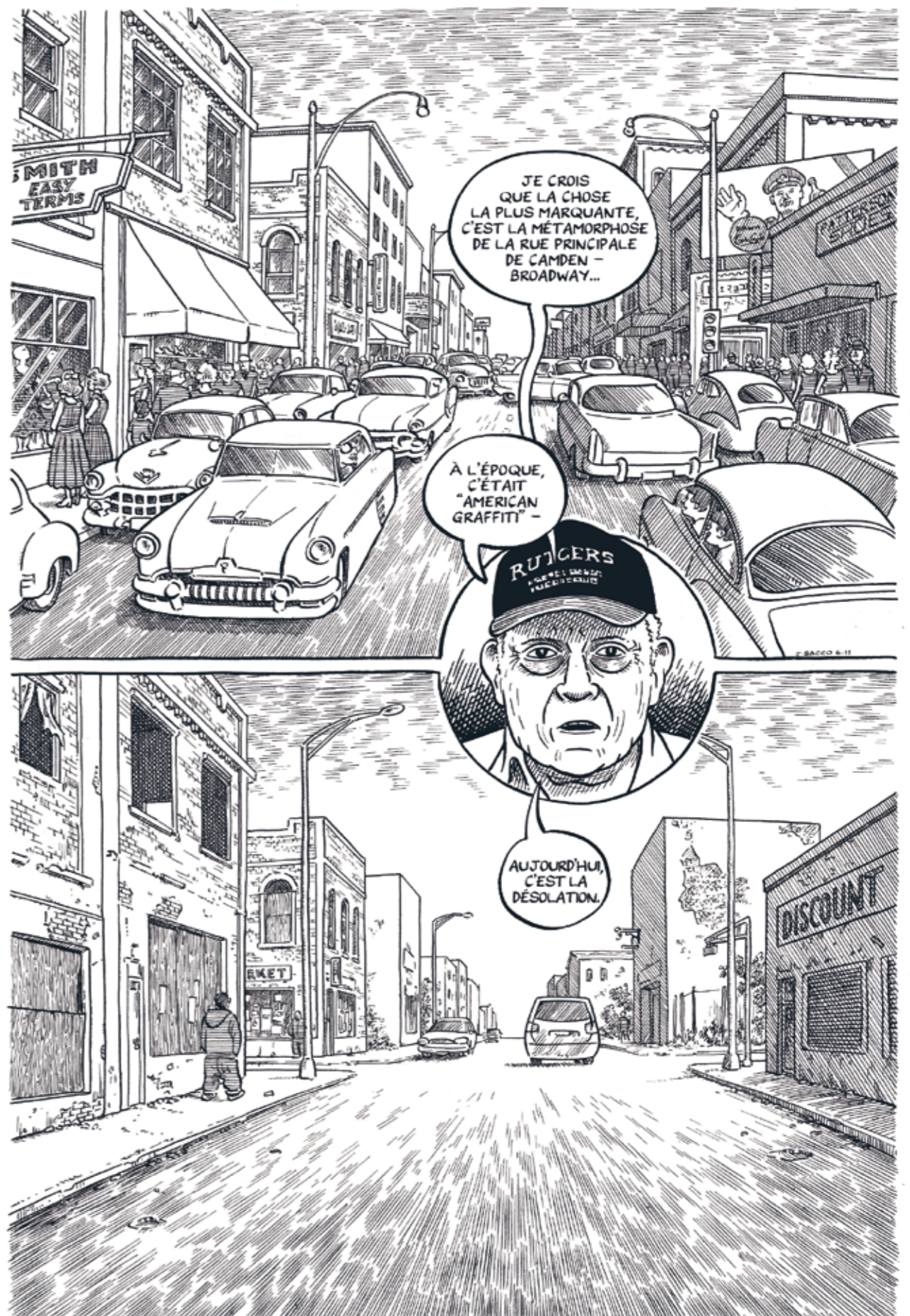
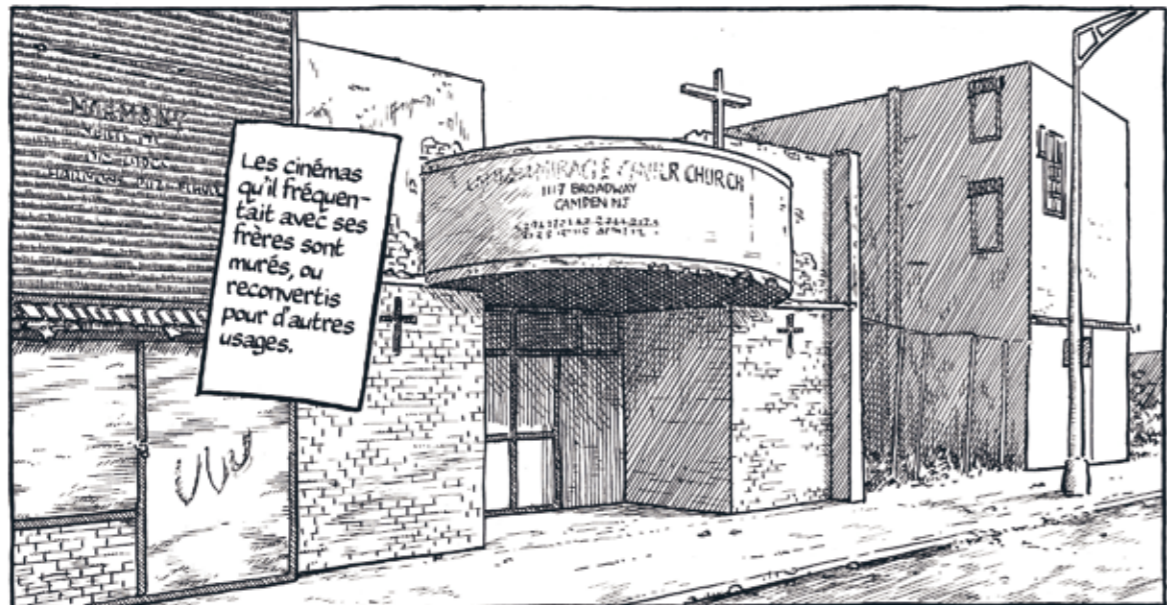
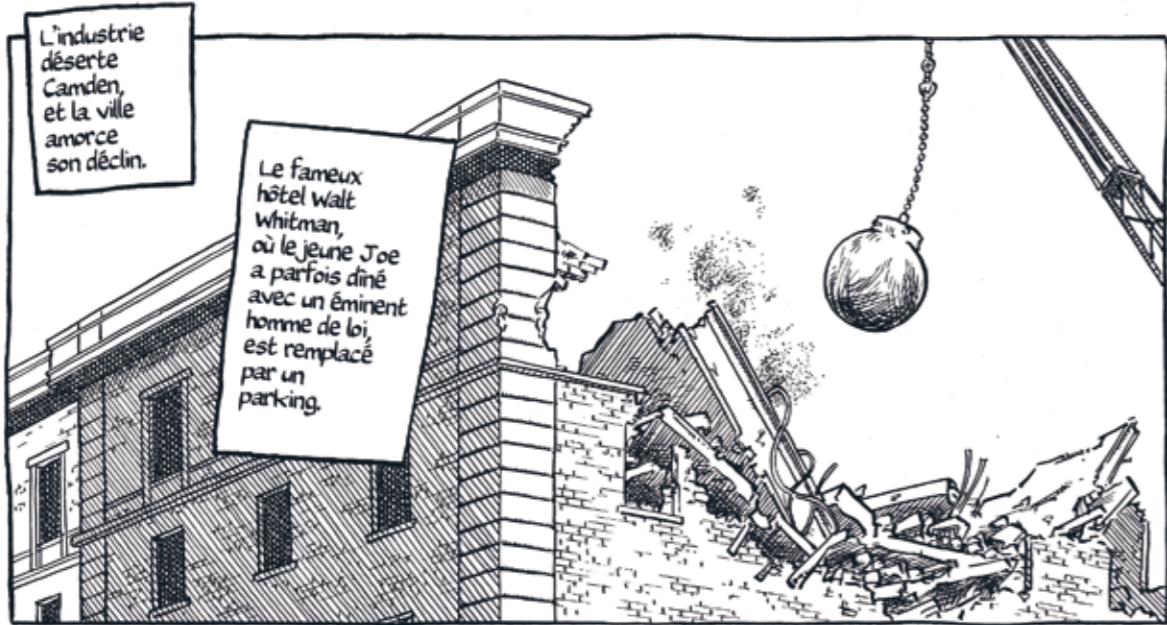


“Camden sits on the edge of the Delaware River facing the Philadelphia skyline. A multilane highway, a savage concrete laceration, slices through the heart of the city. It allows commuters to pass overhead, in and out of Philadelphia, without seeing the human misery below. We keep those trapped in our internal colonies, our national sacrifice zones, invisible.”

“Camden is a dead city. It makes and produces nothing. It is the poorest city in the United States and is usually ranked as one of the most, and often the most, dangerous. In early 2011 nearly half of the city’s police force, 168 officers, were laid off because of a \$26 million budget shortfall. By the end of 2011, although more than 100 officers had been rehired, homicides had climbed by 30% and burglaries by more than 40% from the previous year. Mayor Dana Redd, an African American, responded to the upsurge in crime in December 2011 by calling for a county takeover of the city’s police force, a call the police union said was designed primarily to break the union to hire cheaper, nonunionized officers. Camden City Council President Frank Moran proposed that the state send in the National Guard or increase the numbers of state troopers assigned to the city. Camden is beset with the corruption and brutal police repression reminiscent of the despotic regimes I covered in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.”

“The decline of America is a story of gross injustices, declining standards of living, stagnant or falling wages, long-term unemployment and underemployment, and the curtailment of basic liberties, especially as we militarize our police. It is a story of the weakest forever being crushed by the strong. It is the story of unchecked and unfettered corporate power, which has taken our government hostage, overseen the dismantling of our manufacturing base, bankrupted the nation, and plundered and contaminated our natural resources. Once communities break down physically, they break down morally. The corporations and industries that packed up and left Camden and cities across the United States seeking cheap and unprotected labor overseas are never coming back.”

“The per capita income in the city is \$11,967. Nearly 40% of the city lives below the poverty line. Large swaths of the city are abandoned. There are more than 1500 derelict, gutted row houses. The empty shells of windowless brick factories, warehouses and abandoned gas stations surround the city. There are overgrown vacant lots filled with garbage and old tyres and rusted appliances. There are neglected, weed-filled cemeteries, and boarded-up storefronts. There are perhaps 100 open-air drug markets, most run by gangs such as the Bloods, the Latin Kings, Los Nietos, MS-13 or Mara Salvatrucha. Knots of young Hispanic or African American men in black leather jackets, occasionally flipping through wads of cash, sell weed, dope and crack to clients, many of whom drive in from the suburbs, in brazen defiance of the law. The drug trade is the city’s only thriving business. A weapon is never more than a metre or so away from the drug dealers, usually stashed behind a trash can, in the grass or on a porch. Camden is awash in guns, which are easily purchased across the river in Philadelphia, where Pennsylvania gun laws are notoriously lax. Guns are kept for protection from rival gangs that send out groups to prey on drug dealers, stealing their drugs and cash. Nonviolence is a luxury few on the streets can afford.”





HS.

HS / HISTOIRE SOUTERRAINE

Photos /
Amaury da Cunha



With his first book *Saccades* (2009), Amaury da Cunha initiated a dialogue between photography and text. To him, the two genres are complementary expressive means and not mutual commentaries or illustrations. The writings – until recently – came in fragmentary form. A handful of lines at the most, such as aphorisms, things he had seen or heard or reflections on photography.

In March 2017, *Histoire souterraine* was published at Éditions du Rouergue, a narrative (the book has so much true content that one dares not use the term “novel”) that deals in broad strokes with accidents in the Paris subway, suicides and break-ups. This could seem perfectly sinister if da Cunha’s playful writing didn’t bring a touch of lightness to the subject.

For the first time, therefore, the author chose a long written form that was separate from his photographic practice. However, no doubt seized by a *pentimento*, he published simultaneously, at Filigranes, *HS*, a journal comprised solely of photographs without any text. Nevertheless, the very title indicates the kinship between the two projects: *HS* can mean “out of service” (“*hors service*”) or, for example, “subterranean story” (“*histoire souterraine*”). The logic of this double project is easily discerned: with da Cunha, the practices of writing and photography feed each other. For example, such and such an image is going to inspire such and such a reflection. Or a lived event will find its visual metaphor in a scene suddenly viewed.

Da Cunha gives *The Eyes* a gift by bringing together, for the first time, images and extracts from a narrative that he had intended to be disjointed.

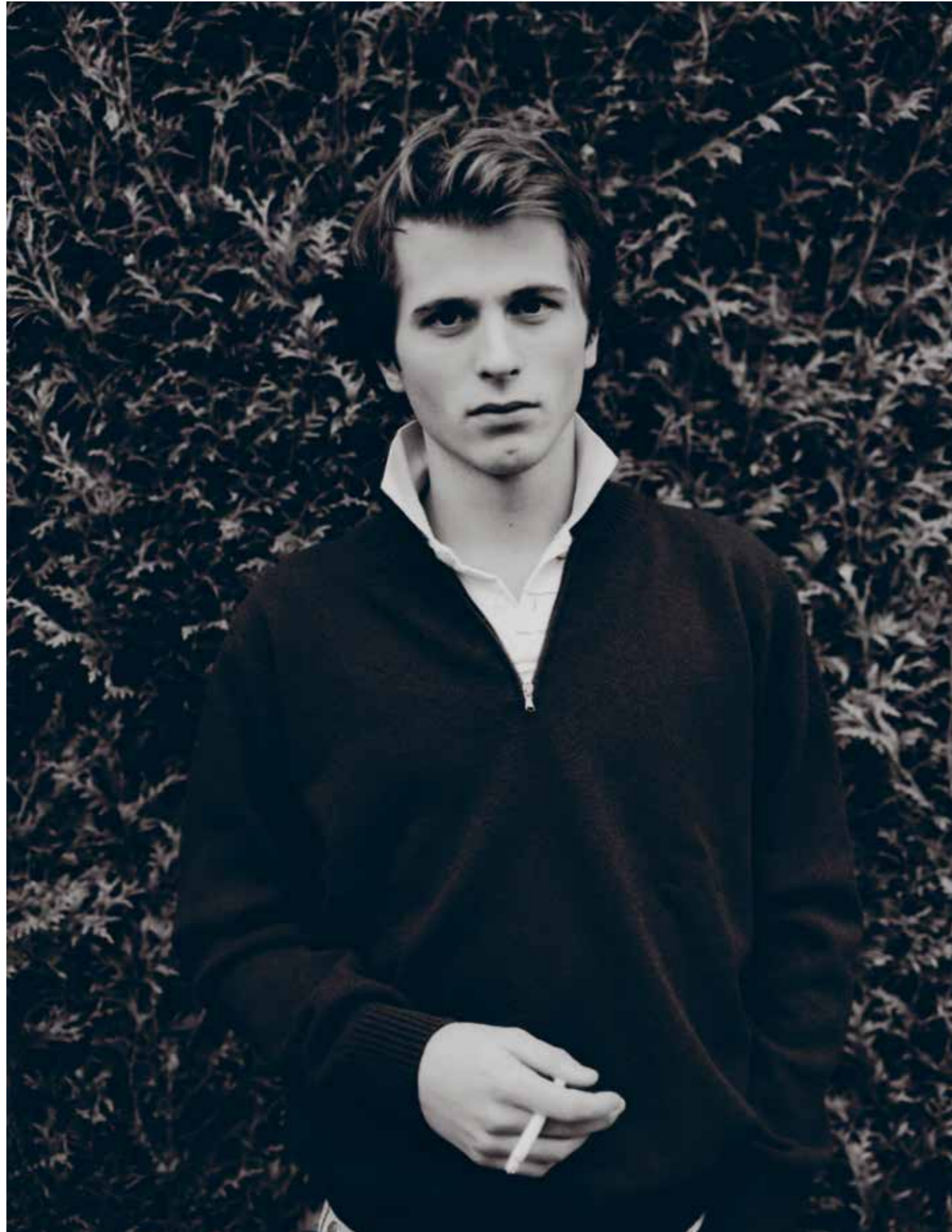
It is the reader’s task to scrutinize the images and dive into the text in order to try and uncover their mysterious interactions.

At the risk of repeating oneself, there is no literal link in the assemblages presented, but a potential concordance of times.

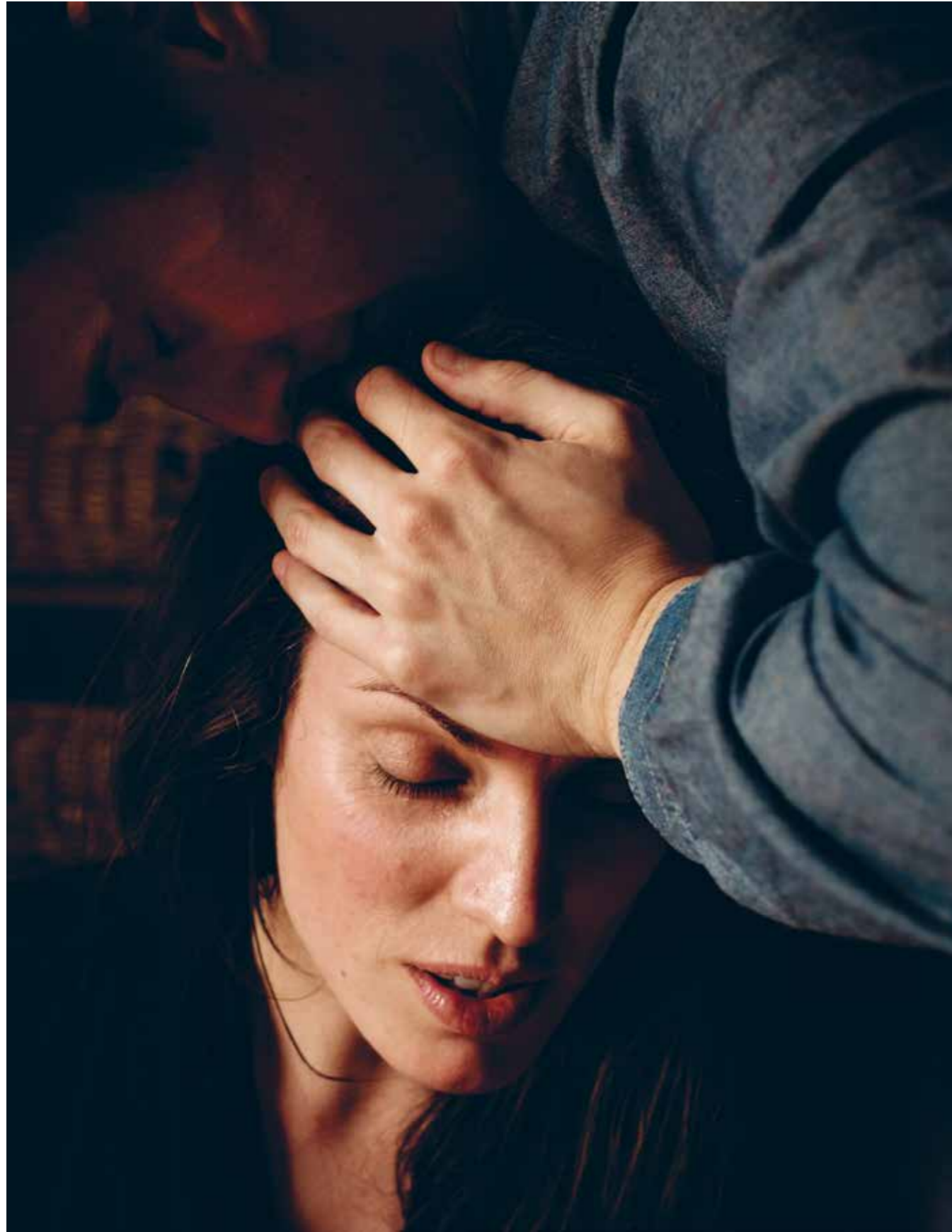
AMAURY DA CUNHA

Born in 1976, Amaury da Cunha completed his studies at the École nationale supérieure de la photographie. His works have been consistently exhibited as well as published, among which *Saccades* (2009), *Après tout* (2012) and *Histoire souterraine* (2017). He also regularly writes critical essays about photography and literature, especially for *Le Monde des Livres*.

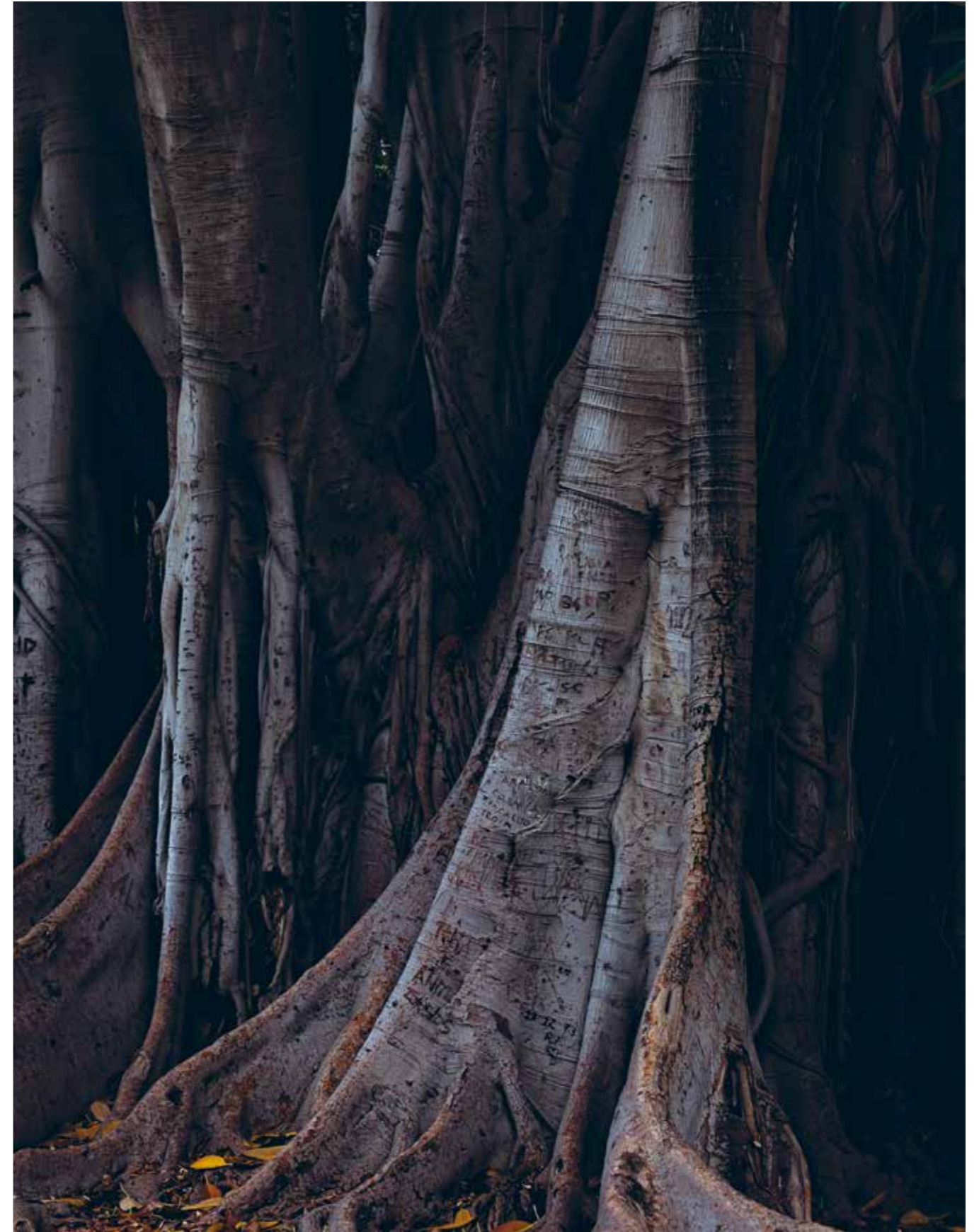
Forthcoming exhibition: « HS, images d’une histoire souterraine »,
Maison Auguste Comte, festival Photo Saint-Germain, Paris, nov. 2017.



“In Singapore, Charles is dead, for he no longer found any images in which to find refuge. No image that could have offered him a revival. He departed all alone, facing the China Sea. A few months later, I saw that he had tried to call me on Skype, three hours before his suicide, while I was asleep. What had he wanted to say to me? What would I have heard? His secrets fascinate me, honour him, kill me.”



“Why is my gaze so often drawn like a magnet to the bizarre, to everything that threatens to founder?”



“Do we use images to fill the gaps in our memory? Or do they serve to patch up the holes superficially, like little plasters on wounds?”



“In the successive order of my childhood passions, I took an interest in fighter planes, great white sharks and all forms of satanic rites. Another recollection of note: this very bizarre and tenacious image that is still in my memory. I’m six years old, I don’t know how to swim yet, I take advantage of my parents’ lack of attention to take off my arm floats. I jump into the pool, I sink, I’m not scared, I open my eyes under water ... I then see a horrified big lad who picks me up to take me urgently back up to the surface.”



“I get the feeling that the woman is herself an image within the image. At the same time, this photograph is freaky, because it seems to stop at the very instant of death.”

“This rescued young woman nearly saw death.”

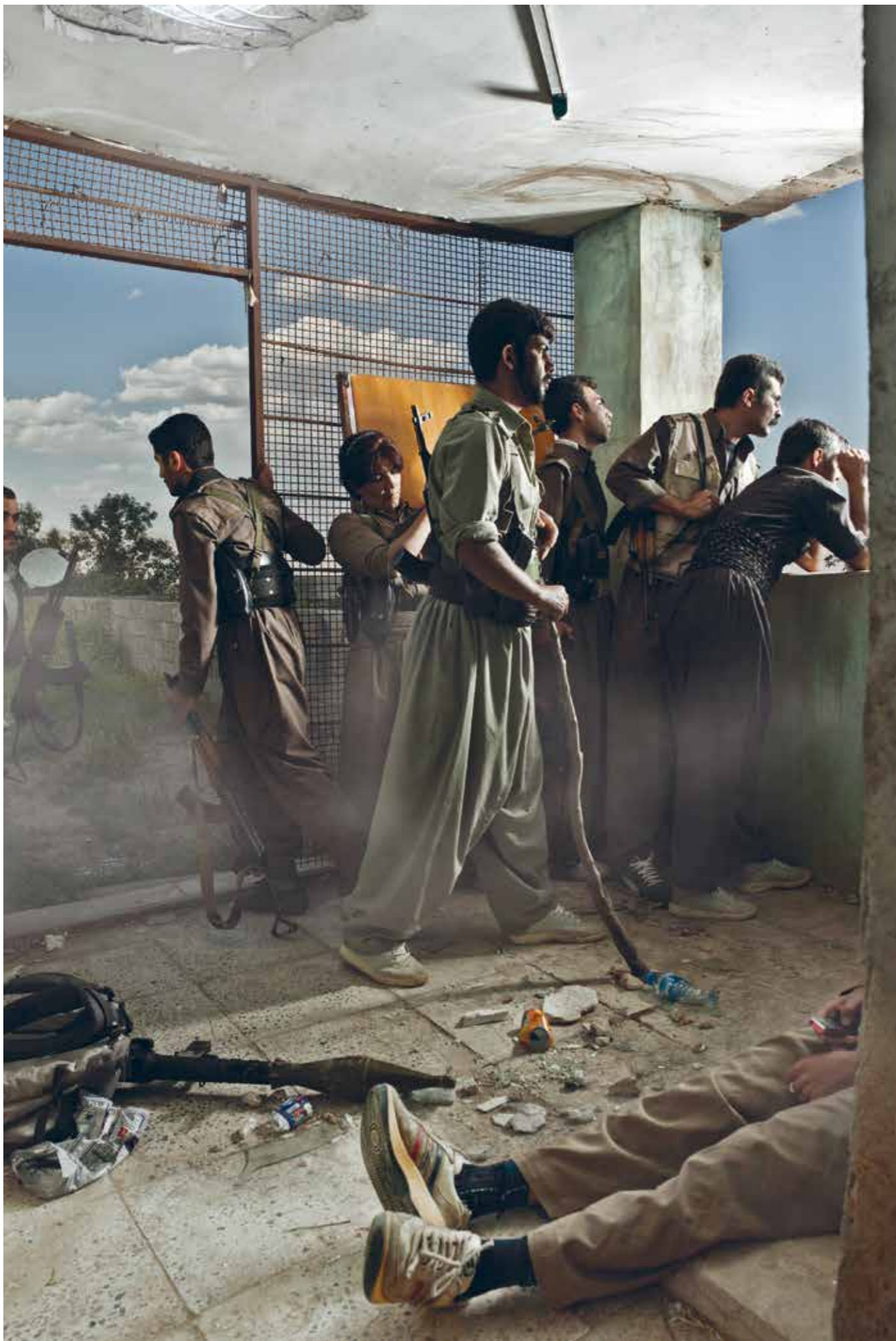
“No, it’s more like death looked her in the face.”

“This is what this photograph tells me, anyway.”

“When he photographs, he doesn’t see any expanse, just fragments, bits of things. As for the sentences, it’s exactly the same thing. For years he’s never managed to finish them, he’s ended them with commas, or at best, with a question mark.”

“I’ve always sketched everything that might take me in unexpected directions, and, at the same time, I await only that: an incident, an unknown bifurcation, an invented story.”





THEATER OF WAR

Photos /
Emeric Lhuisset



Emeric Lhuisset is an artist who questions the relationship between contemporary art and geopolitics through the news and media. Like a researcher, he undertakes in-depth investigations before travelling to the conflict grounds where he produces most of his pieces.

With the series “Theatre of War”, Emeric Lhuisset addresses the notions of the staged versus the real. A question asked of photography from its inception: presented as proof, it was soon subject to manipulation and propaganda. Lhuisset invites us to reconsider war in its representations. His photographs combine the codes of classical painting, contemporary war photography and ethno-documentary photography.

This photographer brings us to question the forms of the “spectacle” of conflict. He encourages us to reconsider our perceptions and take a position in view of what is given for us to see; and to educate our gaze in the density of the complex visual media coverage that is as tough to digest as it is to distance oneself from.

What does the image tell us? Where is the fictional dimension of the story? In the representation of the scene itself? Or in the way our own imagination will grasp it?

Between research, art and geopolitics, Emeric Lhuisset’s frescoes are an invitation to constantly examine the way the media stages the actors of conflicts, as much as the manipulation of the media by the proper actors of the conflict.

The photographs have been taken with a Kurdish guerrilla group in Irak in 2011 – 2012.

EMERIC LHUISSET

Born in 1983, Emeric Lhuisset studied art and geopolitics in Paris. His work has been presented at the Tate Modern in London, at the Arab World Institute in Paris and at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. He has published *Maydan – Hundred Portraits* (2014) and *Last Water War* (2016). In 2017 he won the Grand Prix Images Vevey–Leica Prize. Concurrent to his practice, he teaches contemporary and geopolitical art at the Institute of Political Studies (IEP) of Paris.

Forthcoming book: *L'autre rive*, André Frère/Paradox/Al-Muthanna, Nov. 2017.

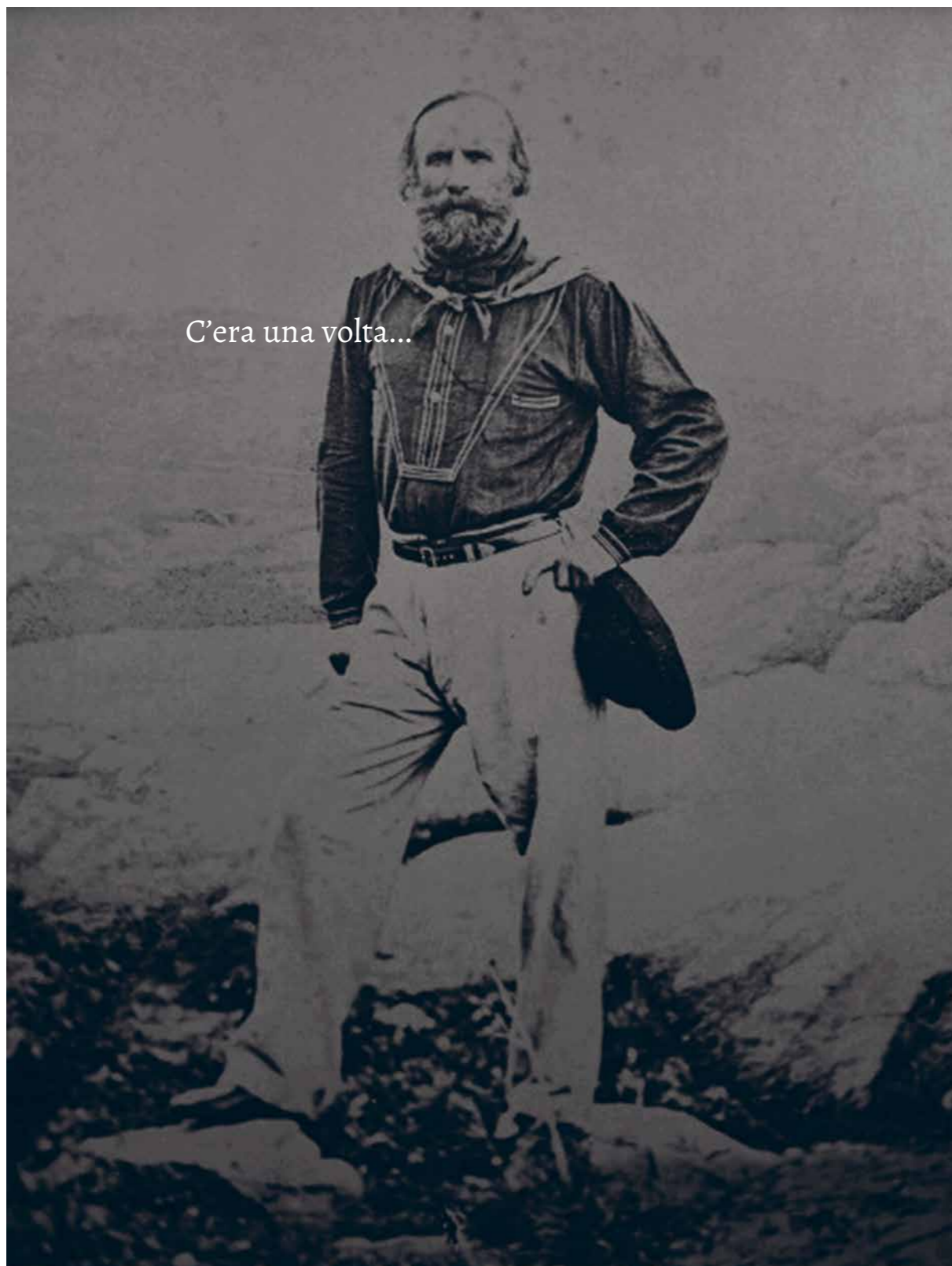
Forthcoming exhibition: “War Pictures”, in “New War”, Bandjoun Station, Bandjoun, West Cameroon, November 2017 / “L'autre rive”, Hôtel d'Agar, Cavailon, December 2017.





4500





C'era una volta...

(OTHER) ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO

Concept /
Lorenzo Tricoli



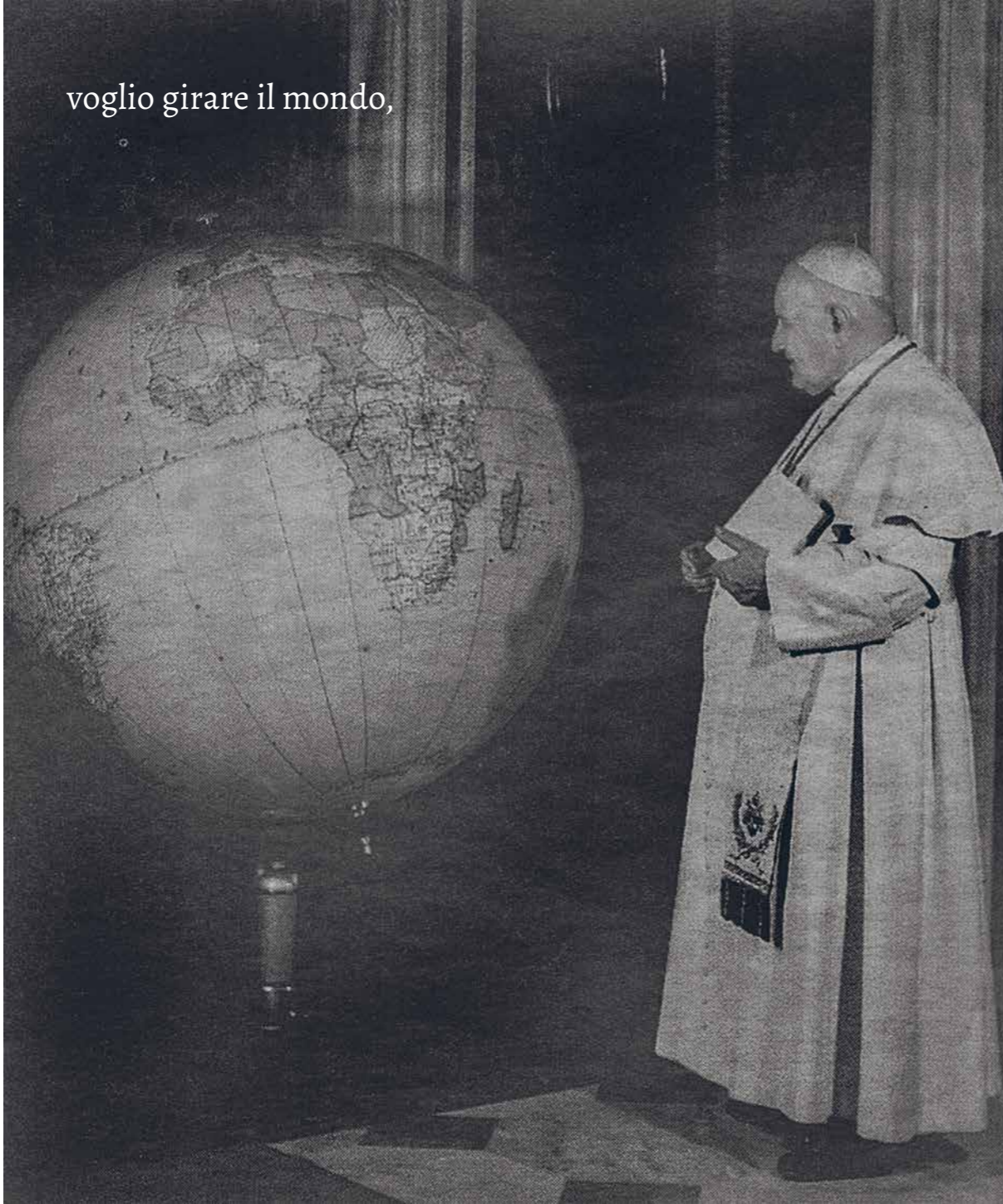
Italian artist Lorenzo Tricoli unexpectedly left us right when his work was finally receiving the attention it deserves. Condensing his aura in this short “episode of language” is a tough mission; hence I hope this piece serves as a diving board into his fascinating archive. And Lorenzo’s work, whether appropriated or his own ironical imagery, is deeply rooted in the concept of the archive. *The Archive You Deserve (TAYD)* is the clever title of his constantly evolving project about human suffering based on gathered, catalogued and reassembled materials from newspapers and the Web on the recent surreal Italian history. The photographs in *(Other) Adventures of Pinocchio* come from it. Italian tragicomic history was a thorn in his flesh but also his main source of inspiration. *(Other) Adventures of Pinocchio* is a conceptual photo-text book on the delirious and wondrous contradictions and “chiaroscuro” – as he describes them – of 20th-century *Bel Paese*. From Garibaldi to Berlusconi, via Mussolini and Cicciolina – the first porn star ever to become a member of a parliament – Lorenzo wittily pairs excerpts from Carlo Collodi’s 1883 children’s novel *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, following their original order of appearance, with iconic images of the Italian socio-political, economic, cultural and folkloristic history, sequenced anachronically. These excerpts are presented on the page in the exact spot where they appeared in the first edition of Collodi’s *Pinocchio*, a subtle touch that suggests the mischievousness of Pinocchio, whose nose grows longer as he lies, as a crude metaphor for Italian mentality. The pairings are not alone in generating this Italian mosaic where drama, corruption and popular culture mix together democratically. At the end of the book you find the Notes, a tale within the tale, that, with the pairings, form narrative triptychs, behind which a rhetorical question is lurking: how can citizen behave if the most creative and illegal shenanigans are “crafted” by the ruling class? But who allowed for such a ruling class? After all, if we have such a picturesque – to use a euphemism – historical archive, maybe we deserve it, unless we wake up and change. At a time in which “berlusconism” is inexplicably threatening us AGAIN, this book is a good antidote.

LORENZO TRICOLI

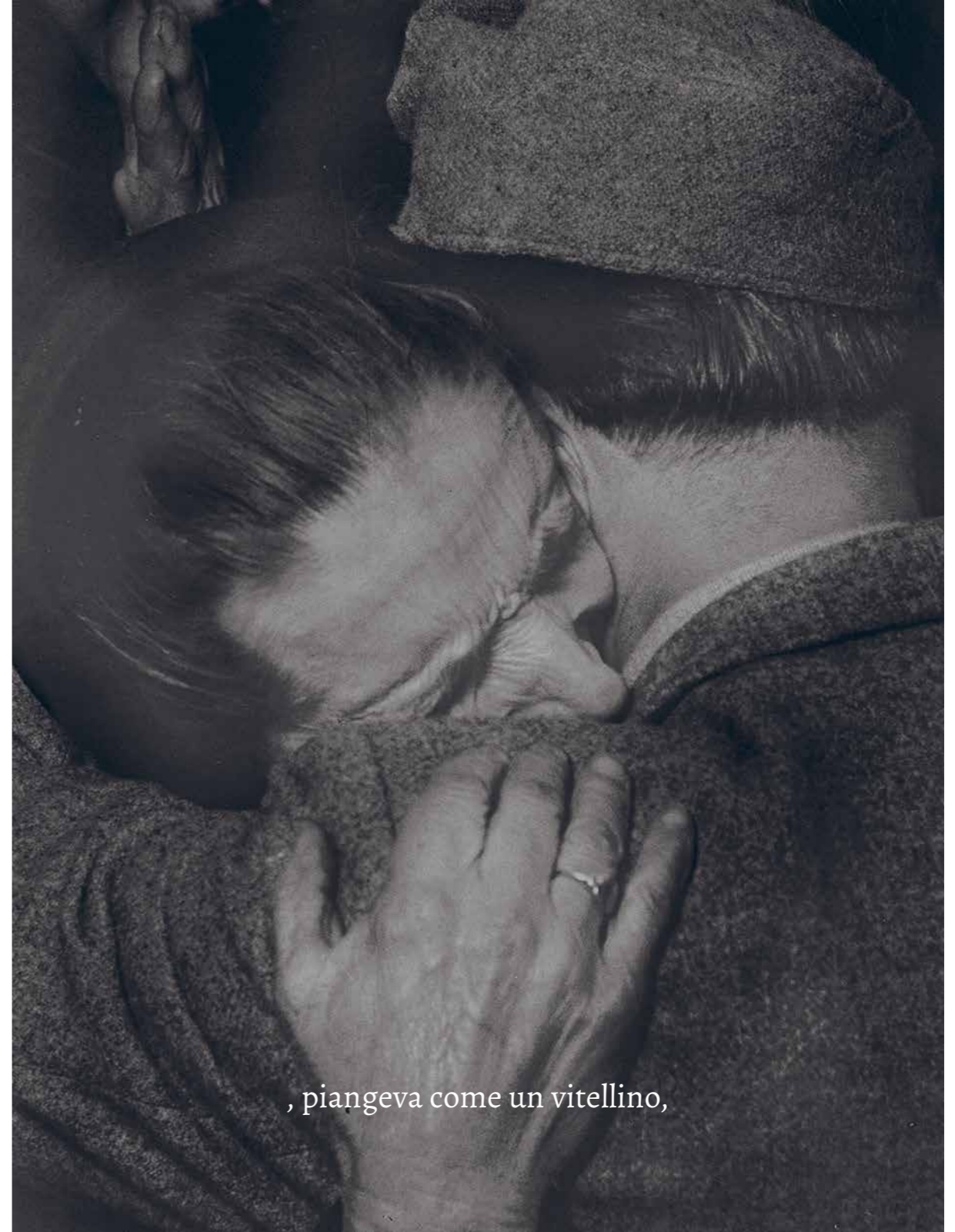
After training at the International Center of Photography in New York, Lorenzo Tricoli (1965–2017) began working as a freelance photographer in the fashion world for major brands and magazines. Since 2010, he devoted himself to projects inspired by his encounters with artists such as Mark Steinmetz and Paul Kooiker. His major project, “(Altre) Avventure di Pinocchio”, revisits the history of Italy in the 20th century: it was exhibited at the Contemporary Art Pavilion in Milan and published by d&books in 2016.

TRICOLI

voglio girare il mondo,



, piangeva come un vitellino,



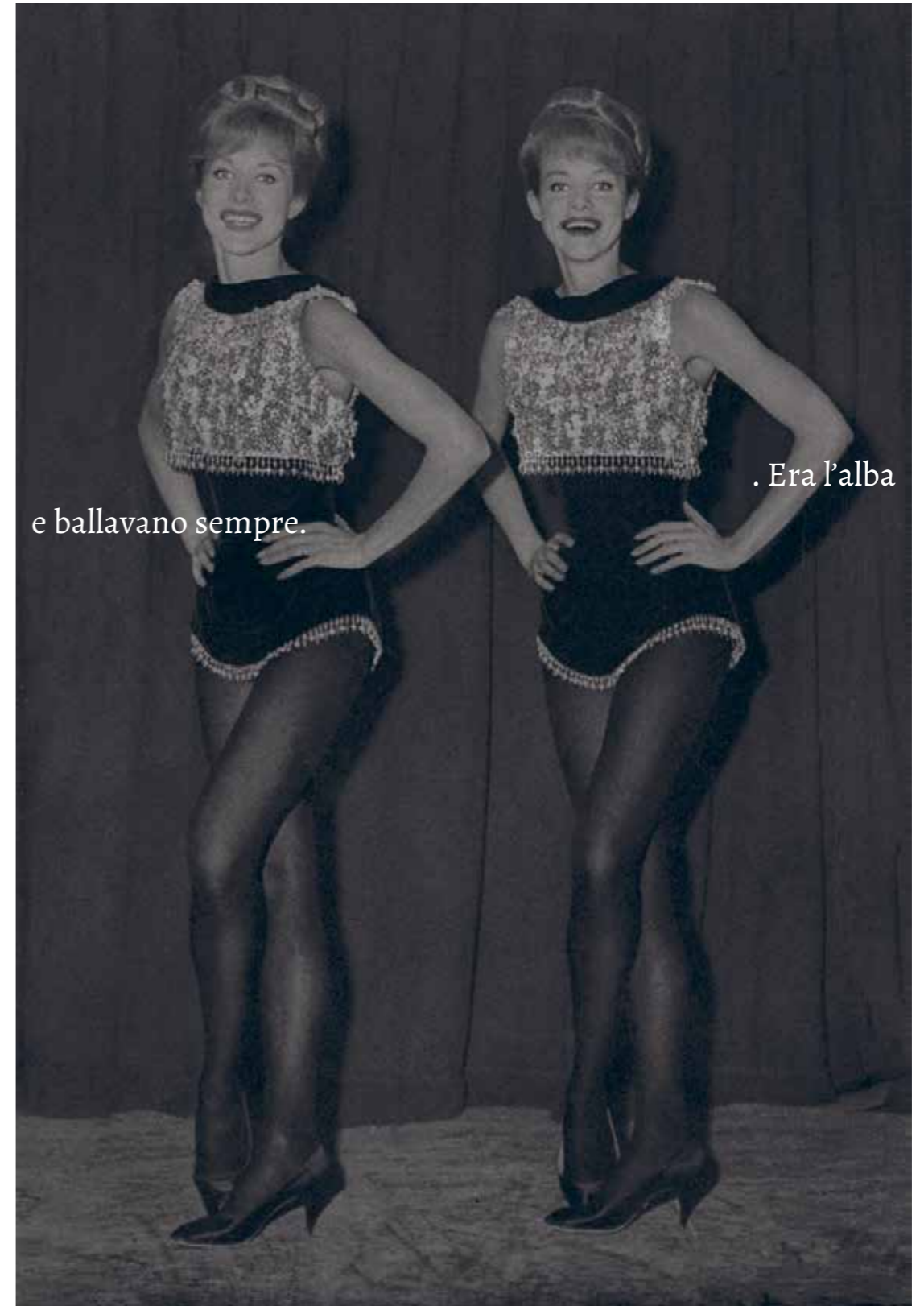
tentennava, pativa.

: esitava

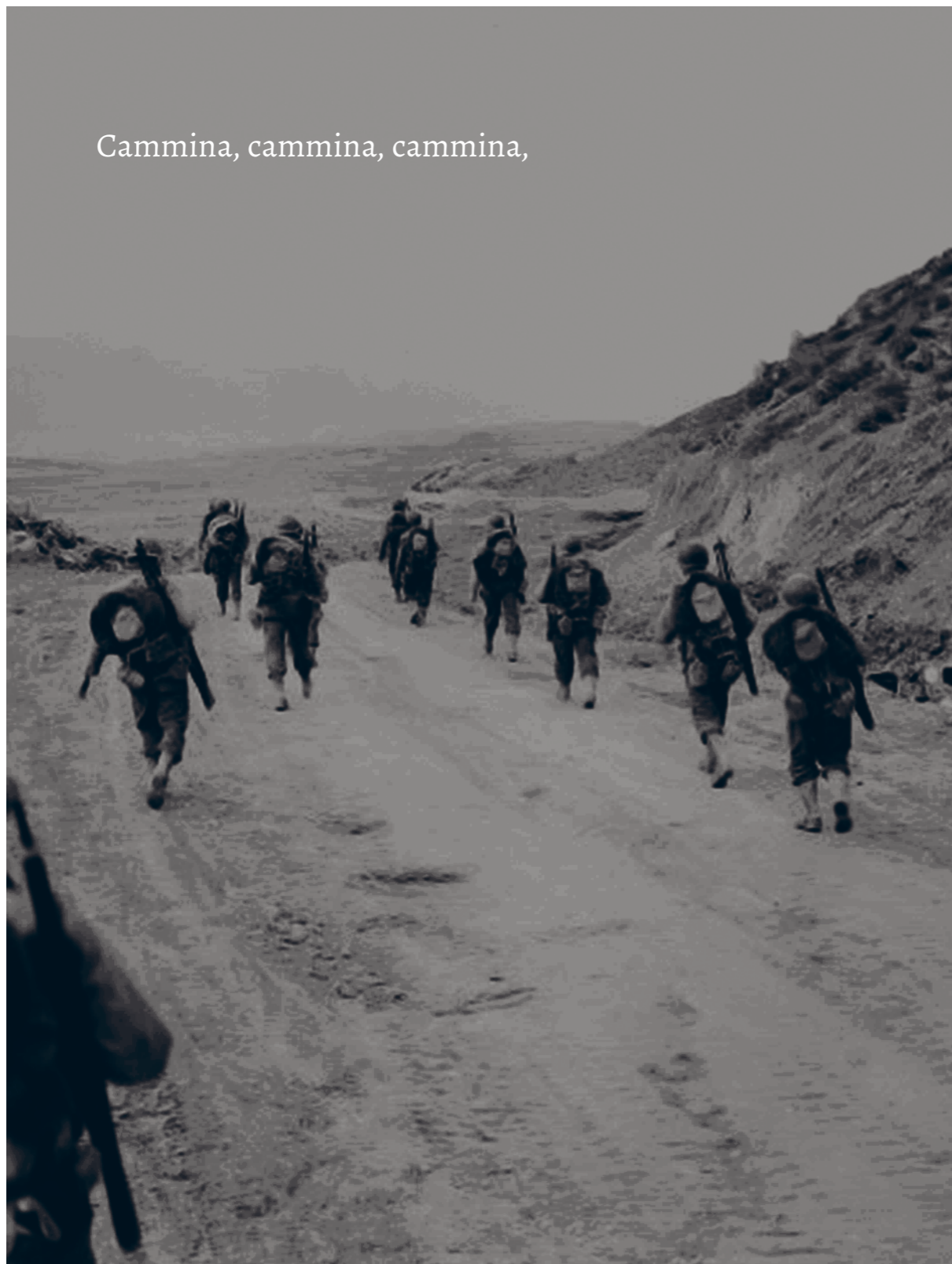


e ballavano sempre.

. Era l'alba

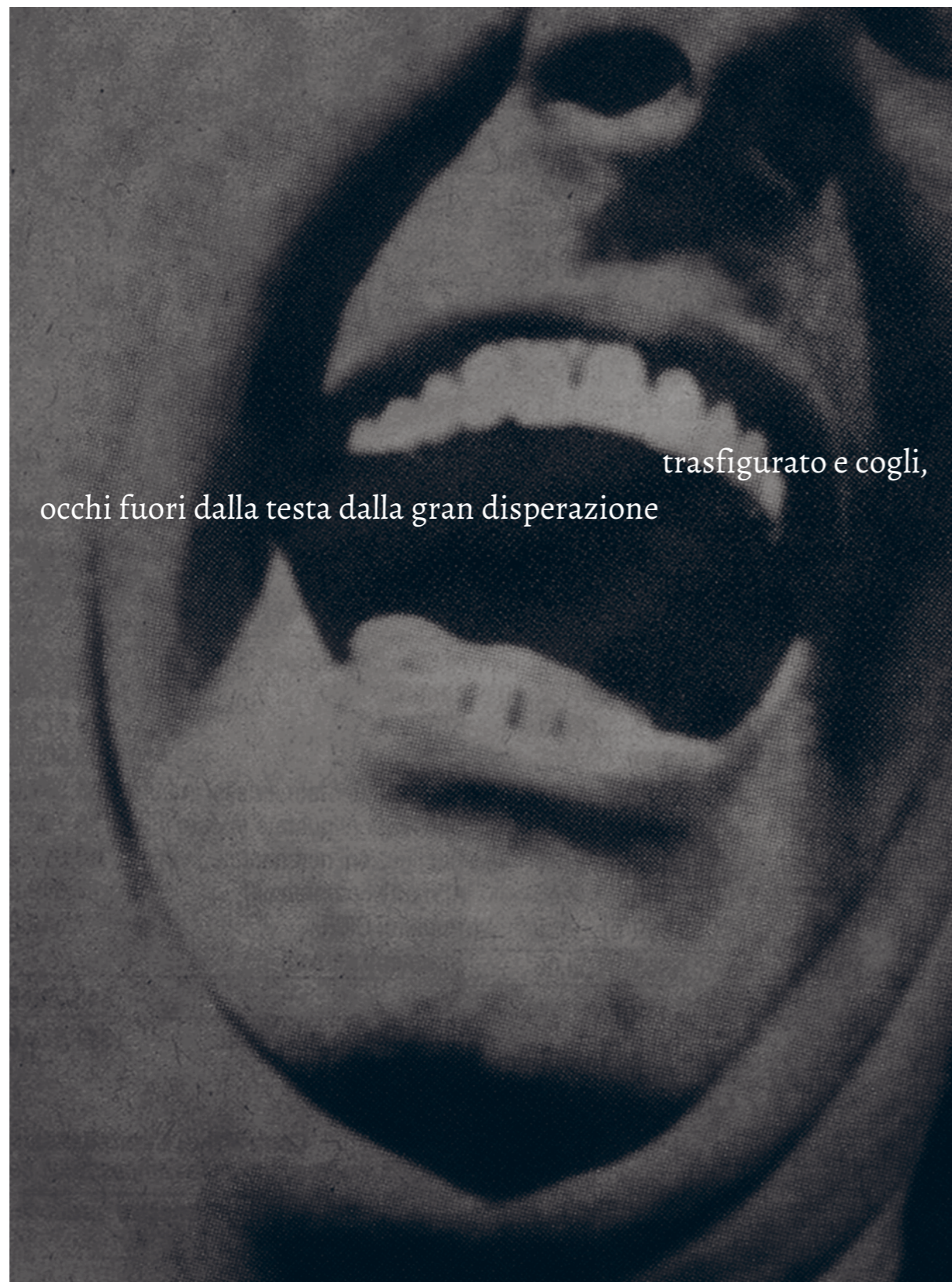


Cammina, cammina, cammina,

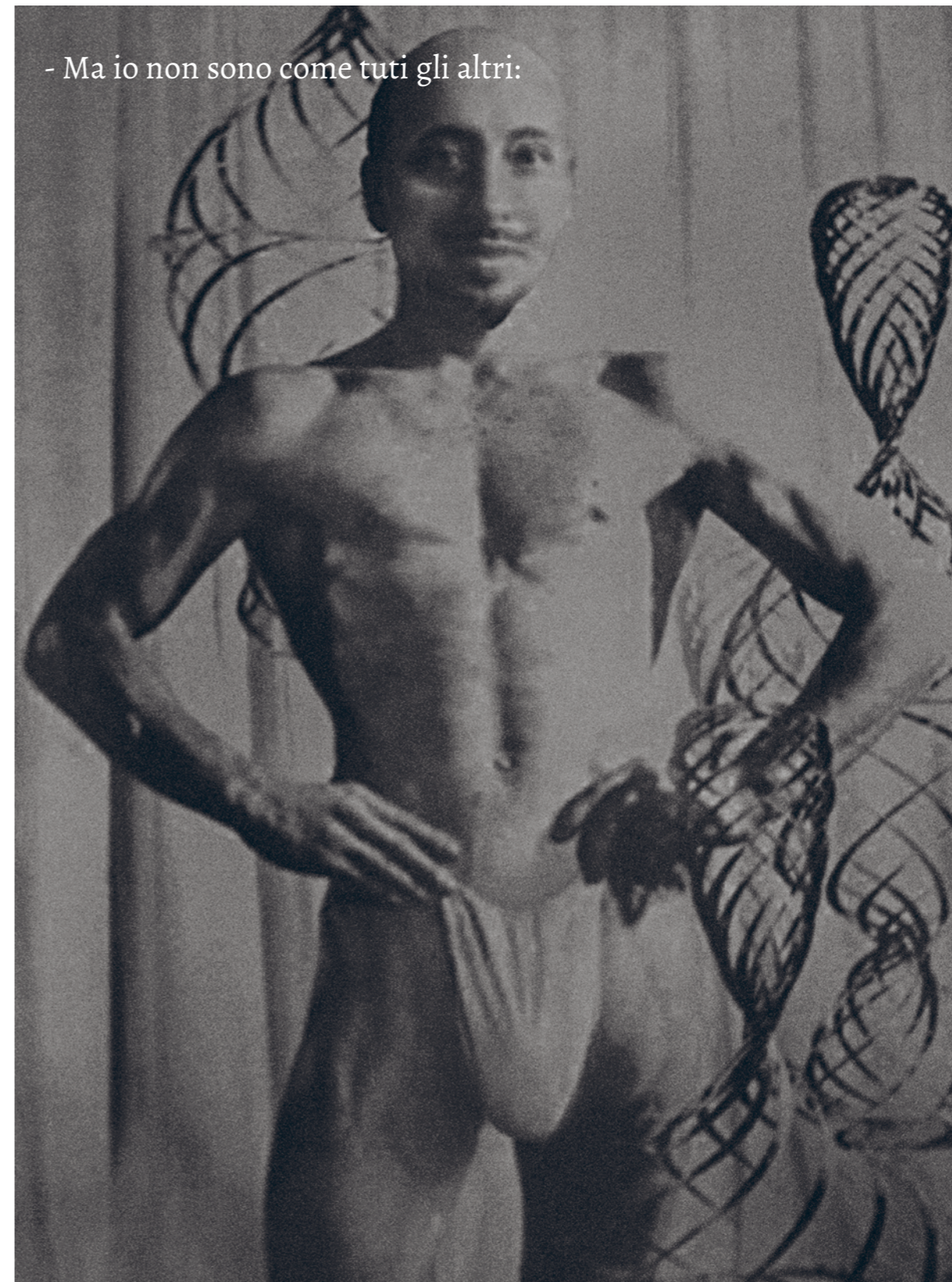


quei due incappati, di cui si vedevano soltanto gli occhi

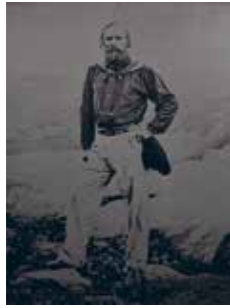




trasfigurato e cogli,
occhi fuori dalla testa dalla gran disperazione



- Ma io non sono come tutti gli altri:



Once upon a time ...



I want to travel the world,



, was crying like a little calf,



:he hesitated, staggered, agonized.



dawn and they were still dancing.



They walked and walked and walked,



these hooded figures, of which you could see nothing but the eyes



disfigured, his eyes bulging out of their sockets in true despair



- I'm not like the others:

BIBLIOMANIA



CALLE
LE

CONVERSATION

Sophie Calle
with Rémi Coignet



Rémi Coignet: In the first of his two articles about you in *Le Monde* in 1984, mentioned in your *Douleur exquise / Exquisite Pain*, Hervé Guibert begins with: “Sophie Calle is among the rare artists to take hold of photography to tell a story.” Would you agree? You tell stories?

Sophie Calle: Yes. Not always, but yes, I do tell stories.

RC: You reveal in *Douleur exquise / Exquisite Pain* that you are a character in Hervé Guibert’s *À l’ami qui ne m’a pas sauvé la vie / To the Friend Who Did Not Save My Life*; and we know from *Doubles-jeux / Double Games* that you are also present in Paul Auster’s *Leviathan*. Are you a character from a novel? Or would you like to be?

SC: I so much wanted to become one, I asked Paul Auster when I realized that he had used my life in a chapter of his *Leviathan*. His heroine, who follows people in the street, is a maid. In short, there were many elements borrowed from my work. I also noticed in that chapter that there were two rules of the game invented by Paul Auster, namely to live according to the colour scheme and under the domination of three letters: B, C and W. I decided to play the game so that the chapter would be entirely true and I “entered” the fiction. I wanted to become a heroine in a novel, so I asked Paul Auster to reverse things. Since he had selected me – me and my work – and had made me into a character in a novel, I asked him to write about a woman my age, French and named Sophie; and I offered him one year of my life to do anything the novel would command me to. The project never happened, because Paul did not want to feel responsible if for example in abiding to the script written for me anything happened to me. Afterwards, I asked the same thing of other authors, including Enrique Vila-Matas, who talks about it in *Exploradores del abismo / Explorers of the Abyss*, but for various reasons it did not happen.

RC: Is one of the aims of your practice to walk out of your life, like Paul Auster writes in *Leviathan*?

SC: Walk out of my life? No, I don’t walk out of my life. Quite to the contrary: my mother dies, I speak about her. In *Douleur exquise / Exquisite Pain*, a man leaves me, and even if it means feeling nauseous, I don’t walk out of my life. Rather, I go ...

RC: Straight on?

SC: Yes, even if the expression doesn’t really belong to my vocabulary.

RC: Sorry ...

SC: No, you’re right, it does fit with how I feel, but I don’t really know what term to use ... Anyways, I take hold of things that happen to me and I tell them. Speaking of my mother all the time means that she lives with me. She doesn’t leave, she’s here. When I talk about the separation letter, the man is also here – in a more playful way, less sad, less painful,

less connected to failure. He's always here, at a fair distance. It's a means of considering the separation with some distance.

RC: Most people live a very unremarkable life. I often feel that you add a little pebble to banality to see whether something interesting comes out of it. I'm referring to *Où et quand* [Where and when], for example. Or to the idea of following a man all the way to Venice ...

SC: I like to play. When I was five, I used to invent my own rituals. Rituals are great. They're relaxing. For example, with the stranger, I decided that I was going to follow him wherever he went, whatever happened. No more questions asked, you just do it! I can't bring myself to stop and photograph a bum in the street or anyone from whom I did not have ask permission. But when I decide that one such individual must enter my story, then questions that I would never have dared ask, suddenly I can ask them; the pictures I did not dare take, I dare to take. The ritual allows for this.

RC: When I saw again "*Où pourriez-vous m'emmener? / Where Could You Take Me?*" in *Ainsi de suite / And So Forth*, I wondered whether words were not primary in your work, and the photos were a means of making them plastic.

SC: It depends on the projects. It's funny. It was always the most important in the beginning. However, in *En finir* [Winding up], I found the images and had no text. And that was very new for me, to have only the images and to find them beautiful. But suddenly, I found myself helpless because I didn't know what to do with them, since text had always been so crucial to me. And it took me 16 years to find what to associate with these images.

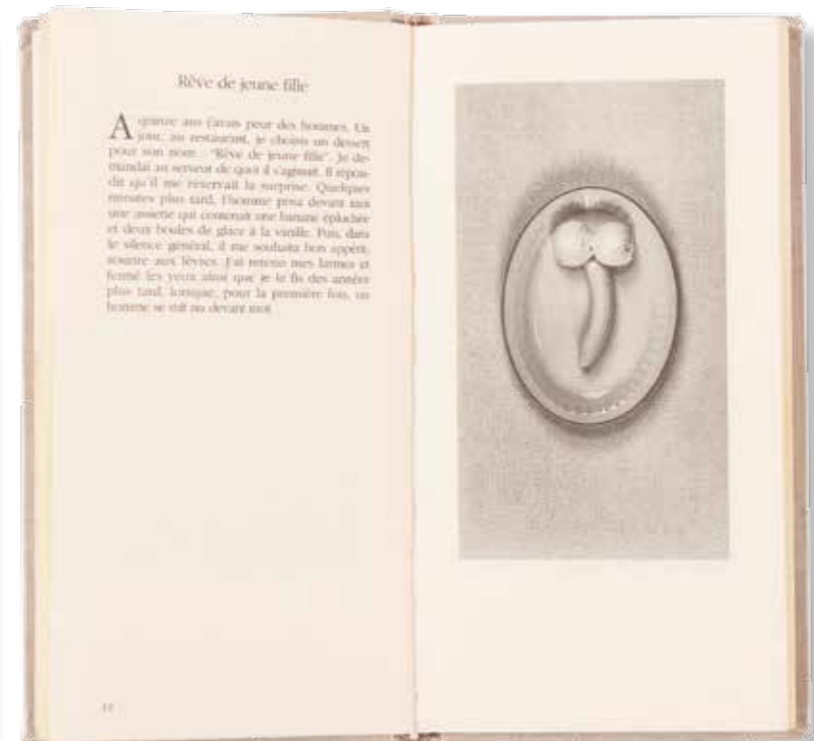
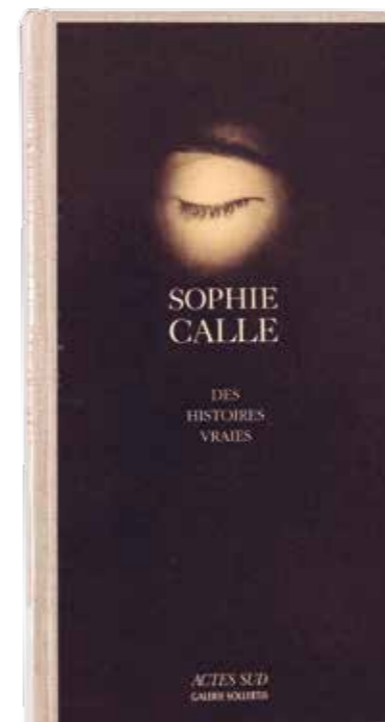
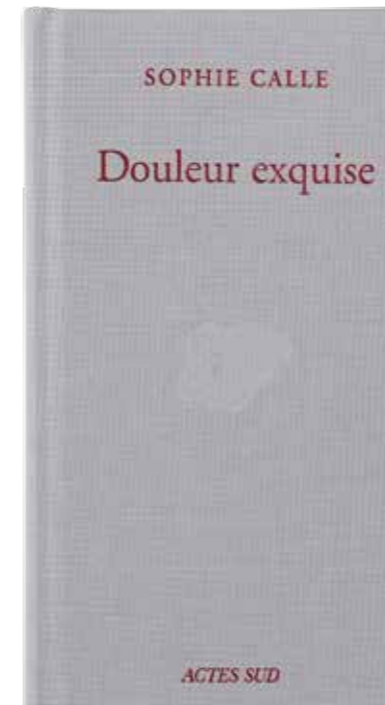
RC: Do you ever select a given image to try to affirm the truthfulness of what the text asserts, like the author W. G. Sebald did?

SC: Not that way. For example, when I was following someone on the street or when I was a maid, the image served as a record, whatever its quality. Not to prove that it happened but as a simple record. Yes, I don't need to prove.

RC: You claim?

SC: This is not what matters. Even if I say "it happened", it may not have happened. Anyways, the simple fact of selecting a small portion of text, a moment out of the whole story, implies that it is not the truth of the story. It happened. Indeed, it has, but it is not the truth. When I made the film *No Sex Last Night*, we had been living together for a year; we filmed 60 hours and released a 1-hour long movie. We could have made 30 movies that would all have contradicted one another. Then we decided to focus our attention on me and my frustration and on him and his addiction. We could have made a film only with landscapes, or silence. It would have been

Douleur exquise,
Actes Sud, Arles,
2003.



Des histoires vraies,
Actes Sud, Arles,
1994.



Moi aussi,
Éditions 591, Paris,
2012.



Où et quand Lourdes,
Actes Sud, Arles,
2009.

a different film, but it would have happened. I don't try to prove, because there is nothing to prove.

RC: Does the title of the book *Des Histoires vraies / True Stories* mean that others may not be?

SC: No, it was a joke. I was always being asked, "Is it true?" So I thought: I'm going to write that it is and they will stop asking me. Except that today, I'm now asked: "Is it really true?" [chuckle]. But in the beginning, the idea came from being tired of being asked the question.

RC: According to you, what is the importance of the book in the presentation of your work compared to the exhibition?

SC: I have always worked with both simultaneously. I cannot imagine a show without a book, or a book without a show. I always thought them to be complementary. The most obvious case is *Prenez soin de vous / Take Care of Yourself*. Some women have replied to me with a 20-page-long analysis of my letter. I could not hang them. So I looked for the word, the sentence in their replies that would allow me to create a piece that would be shown on the wall. But I could not boil it down to a simple word when considering the person who had sent in a 20-page-long reflection. The book allowed me to fully respect their words while being able to play with them on the walls, to use them as material. In this case, the exhibition could not have existed without the book.

RC: But when you represented France at the Venice Biennale and you "hired" Daniel Buren through an ad in *Libération*, basically he told you: "You exhibit on the wall as if it were the page of a book."

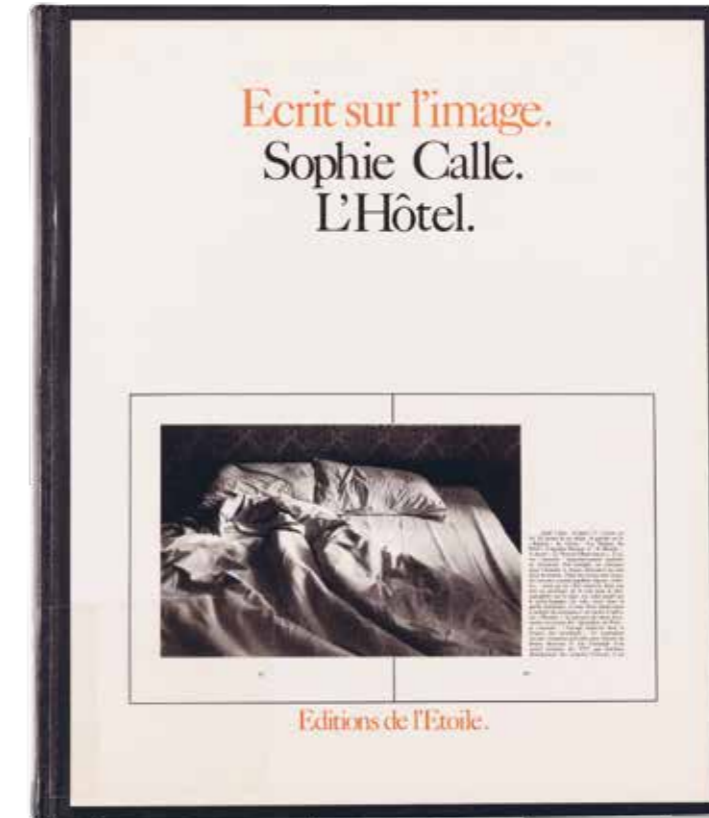
SC: He was right. So right – I listened to him. It could have been empty words ... but first it was Daniel Buren, and then ... I heard him. So, I tried to do something that would be different from the book page.

RC: I would like to understand how a book by Sophie Calle comes to be. Do you make dummies on your own, and then you show them to the publisher, Actes Sud or Xavier Barral? Or do you call and say: "I have a project. How could we give it an interesting shape?"

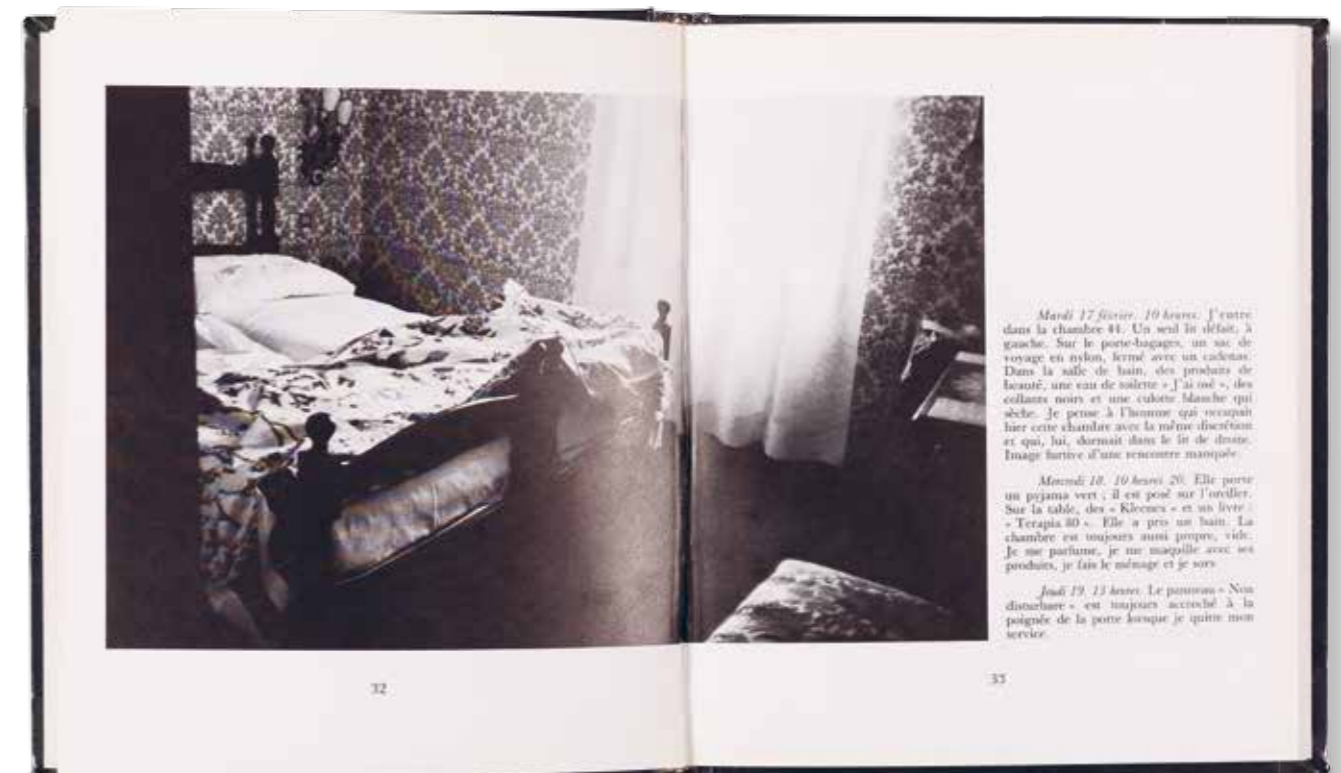
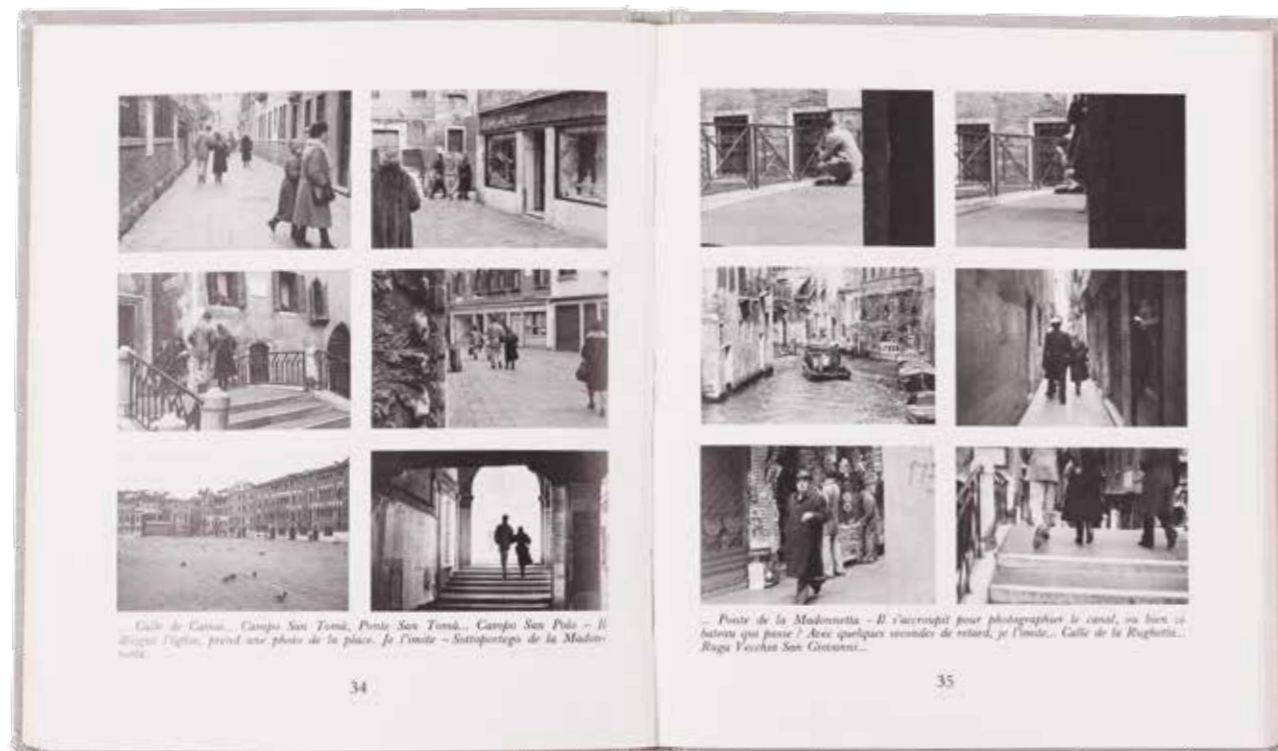
SC: Usually, one or the other asks me whether I have a new project. So I don't ring their bell! Then I tell them about the project, and generally it happens ... Either my editor at Actes Sud or Xavier Barral sends out a rough draft and we talk about it ... I don't work on my own but I'm very involved. The choices are always made together with the artistic director.

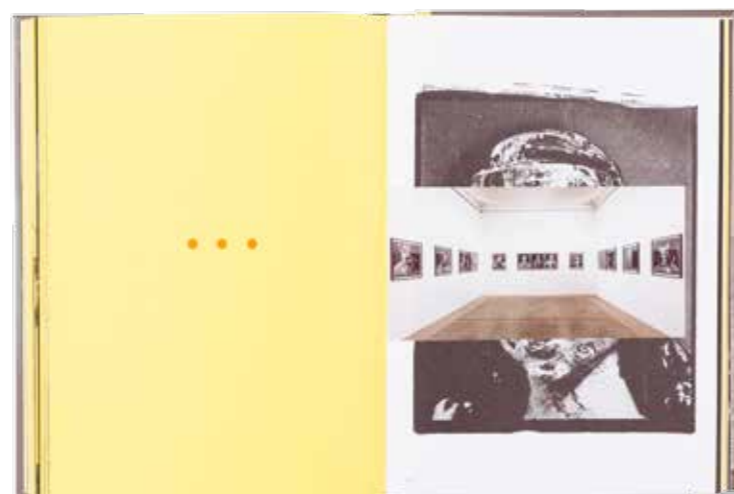


Suite Vénitienne,
 Éditions de l'étoile, Paris,
 1988.



L'Hôtel,
 Éditions de l'étoile, Paris,
 1984.





Ainsi de suite,
Xavier Barral,
Paris,
2016.



RC: *Ainsi de suite / And So Forth* ends with a portrait of you and a caption that reads: “Have you seen me, and so forth ... Still yet?” Does this mean that there will be a third volume?

SC: This does not mean that there will be one, only that it could be the case. It’s the idea ... Perhaps I’m not quite finished producing new pieces. I’m actually working on a new exhibition at the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature in Paris in October, with projects that are not published in *Ainsi de suite / And So Forth*. The show will be entitled “*Beau doublé, Monsieur le Marquis*” (Great double shot, Marquis), because I have invited a dear artist friend of mine, Serena Carone, to exhibit with me. She will show her own pieces and we have also tried to respond to each other on specific subjects. For example, I pay tribute to my father’s eyes, and she bounced back with a sculpture about the gaze.

One of the new projects is produced from the classified ads published in *Le Chasseur français* since 1895. By decade, I tried to spot the main female features looked for by the men who released these ads. It starts with “Not poor” from 1895 to 1905, and from 1905 to 1914 it becomes “Tainted or not”, in other words, virgin or not, etc.

RC: It’s totally transgressive to show such a project at the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature.

SC: Let’s call it another form of hunt. A woman hunt ... But I’m also going to show – between the rifles – a very old project, *Suite vénitienne*, which is a form of man hunt. There will also be a piece around the white bear, a symbol of the museum; I’ve hidden him under a cloth. So, I’ve tried to come up with new things, and it’s always exciting.

SOPHIE CALLE

Born in Paris in 1953, Sophie Calle defines herself as a “narrative artist”. Her protean work consists of “putting her life on the line”, especially her most intimate moments, while questioning those of others, combining writing, photography, film and performance. She was exhibited at the Centre Georges Pompidou in 2004 and represented France at the Venice Biennale in 2007.

Forthcoming book: *Les Fanfares de circonstances*, Xavier Barral, Paris, 2017.

Forthcoming exhibition: “*Beau Doublé Monsieur le Marquis*”, musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris, Oct. 2017 – Feb. 2018.



LOVE ON THE LEFT BANK

Ed van der Elsken
By Tamara Berghmans



Half a century after the Dutch photographer Ed van der Elsken published his photographic story about the unrequited love of Manuel for Ann, I am wandering around in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Looking for *Love on the Left Bank*.

In 1953, on Edward Steichen's advice, Van der Elsken compiled a photobook from his unordered contact prints. He merely gathered his existing photographs, thought up a storyline based on actual events, turned his subjects into characters by giving them fictitious names, and arranged the images in a chronology. He pasted his contact prints onto 66 white, purple and green contact sheets: roughly some 1,500 photographs – 35 mm and 6 x 6 cm – along with drawings and notes in a variety of colours. The photographer's sketchbook.

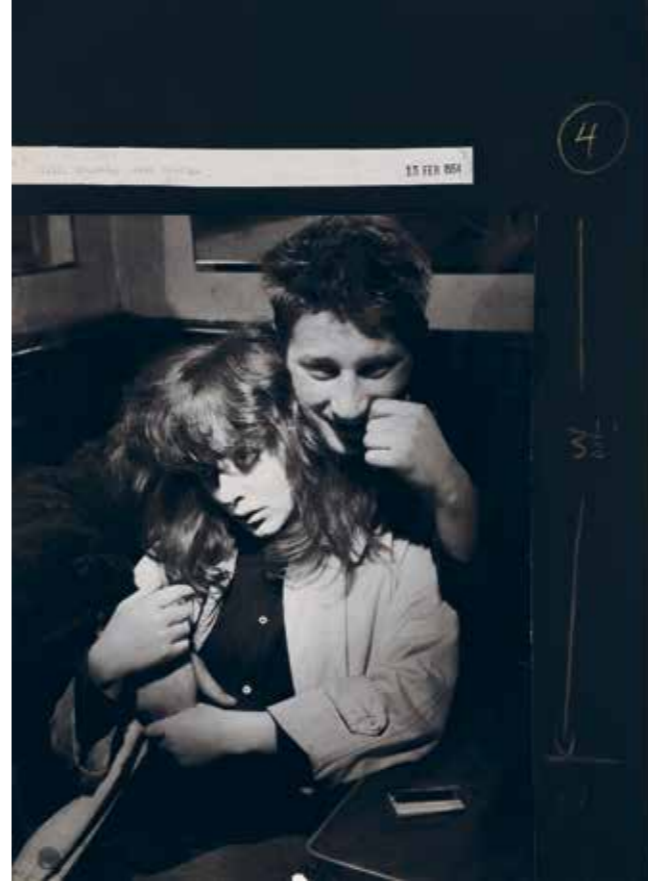
After organizing his contacts, Van der Elsken compiled three dummies. His first dummy is loose-leaf and consists of photographs mounted on yellow and black boards with strips of white paper with French captions and notes in between. The boards are larger than the book and have the same format as most magazines of the day. The characters are still referred to by their real names (Roberto instead of Manuel, Vali instead of Ann, etc.). From the English remarks (e.g. "not this"), the stamps and the dimensions in red pencil, we may infer that he submitted the dummy to the English magazine *Picture Post*. The storyline corresponds by and large with that of the book, except that it has not yet been divided into chapters. In the last dummy the photographs are mounted on white paper without captions or text. The pages contain various pencil notes by graphic designer Jurriaan Schrofer, such as "not this one" and "crop from the bottom". This is very different from the first dummy, in which Van der Elsken tended to stick to one photograph per page.

Love on the Left Bank is a photobook with many lives. Between 1953 and 1956 the Saint-Germain-des-Prés photographs were exhibited and published on several occasions. The diverse interpretations and variations on the love story in the prepublications show that the (then) "racy" and controversial subject stirred up more dust than we can possibly imagine today. Van der Elsken's world vision contrasts sharply with the prevailing views on what you could and could not do. The love story of Manuel and Ann merely serves as a backdrop. The real significance of *Love on the Left Bank* lies in the dark mood and the spirit of the times that the book captures.

Een Liefdesgeschiedenis in Saint-Germain-des-Prés.
Published by De Bezige Bij, Amsterdam, 1956.
112 pages, 216 black-and-white photographs.

The reproductions are taken from the book
Looking For Love on The Left Bank,
The Eyes Publishing, Paris, 2017.





goudy 6/10 wasser 11p op 13 1/2 uca
11p. l'interline
1/19-12-12-11

"Comment ils mangent et dorment etc."

Je reste dans le quartier. Bientôt je ne me demandais plus, de quoi vivaient ces garçons et ces filles. Le moyen le plus commun était trancher comme avec une pour-alimentation, adoucie de boissons alcoolisées. On volait un peu, on se faisait entretenir par les amis, on trafiquait un peu la drogue. Quand l'hiver adoucit le froid, quelques-uns se faisaient emprisonner.

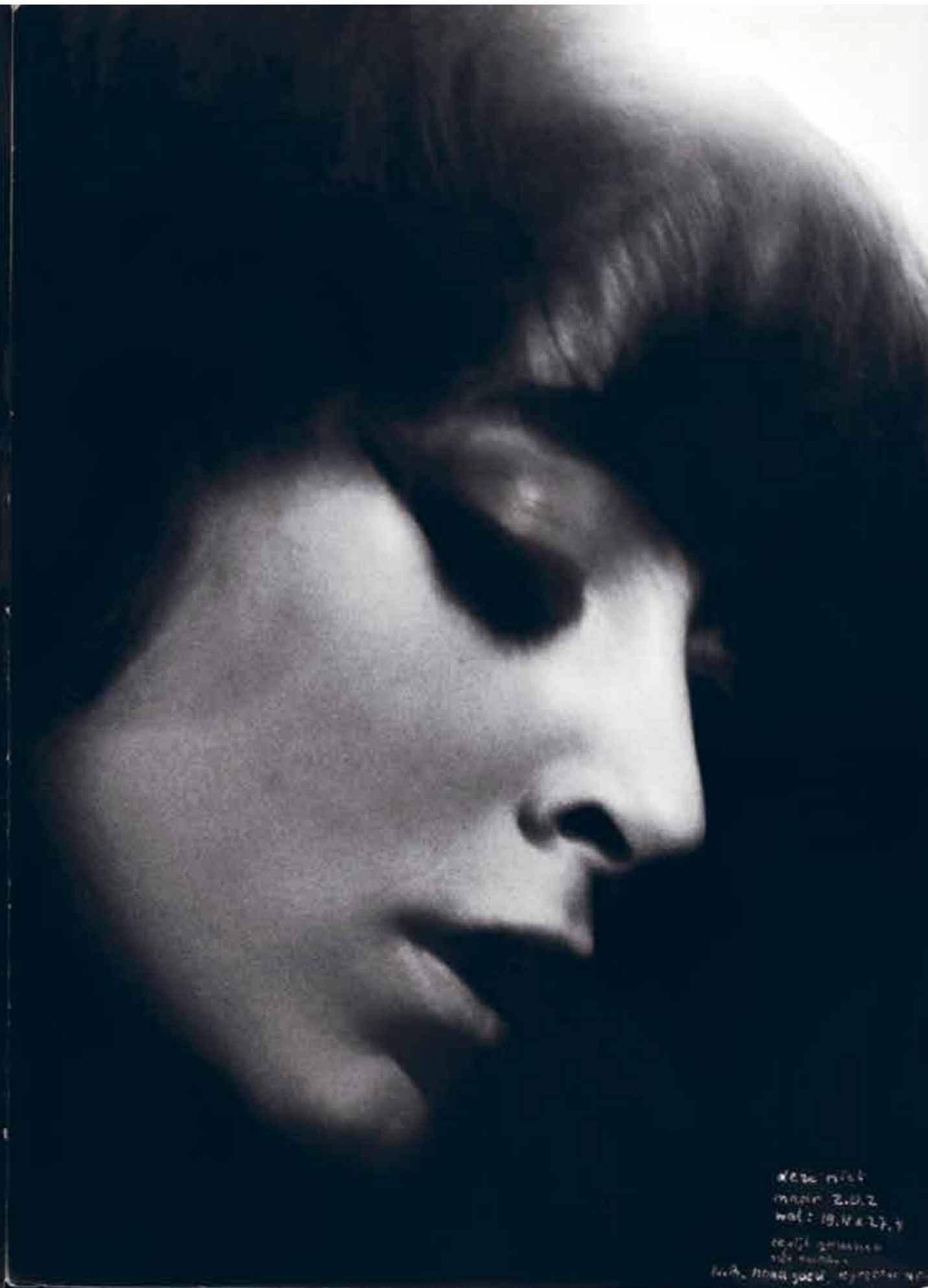
On mange un quart de brioche dans la rue. Le caillou vole une bouteille de lait, déposée sur le trottoir devant une laiterie. "La petite souris", Flage de l'Ordon vend des frites à partir de l'après-midi. Et un jour tu es bien trahi, tu te peins un boulot gai à dent fronce ou un spaghetti levain. Pour boire du vin, tu achètes un litre de mauvais vin.

Tu dors dans un sofa, sur un banc ou dans une voiture garée sur la place Saint-Denis. Dans le lit, dans le lit, à l'heure de l'après-midi, on se consolerait de police quand tu es une nouvelle amie tu te peines une chambre d'hôtel.

(thérapie de ce petit négatif)

(cette image est un négatif)







CROW
DRINK
HRP
Fuck THE
world



looking at me? I ain't
DOING NOTHING wrong... yet!
SO WHAT THE HELL are you
like



and drink
SCOTT
←
←
a nagella is a
LOPE HEAD



XAVIER

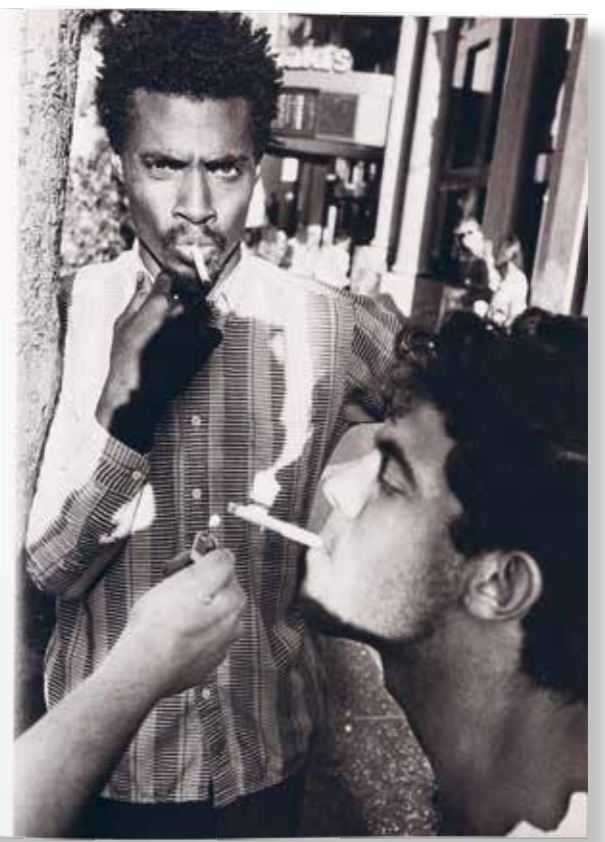


To Jim
with love
I think
that's how
DICK
BE COOL
two



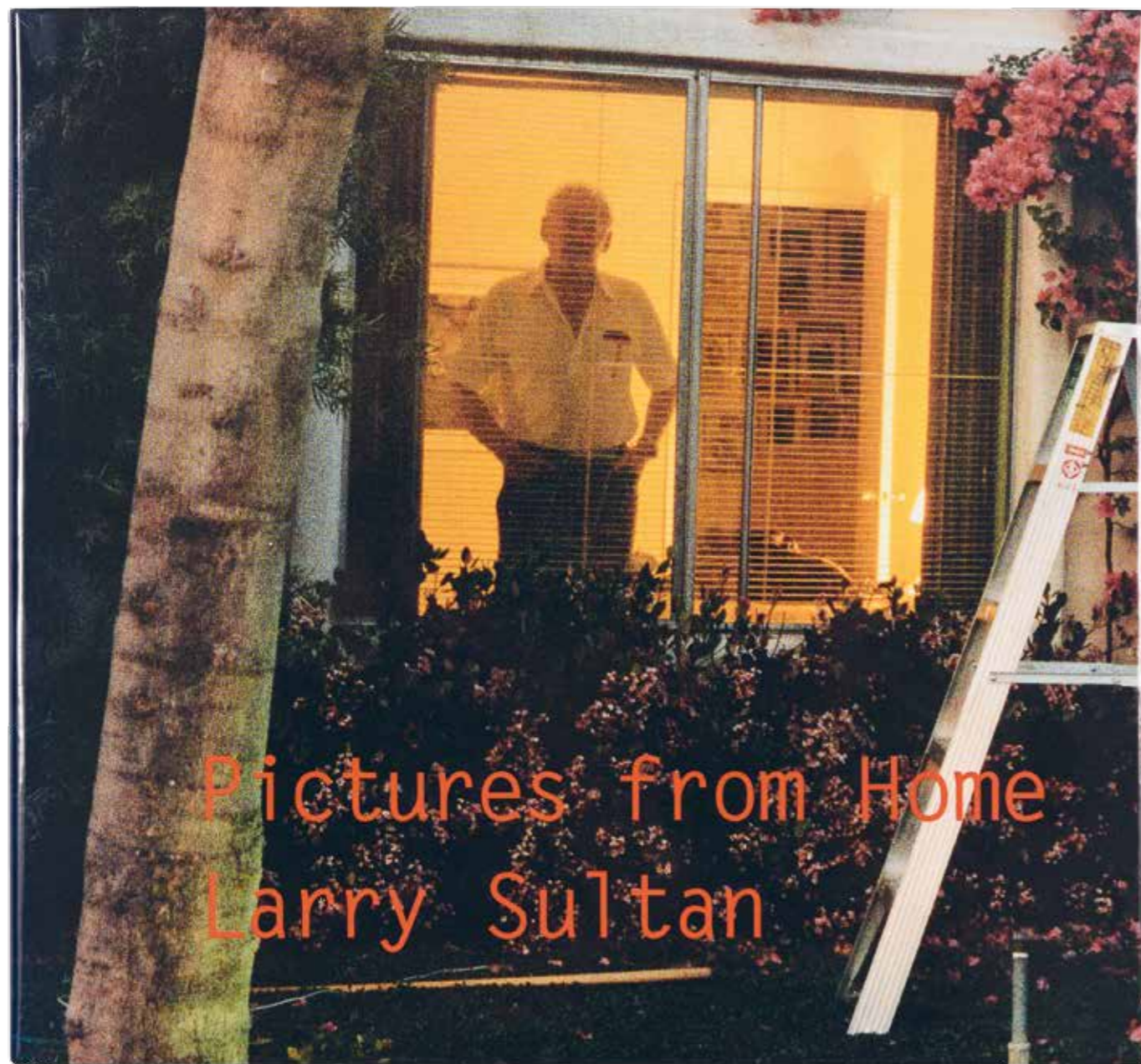


I WANT TO GET MARRIED AND HAVE
AT LEAST FOUR KIDS WITH 10 DOGS,
AND LIVE IN A MANSION WITH A JUNGLE
GREENHOUSE WITH A PET JAGUAR.



BORN A WICKED CHILD
RAISED BY WOLVES
A SCREAMIN KAMAZAZI
I NEVER WILL CRASH





PICTURES FROM HOME

Larry Sultan
By Laurence Vecten



In the 1980s, the decade of Reagan's presidency, Larry Sultan photographed his parents during visits spanning several years. Irving and Jean lived in the Palm Springs desert; their house was decorated with emerald-green carpets, yellow-gold wallpapers and thick curtains.

He began this project without really knowing where it would take him, or what he was looking for. He collated his portraits and enriched them with old shots and extracts of films from the family archives and with a text, and thus published a very personal album in 1992. Larry Sultan wrote and gave a voice to three narrators: himself and his two parents, thus detailing their history, their meeting in Brooklyn, their move to Los Angeles, their career progressions, their relationships, their fears and their rapports with the portraits made.

The couple submitted to their son's *mises en scène* but remained dubious concerning the outcome, which was not at all in line with their perception of their daily life and themselves. They reproached him for representing them as tired and taciturn. The portraits' construction is contemporary, meticulous; the colours are very present and real, without immediately giving way to nostalgia and affection. However, Larry Sultan communicates to his album's readers a strong affection for his relations, a tenderness reinforced by the confession of his uncertainties. Sultan seeks to understand the meaning of his work: sociological or emotional? He provides a simple explanation: his method is driven by a desire to stop time and make his parents immortal: "I realize that beyond the rolls of film and the few good pictures, the demands of my projects and my confusion about its meaning, is the wish to take photography literally. To stop time." A generation has passed since the first edition of the book: 25 years on, Mack invites us to reopen Larry Sultan's family album by bringing out a new version. The publisher has performed this re-reading with Kelly Sultan, the wife of the late photographer who passed away in 2009.

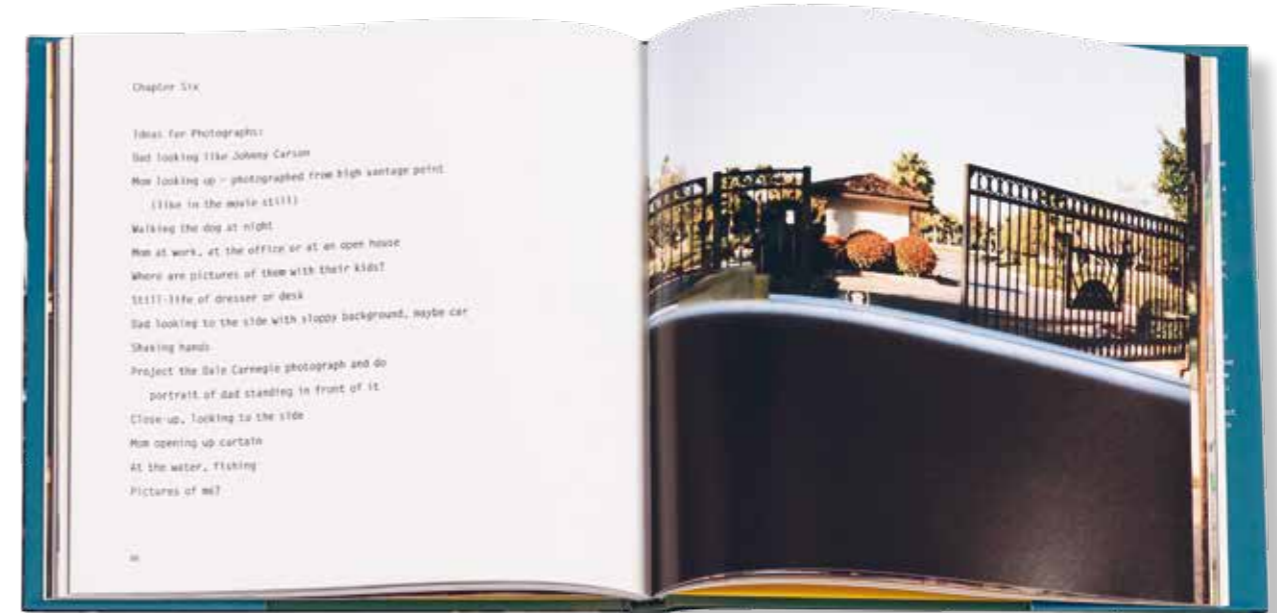
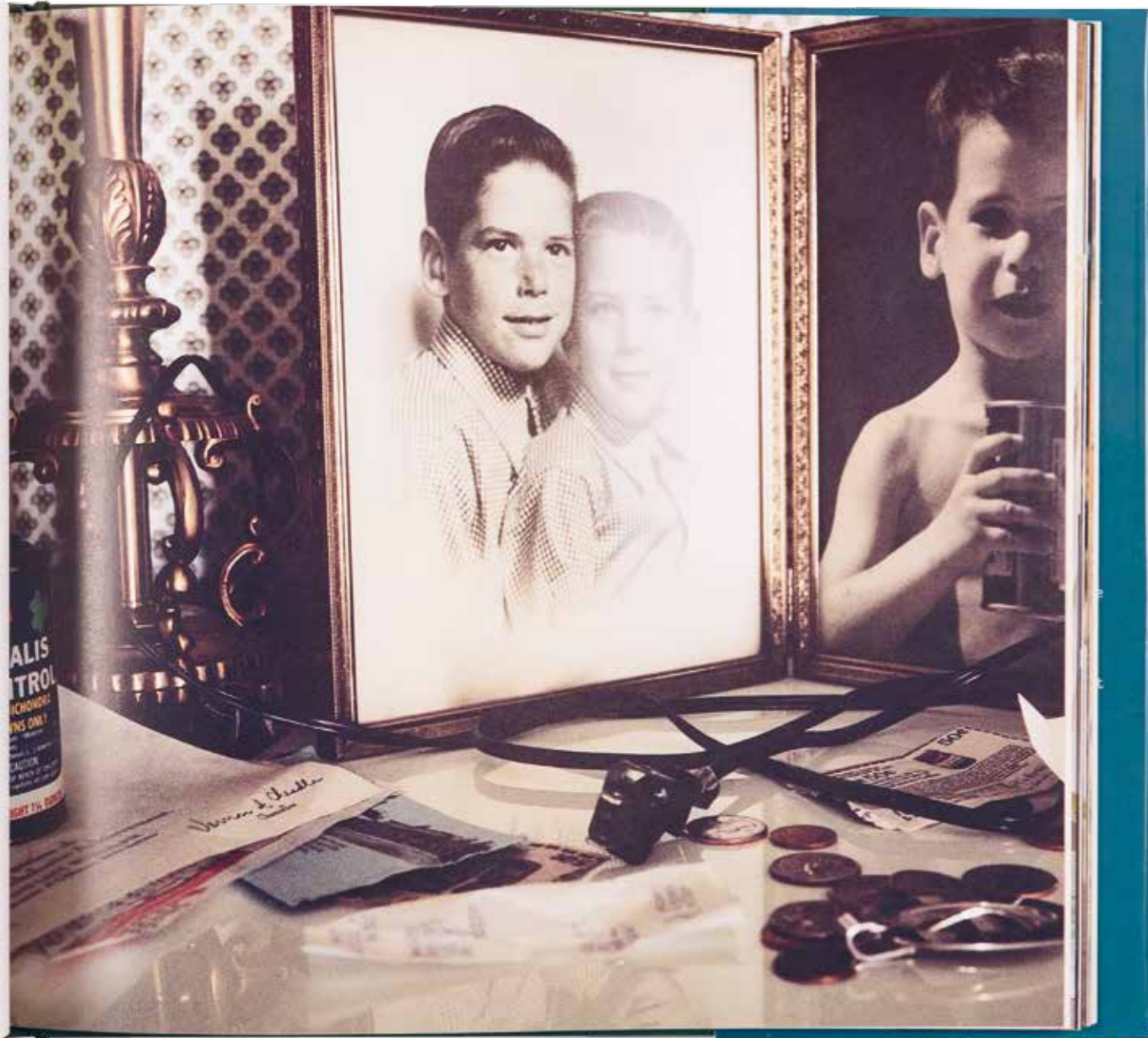
The book as an object is very subtly different. The format is adapted to the French style, showing the portraits to best advantage by surrounding them with borders. The photographs are unframed, lending the protagonists a new distance, like *mise en abyme*. They are printed on crisp, clean, glossy white paper, conveying the impression of more vivid colours, interspersed with a fine, rough, unvarnished paper that underlines the fluid and vaporous effect of the old memories from the film clips and family snapshots. They are printed on a black background when there is no bleed. A number of photos have been added. The author's first project is not altered by this new layout and its subtle differences.

Published by Mack Books, London, 2017.

196 pages, 140 colour photographs.

First published by Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1992.

112 pages, 90 colour photographs and 10 black-and-white photographs.





PEOPLE IN CARS

Mike Mandel
By Jeffrey Ladd



The car has figured prominently in photography both as a transport for photographers to explore the world and as a subject providing a multitude of metaphor. While Jacques-Henri Lartigue's photos of cars spoke of invention and experimentation with early motorcars and speed, Robert Frank's automobiles came to represent American isolation and alienation. A new book, *People in Cars* by Mike Mandel, brings together a body of portraits from the 1970s literally framed through car windows.

Standing on a street corner in Van Nuys, California, Mandel photographed into cars waiting at stoplights or slowing to make right-hand turns – letting the photographs come to him. “I was a fairly introverted person back then, a bit intimidated doing ‘street photography’. I was inspired a lot by Evans and Frank but I had a hard time putting myself out there in the world ... having people stuck inside the car made me feel a little more protected from any confrontation. But, then again, I was using a short focal length lens, which required that I get pretty close to the car ... I was looking for that moment of contact when you can see in their faces the recognition of being photographed and then a response, sometimes just for an instant, as they glide by me on their way.”

A playful sensibility is often felt in Mandel's projects that borders on comedic performance. With the project *Myself: Timed Exposures*, he interacted with strangers in various situations by quickly setting up a camera on a tripod, focusing and using a self-timer that enabled him to get into the picture to *pose* among them. “I was looking for a way to interact with strangers and see how that dynamic would create a picture.” With *People in Cars*, he thrusts his wide angle lens and invites reactions that other photographers would most likely avoid, and which belittle the “seriousness” of photography – the car's occupants grab at the camera, flip him the bird, throw their hands up in mock surprise, cover their faces, laugh and smile exaggeratedly.

So what are we to make of Mandel's project in the context of today? Is this simply a drive-by of mostly light-hearted reactions evoked by, in Mandel's words, the “foolishness of the situation I was creating”, peppered with a hint of 1970s nostalgia? Some might see it that way, but there is an undeniable dynamic in Mandel's making that seizes the zeitgeist of the counterculture. Most “street” or “documentary” photographers of the time were describing the world “like it is”, whereas Mandel, with projects like *People in Cars*, is doing his best to playfully disrupt the status quo and see what happens.

Published by Stanley/Barker, London, 2017.
72 pages, 34 duotone photographs.



REVIEW



DIARY OF A LEAP YEAR

Rabih Mroué

By Maria-Karina Bojikian



Actor, author, director, scriptwriter, musician and visual artist, Rabih Mroué, like Walid Raad or the pair Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, is part of the artistic scene that sprang up in post-civil war Lebanon. Central to his work, often characterized as militant, are questions of memory, the deconstructed notion of archive and the challenges to the traditional fiction/non-fiction dichotomy. His practice is akin to “a thinking machine”, to use Thierry Garrel’s expression.

Diary of a Leap Year features 378 collages: one for each day of the year, plus one for each month. The 366 images for the days were photographs gleaned from mostly Lebanese and international newspapers that have subsequently been cut up and altered. The pages for the 12 months comprise word fragments taken from articles, reconstituted to generate new meaning.

Texts and images are printed as double-page spreads on the front side of “scritta” paper pages, typical in Bible editions. The paper’s semi-transparency enables several pages to be visible at once, revealing a deliberate variation in the size and placement of the images – from tiny vignettes to full pages.

Toying in this way with the images’ format and positioning, “deterritorialization” and effects of visibility/invisibility conjure notions of history, of memory. This “diary” is not a compendium of snapshots in which the tale of one day overwrites the one before it. Rather, it is “the continuous progress of the past gnawing into the future and which swells as it advances ... a duration in which the past, always moving on, is swelling unceasingly with a present that is absolutely new”. This is a palimpsest-like book in which the past is no longer elusive. It is “compact and undivided in a present which it will create by coming into it”, as Henri Bergson mentioned in *Creative Evolution*.

The English translation of the Arabic title masks some connotations. In Near Eastern cultures, a leap year is widely expected to be challenging, even unlucky. The images are almost exclusively snippets of war, battered bodies, soldiers and ruins, etc. The word *kabasa* (“leap”) also means “compact, compressed”. Mroué actually created the collages peopling the diary of this alleged year over a period of 10 years – from 2006 to 2016. This anachronism contributes to the work’s contemporaneity, through its sheer capacity to grasp its own time. Mroué’s manifesto/book decries the rampant violence devastating the Middle East and, like Aby Warburg’s *Mnemosyne Atlas*, samples “the great chaos of history through interjected images”¹.

Published by Kaph, Beyrouth, 2017.
720 pages, 366 colour illustrations.

¹in Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas ou le gai savoir inquiet, L’œil de l’histoire*, 3, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 2011.

REV
IEW



VILLE DE CALAIS

Henk Wildschut
By Rémi Coignet



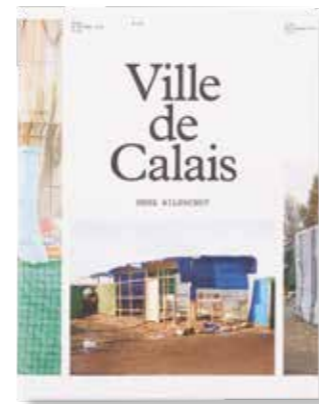
Often, important works are those that allow us to conceive reality differently. About Calais, what have we seen on the television, heard on the radio or read in the newspapers? Fences raised to protect the access to the Channel Tunnel or to the harbour; men running at night attempting to sneak into a truck; squads of policemen to prevent them doing so; and NGOs delivering hot meals to migrants. That's about it.

With *Ville de Calais*, Henk Wildschut reveals the complex reality of the so-called "jungle" very differently from any media stereotype. The derogatory term "jungle" evokes an illegal environment, away from the law, civilization, human community. With a simple title, Wildschut fights against preconceived ideas and imposes the notion of a structure. His images and his texts tell the story of a kind of "temporary autonomous area", as theorized by Hakim Bey, but far from the world of free parties. Here, necessity makes the law.

For this book, Wildschut visited Calais on various occasions over the span of three years, though these were not his first visits. He had already been there for *Shelter*, released in 2010. What is here strikingly revealed is the *ex nihilo* construction of a real city, in clearly dreadful conditions, with its habitat, neighbourhoods and businesses. This latter aspect is no doubt the most striking and the less media-documented. Hairdressers, cafés, tobacco stands opened. Trade geniuses, the "tobacconists" went to Belgium to buy tobacco in bulk and manufactured "real" cigarettes back in the "city". With a tight and subtle layout, Henk Wildschut collects the testimony of the inhabitants and follows the evolution of the city from its erection to its peak and its final destruction by the French State. And we come to consider that if Calais became the focus of such political fixation, it is not so much because several thousand unfortunates wandered onto this stretch of moor opportunely coined "jungle", but because failure to receive the fraternal support to which the Republic pretends compelled them to use their freedom to somehow organize themselves outside of its laws. Something power cannot condone. So "Ville de Calais" was wiped out. With unusual rigour and shrewdness, Wildschut demonstrates the absurdity of the political adage which claims that there is no problem that an absence of solution cannot solve.

French version published by Gwinzegal, Guingamp, 2017.
320 pages, 250 colour photographs.

English version self-published.



REVIEW



THE PROMISE

Vasantha Yoganathan

By Marc Feustel



Based on a foundational Hindu text dating back to 300 BCE, Vasantha Yoganathan's *A Myth of Two Souls* is one of the most wildly ambitious publishing projects I have seen by a young photographer in recent years.

Following the success of his first book *Piémanson* (2014), Yoganathan, who is half-French, half Sri-Lankan, wanted to undertake a project on India, but was struggling to decide how best to deal with its incredible complexity. Over time, he developed a project based on the *Ramayana*, an epic prose poem written in Sanskrit which follows Prince Rama's quest to rescue his wife Sita from the clutches of Ravana over the course of a journey from North to South India.

This age-old tale is present at all levels of Indian life, from popular to high culture. Today, Indians come to the *Ramayana* in myriad different ways, from video games, comic books (as Yoganathan did as a child), paintings, television adaptations or even Snapchat threads. This multiplicity of representations and understandings convinced Yoganathan that he needed to offer an equally kaleidoscopic view.

Entitled *A Myth of Two Souls*, the project is a series of seven books, one for each of the *kandas* (books) of the original poem. *The Promise*, the second of these books, deals with the theme of love. In it, Yoganathan combines his own colour photographs of contemporary Indian life with both hand-painted photographs and vernacular images uncovered during his research.

For *The Promise*, Yoganathan created staged images through a kind of street casting, searching for locals with whom to collaborate to perform a specific passage of the *Ramayana* for his camera. The collaborative nature of this process extends to another vital ingredient of the book: 15 black-and-white images which have been hand-painted in colour by an artist working in a traditional style from the mid-19th-century. The results are stunning, imbuing the photographs with vivid but often highly realistic colours that echo Yoganathan's own colour palette.

A text by the Indian author Arshia Sattar adds a further voice to *The Promise*. Broken up into brief passages interspersed throughout the book, her text is written in a female voice, unlike the original poem which is told from the male perspective. Rather than telling the story, the text acts as essential punctuation for the sequence of images, giving them the necessary space to breathe (a quality accentuated by the layout). Together, these many layers and shifting perspectives create a fascinatingly complex story, allowing the reader to form their own representation of this ancient tale.

Published by Chose Commune, Paris, 2017.
116 pages.



REVIEW



BUZZING AT THE SILL

Peter van Agtmael
By Russet Lederman



America is a nation deeply divided, with many seeking answers in the hollow promises of Donald Trump to “make America great again”. For millions of Americans who have been bypassed by upward economic and social mobility, the fabled American dream has long been replaced by dysfunction and decay. Peter van Agtmael’s *Buzzing at the Sill*, a highly personal and dark book that mixes journal-like writing with colour photographs, explores this American landscape, and his place as a photographer and American within it.

Situated within a lineage of photobooks that lay bare the American dream, Van Agtmael views America from a perspective that is influenced by his experiences as a war photographer in Afghanistan and Iraq. Opening with a seductive full-bleed aerial image of a shadowy landscape glimpsed through an ominous sky, he sequences photographs of people, landscapes and urban environments with short texts that share his childhood memories, family stories and personal anecdotes. Attached to the book’s back cover is a booklet that documents and expands each image. The reader is given the choice to approach the book’s photographs on purely visual terms or to decode them within a fuller textual reading.

As one delves deeper into Van Agtmael’s world, a more nuanced understanding of poverty, conflict and division reveals signs of hope and unity. *Buzzing at the Sill*, whose title comes from Theodore Roethke’s poem “In a Dark Time”, is not simply an exploration of America as damaged goods. Among many unsettling images – a young boy pointing a gun at his throat, a Klansman preparing for a rally, a black teenager who killed himself two years after being photographed and a crowd of Kentucky Derby revellers sneering at the camera – are photographs that reveal the wonder and beauty of daily life: an engagement party, an Iraqi refugee child doing a backbend on a picnic table, Van Agtmael’s sister hugging her child and a desolate stretch of night road lit by a “Jesus” sign.

Van Agtmael is profoundly aware of his privileged position. He shares: “There’s a great beauty but also a terrible presumption in taking the image of someone else and shaping it around one’s own version of reality.” Examining who he is, and how he interacts as a photographer, is critical to *Buzzing at the Sill*. It allows him to explore the margins and acknowledge the blur as he seeks to understand his homeland and his place within it.

Published by Kehrer Verlag, Heidelberg & Berlin, 2016.
160 pages, 72 colour photographs, 32 page booklet with captions and essay by the artist.



REVIEW



CONTAINS: 3 BOOKS

Jason Fulford

By Federica Chiocchetti



“Remember that dancing is not the same thing as staggering weakly back and forth between different impulses.”

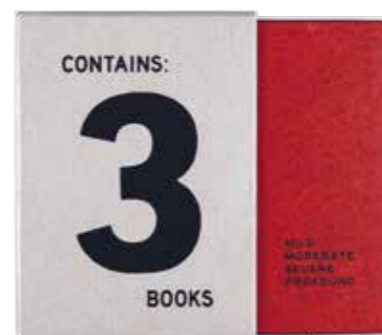
This sentence is an excerpt from Nietzsche’s 1878 *Human, All Too Human*, which Jason Fulford included in his book *I Am Napoleon*. *I Am Napoleon* is one of the three volumes of his 2016 slipcase box, tautologically entitled *Contains: 3 Books* and published by The Soon Institute. There, pictures and words “play off each other in an associative way” and the texts are excerpts from books Fulford was reading at the time, “sequenced into a narrative”.

Fulford pairs the sentence above, which could be read as a metaphor for image–text intersections, with a photograph of a foot on a stony beach that has recently come out of the water. Image–text dynamics entail a kind of dance for our eyes, which move back and forth between looking at the images and reading the words. It is the power and quality of their association that can transform a “weak, staggering back and forth” into a harmonious flow, a dance.

Words, as Fulford points out, can “add meaning to places or to objects through storytelling”, or in other words, the importance of words in enhancing the storytelling powers of photographs is beyond dispute. John Berger underlined in his 1972 *Ways of Seeing* that it is hard to define exactly how the words “this is the last picture that Van Gogh painted before he killed himself”, when they accompany a reproduction of his cornfield painting, “have changed the image, but undoubtedly they have”.

What is fascinating about Fulford’s approach with images and texts is that it is both fragmental and sequential. When he designs a book, he goes “back and forth between a macro -view and a micro -view”, where “each spread is an independent unit with text and image, but there is also an overall arch to the book”. He experiments “democratically” with different typologies of image–text relations, without promoting a right way to do it, but championing ambiguity and the reader/viewer’s freedom, as he reminds us in the prefatory note of *I Am Napoleon*: “I think that any book or picture or composition of any sort, once out into the world, so to say, produces a different effect on each person who seriously tries to follow it. I certainly do not think that the author of it has any monopoly in its interpretation.”

Published by The Soon Institute, Amsterdam, 2016.
3 Volumes, 216 pages.



REVIEW

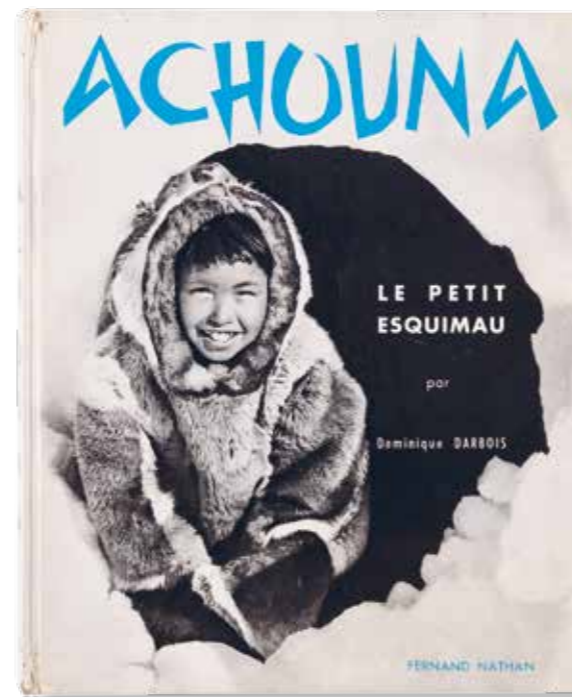
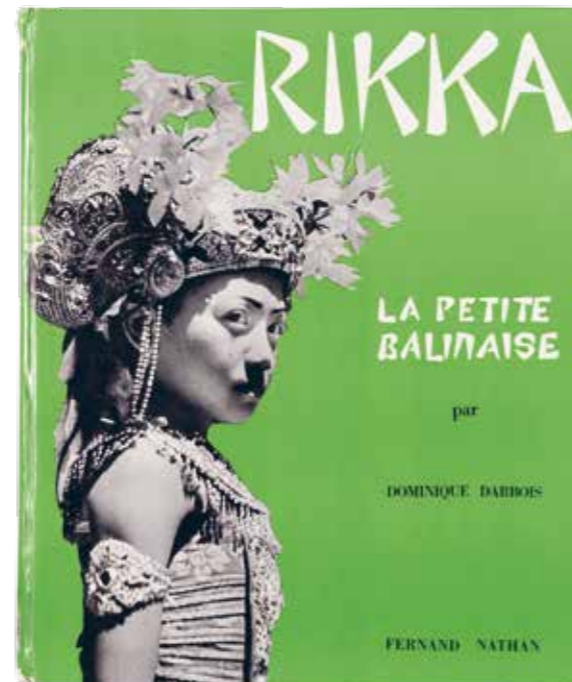


LES ENFANTS DU MONDE

Dominique Darbois
By Federica Chiocchetti



DARBOIS

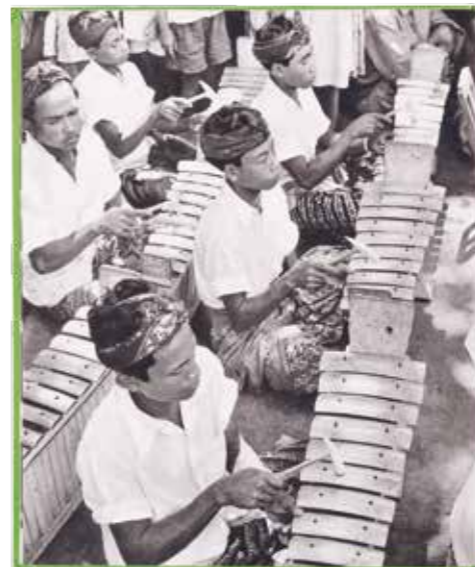


Any encounter with Dominique Darbois's Les Enfants du Monde [Children of the world] books, published between 1952 and 1975 by Fernand Nathan, inevitably provokes a bipolar reaction. At first blush one is mesmerized by their noble concept of exposing post-Second World War Western children to the diversity and “otherness” of children from remote places: *Kai Ming le petit pêcheur chinois*, *Rikka la petite balinaise*, *Gopal enfant de l'Inde* and so forth. You can almost picture little Parisians leafing through these books after the Nazi occupation and discovering a whole new exotic universe that bewitches them. Thanks to a number of graphic and narrative strategies, they could identify themselves with the faraway protagonist, as noted by the French university teacher Frédérique Lemarchant: his/her foreign name is printed big on the cover, and the perspective of certain photographs encourages the young Western reader to see this new world almost through the eyes of the protagonist who inhabits it. Coherence and seriality are key ingredients for a successful editorial collection. In each book an omniscient narrator introduces the young Western reader to a typical day in the life of the foreign protagonist, from morning to night. First a brief geographical description, then the main rituals and habits, the sources of sustenance and the food traditions, to end with a peaceful night full of dreams and stars. An unusual mélange of constructed reality and mild fiction.

Daringly outstanding is the books' experimental design. Imagery and words “contaminate” each other almost psychedelically, conjuring up “futurist” layout solutions. Black-and-white photographs are playfully hand-cropped and collaged, mingled with colourful illustrations, and texts are creatively placed anywhere on the page, generating different layers of dialogue between graphic design and content. Every single element of the spreads is a continuously evolving partner in crime, from page to page, to connote a specific sense of place. Photographs are cropped to form shapes of things mentioned in the text and drop caps are juxtaposed with illustrations that mimic important photographic elements that suggest the place geographically, such as reindeers' horns in *Aslak le petit lapon*.

The French critic Christophe Meunier praises the collection as “postcolonial” and in line with the ethnographic and anthropological studies of the times in which it was published. However, to the more “postcolonially informed” eye of our current times, these beautiful and important historical documents may appear problematic. No matter how genuine Darbois's intention was to explore the diversity of these remote children's lives per se, by avoiding clichés, moral judgement or comparisons with Western culture, her humanistic photographic approach, particularly with its exoticizing close-ups, somewhat fetishizes primitiveness. Also, the collection's simplistic homogeneity, and the omniscient narrator's sporadic intrusion with sentences such as “in India time does not pressurize you” or “you understand Bali's religion is not the same as the one in our countries”, may appear slightly patronizing.

Published by Fernand Nathan, Paris, 1952 – 1978.
20 volumes, black-and-white photographs.

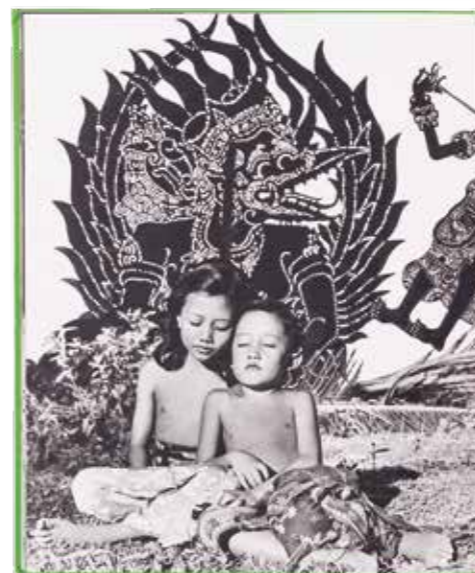


Les habitants de Bali aiment la musique et la danse. Il y a été chaque soir, dans l'un des villages.

Au bal, résonne un orchestre étrange, fait de clochettes et de gongs, mais qui chante comme une vraie musique. Et voilà qu'en approchant, je découvre des hommes assis à terre et frappant sur des lames de cuivre avec des martinet de bois doucement.

doucement, comme s'ils attendaient un grand événement. Les danseuses vont sortir du temple. Békka est très émue. C'est la première fois qu'elle danse devant tant de personnes.

Les danseuses, vêtues dans leur costume de soie et d'or, avancent. Chacun de leurs pas, chaque mouvement de leurs bras, de leurs mains, a une signification, car la danse balinaise est plus qu'une danse; elle raconte des histoires, toujours les mêmes depuis beaucoup d'années.

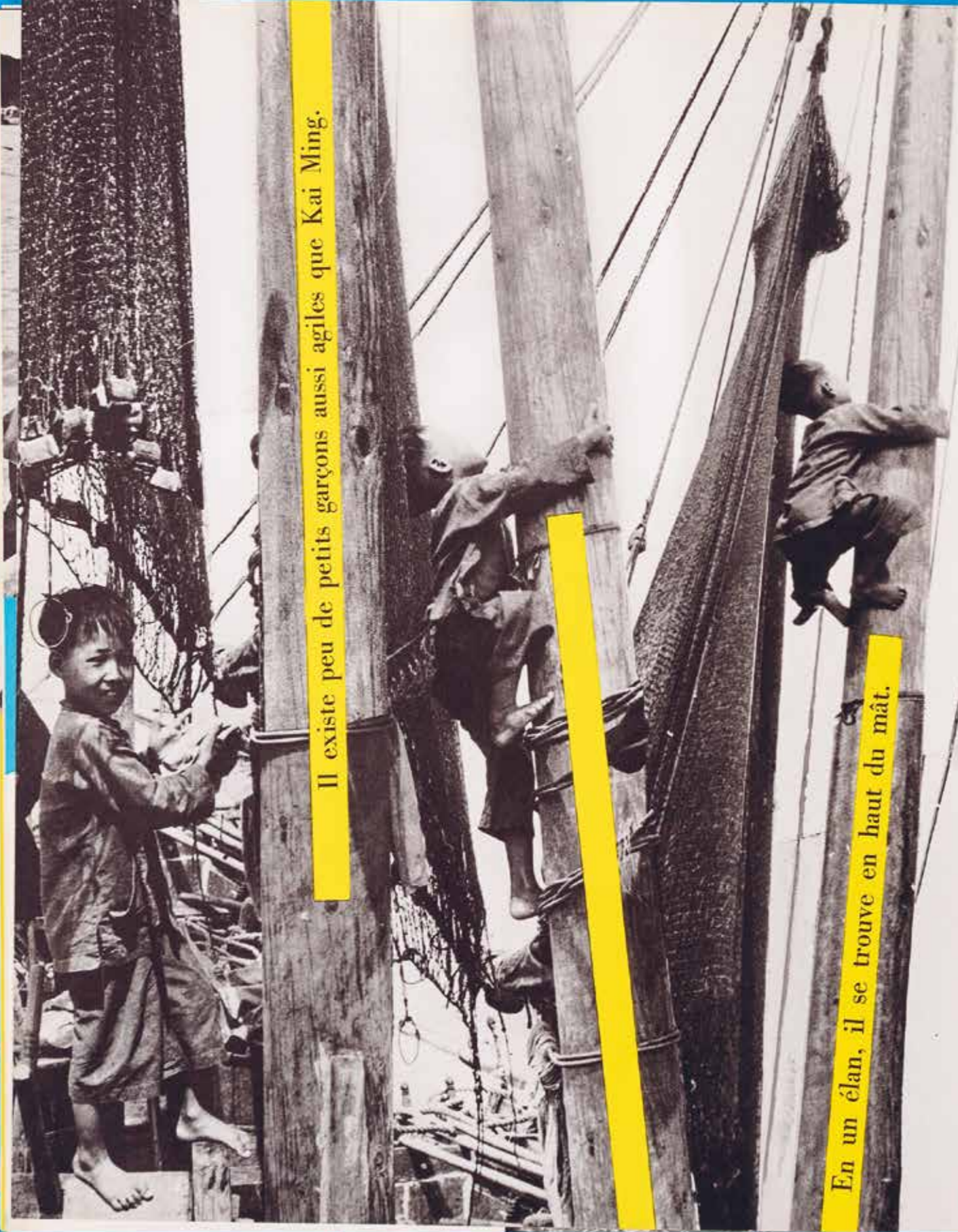


Le silence est venu avec le nuit. Mais dans leur rêve, le monde des ombres continue. Qui appelle Békka? Le beau Prince Arjuna. Et voici la Princesse qui fait signe à Békka. Accompagnés de leurs amis de légende, les enfants sont portés par les heures de sommeil jusqu'à un nouveau jour... Jour heureux comme hier... Jour heureux comme les autres.



Il y a est; voici un fil à la mer! Il s'enfonce dans l'eau, et que le poisson se laisse capturer, puis on le relâvera doucement, pour ne pas le laisser échapper.

Kai Ming ignore encore le nom de certains poissons, mais il sait déjà reconnaître le poisson perroquet, jaune vert, le poisson mandarin, plat à la tête pointue, blanc avec des pétales noirs sur le dos, le poisson tarpon, le poisson lune, rond et tacheté de jaune.



Il existe peu de petits garçons aussi agiles que Kai Ming.

En un élan, il se trouve en haut du mât.





Lentement, Achouma et son père avancent vers les trous d'eau, posant leurs pieds avec précaution sur les blocs de glace flottante qui pourraient les entraîner dangereusement.

Engourdis par le froid, éblouis par la réverbération de la lumière qui heurte les yeux, ils doivent rester immobiles pour ne pas effrayer le phoque. L'attente est souvent bien longue...

Heureusement, ils connaissent les courants et ne s'éloignent pas de l'anclage. Attention... il ne faut pas tomber à l'eau : les glaces empêchent de nager et peuvent vous écraser. Le père d'Achouma éprouve la solidité de la lunette avec son harpon. Il a confié son deuxième harpon à son fils qui, déjà, sait tirer le phoque.

Mais voilà qu'un phoque monte à terre... le père s'approche et tire. Le phoque, tordu à la tête, est mort. Il flotte. On le harponne et on le laisse sur la glace. On attend un autre animal, mais, quand les courants passent les blocs de glace, le trou se referme. Il faut alors repartir plus loin afin de trouver un endroit où, de nouveau, on apercevra un phoque et sa monticule blanche.



Mais les jeux immobiles ne peuvent durer longtemps dans le froid. Achouma tire Nounah vers le haut de la colline et, la tenant dans ses bras, se laisse glisser. Nounah a peur, mais elle est si fière de jouer avec les grands qu'elle se dit rien : elle ferme les yeux par moments, mais elle sait aussi que tomber dans la neige ne fait pas mal. Ainsi, des heures entières, les traîneaux montent et descendent la colline.



Les blocs sont posés côte à côte en cercle. Ils forment la base de la maison. Puis on les superpose en hauteur.

Toujours en rond, le mur monte : il atteint le visage du père.

Les blocs que l'on pose l'un sur l'autre, légèrement inclinés, se soutiennent par leur poids.

Un emplacement est choisi pour construire l'igloo. À l'aide d'une siele, le père découpe des blocs de neige qui ressemblent à de grosses pierres.

Sortir les blocs de neige est un travail difficile : il ne faut pas les briser et ils sont très lourds.

Une fois posé, chaque bloc est égalisé avec un grand couteau.

Le toit en forme de voûte se referme peu à peu.



La ronde : "HUMBO, HUMBO AVO NO KUN"

DO DO LOKO SA, LOKO

Humbo, humbo

LE CHIEN CREUSE UN TROU

NEW YORK SAUL LEITER

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NEW YORK

Saul Leiter
By Jeffrey Ladd



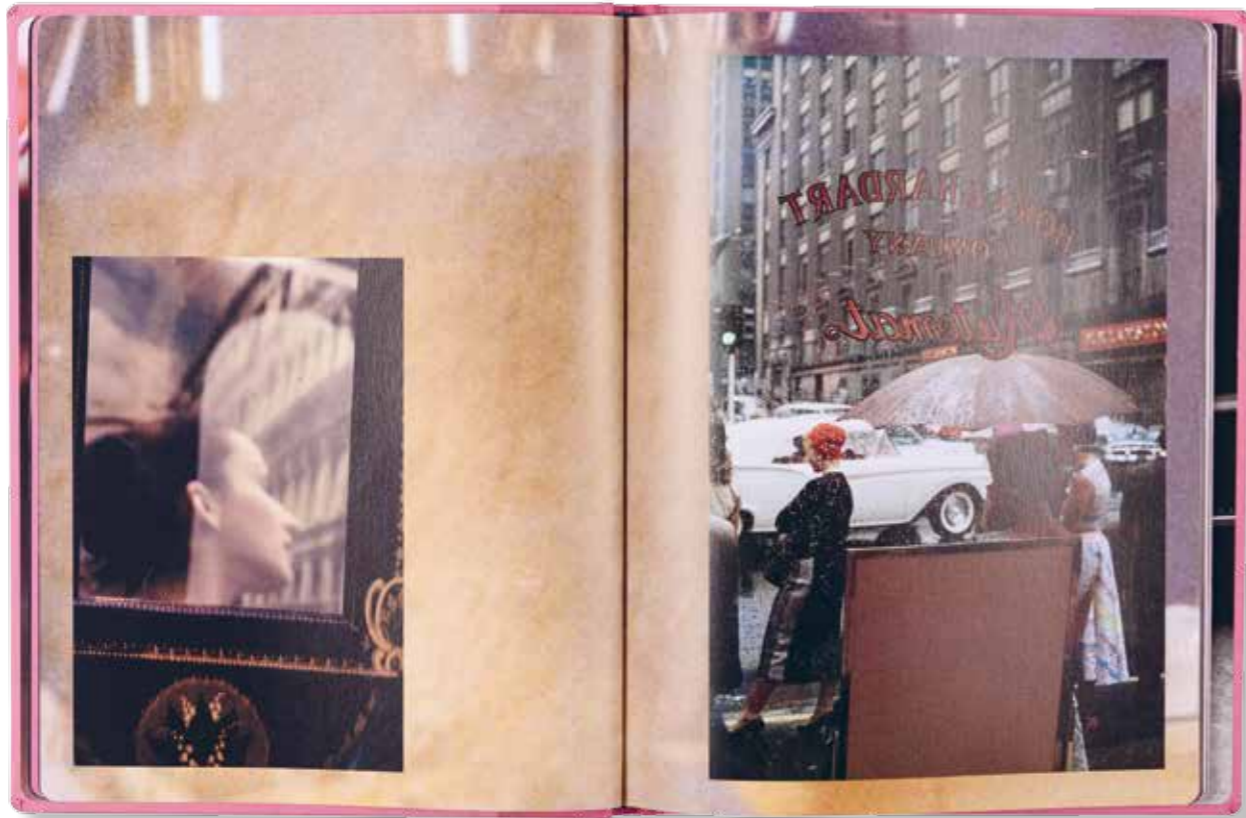
Within so-called “street photography”, several of the most prestigious names associated with the tradition – William Klein, Robert Frank, Diane Arbus, Louis Faurer and others – occasionally worked on assignment for fashion magazines. For most viewers there are clear divisions between an artist’s personal and professional pursuits that can result in attitudes of dismissal towards their work-for-hire as simple financial aberrations that fund the production of more meaningful work. Saul Leiter was one photographer where that line was less distinct, blurred by a sense of grace in his style that expresses the unexpected beauty to be found in the everyday streets and the fashion of the times. A new title in Louis Vuitton Editions’ Fashion Eye collection showcases Leiter’s vivid dialogue between those two types of images.

Leiter’s New York is not gritty like Klein’s punch-in-the-face tabloids or Robert Frank’s sad poems; his is one where, even on the fly, his entire colour palette seems coordinated, the set designed, the characters cast with care. Whether graffiti drawn onto a soaped store window or an advertisement for shoes, as this portfolio attests, both his personal street work and fashion assignments share those qualities in equal amounts that can anchor them together with ease. They show a version of New York so elegant and seductive they tap into a space in the mind entranced by the promise of glamour, much like that of fashion itself.

Published by Louis Vuitton Éditions, Paris, 2017.
112 pages.

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Kourtney Roy

AZIMUT

Tendance Floue
By Christine Ollier



The collective Tendance Floue is famous for its collective campaigns in France (e.g. *Mad in France, Mad in Sète*), Europe (e.g. *Nationale Zéro, Sommes nous?*) and the rest of the world (e.g. *Mad in China, Mad in India*). These works, supported and created collectively, are backed by resultant publications, as is the case this time again with the six booklets *Azimut*, the first of which have just been published.

For the project “Azimut” (“path” in Arabic), the “Tendances” invited other photographers, writers and artists to come and enrich the performance. For performance is definitely what this is about: an act of bravado against the current, standing out starkly, tracing the steps of pilgrims or the paths of 18th-century scholarly travellers. Defying the chaotic and aggressive currents of our society, this novelistic act of defiance takes a stand against our consumeristic attitudes towards time and space. These actors have become, again, walking photographers who cover and traverse the landscapes and countries while sketching random traces, those of a personal, mental and visual vagrancy. They surely had Jean-Christophe Bailly in mind, whose magnificent work *Dépaysement: Voyages en France* could be a companion on walkers’ solitary evenings. Following the philosopher’s example, they too do not seek to delimit contours, or truly try to document a territory according to a defined protocol.

The concept is certainly documentary in style, along the lines of a territorial and social approach, similar to the projects developed by DATAR in France or by Linea del Confine in Italy, or more recently proposals such as “La France Vue d’Ici” or the commission concerning youth or Grand Paris supported by the Ministry of Culture. Some of them record their practice in a documentary that they can identify with, like Bertrand Meunier who initiates this stroll with a black-and-white inventory of the banlieue through which he is walking. Similarly, Patrick Tournebœuf delivers the elements of the landscape that he surveys during a cartographic exercise. But that is not the essential feature of this topographical performance. The wanderings and writings are numerous, unexpected and beautiful because they arise with physical exhaustion, which frees the mind and practices of the customary reflexes. The roamers immerse themselves, breathing in the places they pass through; their vagrancy becomes immersive and interiorized, rambling from encounter to encounter, like Alain Willaume or Grégoire Eloy. Like all those to come, for the most part they walked alone. This is even the principle of departure, although with Tendance Floue the freedom to plan and do is total. Some, finally, took inspiration from the scenery of this hike in order to enrich their practice, like Kourtney Roy, who stages herself in unprecedented places.

All – or nearly all – embellish their solitude with encounters. Some have companions, like Denis Bourges, who shares his landscape impressions with a painter sketching from life. Others, like Meyer, make them up. On the whole, they relish the solitary

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Antoine Bruy



Julien Lafrière

Kourtney Roy



Gilles Coulon

Next page: Mat Jacob





practice of photography, the practice of the topographer, reporter or artist. Cécile Cazenave, who introduces the booklets, underlines their desire to re-establish a link beyond boundaries through “the paradoxical experience of freedom and the constraint that is imposed by walking. [...] The dizziness of the trail, the headiness of this rare availability to oneself and others, the unusual acuity of the gaze on what is around us, equally.”

This poetical performance comes alive again and offers itself for sharing as one flicks through the pages of the “Azimut” booklets. Each stage is constituted around a photographic journey that contributes to a singular inventory of France. The pleasure of going through these travel booklets is enhanced by the writings, true poetic moments that unveil the sense of the written among many of them. These booklets, which are already collectors’ items by virtue of their limited edition of 300 copies, are the timeless traces of a profoundly free artistic and poetic adventure.

Self-published by Tendance Floue, Montreuil, 2017.
6 booklets of 64 pages.

INTERVIEWS

The Eyes has recorded the account of two of the walking photographers, Alain Willaume and Mat Jacob, and that of Didier Quilain, who with Olympus has supported numerous projects by Tendance Floue, up to “Azimut”.

The Eyes: Alain Willaume, what does this walk imply in the relationship with time?

Alain Willaume: From the start, we cut the ties of daily life, we enter into another time dimension. It’s dizzying because it’s momentary. Slowness suddenly reigns. A single tie endures, a delicious tie, that of sending the photos and “words of the day” to others.

TE: You’ve photographed surprising beings and you give them staggering images, as though you had dived into a parallel world. How does one describe your encounters?

AW: The walk allows us to enter this world because time is distended there: the most anodyne of encounters can be drawn out there. You ask an old lady for a glass of water, and you dive into the story of a life. It’s like a hallucination, but it’s also very real, noting must be lost from it. One just needs to be totally available, with no aim in mind.

TE: In your view, there’s an important element missing in the article by Christine Ollier. What is it?

AW: This project reverberates with a need for solidarity in the profession. It gets the guests involved beyond an artistic measure. It conveys openness, fraternity, generosity, and engages the responsibility of the collective. Its future, already, is questioned: is it necessary to continue it by inviting those who have expressed the wish to take part in it? To invent, after the DATAR mission, a mission of a new kind, spontaneous, free and joyous? To cross boundaries? This potential is exhilarating.

TE: Mat Jacob, in your presentation you demand freedom. You have always been free in the way you operate. In what way is it different this time?

Mat Jacob: We’ve always undertaken ambitious projects that could not be produced by a single individual, founded on a simple principle, and guided by a desire both for

freedom and experimentation. This project is moved by a necessity: to find meaning in our lives and practices.

TE: During your previous projects, you appealed to writers, but this time you have brought together 18 guests, even becoming outnumbered! Why this openness?

MJ: These are times of occasional and fleeting commitment. It's a new experience. It may be that it will push us to question ourselves and evolve in the way we operate. Previously we argued for weeks in order to establish a common discourse. This time, a form unites us, with total freedom for handling the core. And this contrast: to be isolated in one's creation, while having the feeling of pushing ahead, together.

TE: The protocol sets down a walk of nine days solo and the handover. An ancient concept, symbol of collective action, that links you to the pilgrimages, Olympiads and crusades. A heroic and performative adventure, therefore, but also a political one.

MJ: The Kogi people of Colombia say that you have to "walk your words". That is what we are trying to do. In renunciación, a return to the essential, an alternative experience of the collective spoken language. Tendance Floue emits sounds in order to listen to the echo that they produce in the occupied cave. All in all, a children's game.

TE: Didier Quilain, you have long been a supporter of Tendance Floue, up to "Azimut". What motivates such loyalty to this human and photographic adventure?

Didier Quilain: I encountered Tendance Floue properly 12 years ago. I was immediately captivated. I found in them a two-fold quality: diversity and complementarity, which allowed them to develop collective projects that were just as creative and exciting as their personal works.

TE: "Azimut" underlines both the need for, and the virtue of, more cohesion in the world of photography. Do you also choose the projects supported by Olympus according to their social aspect?

DQ: One of the commitments upheld by the Olympus Group is precisely its contribution to society, which is realized through various activities: medical, scientific and photographic. This policy, echoing my own values, does indeed guide me in choosing projects.

TE: Photographers are setting themselves a return to slowness and spontaneity. What value does Olympus attach to that in the face of current technological advances?

DQ: Olympus has always been concerned with offering innovative cameras that are able to operate in all situations. Recently, it developed cameras that are both simple and sophisticated, light, compact and even tropicalized: hi-tech, for everyday use. Therefore suitable for the "Azimut" walkers. The OMD EM1 Mark II is passed on from hand to hand, like a baton during a relay.

FOR UM

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM: PHOTOGRAPHY EXPANDED

By Russet Lederman



Now more than ever, with photography's pervasive influence and accessibility, there is a need to create a comprehensive resource where its history and distinct roots can be mapped with depth and precision. In Britain, where experiments by Thomas Wedgwood, William Henry Fox Talbot and John Herschel helped invent photography over 200 years ago, an ambitious programme to make public the world's largest collection of photography is being realized at the Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum in London.

The plan, which involves the transfer of 270,000 photographs, 26,000 publications and 6,000 pieces of photographic equipment from the National Media Museum in Bradford – many from the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) collection – to the V&A, will create an unparalleled resource for the presentation of both the British and international histories of photography.

With a focus on photography as a fine art, the V&A, whose photography collections are part of its Word and Image Department, began collecting photography in 1852. The newly announced two-phase V&A Photography Centre will open in Autumn 2018 with double the exhibition space, a photography festival, a new digital resource and a new photography history course launched in association with the Royal College of Art. A second phase will further enlarge the photography galleries, introduce an open stack browsing library (in addition to the National Art Library's main reference space), teaching rooms and a darkroom for photographers-in-residence.

Photography and photobook collector David Solo says of the museum's expansion plans, "The V&A's Department of Word and Image represents a unique structure – and a set of outstanding collections, now even further enhanced by the RPS material – around which to explore and present the history of photography and its expression today both by itself and in books, with text and with other media. The depth and accessibility of the collections and the greatly expanded space to exhibit and engage with them offer the promise of a remarkable resource for those looking to explore more deeply."

The realization of this impressive multi-year expansion at the V&A will create an unequalled photography research centre for academics, the public and curators worldwide. It also establishes a fundamental rethinking of photography's value in the art world and its place within museums. With a breadth of materials that will surpass all other public holdings of photography, the V&A will be able to launch programmes and curate exhibitions that explore photography from multiple vantage points and with a depth unavailable at any other institution. As Martin Barnes, senior curator of photography, points out, "The V&A ... will be one of the few places in the world where a chronological history of the medium illustrated with original photographs, equipment and archive materials can always be seen. We want to reach beyond restrictive definitions of photography to embrace the broader cultures of the medium."



Alfred Stieglitz, "The Steerage", 1907 (print 1915),
Photogravure © Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(gift of the Georgia O'Keefe Foundation).



Above left: Rudolf Koppitz, "Movement Study", 1926, carbon print © The RPS Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Above right: Gertrude Käsebier, "Portrait of Evelyn Nesbit", 1902, photogravure © The RPS collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Below left: John Cimon Warburg, "Untitled (Flowers in a Vase)", 1903, autochrome negative © The RPS Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Curtis Moffat, "Abstract Composition", about 1925, solarised gelatin silver print photogram, © Curtis Moffat / Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Julia Margaret Cameron, "John Frederick William Herschel", 1867, albumen print © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

William Henry Fox Talbot, "The Melancholy Gentleman", 1838, photogenic drawing © The RPS Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

This reach could be realized through displays of historical photographers or photographic movements that would have the ability to present a photographer's prints beside his/her camera equipment, lenses, notations, letters, negatives and books. By providing this all-encompassing view, the V&A will have the means to close a long-standing divide that often separates the exhibition of photographic prints from their technological roots.

As one of the first museums in the world to systematically collect and exhibit photographs, the V&A already owns many key historic works. Now, with the addition of the prints, objects and archival materials from the RPS, the V&A will reign supreme as a must-visit physical and online destination for anyone interested in photography.



FLORIAN EBNER, FROM LEIPZIG TO POMPIDOU

Portrait by
Charlotte Pons



He shows the restraint widely attributed to his fellow citizens and the restlessness of someone who is finding his bearings, coming on board. And what a ship! At 47, German national Florian Ebner was appointed head of the photography department at the Centre Pompidou. He will work hand in hand with fellow curator Karolina Ziębińska-Lewandowska. Some may complain about the lack of visibility of the space located in the basement of the museum, but the collection comprising 40,000 prints and 60,000 negatives is one of the most important in Europe. It thus goes without saying that the position was much coveted. Even more so since outgoing Clément Chéroux raised the bar high – notably with the exhibitions on Henri Cartier-Bresson and Walker Evans. Why Ebner? “I have often worked with contemporary artists around the question of what constitutes the image today. And I know the history of the 1920s and 1930s well [which forms a large part of the collection]. This was certainly a determining factor,” says Ebner.

Past and Future Trained in Arles, Florian Ebner first taught photography at the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig, before assuming the position of director at the Braunschweig Photography Museum from 2009 to 2012, and then at the photography department of the Folkwang Museum in Essen. In 2015, he was the curator for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Throughout his 25-year career, he has ploughed a furrow marked by reflection on the history of photography coupled with the necessity of looking to the future. “I’m driven by the metaphor of Janus: one side turned to the future, but always keeping an eye on the past.” What does this mean in concrete terms? Notably, a specific way to consider scenography: “Contemporary photography teaches us to think of the photo object in less domesticated ways, to find other exhibition devices for historic photography, without glass or frame, in more direct ways.”

Acquisitions and Programme How does he see his role at the Centre Pompidou, this “machine” (in his own words) in which he admits that it is not easy to be entirely free? He underlines his desire to reach out to works “that reflect with relevance the shift from analogue to digital, that foresaw that we are going to be living in a large web of images” ... but also to revisit the second avant-garde of the 1960s and 1970s, to open the collection to other continents – “there is already a specific consideration for African photography at the Centre Pompidou, and it must be intensified” ... or even to increase “the presence of works by women photographers”. So much for the acquisitions policy. For the rest, the future programme, “while it is still too early to tell anything about it”, the point will be to “reconsider the major historical chapters and connect them to the contemporary”.

Ebner discovered photography with his father and his three brothers – “he had a darkroom at home, the enlarger propped on a changing table on top of the bathtub ... Rather Freudian, right?” He claims he is no longer practising. “I take pictures for the family. But it is not always necessary to click to serve photography.” He is certainly in the right place to prove that.

EBNER

Drawing by Mélanie Roubineau

DUNE VARELA: "ALWAYS THE SUN"

By Gisèle Tavernier

RESIDENCE BMW

Her project is entitled "Toujours le soleil" (Always the sun). Sixth laureate of the BMW Residency at the Nicéphore-Niépce Museum (Chalon-sur-Saône) in 2016, the French-American artist Dune Varela (aged 41) engaged in a "heliographic mission": to revisit the codified documentary representation of the landscape from the time of the pioneering expeditions, in the 19th century. She delved into the archives of the Museum searching for views of grottoes and antique monuments, from Thebes to Athens.

Then, the experimenter in visual creation went to Agrigento (Sicily) to photograph the vestiges of Greek temples. Back at the Museum, the images, once digitalized, were applied onto aluminium sheets before enduring metaphorical violence: armed with a large-calibre gun, Dune Varela sprayed the pillars of these monuments with bullets. A radical photographic act exposing the shaken pillars of Greek thought, as were reduced to smithereens the archaeological treasures in Palmyra (Syria) in January 2017. "These wrecked temples symbolize our Western democracy attacked by [jihadist] terrorism, which resorts to powerful strategies rotten from the inside, it seems, in a world lost between void and excess," ventures the shy, passionate militant.

"The prospect of showing the work right away at BMW partner events convinced me to go experimental," she says. At the Rencontres d'Arles, the exhibition "Toujours le soleil" sets the image's materiality against its fragility. Nineteenth-century views on blackened, shattered glass plates are associated with digital prints on plaster, large formats of antique constructions propped on pedestals like sculptures. "The critical eye of François Cheval, artistic director of the BMW Residency, fertilizes the inventions of the artist," notes Maryse Bataillard, head of sponsoring at BMW France. Thus these anachronistic colourized JPEGs: "Ultimate *mise en abyme*, these screenshots of temples printed on industrial ceramics had to be reduced to fragments. Will the digital image in turn become a vestige?" questions Dune Varela.

"The carte blanche given to a contemporary talent is considered the artistic side of the brand's research and development," adds Maryse Bataillard. For its centenary in 2017, the German car manufacturer has redirected the residency project towards prospective technologies. In addition to the grant of €6,000, the exhibition produced at the Rencontres d'Arles and at Paris Photo and the book published at Éditions Trocadéro, a partnership was launched with the Gobelins, École de l'Image in Paris, a pioneering school in animation cinema.

The 2017 laureate, photographer Baptiste Rabichon (aged 30), an amateur of ancient processes merged with virtual reality, will experiment with colour and collage on fabrics brought back from India. "The advances of the image at Gobelins meet those of the hologram, which is about to revolutionize car driving at BMW," praises Maryse Bataillard. Gathered in the collection of the sponsoring firm, 30 photographic works by resident artists already document the surge of the virtual in the 21st century.



"Temple of Concordia, Agrigento", print mounted on aluminium, bullet marks, 2017

Exhibition view: "Temple of Baal, the time before", print on broken stones, 2016

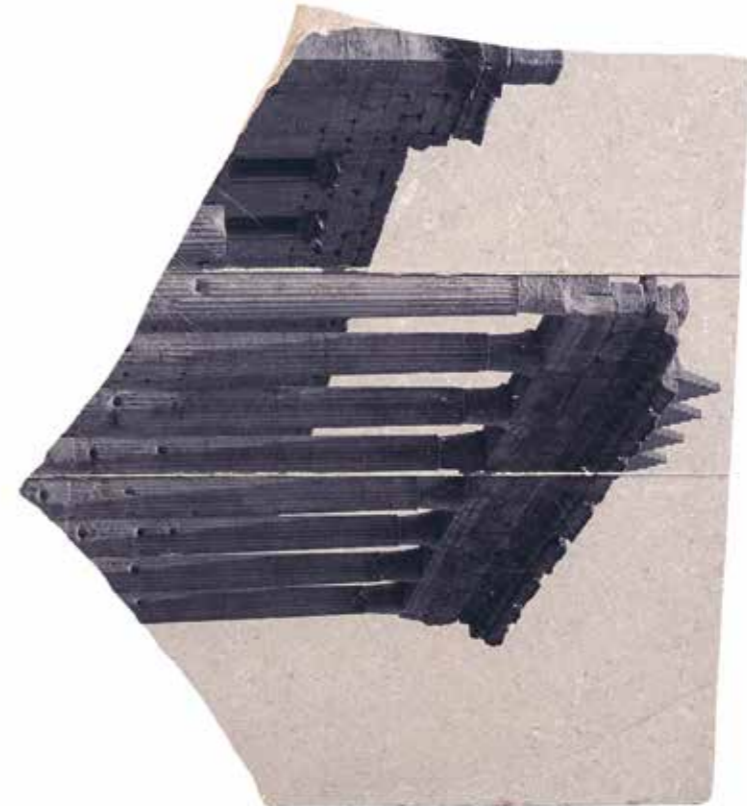




Exhibition view:
"After Malevich", paper,
black paint, papier,
2017



Exhibition view:
"The red cavern",
print on plaster,
2017



Details,
"The Temple of Baal,
the time before",
print on broken stone,
2016



MICHEL JANNEAU, A MAN OF WORDS IN A WORLD OF IMAGES

Portrait by
Charlotte Pons



He loves playing with words and would have gladly devoted himself to writing had wine not caught him “like the wave catches the surfer”. Michel Janneau, deputy managing director at Maison Louis Roederer, was heading towards a career as a university lecturer before “trying out journalism” then joining his family’s Maison d’Armagnac in the South West. Since then, his professional life may be devoted to wine but he is constantly building himself bridges back to culture. He joined Maison Louis Roederer in 1998, taking up responsibility for communication and marketing. He found something to appease his literary impulses via *L’Officiel de Louis Roederer*, initially an internal newsletter, today a glossy revue in which he writes lively contributions. As for the rest, he very soon grasped that advertising and marketing do not necessarily go with the image of the discreet Maison, and that he would have to find some other way of “talking about the Maison without talking about yourself”. This turned out to be patronage.

Grand Patron of Culture The opportunity arose when he learned that, in the basements of the National Library of France (BnF), Rue de Richelieu in Paris, a collection of millions of photographs reposed that this wonderful institution was unable to put on show, for lack of a budget. “I was immediately convinced that was what we had to do.” So, in 2003, Louis Roederer became the official patron for photography at the BnF. The establishment of a photographic research grant – “which suddenly got us a certain amount of interest in the press” – and, later on, the Louis Roederer Foundation followed on afterwards. In 2010, the company was awarded the distinction of Grand Patron of Culture for its contributions. There was no Grand Patron in the world of wines and spirits as yet. No one had ever been bestowed with such a lofty distinction before.

Staying True to the Photo Today, the Foundation invests in three strongly identifiable institutions – BnF, Palais de Tokyo and Grand Palais – and defends a very particular view of patronage: “Stay humble when faced with the rich, erudite world of culture. How do you decide whom to patron? Leave the institutions to make their choice.” Further, Roederer will not simply sign a cheque or drop off a crate of champagne at an opening, all the more because there’s nothing that Michel Janneau enjoys more than to deliver surprises – his delight when recalling the Guy Debord exhibition at the BnF and the Seydou Keita show at the Grand Palais is a sight to behold.

In 2017, the Foundation participated in the Rencontres d’Arles – a dream for many years – where it supported the Joel Meyerowitz exhibition in friendly partnership with Polka. Michel Janneau and Maison Louis Roederer experienced their premiere “in an uninterrupted state of elation”. No surprise – the Foundation’s plan is to “stay true to photography”. The Irving Penn retrospective at the Grand Palais in autumn 2017 sets the tone of the most glamorous of genres.

JANNEAU

Drawing by Mélanie Roubineau

MARTA GILI IS SHIFTING THE LINES AT JEU DE PAUME

By Christine Coste



This may have been forgotten, but Marta Gili is one of the rare international recruits of the last decade. “Except for Marc-Olivier Wahler who was appointed director at Palais de Tokyo, I was the only foreigner in the three shortlisted candidates to succeed Régis Durand,” she adds. The project presented in 2006 by the former head of the Photography and Visual Arts Department at la Caixa Foundation in Barcelona convinced the jury, in particular Alain-Dominique Perrin, president of the Jeu de Paume and precious support afterwards, as she got familiar with the management of a French institution and the questions of patronage.

To wind up with close to 11 years as director is a feat of strength. First, highlighting the monograph in the programme. “It was important to me, because it is an opportunity to reconstitute and enter into the thinking of the artist, to grasp the corpus. The Jeu de Paume has the appropriate spaces for this,” she claims. “Also, thematic exhibitions were predominant in Paris in 2006.” Thus, Marta Gili will be the first in France to devote a retrospective to Sophie Ristelhueber, William Kentridge, Mathieu Pernot, Valérie Jouve, Helena Almeida and Peter Campus; and to programme their first exhibition in France with Ai Weiwei and Taryn Simon, while offering novel perspectives on the major classical authors (André Kertész, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, Germaine Krull, Josef Sudek, Sabine Weiss, Eli Lotar, etc.) as well as forgotten, neglected photographers such as Bruno Réquillart, Pierre de Fenoyls and Gilles Caron. Often, co-production with international institutions is the rule.

Between retrospectives and original monographs focused on historical authors (Richard Avedon, Garry Winogrand, Robert Adams, Ed Van der Elsken and Albert Renger-Patzsch are on the autumn menu) or dedicated to a contemporary artist (Ismail Bahri to speak only of 2017), landmarks are created and reconsidered, artwork is sold and catalogues are published with their nurturing and insightful texts. The 2018 monograph dedicated to Susan Meiselas should be in the same vein. The work of women photographers is the other major line in Marta Gili’s editorial position, concerned from the outset about recovering a balance. In the past decade, 45% of the exhibited authors at Jeu de Paume have been women – a figure largely superior to that of other national and international institutions according to the 2015 ARTnews survey.

“When I arrived at the Jeu de Paume, it was clear that there was something invisible in the work of women photographers, whether in the interwar period or in contemporary times. There had never been a Sophie Ristelhueber retrospective in France, although she is an essential artist.” The same balance is found at Château de Tours, the other exhibition space of the Jeu de Paume after losing the Hôtel de Sully in Paris, with Zofia Rydet, Sabine Weiss or Vivian Maier, to mention but a few.

When Marta Gili asked Georges-Didi Huberman to explore the theme of “upheaval” for her 10 years as head of the institution, the commission met a need to bring to the fore

JEU DE PAUME



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1,2 Views of the exhibition “Joana Hadjithomas & Khalil Joreige. Se souvenir de la lumière”, 2016 © Alice Sidoli et Thierry Rambaud / Jeu de Paume.

3. View of the exhibition “Elena Almeida: Corpus”, 2016 © Alice Sidoli et Thierry Rambaud / Jeu de Paume.

Posters >>





Views of the exhibition
"Laurent Grasso. Uraniborg",
2012 © Romain Darnaud /
Jeu de Paume.



Views of the exhibition "Valérie Jouve.
Corps en résistance", 2015
© Romain Darnaud /
Jeu de Paume.



Views of the exhibition
"Mathieu Pernot", 2013
© Romain Darnaud /
Jeu de Paume.



other thoughts about the medium. For this woman of conviction with an acute political awareness, that theme was not innocent. The torments and conflicts of our times are regularly invited to the Jeu de Paume. Remember the various pressures from neo-Zionist groups during the entire duration of Palestinian Ahlam Shibli's exhibition, to the point where the Ministry of Culture considered shutting it down until the staff at the Jeu de Paume, after a vote, unanimously decided to continue.

Marta Gili savours the freedom she enjoys in her programming. "I have a fantastic team; our accounts are clear and balanced. The association statute of the Jeu de Paume means that my only interlocutor is the board of directors. They have always been supportive."

Today, Marta Gili is considering a new thematic exhibition for the year 2020. Will it be in the same political vein as "Soulèvements" (Upheavals)? "I am 60 years old. I am not going to change," she says while referring to her "concern about the function of art" and her "desire to see an evolution in the programme ... The Jeu de Paume must remain connected to what is happening. It is easier since we are not a museum with a collection." The director of the institution also mentions the continuing leaps in time. "After the photographic avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s, I will pursue what was initiated with Peter Campus and the 1960s to 1980s, years during which the use of video led to experimentations with the capture of the image and the body and their perceptions. The other aspect I will continue while simultaneously changing it is the Satellite programme ... The original principle by which a young curator was invited to suggest artists to produce new pieces has evolved in the last three years since collaborating with the CAPC in Bordeaux. From 2019 on, we will have the Mexican Amparo Museum as co-producer," she added. Meanwhile, Marta Gili is invited by Paris Photo to introduce at the fair a collection she knows full well, the Helga de Alvear Collection.



TRISTAN LUND, ON ALERT

Portrait by
Charlotte Pons



He says that what moves him in an image is not what it represents (“a photo rarely delivers solid facts, right?”) but rather what it suggests through staging and composition. A photo does not tell a story but opens an avenue, giving the impression that something is about to happen. In the end, a photo gives full rein to the beholder’s imagination.

Incite Project Surprising, indeed, since Tristan Lund is known to have been working for the last three years with photojournalist Harriet Logan on The Incite Project, a private collection focused on “politically motivated” images. In other words, photos from reports undertaken in countries at war and/or in crisis. Thus, photographs showing eminently concrete things. But that’s not so surprising when he explains that the project’s ambition is actually to remove documentary and press photography from the stranglehold of the media, which too often reduces it to mere illustration of facts. “We want to give back their artistic dimension to the images, not wait for decades till they have become more digestible to be exhibited in the same way photographers like Robert Capa or Henri Cartier-Bresson are now.” For some of the photographers whose work has joined the collection, it is also the opportunity for them to print their images on paper for the first time. “This is a way to stop thinking of the documentary photograph as an ephemeral image that people blink at while reading an article, but to make it an object of art that one would want to hang on one’s wall,” explains Lund.

Photo London The passionate man discovered the medium late. “I started to take photos when I travelled to Japan after my studies. And I decided to make it my life.” Back in London, he was hired at the Michael Hoppen Gallery, where he worked for seven years. “I thought it was a good way to become a photographer, but in fact it was the worst!” he says today, amused. No problem, though, because he learned that he likes to bring other people’s work to the fore – via The Incite Project and as an adviser to collectors. “My role is to be an impartial voice.” So, what guides him when selecting photographers? “The artist must combine a strong message with original technique. I like the idea that the aesthetic possibilities of the photograph go hand in hand with technological advances.” And he goes on to mention Max Pinckers and Trevor Paglen.

A vision he also supports at Photo London, since the organization has asked him to reach out to young galleries for the “Discovery” section. Sixteen galleries from around the world were selected and were asked to present one single artist, two at the most. His goal? “For all these emerging galleries to make the older ones feel lazy; to wake them up!” On alert. Probably what best describes the man and his accomplishments in the field.

LU
ND

Drawing by Mélanie Roubineau

CHRISTOPH WIESNER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF PARIS PHOTO

Interview with Gisèle Tavernier



The Eyes: What would you say are the emerging trends in the photo market at a time when the art market is led by finance, fairs are multiplying and the buyer pool is rejuvenating?

Christoph Wiesner: The proliferation of fairs is a phenomenon that also involves art in general. At the top of the photo market, Paris Photo fair was lucky to be a major international meeting venue in spite of burgeoning competition from London, Shanghai and San Francisco. The acknowledgement of this market is real, though it only represents 1% of world sales in art. Nevertheless, this niche market is gaining increasing space, split between vintage and contemporary production, part of which is linked to great names in the contemporary arts that reach records at auctions, and the other to be found mostly in galleries. There is financial – not to mention speculative – pressure, because the art market has professionalized. The young scene comes with their Master's degrees in art while swarms of artists, institutions, collectors, circles of museum friends and photography awards contribute to stabilizing a market increasingly substantiated and hierarchized. Even photojournalists evolve, like Susan Meiselas, whose work has found an expression that takes from the contemporary art installation.

The Eyes: Where does contemporary digital photography stand?

CW: By exploring digital photography that facilitates intervention on the images, some artists coming from the analogue find recognition when others revisit ancient processes. The Y generation (born between 1980 and 2000), which has grown up with new technologies and the emergence of photography exhibitions bringing the medium to the status of art, is familiar with contemporary digital photography. It was unthinkable at the time of such Avant-Gardes as Man Ray, Brassai or André Kertész! Another new phenomenon sees visual artists, often plastic artists, exhibited in institutions.

The Eyes: Is the photography market seeking to quench the thirst of the Y generation?

CW: This is not quite yet perceivable ... given that young creation is still protected from the second market in which the top prices come from vintage photography or artists recovered by the contemporary art world, like Andreas Gursky, Richard Prince or Cindy Sherman. Their works represent 25% of total sales, which is considerable. In 10 years from now, will the value of experimental artists like Thomas Mailaender or John Chiara triple or even multiply because their pieces will be sought after by the Y generation? That's the question.

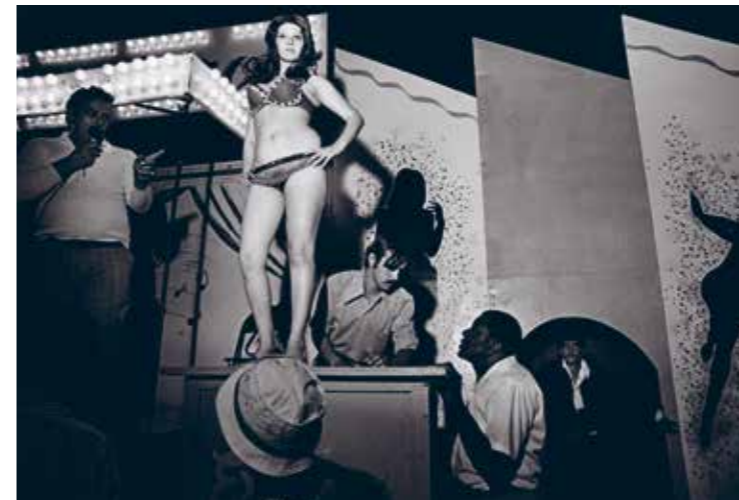
The Eyes: This year, in partnership with the Picto Foundation and Gares & Connexions, Paris Photo has extended invitations to 4 students selected from 50 European visual arts schools. What needs does this fulfil?

CW: The idea is that these future artists, who will be exhibited at the Grand Palais and at Gare du Nord (Paris), must improve their knowledge of market mechanisms so as not to

PARIS PHOTO



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1, 2 Susan Meiselas, "Untitled", from "Carnival Strippers", 1972-1975, courtesy Danziger Gallery.



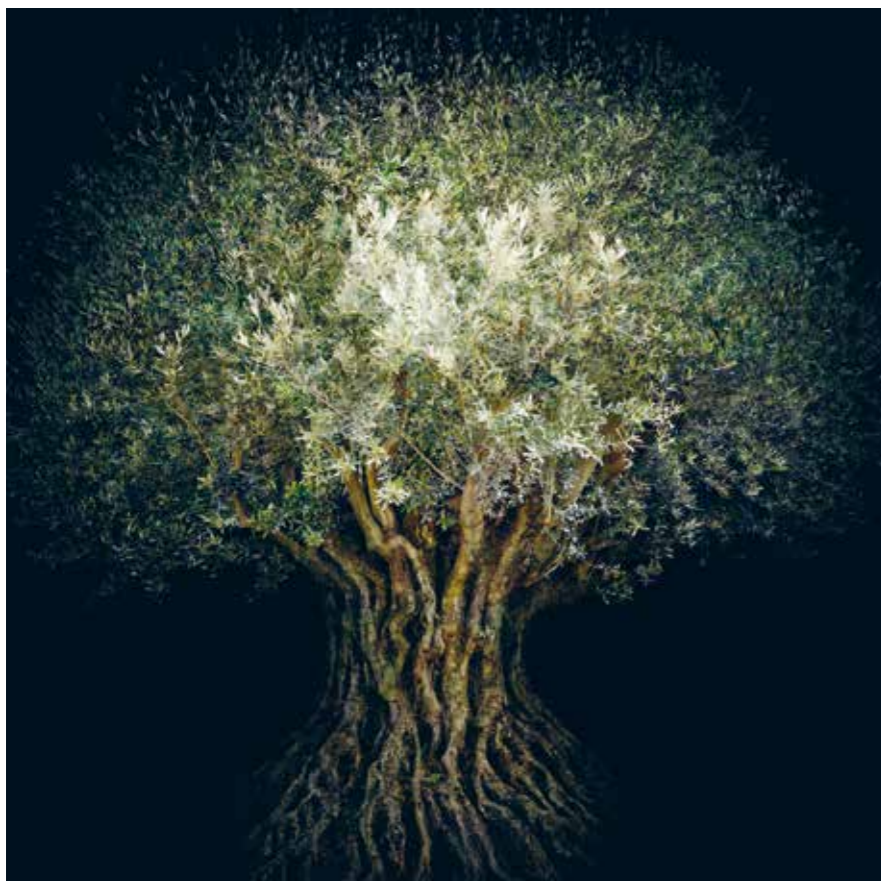
Tim Walker, "Alexander McQueen with skull and cigarettes", Clerkenwell, London, 2009, courtesy Michael Hoppen Gallery.

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1, Andrea Torres Balaguer, "Mustard, The unknown series", 2016, courtesy In Camera Gallery.
 2, Irene Kung, "Olive tree", 2007, courtesy Contrasto.



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3, Kalos&Klio, "Equilibrists of Memory 7", 2017, courtesy Kalfayan Galleries.
 4, Zanele Muholi, 2016, courtesy Stevenson Gallery.



Harry Gruyaert, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, 1981, courtesy Fifty-One gallery.

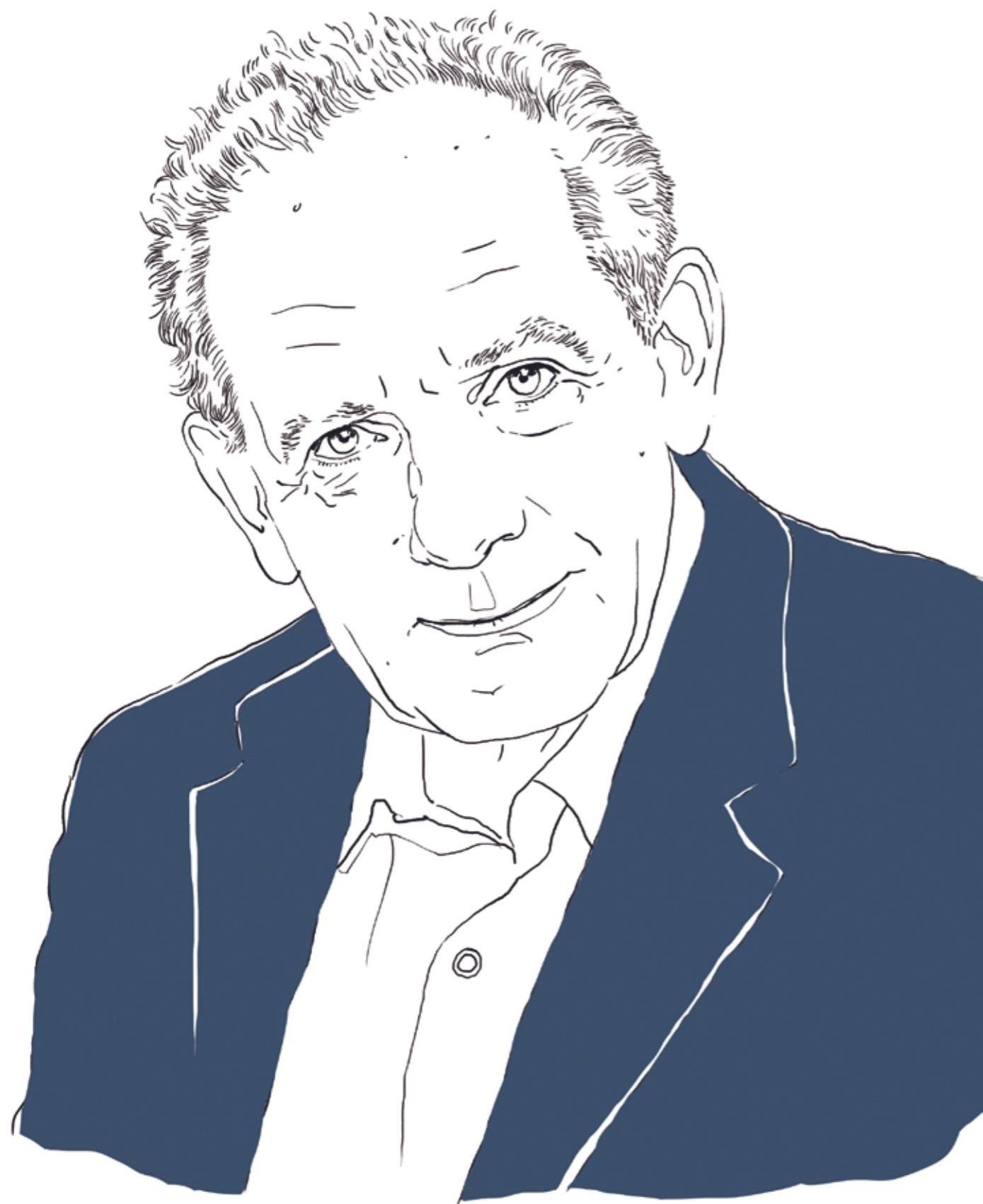
fall victim to them, and this implies creating platforms with the schools. The system has experienced major evolutions, in parallel to contemporary art, with the emergence of photography grants and residencies. At Paris Photo, the platform will give them the opportunity to meet collectors as well as museum and independent curators.

The Eyes: Is this also a means of feeding the market, when 700 museums are being created in the world each year?

CW: The point in bringing in new artists is not to throw them at the mercy of museums; it is about arousing their curiosity. The experience was inspired by the Introducing Award organized by Paris Photo Los Angeles in 2015 in conjunction with Californian schools: the winner and the six finalists have all since found a gallery.

The Eyes: The 2017 programme introduces artist films. Is photography, the still image, overwhelmed by the era of multimedia?

CW: Consider Antoine d'Agata (Galerie Les Filles du Calvaire) or Evangelia Kranioti (Galerie Sator): many artists work with photo and film. This addition is an opportunity for galleries to show their artists' films at the Grand Palais' permanent MK2 cinema. It will be interesting to see whether the generation which is today making still images and videos with their smartphones will now collect artists' films.



MARIN KARMITZ, A TRANSMITTER

Portrait by
Charlotte Pons



This is one of the most anticipated exhibitions this autumn 2017: Maison Rouge is hosting the Marin Karmitz collection, consisting of close to 300 pieces of art, paintings, drawings, sculptures, installations and a series of his own photographs, which were partly revealed in 2010 in Arles.

An opportunity, then, to (re)discover the story linking the film producer to photography; a link initiated in the rough in the early 1970s while covering labour conflicts for Agence Libération. The violence reached its climax with the death of the activist Pierre Overney. Marin Karmitz then put his camera away.

It would take another decade and the passion of Christian Caujolle, co-founder of Agence VU, to bring him back to photography – though this time not behind the lens but in galleries, where he discovered that photography can be something other than an illustration of reality: “An integral artistic expression.” The revelation came with Gotthard Schuh’s *Mineur*, his very first purchase, “and he will be the one to welcome visitors at Maison Rouge”.

A Dialogue Between the Artworks Referring to the print as an individual is very telling of the nearly physical and constantly shifting bond between the man and the artworks: “I need their physical presence, I live with them, they are not stored elsewhere.” He likes the endless storylines that each one holds within, continually renewed through their presentation, creating dialogues between the images. “What’s interesting is their various possible cohabitations. There are artists whose works agree with one another, others that fight against one another. It’s fascinating.” So, he quite naturally got involved in the curation of the exhibition at Maison Rouge. “I do this as if it were a film script.” In fact, the film draws the self-portrait of a man whose story is inscribed in the painful history of 20th-century Europe. Entitled “Resident Alien”, the exhibition explores the issue of identity.

A Transmitter More than a Collector Of his collection, we know the big names – Man Ray, D’Agata, Evans, Vishniac, Smith and many others ... But his desire, his role, dare we say, is to “show the work of photographers who are not on the market”. Thus, he prefers to consider himself a transmitter rather than a collector and deplores the way institutions “no longer play that role”, as he praises Witkiewicz [early 20th-century Polish playwright, painter and photographer], whose work will be on view at Maison Rouge. “His work is filled with modern art! He is Kantor’s master, who in turn influenced Boltanski. And yet, people don’t know him.” Bringing to light the links between the different art forms, periods and artists: such is also the role of the transmitter.

KAR MITZ

Drawing by Mélanie Roubineau

IRVING PENN AT GRAND PALAIS

By Gisèle Tavernier



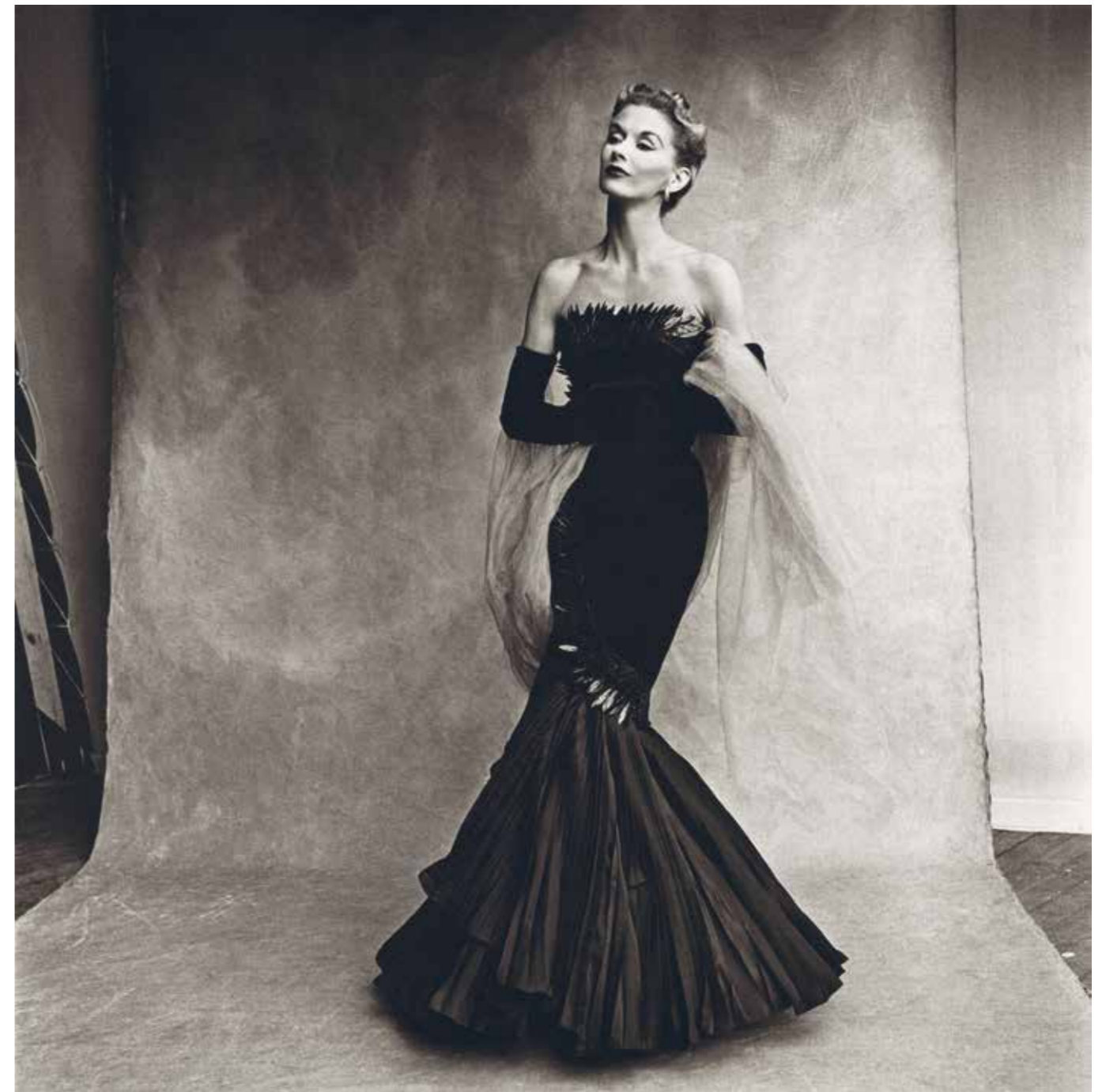
The exhibition organized in Paris in autumn 2017 marks the centenary of the birth of this master of fashion photography and sheds light on a peerless artist's pioneering quest for beauty.

An iconic American fashion photographer for the magazine *Vogue*, Irving Penn (1917–2009) would have turned 100 this year. A retrospective at the Grand Palais in Paris, co-produced with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (MET), celebrates his career from the end of the 1930s to the 2000s. What is there left to discover of his oeuvre of legendary elegant sobriety? “This master of 20th-century photography was above all a peerless artist,” argues Jérôme Neutres, co-curator of the exhibition. There, fashion hangs side by side with still lifes, cult series of portraits and nudes and street objects. “I have always been fascinated by the camera. I see it as the instrument it is, half Stradivarius, half scalpel,” declared Irving Penn who trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. A backdrop suspended outdoors across the world, a theatre curtain was enough for this photography virtuoso to produce such masterpieces as *Cuzco Children* (1948) or *Rochas Mermaid Dress, Lisa Fonssagrives-Penn* (1950). “Irving Penn was a sculptural inventor. He destroyed many of his canvases, arguing that the best brush was the camera,” recalls Jérôme Neutres. At the Grand Palais, where his studio is recreated, 239 sumptuous prints by the artist's hand, his drawings and paintings, along with a rarely seen film showing him at work, shed light on an innovative quest for beauty following the example of the penetrating “existential portraits” of celebrities – Truman Capote, Salvador Dali – framed in the acute angle of the *Vogue* studio in 1947–1948. “His style, a combination of meticulous precision and original shots, was born with the credo of modern art in the time of Matisse, Picasso,” analyses Maria Morris Hambourg, freelance curator and former photography curator at the MET. The fleshy Rodinesque nudes (1949–1950) or the series “Cigarettes” (1972), cigarette butts beautified by platinum palladium prints, shocked the public. But they did not shock the eye of his mentors Alexey Brodovitch, artistic director of *Harper's Bazaar*, and Alexander Liberman, his counterpart at *Vogue US*, who employed him from 1943 onwards. Playing with light and chemical processes, Penn likes to experiment, as is demonstrated by the four prints of *Girl Drinking (Mary Jane Russel)* (1949) which are juxtaposed at the Grand Palais. “His technical repertoire was avant-garde. In one famous advertisement, the strobe lighting revealed the bubbles in a glass of champagne. This had never been seen at the time,” observes Maria Morris Hambourg. Something to thrill the Louis Roederer champagne house, Grand Patron of Photography since 2003, which supports the exhibition. In Paris in 1950, Penn the aesthete excels himself in the art of simplicity. He organizes an *haute couture* shoot for *Vogue* in an abandoned artist's studio. Meanwhile a grinder, a garçon and other craftsmen also pose, inaugurating the famous “Small Trades” [“Petits Métiers”] series. At 83, Penn progresses to digital for his final series “Underfoot” (2000), of litter photographed on the streets. An artist's eye never ages.

IRVING PENN



“Truman Capote”, New York, 1948.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, promised gift of
the Irving Penn Foundation © The Irving Penn Foundation.



"Rochas Mermaid Dress (Lisa Fonssagrives-Penn)", Paris, 1950.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, promised gift of
the Irving Penn Foundation © Condé Nast.

"Still Life with Watermelon", New York, 1947.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, promised gift of
the Irving Penn Foundation © Condé Nast.



"Cuzco Children", 1948.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, promised gift of
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"Three Asaro Mud Men", Nouvelle-Guinée, 1970.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, promised gift of
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