



CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME

Press kit



ERIC BAUDELAIRE

EXHIBITION

20.05.2011 - 25.09.2011

**OPENING FRIDAY 20 MAY AT 6:30 PM
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ARTIST**

THE ANABASIS OF MAY AND FUSAKO SHIGENOBU, MASAO ADACHI AND 27 YEARS WITHOUT IMAGES

The Delme Contemporary Art Centre presents the latest project by Eric Baudelaire: an installation that recounts the political and personal journeys of the Japanese Red Army, reexamined as an *anabasis*¹, at once a lost path towards the unknown and a return towards home.

From Tokyo to Beirut amid the post-1968 ideological fever, and from Beirut to Tokyo after the end of the Cold War, the thirty-year itinerary of a radical fringe of the revolutionary left is recounted by two of its protagonists. May Shigenobu—daughter of Fusako Shigenobu, who founded the small group—witnessed it closely. Born in secrecy in Lebanon, a clandestine life was all she knew until age 27. But a new era began in her life with her mother's arrest in 2000 and her adaptation to a suddenly very public existence. The second character is Masao Adachi, the legendary Japanese avant-garde director who joined the Japanese Red Army and the Palestinian cause in 1974. For this theorist of *fûkeiron* (a movement of filmmakers who sought to reveal the structures of power by filming landscapes) his 27 years of voluntary exile were without images, since those he filmed in Lebanon were destroyed during the war.

It is therefore words, testimony and (false) memory that structure *The Anabasis of May and Fusako Shigenobu, Masao Adachi and 27 Years without Images*. Two intersecting accounts, mixing personal stories, political history, revolutionary propaganda and film theory. Two stories of imageless clandestinity in which images are nonetheless constantly at stake. They are completely absent from May Shigenobu's secret life, but they become the means of self-invention when she becomes a public figure. As a filmmaker, Adachi devoted his life to images. Even during his years in Lebanon he conceives of the preparation for an airplane hijacking as a screenplay, entrusting the role of making images from his script to the media rather than to a cinematographer. Did Adachi abandon activist cinema for an activism without cinema, or should the revolution itself be thought of as a film? No other filmmaker had gone so far in blurring the border between fiction and reality.

Here, the Anabasis is not solely a geographical allegory, it is also political and esthetic. The wandering of May and Fusako Shigenobu and Masao Adachi occurs between the Far and the Middle East, between images of reality and those of fiction, between a radical political engagement and an unsettling fascination with violence. Their paths are symbolic of the political development of a whole era: a radicalization that turns activism into armed struggle, then the gradual collapse of the ideological context of the 1960s, now coming to an end in a spectacularly depoliticized contemporary Japan. So many return journeys that the exhibition views through the lens of an anabasis as considered by philosopher Alain Badiou in his book *The Century*: "the free invention of a wandering that will have been a return, a return that did not exist as a return-route prior to the wandering." A movement that leaves "undecided the parts respectively allotted to disciplined invention and uncertain drifting, [...] a disjunctive synthesis of will and wandering."

Nothing didactic or objective is attempted in Eric Baudelaire's project; the point is rather to give space to stories, accepting the idea that a history of extreme leftwing terrorism can be nothing but the confrontation of antagonistic, ideological narratives, in a haze of fantasy, emotion, pain and indifference. A text in the making in which language and images are infused with fragmented, conflicting meaning. The character of May Shigenobu enables questions to be raised about the construction of the self through ideologies, myths, narratives, secrecy and the need to find a place in a world rendered more complex by the collapse of radical political certainties. The figure of Masao Adachi pushes the limits of complex relationships between art and action, cinema and revolution, terrorism and activism.

Adopting an experimental documentary installation format, the exhibition comprises a set of almost-monochromatic silkscreen prints, a booklet, and a two-channel film where the accounts of May Shigenobu and Masao Adachi are set to new *fûkeiron* images, filmed in Super 8 in the contemporary landscapes of Tokyo and Beirut.

¹ In his chronicle of the retreat of the Ten Thousand, Xenophon names Anabasis a homeward movement of people who are out of place and outside the law. The term symbolizes the collapse of the order that gave meaning to the presence of Greek mercenaries who had come to wage war against the Persians after the sudden death of Cyrus, their commander. The Greek army has to beat a retreat without any guide, without knowing the way; they go from being heroes to being foreigners in a hostile country.

ERIC BAUDELAIRE

Eric Baudelaire was born in 1973 in Salt Lake City, USA. He lives in Paris.

Through film, photography, printmaking and installation, he explores the relationship between images and events, documents and narratives.

RECENT SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *Eric Baudelaire*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, United-States
Unfinished Business, Gallery TPW, Toronto, Canada
- 2009 *Anabases I*, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, United-States
Anabases II, Galerie Greta Meert, Brussels, Belgium
- 2008 *Site Displacement / Déplacement de Site & Recent Works*, La Tôlerie, Clermont-Ferrand
- 2007 *Circumambulation*, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, United-States
Eric Baudelaire, Musée de la Photographie, Charleroi, Belgium
Acontecimientos, Galeria Juana de Aizpuru, Madrid, Spain

RECENT SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 *Void if Removed : Concrete Erudition 4*, Le Plateau FRAC Ile de France, Paris
Elastic Frames, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, United Kingdom
- 2010 *Watchmen, Liars, Dreamers, Concrete Erudition 3*, Le Plateau FRAC Ile de France, Paris
A Never Ending Story, CAC Sukhum, Abkhazia
Vernacular of Violence, Invisible Exports, New York, United-States
Collector / Recycler, Centre de la Photographie d'Île-de-France, Pontault-Combault
Public Image, Cooper Gallery, University of Dundee, United Kingdom
- 2009 *La Librairie*, John Tevis Gallery, Paris
Great Expectations, Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Photocinema, Format, Quad, Derby, United Kingdom
Just with your eyes I will see, FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand
- 2008 *Second_Nature*, Domaine de Chamarande, Chamarande
LA FOULE (contrôle-chaos), Espace d'Art Contemporain La Tôlerie, Clermont-Ferrand
Il faut détruire Carthage, Lieu-Commun, Toulouse
- 2007 New presentation of the contemporary collections, Centre Pompidou/MNAM, Paris
Replaying Narrative, Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, Canada
Watching War, Creative Arts Council, Brown University, Providence, United-States

PROJECTIONS & FILM FESTIVALS

- 2011 Rencontres Paris/Berlin/Madrid, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain
International Film Festival Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 2010 *Migrating Forms*, New York, United-States
Courtisane Festival, Gent, Belgium

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, United-States
Centre Pompidou, Paris
Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris
Frac Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand
Musée de la Photographie, Charleroi, Belgium

RESIDENCIES

- 2008 Villa Kujoyama, Kyoto, Japan
2001 Ucross Foundation, Wyoming, United-States

CATALOGS & ARTIST'S PUBLICATIONS

- 2010 *The Makes*, Le Bal, Paris
Sugar Water, Onestar Press, Paris
- 2009 *Anabases: Source Documents*
- 2008 *Site Displacement / Déplacement de Site*, Archibooks, Paris
- 2005 *Imagined States*, Actes Sud - Fondation HSBC pour la Photographie, Arles

PRACTICAL DETAILS

Opening Friday 20 May at 6:30 pm.
Exhibition open 20 May - 25 September 2011

Wednesday-Saturday: 2-6pm, Sundays : 11am-6pm.
Admission free.

Guided tour with Eric Baudelaire: Sunday 3 July at 4:pm
Guided tour with Laurène Macé (Visitor Service Officer) every Sunday at 4:pm

RELATED EVENTS

CONFERENCE OF ERIC BAUDELAIRE : THURSDAY 26 MAY AT 3:pm

GUIDED TOUR WITH ERIC BAUDELAIRE : SUNDAY 3 JULY AT 4:pm

GUIDED TOUR WITH LAURÈNE MACÉ (VISITOR SERVICE OFFICER) : EVERY SUNDAY AT 4:pm



LOCATION AND ACCES

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www.cac-synagoguedelme.org / cac.delme@wanadoo.fr

FROM PARIS (by train 90 mins):
TGV Est, get off at Metz or Nancy

FROM METZ (by car, 30 mins):
D955, formerly route de Strasbourg

FROM NANCY (by car, 30 mins):
N74 towards Château-Salins then D955 towards Metz

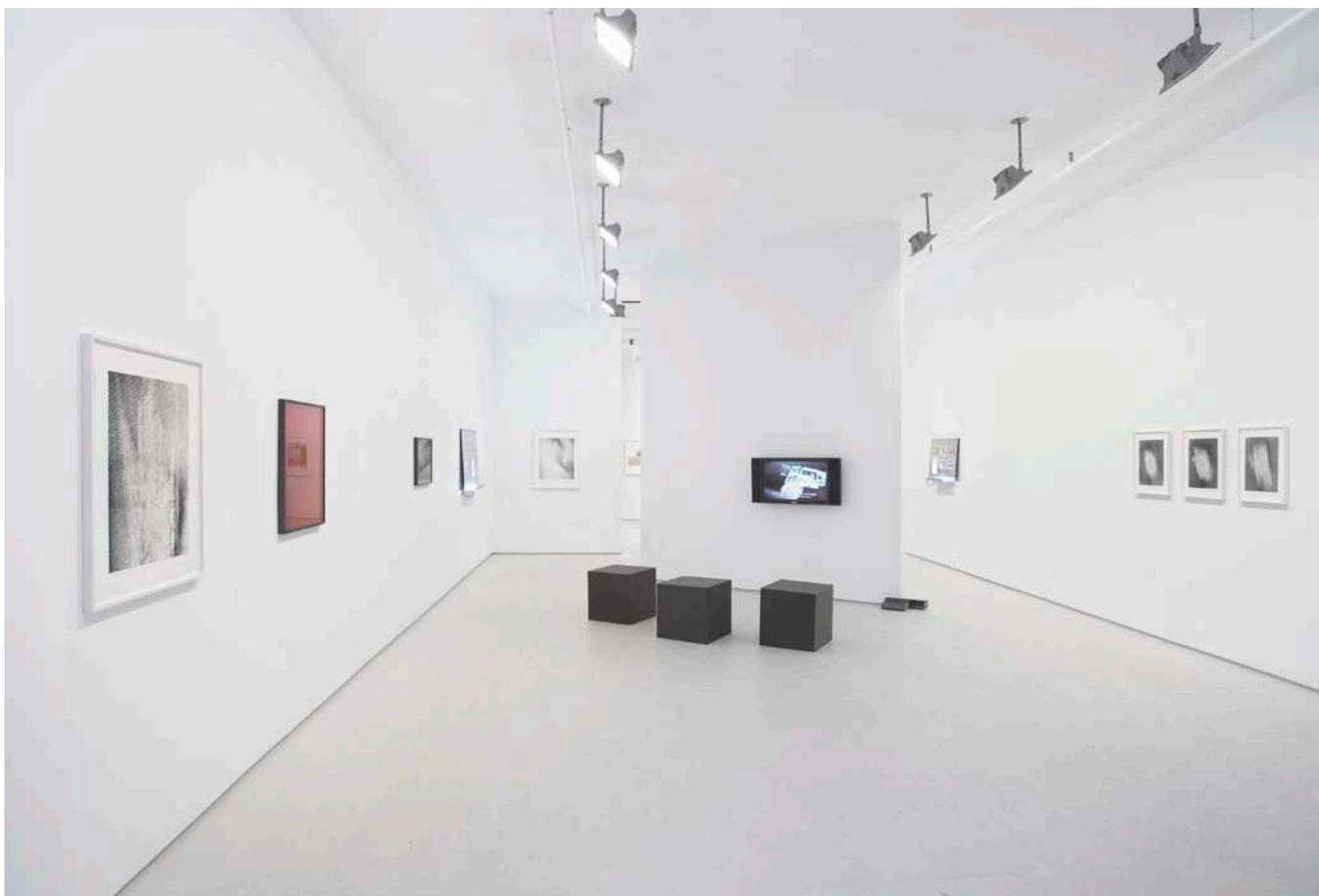
Press kit downloadable on www.cac-synagoguedelme.org/presse
Visuals available on request
Media Relations Officer : Agathe Borgne communication@cac-synagoguedelme.org / +33 387 01 43 42

The Anabases of May and Fusako Shigenobu, Masao Adachi, and 27 Years without Images received funding from the Centre National des Arts Plastiques (allocation de recherche) du Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication.





ANABASES II
Exhibition view
Galerie Greta Meert, Brussels, 2009



ANABASES I
Exhibition view
Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, 2009





The Makes (That Bowling Alley on the Tiber), 2010
 Found photographs, pages torn from *That Bowling Alley on the Tiber* by Michelangelo Antonioni, plexi, steel and fluorescent light
 Exhibition view, *Anabases II*, Galerie Greta Meert, 2009

A series of neon-lit panels with film-stills, reminiscent of the vitrines in old movie theaters. Among the black and white pictures there is also a short text, a page torn from *That Bowling Alley on the Tiber* by Michelangelo Antonioni. The texts are what Antonioni called “narrative nuclei,” ideas, fragments of stories, notes for films he thought about, but never made. They transcribe intentions that were often impossible to film, because they test the limits of cinema itself, limits which Antonioni is exorcising through this writing process.

Recontextualized within the vitrines, these narrative nuclei come to life with the film-stills that surround them, found photographs from 1960s and 1970s Japanese cinema collected by the artist during a residency in Japan. The vitrines offer a juxtaposition between an intention for a nonexistent movie and real pictures that have been isolated from their native narrative context. From this assemblage emerges the possibility of a film.

The process is reminiscent of Eisenstein’s collision-montages, or Aby Warburg’s Mnemosyne Atlas, since it delves into the unconscious memory of images and plays on the narrative possibilities that emerge from the space between juxtaposed images. But it is very much an assisted Mnemosyne, because the orphaned film-stills are put back into movement by a text that functions like a program dictating the reading of these images. The program deliberately hijacks the stills from their original context, transposing them to a new space, filling the void left by Antonioni’s unrealized intent. What feels like a remake, is actually just a make. Or rather the traces of a make, since there is no actual movie, just a ghost of a movie behind a document attesting to its possibility – a movie that exists only in the imagination of the viewer facing the finished piece.





The Makes, 2010
HD video
26 mins

Adopting the format of a DVD bonus track, *The Makes* is an interview with Philippe Azoury, film critic for the French newspaper *Libération*, during which an invisible cinema finds a form through an assemblage of various paratextual materials: ideas for unmade films published by Antonioni (what he referred to as narrative nuclei), found film stills from various unrelated Japanese films, critical discourse, real life anecdotes, and a correspondence between Barthes and Antonioni. The montage collapses two times onto each other: a non-realized future (Antonioni's), and a non-experienced past (stills from Japanese films we haven't seen).



[SIC], 2008
HD video
15 mins

In a Kyoto bookstore, an employee receives a parcel of new books. She methodically leafs through them, scratching the surface of certain pages with a blade in an extrapolation of the use of bokashi, a Japanese practice of self-censorship wherein obscenity is defined as "that which unnecessarily excites or stimulates sexual desire." In a poetic of the absurd, the film extends the bokashi gesture beyond the question of desire, in a ritual that doubles as a meditation on what an image does, or can do.



Of Signs & Senses is a series of heliogravures on rag paper. The figures on the prints are abstracted forms of scratchings, details from pages of western art magazines bought as is in Japan. The blown-up offset printing pattern reveals the scale of the original material, and the titles refer to the source, the place and the time of their scratching by anonymous hands.

The process leading to the gravures retraces the itinerary and mutations of a form. In the beginning, there is an image, the reproduction of a work of art in a magazine. When the magazine is imported in Japan, foreign press distributors manually scratch out, page-by-page, all visible genitalia before selling it. The *bokashi* is the space where ink was removed from the surface of the page. The gravures sample bokashi from magazines bought in Tokyo and Kyoto in 2008.

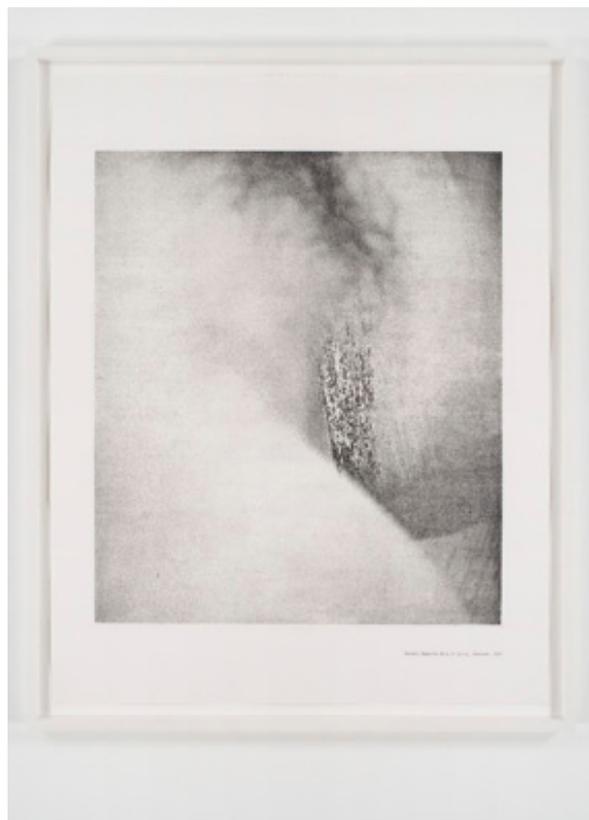
Japan is by no means a puritan culture – pleasure in its most deviant forms is quite freely expressed, and there is a rich history of erotic representation from century-old pornographic prints through to contemporary Manga. Cataloguing *bokashi* is less an attempt to address the question of censorship than an exploration of cultural variations in the approach to sexual representation. The gravures function as documents mapping the figurative relationship between desire and form (or form as absence), collected into an archive of negative spaces onto which different meanings can be projected.

In Japan, sex is a militant territory: *Pink Films* were pornographic provocations that emanated from the radical left, and Nagisa Oshima's *In the Realm of the Senses* was the vehicle for an ideological and legal battle that resulted in the current use of scratchings. During his trial, Oshima challenged the Japanese Supreme Court to define the notion of "obscenity" at the basis of the charges against him. He was acquitted as the court sidestepped any clarification of article 175 of the Japanese penal code banning that which "unnecessarily excites or stimulates sexual desire." A legal and semantic grey area remains (much as it does in America where a Supreme Court justice failed to define pornography more precisely than with the famous phrase "I know it when I see it").

This vacuum of jurisprudence is what leads prudent Japanese importers to scratch ink off an Avedon or Dash Snow photograph in an Artforum advertisement. Bokashi are quite literally an expression of a universal failure to use words to delimit the boundaries of sexual representation while artists have ceaselessly explored and circumscribed this very space beyond language.



Artforum XLVI #10 p.74 [sic], Yokohama, 2008, 2009
Heliogravure on rag paper
81 x 63 cm



Paradis Magazine #3 p.71 [sic], Yokohama, 2008, 2009
Heliogravure on rag paper
81 x 63 cm





Chanson d'automne, 2008
 Grease pencil on September 2008 *Wall Street Journal* pages
 72 x 130 cm

An assemblage of articles from *The Wall Street Journal* dated September 2008, a month rich in doomsday headlines culminating with the near-meltdown of the world financial system. Within these clippings, an alternative narrative emerges in the form of verses of poetry, as if decoded within the newsprint and materialized by markings in red grease pencil. Poetry revealed from within the fracture lines of a dysfunctional economic order.

The juxtaposition takes on a politically enigmatic meaning when we are reminded of a prior appearance in the media of these same verses from Paul Verlaine's *Chanson d'Automne* (*Autumn Song*). "When a sighing begins / in the violins / of the autumn song" was broadcast on the BBC in 1944 as a coded signal to the French resistance that the invasion of Normandy was imminent. And on the eve of D-Day "My heart is drowned / in the slow sound / languorous and long" triggered acts of sabotage behind enemy lines.

Chanson d'Automne treats the drama of the Fall of 2008 with a little poetic humor, while at the same time questioning what forms of resistance, either covert or overt, remain in play at a time when capitalism is in crisis, and triumphant theories about "The End of History" are being replaced by the utter uncertainty of chapters to come.





Not Yet Titled I, 2010
 57 books and a sound track of a voice reading the last lines of each one



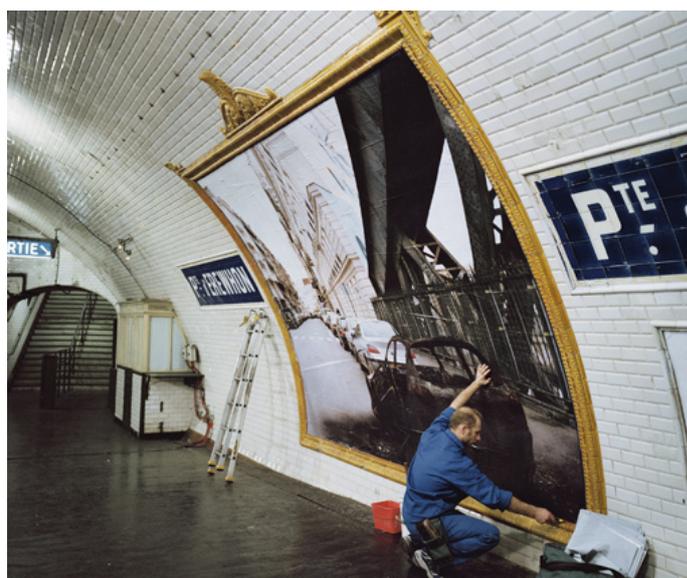
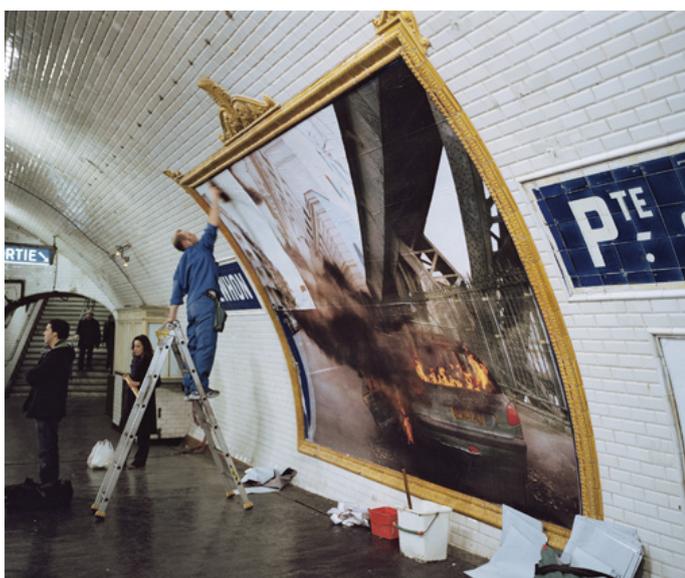


Blind walls, 2007

C-prints & gelatin silver prints, plexi, graffiti
120 x 91 cm

Exhibition view, *Circumambulation*, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, 2007





Sugar Water, 2007
HD video
72 mins





The Dreadful Details, 2006
C-print, diasec
209 x 375 cm, diptych
Commissioned by the CNAP

The Dreadful Details is the artist's most talked-about work in recent years. This reconstitution of a contemporary war scene (showing American GIs in a Middle Eastern setting) made in Hollywood and meticulously composed in the great tradition of history painting is incisive in its simultaneously emotionally immediate and protocol-distanced relation to current events. But far from being a provocative comment on photojournalism, this work actually questions the existence of a collective visual memory that could be described as almost "clichéd".





In order to give form to questions about the topographical determinants of a French city, Clermont-Ferrand, where he has been invited to carry out a project during a residency, Baudelaire privileged the metaphor of process rather than of form. The development of this city with its industrial tradition is inextricably tied to a single century-old business (Michelin tyres), whose production units, as is the case in many other zones, have been gradually moved out to emerging countries.

But it was not the traces of this industrial mutation, however visible in the city, that the photographer chose to directly represent in his images. Rather, he chose to refer to this phenomenon by reproducing this economic process at the level of his own practice. Picking up on an announced project – which was later indefinitely postponed – for a joint venture, involving the construction of an overseas Michelin factory in Bombay, he sent the photographs he took in Clermont-Ferrand to an Indian photographer that he knows and hires him to produce a series of similar photographs that would act as (Indian) echoes of his views of Auvergne's capital city. This act of artistic twinning is neither documentary in nature nor is it a simple denunciation of a significant economic situation and its possible social consequences. Rather, the project itself functions as an activation of the concept of subcontracting and outsourcing. The result, which is striking (it is almost impossible to distinguish the origin of the photographs) extends the work's concern to the topographical uniformity induced by globalisation.



Site Displacement / Déplacement de Site shows clearly how Baudelaire manages to transfer the critical thrust of his work from the political to the artistic domain, by opting to address the fundamental themes of the representation (globalization, outsourcing, subcontracting) through a manipulation of the rules of his own medium. This general strategy of displacement and evasion unfolds the issues rather than circumscribes them, and opens up a multitude of perspectives.

Site Displacement / Déplacement de site, 2008
22 C-prints
Variable dimensions





Imagined States, 2005
 C-print, diasec
 Exhibition view, Phillips de Pury, New York, 2006

The title “Imagined States” echoes a tradition of fictional literature. It summons up images of faraway lands, conquest and dreams. But these imagined States are not, however, the *imaginary* states that they first bring to mind. They strive to give shape to the dreams of peoples in search of a constructed identity; whereas imaginary states would be founded more on an artist’s projection in a fantasy universe. The photographs of “Imagined States” must therefore be understood as an elaboration on imagined constructs of the State which, although explicitly artistic, is nevertheless informed by reality. The imagined States physically exist; they are on maps and have their own history and geopolitics – as we shall see later. Nothing imaginary here, only the imagination of an artist: the terrain in which he carries out his own esthetic experiments. How, therefore, does one photograph the longing for Statehood? The State as a state of mind? A State without borders, without a legitimate flag: a theoretical State. How does one photograph a utopia, that other name that Thomas More gave to the ideal State?

Texts about *The Dreadful Details* and *Site Displacement / Déplacement* :
Site Displacement / Déplacement de Site, text by Guillaume Désanges, ed. Archibooks, 2008
 Text about *Imagined States* :
États Imaginés, text by Michel Poivert, ed. Actes Sud, 2005



LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME, CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART



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Registrar

The Centre for contemporary Art in Delme is located in a former synagogue, built in an Oriental style in the late nineteenth century. Not least among its special features are a dome, an arcaded entryway decorated with latticework, and windows with geometric stained glass.

The synagogue was partly destroyed during the Second World War. The outer walls survived, but the interior was rebuilt along stricter lines after the war. The synagogue was permanently de-consecrated in the early 1980s for lack of sufficient numbers of worshippers. The first art exhibition was held in 1993.

The many artists who have exhibited in this unusual venue in the past fifteen years, generating an identity and reputation for the art center both locally and internationally, include: Daniel Buren, Ann Veronica Janssens, Jean-Marc Bustamante, François Morellet, Tadashi Kawamata, Stéphane Dafflon, Delphine Coindet, Jeppe Hein, Jugnet & Clairet, Peter Downsbrough and, more recently, Katinka Bock, Julien Prévieux, Gianni Motti, Yona Friedman...

All have developed a special view of the venue by creating site specific works. In addition to three or four temporary shows presented in the former synagogue every year, the Delme art center manages an artist-in-residence program in the village of Lindre-Basse in the heart of the Lorraine regional park area.

The Delme synagogue, of modest size and located in a rural region of Lorraine, has always positioned itself as an art lab, a site of artistic exploration and production. The art center makes a concerted effort to establish a dialogue with all potential audiences, focusing on the local area.

La synagogue de Delme Centre for Contemporary Art is grateful for support from the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Lorraine contemporary art authority (DRAC), the regional and departmental governments of Lorraine and Moselle, and the municipality of Delme.



La synagogue de Delme Centre for Contemporary Art is a member of DCA—Association pour le Développement des Centres d'Art.

Photo : O.H.Dancy



LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME - CONTEMPORARY ART CENTRE/ ERIC BAUDELAIRE THE ANABASIS/ 20.05.2011-25.09.2011
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PROGRAMME 2011

NEXT EXHIBITION:

LES 1000 RÊVES DE STELLAVISTA / THE THOUSAND DREAMS OF STELLAVISTA

Group Exhibition

Curation: Christophe Berdaguer & Marie Péjus, Marie Cozette

Dates: mid-October 2011 to January 2012

The exhibition explores the question of architecture as it relates to ghosts, to the archaeology of usages and to memory, while also touching on the manner in which this memory can remain alive in time despite the sedimentation of past usages. The exhibition's title is a reference to a short story by J. G. Ballard, in which the author conjures up a strange city whose houses retain in memory the psychology of successive inhabitants. These houses continue to react and transform in line with their owners' affects, as if they were physical extensions of their moods.

This exhibition project echoes a public commission in progress at Delme, conceived by the artistic duo Berdaguer & Péjus.

PUBLIC COMMISSION IN PROGRESS:

GUE(O)ST HOUSE, CHRISTOPHE BERDAGUER & MARIE PÉJUS

With their Gue(o)st house project, Berdaguer & Péjus take a fresh slant on approaches to the Centre for Contemporary Art – La Synagogue de Delme, designing new spaces for public and artists alike. Behind the centre is a sculpture embracing a disused building which, once a prison and then a funeral parlour, is now the cornerstone of a life-size "psychoarchitecture". Making play with the structure's archaeology and its ghosts, the artists are creating an architectural phantasmagoria: totally encased, the original literally dilates and overflows its boundaries.

