



## press kit

at la maison rouge 26th October 2008 to 18th January 2009

press review Tuesday 24th October 2008 2pm to 4pm

press Saturday 25th October 2008 4pm to 9pm

# MEXICO: EXPECTED / UNEXPECTED

## COLLECTION ISABEL AND AGUSTÍN COPPEL



Gabriel Orozco, *Bus stop*, 2007

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## **présentation**

A private, non-profit foundation, la maison rouge opened in June 2004 in Paris. Its purpose is to promote contemporary creation through a programme of three solo or thematic temporary exhibitions a year, certain of which are staged by independent curators.

La maison rouge was created on the initiative of Antoine de Galbert, an art collector and active figure on the French art scene. While Antoine de Galbert's own collection is not shown, the entire project is fashioned by his personality and outlook as a collector. Beginning with *Behind Closed Doors: the private life of collections*, la maison rouge stages exhibitions on the theme of private collections and 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 2000 he chose to create a foundation as a means of both anchoring his commitment to contemporary creation and opening his collection to the public.

## **le bâtiment**

La maison rouge is installed in a renovated factory in the Bastille district of Paris, overlooking the Arsenal marina. The 2,500 sq m site, including 1,300 sq m of exhibition space, is centred around "la maison rouge" or red house.

By naming the venue after this house, la maison rouge makes clear its vocation as a welcoming, convivial space where visitors can see exhibitions, attend lectures, enjoy a drink or explore the bookstore.

The artist Jean-Michel Alberola (born in Paris in 1953) was commissioned for the interior design of the reception areas.

## **la librairie**

la maison rouge has chosen Bookstorming, a specialist in contemporary art publications, for its bookstore at 10 bis, boulevard de la Bastille. Its selection of titles is regularly updated to reflect the current exhibitions at la maison rouge. It also stocks art DVDs and videos, publications on the latest developments in the contemporary art world, and proposes an important catalogue of out-of-print books and books by artists.

Bookstorming, t. +33 (0)1 42 25 15 58

## activities at La maison rouge

### the vestibule

Always attentive and open to creations by young artists, Antoine de Galbert created this open-access space in 2006, showing new exhibitions every four to six weeks.

### the suite

la maison rouge develops other activities alongside its exhibitions, and in collaboration with Gérard Wacjman has opened a hotel room, the Suite, inside its walls. It welcomes guests from all fields of thought and contemporary creation to provoke unexpected encounters with the public.

The maison rouge has invited young author and book reviewer **Aurélié Djian** to propose a new series of programs in la suite, around literature and poetry.

### Upcoming « rendez-vous » in « la suite »

#### RENDEZ-VOUS #19

*Courir* by Jean Echenoz, a reading of his new book, to be published at Les éditions de Minuit (october 2008), Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup>

#### RENDEZ-VOUS #20

*Musical Interpretation of a literary* by Pierre-Yves Macé, Thursday December 18th

#### RENDEZ-VOUS #21

*Duo cello-voice* by Eric Meunié and Vincent Ségal, Thursday January 8th, 2009

Tarifs : 6.50 / 4.50 €

Places limitées. Réservation indispensable à : [info@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:info@lamaisonrouge.org)

« La Suite, le son & l'écrit » is sponsored by l'Association des amis de la maison rouge.

## **for children**

### **le mercredi, on goûte aux contes**

One Wednesday a month, a story-teller takes children ages 4 to 11 on a journey into the land of imagination.

Story + snack: €6.50 for children and accompanying adults.

Lasts around 90 minutes

### **next storytimes :**

17<sup>th</sup> September 2008, at 3pm

1<sup>st</sup> October 2008, at 3pm

5<sup>th</sup> November 2008, at 3pm

10<sup>th</sup> December 2008, at 3pm

14<sup>th</sup> January 2009, at 3pm

Information and reservations: [stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org)

## **les visites commentées**

### **pour les individuels**

Tous les samedis et dimanches à 16h, la maison rouge propose une visite commentée gratuite des expositions en cours.

### **pour les groupes**

Visite commentée sur demande (75 euros + droits d'entrée)

Les visites sont assurées par des étudiants en histoire de l'art, spécialisés en art contemporain.

Renseignements et réservations : Stéphanie Molinard, 01.40.01.92.79 ou [stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org)

## **les amis de la maison rouge**

A non-profit organisation, les amis de la maison rouge is closely involved with and supports Antoine de Galbert's project. It contributes to reflection and debates on the theme of the private collection, organises activities to coincide with the exhibitions, and promotes la maison rouge among French and international audiences.

Membership from €70

t. +33 (0)1 40 01 94 38, [amis@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:amis@lamaisonrouge.org)

**➤ The full programme and dates for activities are at [www.lamaisonrouge.org](http://www.lamaisonrouge.org)**

# la maison rouge publications

## catalogue of the exhibition

### **Mexico: Expected / Unexpected - collection Isabel and Agustín Coppel**

The catalogue for the exhibition, in French and English, is published by Fage editions with texts by Sabina Berman, Elmer Mendoza, Antoine de Galbert, and an interview with the collectors Isabel and Agustín Coppel by Mónica Amor and Carlos Basualdo.

## **the “privées” collection**

For each of the collections it shows, la maison rouge and Fage jointly publish a catalogue as part of the "privées" collection.

In French and English

### **L'intime, le collectionneur derrière la porte**

#### **Privées 1**

La maison rouge, Fage éditions, 2004

160 p – 25 €

### **Central Station – collection Harald Falckenberg**

#### **Privées 2**

La maison rouge, Fage éditions, 2004

160 p – 25 €

### **Arnulf Rainer et sa collection d'art brut**

#### **Privées 3**

La maison rouge, Fage éditions, 2005

272p – 30 €

### **Une vision du monde – la collection d'Isabelle et Jean-Conrad Lemaître**

#### **Privées 4**

La maison rouge, Fage éditions, 2006

144p – 25 €

### **Busy Going Crazy – la collection Sylvio Perlstein**

#### **Privées 5**

La maison rouge, Fage éditions, 2007

160p – 20 €

**➤ To buy online or for more information, visit the la maison rouge website**

## **MEXICO: EXPECTED / UNEXPECTED**

### **COLLECTION ISABEL ET AGUSTÍN COPPEL**

This exhibition of the Isabel and Agustín Coppel Collection attempts to explore contemporary Mexican art from a point of view that simultaneously underlines the intense dialogue with its canonical predecessors that characterizes it and the international landscape to which it also belongs. As a result, two frames of reference ground the curatorial effort deployed here: on the one hand, this presentation attempts to address a collection which is open to the global dynamics that fuel the contemporary art of our period, and on the other, to show that the Coppel Collection is equally committed to a growing group of Mexican contemporary artists and a constantly enlarging local audience. The main goal of this exhibition and its publication is thus to allow the viewer to see how the Isabel and Agustín Coppel Collection champions contemporary art nationally and internationally while it precisely and consistently interrogates the fundamental differences between those two categories.

The Isabel and Agustín Coppel Collection features key figures of the Mexican contemporary art scene such as Francis Alÿs, Melanie Smith, Gabriel Orozco, Abraham Cruzvillegas, and Damian Ortega among many others. Departing from the work of these artists the collection expands diachronically in an effort to establish the possible influences and antecedents to the work of these artists, in the practices of figures such as Gordon Matta Clark, Lygia Clark, Ed Ruscha and Helio Oiticica. It also deploys itself synchronically as it incorporates younger international artists with a poetic that seems akin to that of the Mexicans, such as Tatiana Trouvé, Rivane Neuenschwander and Terence Koh.

“Mexico: Expected/Unexpected” attempts thus to explore a possible definition of Mexican contemporary art with works that dialogue with and overcome that notion as a stable category. In a movement that echoes what seems to be taking place in other areas of Mexican culture such as film and literature, the Isabel and Agustín Coppel Collection –as well as this exhibition- operate as a sort of mirror that projects an image of contemporary Mexican art that is unstable, rich, complex, unpredictable, in which tradition and innovation are in constant interplay. The resulting image surprises just there where the viewer would have only expected the plainness of the cliché.

The show is organized roughly in five sections. The works installed at the entrance of the exhibition space will introduce the viewer to the Collection through the notions of limit and borders -by these we understand the physical limits of the exhibition space as well as the geographical border with the US that has played so fundamental a role in modern and contemporary Mexican culture. The second section links formally, through a series of resonating typologies, works realized in various mediums (painting, sculpture, video, installation) while at the same time alluding to established notions of Mexican-ness, such as images of death, the relation between the city and nature, the poetics of craftsmanship, and the precariousness of everyday life. The third section, dominated by a work by Tatiana Trouvé specially made for the exhibition, introduces two contiguous galleries: one that emphasizes the structural and constructive affinities of the works on display, and another one where the exhibition explores a number of iconographic resonances that challenge notions of nationalism and belonging.

Overall, the main trait of “Mexico: Expected/Unexpected” is to complicate the relationship between the local and the international, in such way that the non-Mexican artists in the show seem to respond to a presumptive notion of Mexican-ness while the Mexican artists seem concerned with contradicting it. In this movement the exhibition mimics the logic that organizes the Coppel collection and seems to pervade the unpredictable space of Mexican contemporary culture.

Mónica Amor (Exhibition Curator)

Carlos Basualdo (Project Advisor)

## biographies elements

### **EXHIBITION CURATOR: MÓNICA AMOR**

Monica Amor is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Maryland Institute College of Art. She curated, among other exhibitions: "Gego: Defying Structures" for the Serralves Foundation in Porto (2006), "The Pons Archive" (With Carlos Basualdo) for Koldo Mitchelena in San Sebastian (2003) and "Beyond the Document," (with Octavio Zaya) for the National Museum Reina Sofia in Madrid (2001). She has written for various publications, including *Art Nexus*, *Third Text*, *October* and *Artforum*.

### **PROJECT ADVISOR: CARLOS BASUALDO**

Carlos Basualdo is a poet and curator who has collaborated with major international contemporary art institutions. He is the contemporary art curator at the Philadelphia Art Museum and teaches a course on the History of Exhibitions at the IUAV (University of Venice). He was chosen to curate the work by Bruce Nauman for the USA Pavilion at the 2009 Venice Biennial along with Michael Taylor. He was also an associated member of the group of curators for the Documenta 11 in 2002, and one of the curators for the 50<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial in 2003.

He writes for *Artforum International* and *Art Nexus*, and has curated several reviews and exhibitions all around the world such as *Worthless/Invaluable* at the Lubljana Modern Art Museum; *Elio Oiticica: Quasicinemas* which was shown at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London and the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York; and *Tropicália: A Revolution in Brazilian Culture* at the Contemporary Art Museum in Chicago, the Barbican Centre in London, the Bronx Museum in New York, and the Modern Art Museum in Rio de Janeiro.



**entretien d'Isabel et Agustín Coppel (extraits),  
par Mónica Amor et Carlos Basualdo(extraits)  
publié dans le catalogue de l'exposition**

Mónica Amor: *How did you start collecting and what was the first piece you purchased?*

Agustín Coppel: I visited some exhibitions in Culiacán, and I became the friend of an artist who has now passed away. With him I started to know a little bit more about art. Actually, I feel that the first piece we bought for the collection was a painting we got in LA, at the Tere Iturralde Gallery. It was a 1940's piece by Cordelia Urueta, where a woman in a white dress dances before a mirror, and it has the aesthetic of Diego Rivera. Isabel and I loved it, and we still have it in our dining room.

[...]

Carlos Basualdo: *I would like to know, why art? And also, if it was a decision both of you made, where does that decision come from?*

Agustín Coppel: We both liked art a lot, and we found enormous pleasure in seeing artworks and looking for museums, to get a better insight of these matters.

Mónica Amor: *In the artistic context of Culiacán? Any particular museum?*

Agustín Coppel: There is a museum in Culiacán, the MASIN, which has artworks from the 1950's and 60's in Mexico, as well as some by turn of the century artists. But rather, we started to search on our trips.

[...] Along the way, we started to buy Modern Mexican artworks, not by the great masters like Tamayo or Rivera—except for an Orozco that we bought many years ago— but by peripheral Mexican modern artists, artists who are very good, but not so well known internationally.

Mónica Amor: *Do you still have those works?*

Agustín Coppel: We still have and enjoy those works, all of them. But at some point we stopped that process and started to see the subject of art and what was happening in the world with more amplitude. We directly passed, with full conviction, to collect international contemporary art.

[...] The first international contemporary artwork we bought was a very large installation by Gary Hill, *Learning Curve* (1993).

[...] I was certain that Gary Hill was the best video artist of that moment, and I thought that it was important to buy something totally conceptual, very historical and meaningful. I remember I made a broad analysis of who the video artists at that moment were, and which were their most interesting works. Isabel liked Hill's work and we decided to buy it.

Carlos Basualdo: *It would seem that, from the start, you were thinking in terms of historical importance—of the position of the works in a wider context, as if there would have been a programmatic intention in the collection. It doesn't seem to be a matter of living with things you like, rather it looks like a matter of bringing a whole together. Did it happen that way?*

Agustín Coppel: Always, but especially with the second part of the collection, where there was more thinking involved. Yes, I wanted to have a body of work that made sense, and would be interesting for me in the future, not just at the moment when I liked it.

[...]

Mónica Amor: *At the beginning, what was the focus of the collection, how did you choose it, and why was it important for you?*

Agustín Coppel: I believe we don't know, it really is some sort of enigma.

[...] Even if I would have defined a perspective beforehand, I believe that with the show that Monica is curating she has found a very interesting and different sense, something we had not yet seen. I believe that if you try to define the collection too tightly, if you try to explain it, and only devote it to a medium or a period, the process loses its depth and the pleasure it gives you. And it also takes coherence away, because coherence is in the works themselves. We believe in the message of art itself. For instance, this exhibition that is being made in Paris gives us a series of very interesting new relations that we are just discovering. This is what is unexpected about the collection, that it has a potential to be read in different ways.

[...]

**Mónica Amor:** *Are you interested in sharing the collection with an audience? Have you thought of ways in which that could happen?*

[...] There is a beautiful garden in Culiacán; it is a space that belongs to the government of the state, a public space. And there is an association of which I am the president called Sociedad Botánica y Zoológica de Sinaloa, AC (Botanical and Zoological Society of Sinaloa, A.C.). I had a very good relation with the man that came up with the idea of the Botanical Garden, Engineer Carlos Murillo, who passed away some time ago. I worked with him for about 15 years, trying to improve the space. We did a very good job and, at some point, because of this art thing, I thought it would be a good idea to start incorporating some works into the space.

[...]

**Mónica Amor:** *Y a-t-il un espace fermé, dans le jardin Botanique, pour les œuvres qui ont besoin d'un espace plus conventionnel?*

**Agustín Coppel:** Il y aura une sorte de galerie dans l'un des bâtiments que Tatiana Bilbao réalise, mais c'est petit, pour une petite exposition d'art. L'installation est permanente et aura besoin d'entretien. Il y a des œuvres de James Turrell, Gabriel Orozco, Dan Graham, Francis Alÿs, Julian Opie, Olafur Eliasson, Pablo Vargas Lugo, Simon Starling, Teresa Margolles, Rikrit Tiravanija, Tino Seghal, Diana Thater, Richard Long, Mario García Torres, Sofía Taboas, Kyoto Ota, Fernando Orte, Pedro Reyes, etc.

**Mónica Amor:** *When do you think the project will be ready?*

**Agustín Coppel:** In about two years. Some of the works are already being finished, and the garden itself needs a lot of improvement.

[...]

I believe that if we manage to get it right, each of the visitors to the Botanical Garden will enter the experience of the garden itself with its natural charms, and will have an unexpected contact with contemporary art, which is almost non-existent in Culiacán.

## list of the artists

Doug Aitken (1968, Redondo Beach, United States), Manuel Alvarez Bravo (1902, Mexico – 2002, Mexico), Francis Alÿs (1959, Antwerp, Belgium), Carlos Amorales (1970, Mexico), John Baldessari (1931, National City, United States), Lothar Baumgarten (1944, Rheinsberg, Germany), Iñaki Bonillas (1981, Mexico), Miguel Calderón (1971, Mexico), Maurizio Cattelan (1960, Padova, Italy), Lygia Clark (1943, Tulsa, United States), Abraham Cruzvillegas (1968, Mexico), Rineke Dijkstra (1959, Sittard, Netherlands), William Eggleston (1939, Memphis, United States), Flor Garduño (1957, Mexico), Kendell Geers (1968, Johannesburg, South Africa), Dan Graham (1942, Urbana, United States), Enrique Guzmán (1952, Guadalajara – 1986, Aguascalientes, Mexico), Jonathan Hernández (1972, Mexico), Graciela Iturbide (1942, Mexico), Terrence Koh (1977, Beijing, China), Helen Levitt (1913, New York), Phillip Lorca DiCorcia (1953, Hartford, United States), Marcos Reis Peixoto Marepe (1970, São Antônio de Jesus, Brasil), Gordon Matta Clark (1948, New York – 1973, New York), Jorge Méndez Blake (1974, Guadalajara), Ana Mendieta (1948, La Havane, Cuba – 1985, New York), Jonathan Monk (1969, Leicester, Great Britain), Rivane Neuenschwander (1967, Belo Horizonte, Brasil), Helio Oiticica (1937, Rio de Janeiro – 1980, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil), Gabriel Orozco (1962, Jalapa, Mexico), Damian Ortega (1967, Mexico), Fernando Ortega (1971, Mexico), Jack Pierson (1960, Plymouth, Massachusetts, United States), Pedro Reyes (1972, Mexico), Ricardo Rendon (1970, Mexico), Ed Ruscha (1937, Nebraska, United States), Maruch Sántiz Gómez (1975, San Juan Chamula, Mexico), Stephen Shore (1947, New York), Melanie Smith (1965, Pool, Great Britain), Simon Starling (1967, Epsom, Great Britain), Thomas Struth (1954, Geldern, Germany), Tercerunquinto (Julio Castro (1975), Gabriel Cázares (1976), Rolando Flores(1978). Monterrey, Mexico), Tatiana Trouvé (1968, Cosenza, Italie), Pablo Vargas Lugo (1968, Mexico), Pae White (1963, Pasadena, United States), Mariana Yampolsky (1925, Chicago – 2002, Mexico)

## some works



Doug Aitken, *99 cents Dreams*, 2007



Manuel Alvarez Bravo, *Ventana a los magueyes*, 1976



Francis Alÿs, *Ambulantes II*, 1992-2003



Carlos Amorales, *From The Bad Sleep Well* (détail), 2007



Miguel Calderón, *Mexico vs Brasil*, 2004



William Eggleston, *From Los Alamos Series; Untitled (Shack with Yellow Door)*, 1965-1973



Graciela Iturbide, *El señor de los pajaros*. Nayarit, 1985



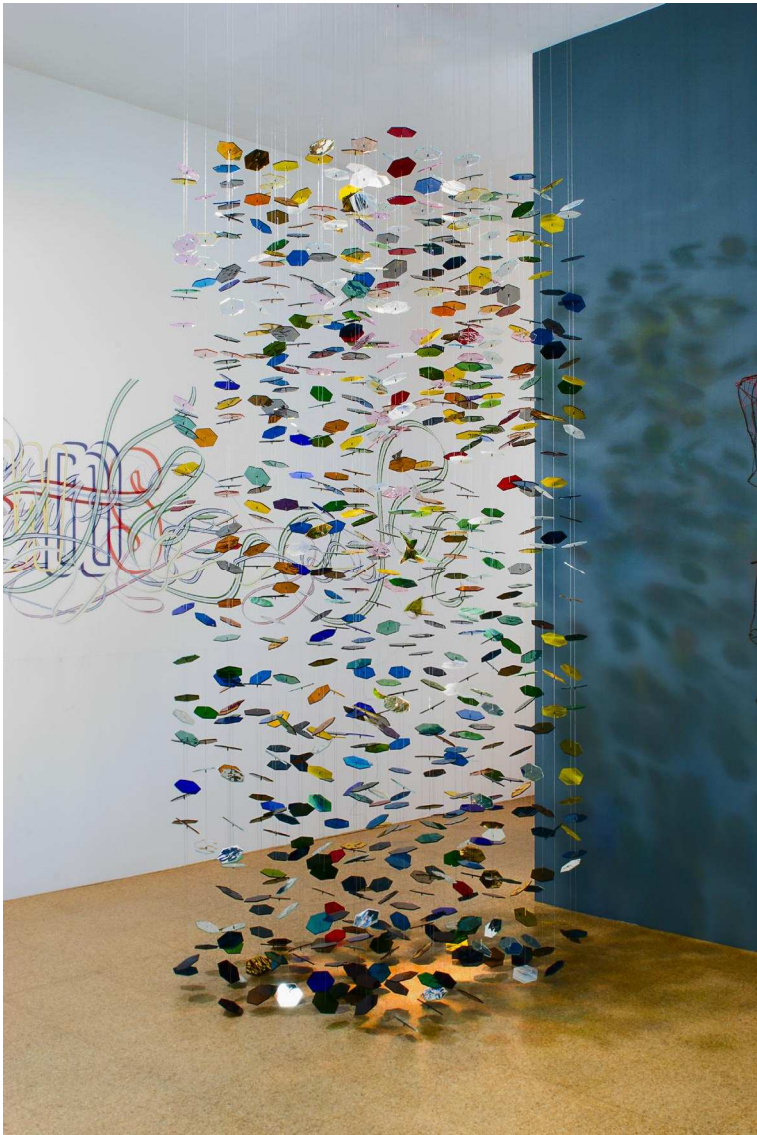
Phillip Lorca DiCorcia, *Mexico City*, 1998



Damian Ortega, *Geometría Expandida (Expanded Geometry)*, 2005



Melanie Smith, *Photo for Spiral City II*, 2002



Pae White, *Frieze Festoon*, 2005

## **Around the exhibition**

### **saturday 25th Octobre, 5 pm**

« carte blanche à un collectionneur »

**Agustín Coppel in conversation with Carlos Basualdo**, project advisor of the exhibition.

Conference organised by Les amis de la maison rouge.

Information and reservation at [amis@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:amis@lamaisonrouge.org)

### **thursday 11th December, 7 pm**

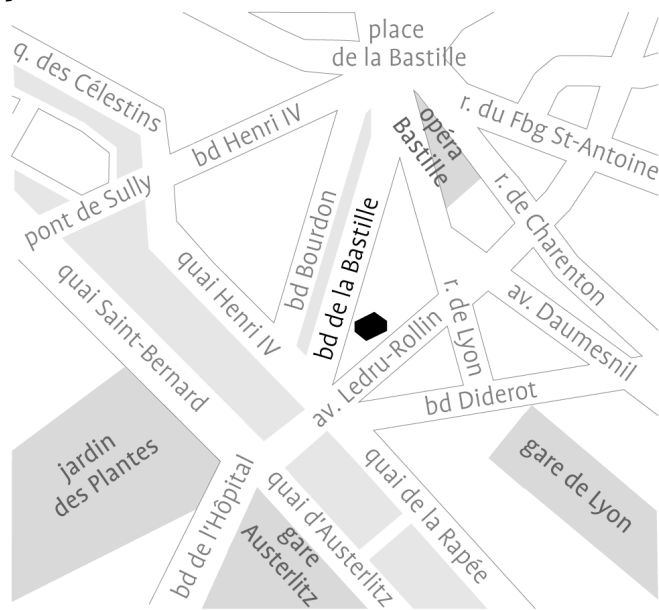
**Conference : The contemporary Art in Mexico by Guillermo Santamarina and Leticia Clouthier**

Information and reservation at [amis@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:amis@lamaisonrouge.org)

**➤ The full programme and dates for activities are at [www.lamaisonrouge.org](http://www.lamaisonrouge.org)**



## practical information



### getting there

**metro stations :** Quai de la Rapée (ligne 5) ou Bastille (lignes 1,5,8)

**RER station :** Gare de Lyon

**bus :** 20/29/91

### accessibilité

les espaces d'exposition sont accessibles aux visiteurs handicapés moteur ou aux personnes à mobilité réduite

### accessibility

the exhibition areas are accessible

### opening days and times

Wednesday to Sunday 11am to 7pm

late-night Thursday until 9pm

closed December 25th, January 1st and May 1st

### admission

**full price:** €6.50

**concessions:** €4.50 (13-18 years, students, full-time artists, and over-60s).

**free:** under-13s, the unemployed, companions of disabled visitors, members of ICOM and les amis de la maison rouge.

### annual pass

**full price:** €16

**concessions:** €12

free and unlimited admission to the exhibitions.

free or reduced rate admission to related events.

## partners of La maison rouge

**La maison rouge est membre du réseau TRAM**

**Télérama est partenaire média de la maison rouge**