



My Buenos Aires

la maison rouge

exhibition
from June 20th until
September 20th, 2015

Press Kit

This exhibition has the support
of the City of Buenos Aires



Buenos Aires Ciudad

My Buenos Aires

exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015

opening preview Friday, June 19th from 6pm to 9pm

press preview from 9.30am to 11.30am

curators:

Paula Aisemberg and Albertine de Galbert

My Buenos Aires at la maison rouge continues a series of exhibitions that showcases the art scene in cities worldwide. The series was launched in summer 2011 with Winnipeg, Canada, followed in 2013 by Johannesburg, South Africa. Some regret what they see as a “standardized” art world, laying the blame at globalization’s door, and so this seemed the opportune moment to look at centres of creativity which, though out of the spotlight, enjoy a thriving art scene of works infused with the city, its territory, history and myths.

Buenos Aires, a mystery reinvented

A mirror city, established twice (in 1536 and then again in 1580), “Our Lady of the Fair Winds” stands on *Río de la Plata*, the “silver river” that gave the country its name. Buenos Aires extends over two hundred square kilometres and is home to three million *porteños* (“port-dwellers” in Spanish). The Greater Buenos Aires conurbation has a population of fifteen and a half million, making it Latin America’s third most-populated agglomeration after Mexico City and São Paulo.

Described by Malraux as “the capital of an empire that never existed”, Buenos Aires fuels many fantasies. The mere mention of tango or beef, of Borges or Maradona, of Argentinean beauties will plunge anyone, even someone who has never set foot in the city, into dreamy nostalgia.

The visual and cultural familiarity that greets a European visitor can disappoint those in search of instant exoticism and pre-packaged emotions. Yet this is precisely where its power of seduction lies; in the (un)acquaintance of what we find when we peel away the masks of this tentacular city, which in 1914 was home to as many immigrants as Argentineans and where still today 40% of its residents were born elsewhere.

Buenos Aires is a child of immigration, whether voluntary or forced; a city haunted by absence. To live there is to accept estrangement and to overcome loss. Hardly surprisingly then, Buenos Aires shares New York’s love of psychoanalysis, and has one therapist for every 120 inhabitants.

Seductive, Buenos Aires is no less sombre. It bears the stigmata of violence endured, of uprooting, dictatorship and the mourning of the many disappearances including, since the financial and economic crisis of 2001, that of its own image as a “major European power” that would inexplicably have alighted on the American continent.

The public protests that arose following the 2001 crisis have shown a capacity for counterpower that has no equivalent in the history of modern nations. Even in the throes of crisis, strikes and the pillaging of recent decades, Argentineans continue to wield sarcasm, dark humour and irony as a remedy against resignation.

A chameleon city, Buenos Aires comes with all the accoutrements of a modern conurbation – urban violence, air and noise pollution – yet behind



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My Buenos Aires

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the jacarandas that line its avenues it conserves the extraordinary capacity to reinvent itself and to reveal, unabashedly and sometimes even brutally, the pressing need to live better.

An artistic community that stand together

Authors and actors from all disciplines have in them this extraordinary and also determined capacity for reinvention. In the visual arts, decades of crisis and “getting by” have at least forged a community of artists who, irrespective of rivalries and conflicting views, face adversity as one.

Artists have responded to the lack of infrastructures and learning opportunities by throwing open their studios, hosting *charlas* (group discussions) where ideas can be brought out into the open. Those who do manage to enter the global art market willingly put their own money into supporting local creation. The grant endowed by painter Guillermo Kuitca, for example, gave an entire generation of artists between 1991 and 2011 access to a studio, and to critical and technical support with which to develop their work. *Bola de nieve* (“snowball”), a free website set up in 2005 by *Ramona* magazine, is a database of images where each artist invites another, thereby forming an endless chain. 1,135 artists now show their work there. In a similar spirit, an artist might often recommend visiting another artist’s studio, even when this means putting off visits to his or her own studio to another day.

A compelling movement

In the space of a few years, the map of Buenos Aires contemporary art has undergone substantial transformation to become more evenly spread

between the city’s various neighbourhoods. Little by little, the art scene is moving away from the centre. Ruth Benzacar’s gallery, now in its fiftieth year, is leaving the historic Calle Florida for new premises west of the Palermo neighbourhood. New venues are opening in the north, such as Hotel de Inmigrantes. Further north still, the Haroldo Conti Memorial Cultural Centre includes a sculpture park that pays tribute to the men and women who disappeared during the dictatorship, and a cultural centre showing contemporary art. Di Tella, a private university with a famous past, launched an experimental research programme in 2010 under the directorship of the historian and curator Inés Katzenstein. To the south of the city, new director Victoria Noorthoorn is revolutionising the Buenos Aires Modern Art Museum (MAMBA).

The microcentro remains the city’s nerve centre at the heart of its history, and is still the site of numerous art venues, including the Fundación Osde, and galleries. The disgruntled still march on Plaza de Mayo while artists have begun to install works under the obelisk. This reconfiguration of Buenos Aires’ art venues symbolises a city that is gaining momentum, spreading its wings ready to fly. The direction it will take remains to be seen.

Cultural Policy

The city’s Culture Department is behind a number of initiatives which support this quality cultural provision.

The Patronage Law has forged stronger ties between business and the worlds of art and culture by encouraging the private sector to become involved with projects of cultural significance for the city. In a similar vein, thanks to the creation and development of the city’s southern zone (Polo Sur), artists have been able to revive parts of Buenos Aires which for decades languished outside the main exhibition circuits. Initiatives such



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as the arts district (Distrito de las Artes), the art factory (Usina del Arte), and numerous theatres, cultural centres and exhibition spaces have breathed new life into the south of the city whose industrial landscape now offers something new.

For several years, the successful Tandem programme has enabled art and culture taking place in Buenos Aires to resonate with comparable projects in other capital cities around the world, including Madrid, Amsterdam, Medellín and Paris.

Taking art into public spaces, installing sculptures in the city's squares, organising open-air performances, launching new circuits such as in Calle Florida or the Borges Xul Solar walking tour... these and other initiatives illustrate the fusion between tradition and modernity, and show how new generations are embracing the city and its mythology.

My Buenos Aires, the exhibition

My Buenos Aires runs counter to the romantic vision of Buenos Aires. Paula Aisemberg and Albertine de Galbert seek to offer visitors to la maison rouge neither a portrait of the city nor a "who's who" of Argentinean artists, but rather a sensation, an experience of the dynamics at work in the Argentine capital.

The exhibition moves back and forth between political and private, public space, the domestic and the unconscious, exploring themes such as instability, tension and explosion, masks, encryption and the strange.

Along their way, visitors will encounter remnants of facades, mutant scaffoldings, car bonnets, motorway junctions, burned-out houses and headless statues. They will decipher coded languages to the gentle sway of the music rising from the city and the whirl of fans. When night falls,

they can settle onto an old sofa and listen to a raspy tango, pick their way through the patched-up ruins of a kitchen that's acting as though nothing was wrong, or study their reflection in the black ink of a white marble basin. They will sink into a waking dream inhabited by strangely unnerving doubles and faceless people falling from the sky, only to wake in the muffled folds of a stucco wedding cake.

With more than sixty artists working in all media, from installation to painting, sculpture, video and photography, four generations are represented. Established names such as León Ferrari, Guillermo Kuitca or Jorge Macchi will join others to be discovered. More than 15 of them will travel to Paris to work on *in situ* installations.

My Buenos Aires is an invitation to plunge into the mystery of Buenos Aires without attempting to resolve it, and to experience the unsettling strangeness of its multiple personalities.



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Extracts from the catalogue
“A persistent dream”
A text from Albertine de Galbert

(...)

Orson Welles said that to understand a country you needed “ten days or ten years; because on the eleventh day you get used to it and you stop seeing things!” And because the same surely goes for cities, Paula and I decided not to fight that initial impression of Buenos Aires, the sensation of instability, of disorientation, of encryption. Together, making no plans, we immersed ourselves, to a large extent instinctively, drawing on our respective experiences, which were complementary in an original kind of way: the uprooted Argentinean and the French Argentinophile. Already, our joint undertaking had integrated Borges’ mirror theme, and also that of the double. They would prove recurrent throughout our journey.

Utterance

A European or North American taking an interest in the art of Latin America will often feel hemmed in between local wariness – understandable in this postcolonial world – on one side, and their own temptation to essentialise this continent, to consider it as homogenous entity, or at best as a multitude of exoticisms, which in the end is the same thing.

Putting on a show in Paris of work by over sixty Argentinean artists can thus be a politically delicate undertaking, and it is well worth stating here, as a matter of principle, that this exhibition is not about ranking Argentinean artists, or organising their work into categories.

(...)What goes for human mobility also goes for the mobility of artworks. Every collective exhibition

1. Related by Pasolini to Orianna Fallaci, reprinted in *L'Inédit de New York*, Pier Paolo Pasolini, interview with Giuseppe Cardillo, Paris, Arléa.

is a reconfiguration of the pieces that constitute it, just as every work that joins an ensemble also updates and reinterprets it. To bring together 120 works by Argentinean artists and display them outside their national or even Latin American context is necessarily to show and read them in a new light. But looking at Buenos Aires from France also means trying to re-educate the French vision of the south, which is all too often high-handed and condescending, taking a lesson in humour, solidarity and engagement, and bringing into play each person’s relation to their environment.

Artists and inhabitants

(...)

Inès Katzenstein, an Argentinean historian and curator and director of the Art Department at the Torcuato Di Tella University in Buenos Aires, describes the period as follows: “at the beginning of the decade, art was overwhelmed by the violence of the political and economic crisis, which shook up people’s lives and monopolised cultural discourse, artworks, and the perspectives for understanding them. After 2002, we had the feeling that nothing transcendent could ever happen: what was important had already happened, and had profoundly transformed Argentina’s position with regard to its own identity and its own history. In this emergency, discussion was dominated by questions about the validity of making art².”

(...)

In her article she takes an interest in artists whose artistic production has remained object based³, and who were accused by some Argentineans as well as foreigners “who turned up in post-crisis Argentina looking for politicised exoticism⁴,” of being disconnected from social reality on one

2. Inés Katzenstein, “Trash : une sensibilité de la pauvreté et de la surinformation,” *Poétiques contemporaines, Itinéraires dans les arts visuels de l'Argentine des années 90 à 2010*, Fond National des Arts, 2010, p. 33.

3. Fernanda Laguna, Mariela Scafati, Leopoldo Estol, Diego Bianchi and Eduardo Navarro.

4. Id.



My Buenos Aires

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hand, and, on the other, of going in for obsolete formalism. She shows how, even for these artists, the emergency created by the crisis impacted their works, determining a “certain materiality and a certain language [...], opening up a third alternative to the political art/formalist art dichotomy⁵.”

(...)

The historian Aby Warburg thought of the artist figure as a “seismograph,” “the inscriber and transmitter of invisible movements that survive, that continue their movement under our earth, that dig, that wait for the moment [...] to suddenly manifest themselves.⁶” The intensity with which the city – in the broad sense – infuses our representations (whether gestural, visual, pictorial, musical or verbal) varies in accordance with individual lives and the tensions due to history. The works we have chosen to constitute this exhibition, most of them made since the 2000s, do not all take the city of Buenos Aires as their protagonist, but when seen together they do make it ubiquitous.

For sociologist David Le Breton, the city is not a reality in itself: “Around each inhabitant myriad paths are laid out, linked to their daily experience of the city [...]. Many cities within the same city like an endless nesting of consciousnesses and imaginaries, finally projecting only the real city at the unprecedented confluence of all these viewpoints⁷.” It is in one of these confluences, therefore, that we are inviting visitors to La maison rouge to wander through. To fit together the pieces of a puzzle that combine in multiple ways, but will never form a whole, and imagine a Buenos Aires that is partial, subjective and even fictive: that is the project of this exhibition.

My Buenos Aires

(...)

Like buildings in Buenos Aires, which often have two or three entrances (a very *porteño* twist on the

5. Id.

6. G. Didi-Huberman, *L'image survivante. Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2002, p. 123.

7. David Le Breton “Marcher la ville,” *L'Esprit des Villes* journal, 2014, p. 158.

Hausmannian model⁸), this exhibition articulated in several phases may tell several stories.

It could be the story of a day almost like the others, twenty-four hours wandering the urban stew of asphalt and concrete, from the public space of the street, of theatres, to the intimacy of the home, to the white of early morning, complete with stinging eyes and hangover; a navigating by sight in the “archipelago city⁹” whose fractures upend notions of centre and periphery; or an inward, analytical path, where the stigmata of violence reappear in the mending of split walls, where the repressed returns, like a disarticulated, mumbling ghost whose memory sticks to you the way Peter Pan's shadow was stitched to his shoes. Buenos Aires, a constellation of impossible stories, like those children's books in which the reader is also the main character: “books in which you are the hero: adventure is at hand,” ran the French publisher's slogan.

1.

The works set out around the main building constitute both the introduction and the heart of the exhibition, the entrance and the exit, a crossroads distributing spaces. And it is here that we decided to “set the scene,” to question the “imageability” of the city¹⁰, the stability of its landmarks, and its animating movements.

The works present a city crisscrossed by urban and social fractures (Gallardo, D'Angiollilo), a fragmented, labyrinthine city (Siquier, Hasper,

8. On this point, see Thibaut Béchini's article “Construire Buenos Aires, 1880-1960” in *Le Bulletin de l'Institut Pierre Renouvin* 37, Spring 2013, p. 29.

9. Adrián Gorelik, “Rôles de la périphérie. Buenos Aires : de la ville expansive à la ville archipel,” *Problèmes d'Amérique latine* 3/2013 (No. 90), p. 17-38.

10. This is the capacity of urban forms to generate an image in the mind of the individual and thereby facilitate the creation of collective mental images. This concept was created by the American urban planner and academic Kevin Lynch, who was one of the first writers to take an interest in the perception of urban space. In his seminal book, *The Image of the City* (1960) he re-established the legitimacy of visual analysis of cityscapes at a time when urban practice was based essentially on the functional analysis of space.



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Díaz Morales), an archipelago-city, to borrow Adrián Gorelik's term, one that, while resisting the traditional centre-periphery duality, is no less a place of inequalities. The crisis is not far away, and we can observe a tension, a fragile equilibrium that threatens to snap (Bacal). However, we can also observe, thanks to the physical, formal and intellectual movement begun by the artists, the possibility of alternative circulation (Macchi, Kuitca, Mongan), of opening up, of a renewal of images and therefore of perceptions of the city (Liliana Maresca Secondary School Project).

Thus, references to the flag (Jitrik), to plans (Hasper), to monuments and other postcard images (Aizenberg, Gómez Canle, López, Ferrari), whether actual or invented, are all instruments for overturning hierarchie of values and nomenclatures of the city, tools for reappropriating a real or symbolic territory.

2.

Unlike the Romantics, who magnified ruins in order to dramatise the landscape and reveal the sublime, a sensation of humility and even tenderness emanates from the works assembled in the first exhibition room, where the humblest urban themes, the most ordinary situations – a family picnic in a park (Goldenstein), a waiter laying a table in a café (Cusnir) – are accorded attention and care.

Rejected by some, objects are converted into creative materials by others in a transposition reminiscent of the art of recycling urban waste begun by the *Cartoneros*¹¹ in the late 1990s. Although abandoned, each object or material potentially has its own intrinsic value.

11. *Cartoneo* was originally the activity of collecting cardboard and other paper derivatives in the streets for recycling. Paper products are still the most sought-after, but now this activity has extended to searching waste for any kind of object or artefact that can have a use and/or value. The people who perform this activity are called *cartoneros*. Unlike waste collection employees, these are self-employed individuals who work in an unplanned way and whose only remuneration is the modest payment made from the sale of the waste. This activity is very widespread in Argentina, and grew dramatically in the city and province of Buenos Aires during the economic and social crisis of 1999–2002. In 2002 there were an estimated 40,000 *cartoneros* in Buenos Aires.

In this context of extreme violence, symptomatic of a two-track economy in which the poorest survive thanks to the waste left by others, using debris to make works of art, and displacing the street into the museum, is obviously a political act. What is presented here is an aesthetics of reparation, a sequence in the footsteps, prowling through the city.

The city beautified, made up by artists who paint a car bonnet (Villar Rojas) or a bit of fencing (C. León), or build cement totems with casts of plastic bottles (Terán). Bits of façades, amputated and battered, are restored with silver prostheses (Astorga), the most popular urban motifs such as the *filete*¹² are bedecked with crystal (Gumier Maier). Bedecked with a plumage of brochures quivering in the evening breeze (Strada), the city is dressing up, ready to step out.

3.

"I listened to the day joyfully crumbling away like a cliff inside me" wrote Nicolas Bouvier in *L'Usage du monde*¹³. As the day draws to a close, time seems to slow down, it follows the rhythm of the eye whose acuity slowly blurs. Buenos Aires fills with phantoms. Evita Perón has lost her head (Porter), a man dies several times amidst general indifference (Kacero), abandoned buildings loom

12. "*Fileteado* is a style of painting and decorative drawing typical of Buenos Aires. It is characterized by spiralling and whiplash lines, lively colours, frequently symmetrical compositions, the use of shading and perspective effects to suggest relief, and the saturation of space. Its decorative repertoire includes stylised motifs based on leaves, animals, horns of plenty, banderoles and precious stones. Usually, *fileteado* artworks include some clever motto, be it a poetic couplet or witty, moving or philosophical aphorism. This is sometimes written in *lunfardo*, with ornamental letters, generally in Gothic or cursive script. This style, which emerged in the city of Buenos Aires in the late 19th century, and was originally used as simple ornamentation to embellish horse-drawn carts carrying food. Over the years, however, it became the city's characteristic form of art, and even one of its most recognisable iconographic emblems. Many of its practitioners were of diverse European immigrant stock and brought their own artistic roots to the local *criollo* foundations, thereby engendering this typically Argentinian style." Translated from the French Wikipédia entry.

13. Nicolas Bouvier, *L'usage du monde*, Paris: Payot, 1992, p. 12. Translation, *The Way of the World*, NYRB Classics, 2009, p. 14.



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out of the half-light (Pastorino). A car sinks slowly into black water, as if the river that the city turns its back on had crept up on it overnight and flooded space (Macchi). In a nightmarish slo-mo, a desperate crowd goes pillaging and the police sets the dogs on terrified demonstrators (Golder).

Black hole. The city cries, seethes inside (Erlich), its lights are in mourning (Ballesteros), but a voice rises up behind a wall to relate the world's woes to a slightly scraping tango tune, offering the velvet of a sagging sofa to tired souls (Gallardo).

Just nearby, a woman with naked breasts excessively fills the stage of the Colón (Ferrari), where an ageing figure proffers answers and cues from behind the glass pane of a pocket theatre (D. León).

Further ahead, a door left ajar invites us to enter, to transgress. Like chameleons (Kuitca), ambiguous (Paksa) or voyeuristic (Rubio) works serve up privacy raw to the visitor, while others bar access (Da Rin). It is time to choose, to go back on our steps or through this door, "the boundary point at which human beings actually always stand or can stand¹⁴," between the infinite and the finite, where the limitless abuts the limit.

4.

"Not only our memories, but the things we have forgotten are 'housed.' Our soul is an abode. And by remembering 'houses' and 'rooms,' we learn to 'abide' within ourselves. Now everything becomes clear, the house images move in both directions they are in us as much as we are in them¹⁵." Nothing is more intimate than the home, the house, a metaphor even in computer language for the starting point, the origin. As the first perimeter to be delimited, to conquer, the house is also the first visual repertoire, a host of codes of belonging and differentiation that we choose

14. Georg Simmel, "Bridge and Door," 1909. English translation, *Simmel on Culture*, Sage Publications, 1998, p. 172.

15. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (1957), Beacon Press, 1994, p. xxxvii.

as we grow up to reproduce or confront, and that delineate – or sometimes erase – the contours of our identity.

Upsetting or deconstructing the image of a domestic interior, whether by derision of appropriation, should therefore be seen here as the sign of a deep, threatening movement that creates tension. Something has happened in this kitchen whose harmony is subtly fissured, in which each object and piece of furniture has been broken and stuck back together (Espina/ Cordiano). The house moves and in this trembling objects are displaced, multiply and accumulate in the play of mirrors, rupturing the reassuring rationality of everyday life so aptly described by Sigmund Freud as "the uncanny" (*unheimlich*).¹⁶

The house, usually organised to fit the hierarchies of the family – and, by extension, those of the social model to which it belongs – is turned on its head: the Holy Family is relegated to the kitchen, to the hell of an oven, a stove, or the turnstile of a meat grinder (Ferrari); the china explodes (Calvo); the bedroom sits boldly in the middle of the living room (Minujín/ Brusse); the walls have holes in and if you poke your head through you can see a choreography of hybrid objects melting into one another (Bianchi). The most insignificant objects, like a Brik of fruit juice, a mate cup or woven trays crowd the walls (Pombo, Suárez, Laguna). This aesthetic, which takes the simplicity of its subjects, supports and materials from the codes of folk art, runs deliberately charts the opposite course to art as spectacle. The same goes for the geometrical painting, tousled with a good dose of Lobachevskian¹⁷ humour in the tangle of old, stripped stretchers (Landet), in the layering of several monochromes dressed in a small sleeveless sweater (Scafati), or the anachronistic promise of a modern interior (Minolitti).

16. Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, Penguin Classics, 2003, ff. p. 121.

17. "Lobachevsky created geometrical humour by applying the spirit of subtlety to the spirit of geometry: he promoted polemical reason to the rank of constitutive reason; he founded the application of the principle of contradiction." Gaston Bachelard, *L'Engagement rationaliste*, PUF, 1972, p. 9.



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Cross-fade. Water. An image of the sea, ready to overflow its frame (Brodsky), which drowns in its muddy brown waters the traces of conquest, of contraband, and of the bodies thrown to the bottom of the “silver river” during the Argentinean dictatorship. An image like an impact that stops you breathing, just as a nightmare sometimes escapes recollection, when memory refuses to print it (Aveta).

5.

Dreaming and walking have the same liquid quality¹⁸, and what this daylight promenade evokes is indeed the way dreams can distort and intensify things.

Witness the threatening tip of a rusting giant hook leaning against a wall (Duville), and the charred edges of a makeshift cabin housing a fragile ecosystem miraculously saved from the chaos (Basualdo). Space breathes, struggles against drowning, to the rhythm of a giant black lung plugged into the mains (Reinoso). Its breathing sends a flutter through the big sheets of paper in abstract assemblages, whose motifs in unreal colours seem to hold the key to the unconscious (Boz).

6.

Eguls, avicz, segombir, tambicurebia, carencol, urmbil, ponivo... Standing on scaffolding, a paradoxically fragile promontory bending under the weight of the body (Lamothe), a voice comes to us through the walls and spells out invented words (Kacero) like an incantation causing the murky waters of the repressed to rise. A bookcase has fallen, and the books from this model still hang in the air (Gordín) – in Buenos Aires, the city with the world’s highest per capita ratio of bookstores and psychoanalysts¹⁹, words have a power of evocation that can stop time and suspend the laws of gravity.

As words disintegrate, so symptoms of violence come to the surface. Books that have escaped

18. Thierry Davila, Marcher, *Créer. Déplacements, flâneries, dérives dans l’art de la fin du XXème siècle*, Éd. du Regard, 2002, p. 56.

19. Marie-José Sirach, “Dans les librairies de Buenos Aires, on vole encore les livres,” L’Humanité.fr, article date 20 March 2014.

editorship (Brodsky), press cuttings revealing the manipulations of the dictatorship (Jitrik/Funes), and indecipherable hieroglyphs (Dermisache). The dead man (the *desaparecidos*), that “no one everywhere” described by Borges, reappears like a faceless ghost (Araoz), to which “we do not leave [...] one colour, one syllable²⁰.” He is reflected in a pool of black ink with tombstone marbled edges, confronting the visitor with their own apneic image (Legón), while a canvas offers to its indiscretion the remains of dreams in oil paint, precipitates of depressive inner landscapes (Stupía).

7.

How, after the fracture, can the self be reconciled? How does it recover its wholeness? It takes courage to confront the last obstacles that keep us from ourselves, to trample the masks (Vilar), sacrifice our doubles (Costantino), repair the image of intimacy, the wounding illusions of childhood (Denegri), to absorb and assimilate our own history (Chaile). At the end of the journey, in the weak light, a paradoxical, powerful and fragile form has, after all, found the strength to exist (De Caro). It begins to move, in the naked truth of its metamorphosis, the persisting image of a desire that tirelessly resists the threat of new day dawning. “If things are void of substance/and if this teeming Buenos Aires/is no more than a dream/made up by souls in a common act of magic,/there is an instant/when its existence is gravely endangered/and that is the shuddering instant of daybreak,/when those who are dreaming the world are few/ and only the ones who have been up all night retain,/ashen and barely outlined,/the image of the streets/that later others will define./[...] But again the world has been spared./Light roams the streets inventing dirty colors/and with a certain remorse/ for my complicity in the day’s rebirth/I ask my house

20. Jorge Luis Borges, “Remorse for Any Death,” translated by W. S. Mervinn in *Fervor de Buenos Aires (1923), Selected Poems*, (1923), Viking Penguin, 1999, p. 21.



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to exist,/amazed and icy in the white light,/as
one bird halts the silence/ and the spent night/
stays on in the eyes of the blind²¹.”

**Extracts from the Glossary
of Argentinian Terms
by Fernanda Laguna
and Francisco Garamona**

Asado (Barbecue)

(...)

Borges

The greatest Argentinian writer. The Illustrious Blind Man. The solitary passerby of the streets in the South of the city. Author of fantastic books, of incredible theories. A great conversationalist. Books that collect the many interviews given by him, always pleasant to read. His favourite topics of conversation covered Shakespeare, Cervantes, the Bible, detective stories, Metaphysical Poets, Thomas de Quincey, Macedonio Fernández, Xul Solar, Quevedo, and so on. Always paradoxical, with a subtle irony and a somewhat feigned surprise. He edited, with Adolfo Bioy Casares and Silvina Ocampo, the *Anthology of Fantastic Literature*, a classic of the genre. His emblems were mirrors, libraries, labyrinths, swords, the night. In one of his most famous poems, “The Poem of the Gifts”, he wrote: “No one must reduce to tears or reproaches / this declaration of God’s mastery / who with magnificent irony / gave me both books and the night. / From this City of Books he gave domination / to these eyes of mine without light, eyes that alone / can read in the libraries of dreams / the mad paragraphs / that dawn surrenders to desire. In vain does the day / lavish its infinite books, / arduous as the ardent manuscripts/ which perished by fire in Alexandria.” Jorge Luis Borges died in Switzerland in 1986.

21. Jorge Luis Borges, “Break of Day,” translated by Stephen Kessler, in *Selected Poems*, op. cit. p. 23–24.

Avenue Corrientes

Going up and then down from the Río de la Plata to the cemetery of Chacarita and even beyond, Corrientes Street summons the heels of the people walking. One wonders, looking at beautiful boys and girls, with striped hairdos, touched by the thousand colours of the day, on the street where they work. On Corrientes Street thousands of shops congregate, some directed towards fortune and others towards the lessfavoured sister of fortune, or, to call her by her name, “bankruptcy”. Bookshops with thousands of books waiting to be bought and read, shoe shops, lingerie shops in front of which lonely men are detained, watching the photos of women in lace, sex shops, venerable and famous pizzerias, bars where the intellectuals of the 50’, 60’ and 70’ met to discuss about politics and literature.

In short, on Corrientes Street you find everything. It crosses many quarters of the city: San Nicolás, Congreso, Once, Abasto, Almagro, Villa Crespo and Chacarita, as an absent star roaming the sky, and which makes us think, for a second, about the way life goes on, from here to there, when we stare at the moment, which is happening under our very eyes.

Cumbia

(...)

Delta

(...)

Evita

(...)

Football

(...)

Guevara, Ernesto

Better known as “Che”. Argentinian revolutionary who was one of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution: once that conquered, he went on waging battle in Africa and Bolivia, where he was betrayed by



My Buenos Aires

exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015

the villagers and killed. The photo of his body after execution stretched upon a dissection table is extremely famous. His travelling labours led him to cross Latin America on a motorbike. He wrote many books, *The Motorcycle Diaries and Guerrilla Warfare*, among others. He left letters to his children, insisting that they should not become accomplices of the injustice of the world, letters which are particularly moving. They also reveal his thoughts with much ingenuity.

He had a great inkling for the Infinite.

Isabel Sarli

Protagonist of all films directed by Armando Bo (who was moreover her lover). Because of her exuberant body, young people and the not-so-young people ran to the cinemas to see her on screen, and she was almost always very scantily clad. Films such as *Carne*, *Thunder among the Leaves*, *The Mayor's Wife* and so many others, indelibly printed the curves of her generous body in the closed eyes of the teenagers of the 60', 70' and 80': they dreamed awake, imagining scenes happening on their mental screen, when they deposited her upon the striped coverlets of their beds. When in the morning she departed from the sheets, all that was left to them, was to stare at the poster of one of her films, tacked to the wall of their bedrooms. Isabel Sarli is an icon of erotic and art-house cinema in Argentina and she can still be seen on screens.

Jacarandas

(...)

Kiosque

There is at least one kiosk per block in the city of Buenos Aires and other heavily populated cities of Argentina. It is one of the most frequented places by the *Porteños* who always need something, at all hours. Cigarettes, cigarette paper, lighters, caramels, chocolates, condoms, biscuits, mineral water, toothpaste, rubber bands for hair, matches, candles,

and spirits – even after twelve at night, when it is no longer legal to sell alcoholic beverages. These kiosks are places that literally save parties. That is why those kiosks which are open 24 hours a day are so necessary. You can even become friends with the *kioskero*.

Littérature

Literature is a drug and to obtain it you have to go to various places, because it is commercialised and expands itself in a thousand ways across the city. In bookshops such as the Club Editorial Río Paraná, La internacional Argentina, La Gaddianna, El rayo rojo, Mi Casa, Lilith, Fedro, etc. Magazines such as “Mancilla”, “El ojo mocho” (the Bruised Eye), “La luz artificial”, “Un falduo”, “Finanzas”, “Vox” and “La copiadora manuscrita”, among others. Social clubs such as El Ministerio del Misterio (EMDM), to name it by its acronym. Independant Book Fairs – the FLIA and the Sensación are the most important in Argentina –, publishing houses, poetry readings, fanzines, literary meetings, second-hand book fairs, such as the ones in Plaza Italia, Parque Centenario or Parque Rivadavia. In these places one can find everything, from new copies to first editions. If, however, you wish to read good literature, we, from our humble glossary, can recommend to you Belleza y Felicidad, Blatt y Ríos, Mansalva, Nulú Bonsai, Iván Rosado, Eloísa Cartonera and Spiral Yetty, among others, because that is where the best literature is published.

Demonstrations

(...)

Obelisk

(...)

Psychoanalysis

Some years ago, one took a taxi more often than today. When you chatted to the driver and asked him what his profession was before he became a taxidriver, he would inevitably answer: “I am a psychologist.” Buenos Aires is on one side



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My Buenos Aires

exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015

a city of psychoanalysts, and on the other of psychoanalysed persons. We do not know how this came about. But the couches of this city always remain warm. When one person settles down on the couch to talk about his sufferings, dreams or phantasies, he will immediately know that before him, another patient has been there doing exactly the same, in an infinite repetition.

Quilombo

(...)

Riachuelo / Río de la Plata

The Riachuelo is a long and muddy river.

This saying does not amount to much. Its flowing seems slow. It travels from the centre of the plains, from the fields of the pampas into the great city. The river is a youngster looking for adventures, to try his luck in the “tango” quarter of La Boca.

Its colour is dark, but thousands of colours from the shanties of the *barrio* are reflected upon it. Some years ago, they began to clean the river, given that it had more than its fill of chemical products and sunken boats. Now the reflected colours are less melancholic. Riachuelo is the port, the river and the tango, because its story recounts the story of the immigrants. It flows into our freshwater sea, the largest river of the world, the Río de la Plata. The Riachuelo stands to its great promise of more water, of fresher water to boot. It is lovely to see it pushing its jet-black waters into the beige-coloured, slightly metallised waters of the Río de la Plata. The rivers in this city are hidden, however. Viewed from an aeroplane, they are gigantically present, but on the ground, they are nowhere to be seen.

People ask each other: “Is their existence the fact of a collective hallucination?” A long time ago, the banks of the Río de la Plata filled with sediments, so that the embankments expanded further, serving as lovely pastures. It is said that the older *Porteños* dream that they return to the river waters, to their former playgrounds, as if they were children.

Spinetta, Luis Alberto

Composer and singer of Argentinian rock music. Had he been born in England, and had he sung in English, he would have been another David Bowie. Although he was in reality born in the bourgeois quarter of Belgrano, his music flowed over the whole *porteña* culture as the Virgin’s own Mantle.

His fans scrupulously learned by heart his lyrics, extremely complicated combinations of poetic nouns, in order to sing them along during his shows. Spinetta released more than 40 records, and was member of legendary bands such as Almendra (Almond), Pescado Rabioso (Rabid Fish), Invisible and Spinetta Jade. Songs such as “Muchacha ojos de papel” (Paper-Eye Girl), “Para ir” (To Go) and “Que ves el cielo” (So that You See the Sky) are taught to children from kindergarden onwards. Luis Alberto Spinetta, who died a few years ago, is indisputably one of the fathers of national rock music, together with Charly García, Moris and Litto Nebbia.

Tango

(...)

Villas miseria (Shanty towns)

(...)

Yerba mate (Maté)

(...)

Zampallo

(...)



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My Buenos Aires

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list of artists

Roberto Aizenberg (1928-1996),
Nicanor Araoz (1981),
Marcela Astorga (1965),
Hugo Aveta (1966),
Nicolás Bacal (1985),
Ernesto Ballesteros (1963),
Eduardo Tomás Basualdo (1977),
Diego Bianchi (1969),
Joaquín Boz (1987),
Marcelo Brodsky (1954),
Eugenia Calvo (1976),
Gabriel Chaile (1985),
Nicola Costantino (1964),
Ariel Cusnir (1981),
Julián D'Angiolillo (1976),
Flavia Da Rin (1978),
Marina De Caro (1961),
Andrés Denegri (1975),
Mirtha Dermisache (1940-2012),
Sebastián Díaz Morales (1975),
Matías Duville (1974),
Leandro Erlich (1973),
Tomás Espina (1975) &
Martín Cordiano (1975),
León Ferrari (1920-2013),
Ana Gallardo (1958),
Alberto Goldenstein (1951),
Gabriela Golder (1971),
Max Gómez Canle (1972),
Sebastián Gordin (1969),
Jorge Gumier Maier (1953),
Luján Fúnes (1944),
Graciela Hasper (1966),
Carlos Herrera (1976),
Carlos Huffmann (1980),
Roberto Jacoby (1944),
Magdalena Jitrik (1966),
Fabio Kacero (1961),
Guillermo Kuitca (1961),
Fernanda Laguna (1972),
Luciana Lamothe (1975),
José Luis Landet (1977),
Martín Legón (1981),
Catalina León (1981),
José León (1982),
Marcos López (1958),
Jorge Macchi (1963),
Adriana Minoliti (1980),
Marta Minujín (1944)
with Mark Brusse,
Guillermina Mongan (1979),
Margarita Paksa (1936),
Esteban Pastorino (1972),
Marcelo Pombo (1959),
Santiago Porter (1971),
“Middle School Liliana
Maresca Project” (Lorena Bossi,
Ariel Cusnir, Sebastián Friedman,
Leandro Tartaglia, Dani Zelko)
with the students of highschool
n°44 of La Cava de Fiorito,
Pablo Reinoso (1955),
Marisa Rubio (1976),
Mariela Scafati (1973),
Pablo Siquier (1961),
Elisa Strada (1970),
Eduardo Stupía (1951),
Pablo Suárez (1937-2006),
Luis Terán (1977),
Valeria Vilar (1974),
Adrián Villar Rojas (1980).



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curators

Paula Aisemberg,
director of la maison rouge.

Born in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 1966, Paula Aisemberg studied history (Sorbonne) and art history (Ecole du Louvre) in Paris. During the 1990s she worked with various Paris art galleries. Since 2001 she has worked alongside Antoine de Galbert and actively contributed to setting up the project for the Foundation, which she has managed since its creation in 2003 and sometimes curates the exhibitions.

Albertine de Galbert*,
freelance curator and
founder of arte-sur.org.

Born in 1980 in Grenoble, Albertine de Galbert lives and works in Paris. She worked for a New York gallery and a public relations company in Madrid, following which she became artistic co-director for *L'Art et la Manière*, a documentary series broadcast by the Franco-German television network Arte. In 2011 she launched arte-sur.org, a networking website for contemporary artists and professionals in Latin America. Since 2010 she has developed curatorial projects (Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Palais de Tokyo) and cultural cooperation programmes (twinned residency programmes, cooperation projects, consultancy services), chiefly between Europe and Latin America.

*assisted by Mathilde Ayoub for the non profit beam prod.

catalogue to the exhibition

The catalogue for *My Buenos Aires*, the third volume in the *Guides de Voyages* collection which began in 2011 with *My Winnipeg*, features contributions from major Argentinean authors including Maria Gainza (artists notes), Fernanda Laguna and Francisco Garamona (glossary), and Diana Weschler (essay), and from the French specialist of Buenos Aires Michel Bolasell (notes on the city), and a text from Albertine de Galbert, curator (un rôle persistant).

medias partners



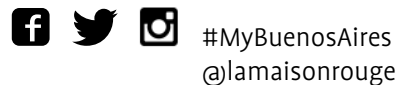
annual partners



la maison rouge is a member of Tram



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upcoming exhibition

Collection Artur Walther

October 17th, 2015 – January 17th, 2016



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My Buenos Aires
exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015



Gabriel Chaile, *La oración eficaz*, installation, 2011



Nicanor Aroz, *Sin Título, Momias Negras*, installation, 2010-2015

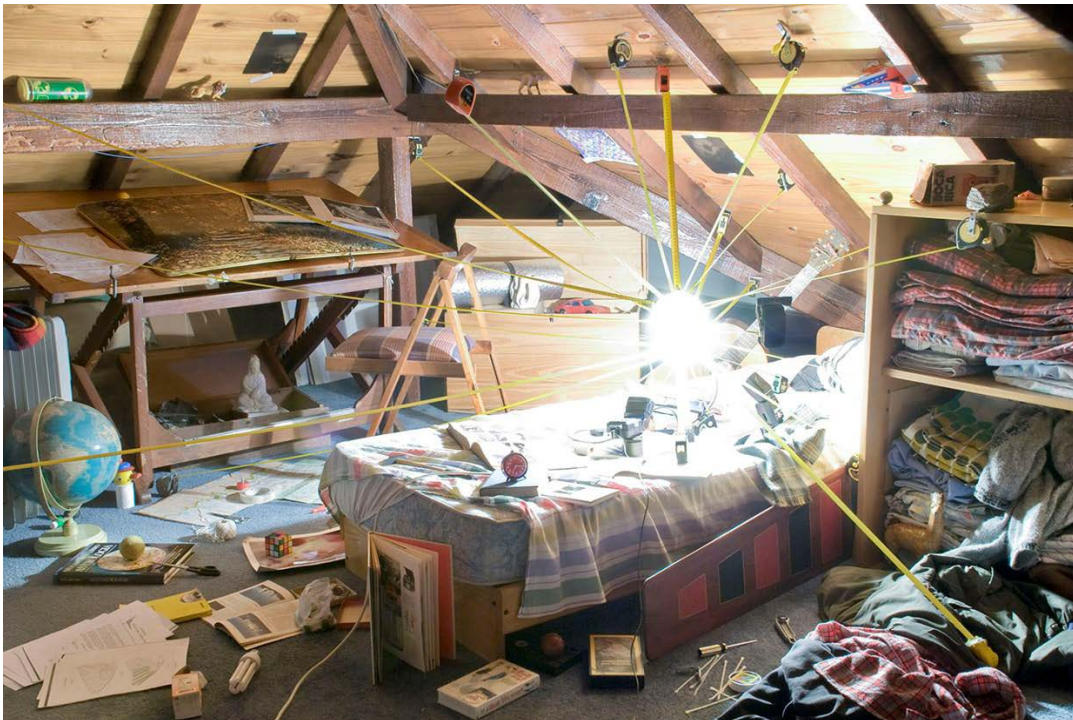


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Jorge Macchi, *Fan*, installation, 2013



Nicolas Bacal, *La gravedad de mi órbita alrededor tuyo*, color print, 2009-2010



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Marta Minujin & Mark Brusse, *La Chambre d'amour II*, installation, 1963-2008



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Tomás Espina & Martín Cordiano, *Dominio*, installation, 2013



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Leandro Erlich, *Rain*, 1999. © collection Antoine de Galbert



Alberto Goldenstein, *série Flâneur*, color print, 2004



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Ernesto Ballesteros, *Sin Titulo*, "Fuentes de luz tapadas",
color print adjusted with black felt, 2005-2015



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exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015



Fabio Kacero, *Totloop*, video, in collaboration with Unión Gaucha Producciones, 2003



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Publics Events around My Buenos Aires

June

► **Saturday and Sunday, 4pm** / guided tours
Weekend visits

► **Sunday, June 21th, 5pm** / event

Bandoneon and Guitar Duet:

Louise Jallu and Hiroki Fukui

► **Sunday, June 21th, 2.30pm** / guided tour

Visit of the exhibition My Buenos Aires

presented by the curators

► **Wednesday, June 24th, 3pm** /

young people activity

Story telling with the narrator Laetitia Bloud

► **Thursday, June 25th, 7pm** / conference

“Buenos Aires, place of artistic sociability”

by Florencia Cherñajovsky and Inés Dahn

July

► **Saturday and Sunday, 4pm** / guided tours
Weekend visits

► **Thursday, 7pm** / guided tour

Summer night visits

► **Wednesday, July 1st, 3pm** / young people activity

Story telling

with the narrator Valérie Briffod

► **Thursday, July 2nd, 7 pm** / event

“Fictional talk” with Edgardo Cozarinsky

Festival of meetings of Iberian-American
Literature in Paris

► **From the 4th to the 19th of July, 10.50** / event

Argentinian cinema programming MK2 Bastille

program see p. 23

► **Saturday, July 4th, 4 juillet 2015 from 2pm** / event

“TRAM – hospitalités 2015:

Maison Puissance Trois”

August

► **Saturday and Sunday, 4pm** / guided tours

Weekend visits

► **Thursday, 7pm** / guided tour

Summer night visits

September

► **Saturday and Sunday, 4pm** / guided tours

Weekend visits

► **Thursday, September 10th, 7pm** / conference

A conference animated by Victoria Noorthoorn,

director of the Museo de Arte Moderno

de Buenos Aires

► **Wednesday, Septembre 16th, 3pm** /

young people activity

Story telling with the narrator Florence Desnouveaux

During the exhibition

► **Wednesday the 1st of July at 7 pm** / event

El Caimán de Barranquilla / le Caïman de Barranquilla

Lucia Ramos Monteiro offer a program of films

around Luis Ernesto Arocha. As a part of FRACO

(a lauch pad dedicated to colombian and french

professional of contemporary art). www.fraco.org

► **Thursday the 9th of July at 7pm** / performance

Afrogalactica : Un abrégé du futur

by Kapwani Kiwanga

As a part of AFRICA ARTS and la European

Conference on Africa Studies, a week dedicated to

performance art in Africa and her diasporas diasporas

► **Sunday, Septembre 20th, 5pm** /

as an event for the end of the exhibition

Concert Soundinitiative (Maurizio Kagel, D’Adamo,

Martin Matalon... program to be defined)

with the support of La Muse en Circuit

Informations and booking

www.lamaisonrouge.org



**Cycle of Argentine cinema
from the 4th until
the 19th of July 2015
at MK2 Bastille**

La maison rouge and the cinema MK2
bring together a cycle of Argentine cinema.

It is on large screen that the cinema MK2 Bastille offers every morning of the weekend, from the 4th until the 19th of July, the opportunity to watch three unique, challenging and accessible films representative of the New Wave of the Argentine cinema : *Les Nouveaux Sauvages (Wild Tales)* from Damián Szifron, *Jauja* from Lisandro Alonso, *Les Acacias* from Pablo Giorgelli.

► **Saturday July, 4th and Sunday 19th**
Les Nouveaux Sauvages (Wild Tales)
from Damián Szifron

Goya in 2015 for the best foreign language film
(Spanish language).

A film with Ricardo Darín,
Oscar Martinez, Leonardo Sbaraglia

► **Sunday July, 5th and Saturday 11th**
***Jauja* from Lisandro Alonso**

With Avec Viggo Mortensen,
Ghita Norby, Viilbjørk Mlling Agger
A film from 2015

► **Sunday July, 12th and Saturday, 18th**
***Les Acacias* from Pablo Giorgelli**

Caméra d'Or at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival

With German De Silva,
Hebe Duarte, Nayra Calle Mamani
A film from 2012

Admissions: 6,50€
under 14 : 4,00€ / under 18 : 6,00€
Unlimited card to MK2 accepted

**Find the details of the program
and reservation on**
www.mk2.com/cinema-argentin



My Buenos Aires

exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015

la maison rouge

La maison rouge, a private non-profit foundation, opened in June 2004 in Paris to promote contemporary creation through three temporary exhibitions a year. Solo or group shows, some are staged by independent curators. While La Maison Rouge was never intended to house the collection of its founder, Antoine de Galbert, an active figure on the French art scene, his personality and outlook as a collector are evident throughout. Since its very first exhibition, Behind Closed Doors: The Private Life of Collections (2004), La Maison Rouge has continued to show private collections and consider the issues and questions surrounding them.

Antoine de Galbert

Born in 1955 and a graduate in political science, Antoine de Galbert worked in corporate management before opening a contemporary art gallery in Grenoble for some ten years. Concurrently, he purchased the first works in a collection that was to take on growing importance in his life. In 2003, he chose to create a foundation as a means of both anchoring his commitment to contemporary creation.

building

La Maison Rouge occupies a renovated factory on a site covering 2,500 sq m in the Bastille district, opposite the Arsenal marina. Some 1,300 sq m are reserved for the galleries which encircle the "red house" from which the foundation takes its name. This concept of a house reflects the foundation's vocation to be a pleasant and welcoming space where visitors can take in an exhibition, attend lectures, browse in the bookshop or enjoy a drink.

The reception area was designed by Jean-Michel Alberola (b. 1953, Paris).

the bookshop

Located next to La Maison Rouge at 10 bis, Boulevard de la Bastille, the bookshop is run by Book storming, a specialist in contemporary art books. Its selection of titles is regularly updated to reflect the exhibitions at La Maison Rouge. It also stocks artists' DVDs and videos, and a wide selection of out-of-print and artists' books, in addition to books on the latest developments in contemporary art.

les amis de la maison rouge

Les amis de la maison rouge helps and supports Antoine de Galbert's project. It puts forward ideas and takes part in debates on the private collection, suggests activities to tie in with the foundation's exhibitions, and contributes to making la maison rouge more widely known in France and internationally. As a friend of la maison rouge, you will:

- Be first to see exhibitions at la maison rouge
- Meet exhibiting artists, the curators and the team at la maison rouge
- Be invited to preview lunches
- Meet and network with other art enthusiasts
- Attend talks by and debate with experts and collectors
- Contribute ideas and suggest themes for lectures and exchanges as part of the «carte blanche to collectors»
- Suggest artists to create a work for the patio and take part in an annual vote to choose that artist
- Visit the most vibrant centers for contemporary art from Moscow to Dubai, Barcelona, Brussels, Toulouse...
- Discover exclusive venues, private collections and artists' studios
- Enjoy special access to collector's editions by artists exhibiting at la maison rouge



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My Buenos Aires

exhibition from June 20th until September 20th, 2015

- Support a collection of books, edited by Patricia Falguières, with texts published for the first time in French addressing themes of museography, the exhibition, and the work of certain artists
- Become the benefactor of a book in the collection and have your name associated with it
- Be first to enroll for lectures, performances and events relating to the exhibitions
- Be part of a European network of partner institutions
- Belong to a unique enterprise in one of the most dynamic venues in Paris
- Be involved in the original, open-minded project led by Antoine de Galbert and his foundation.

Membership from € 95

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amis@lamaisonrouge.org

Rose Bakery ^{culture} **at la maison rouge**

Rose Bakery ^{culture} joined la maison rouge on October 22nd 2010. Rose Bakery and la maison rouge are embarking on a specific project, led by interior designer-scenographer Emilie Bonaventure. Three times a year, visitors to la maison rouge will discover a “pop-up” café, designed by be-attitude. A first for a cultural venue.

Each season, the prototypes, special creations, limited editions, flea-market finds and other salvaged objects will make up an eye-catching decor which may or may not echo the foundation’s exhibitions.

Émilie Bonaventure

Interior designer, scenographer, artistic director, specialist in French ceramics of the 1950s and creator, Emilie Bonaventure set up Be-Attitude in 2005. She believes art and luxury must interact on a daily basis, imagining crossovers between the two in all fields.

“Design meets curiosity, production meets imagination, creation meets professionalism”:
Be-Attitude builds on long-term, constructive partnerships with freelancers to propose a new idea of what a creative business should be.

Rose et Jean-Charles Carrarini

Originally based in London, Rose and Jean-Charles Carrarini opened Villandry in the late 1980s. After swapping London for Paris, in 2002 the Franco-British couple opened Rose Bakery on Rue des Martyrs, followed by a second spot in London’s Dover Street Market in 2005, and in 2008 a third address in Paris in the Marais district, sealing their reputation once and for all. They have turned French mealtimes upside down and welcome customers for breakfast, brunch, lunch and early dinner. Rose Bakery^{culture} developsthis concept by offering extra-long lunch hours and early dinner on Thursdays (last orders 8pm).

Rose Bakery ^{culture}

wednesday to Sunday

11am to 7pm

rosebakeryculture@lamaisonrouge.org

tel/fax: + 33 1 46 28 21 14



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visitor information

la maison rouge

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www.lamaisonrouge.org

getting here

Metro: Quai de la Rapée (line 5)
or Bastille (lines 1, 5, 8)
RER: Gare de Lyon
Bus: 20, 29, 91

access

The galleries are accessible to the disabled and mobility impaired visitors

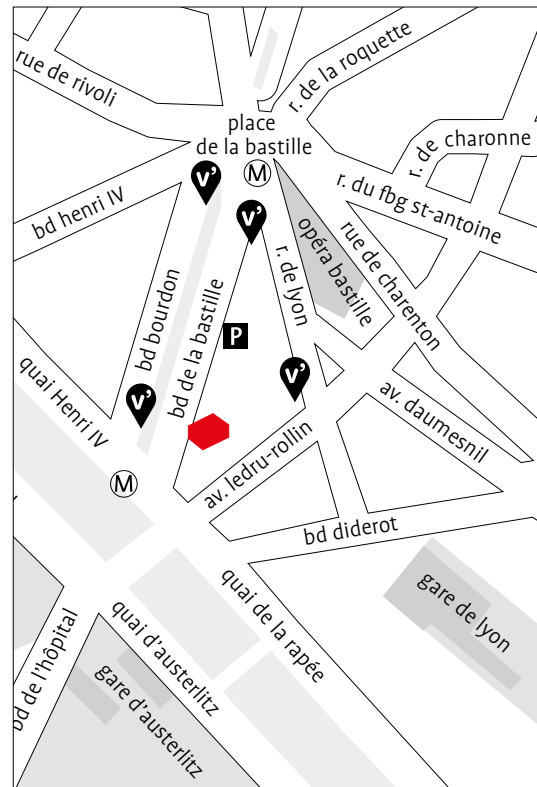
opening days and times

Wednesday to Sunday from 11am to 7pm
Late nights Thursday until 9pm
January 1st and May 1st

admission

Full price: € 9
Concessions: € 6 (13-18, students, full-time artists, over 65s)
Free for under 13s, job-seekers, companions to disabled visitors, members of ICOM and Amis de la maison rouge

Annual pass: full price € 24
Annual pass: concessions € 16,50
Free and unlimited access to the exhibitions
Free access or reduced rates to related events.



Cover p.1:
Ana Gallardo, *Casa Rodante*, video excerpt, 2007



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