

exhibition: February, 23 - May, 20 2018

opening: Thursday 22 February, 6 pm-9 pm

auschwitz is my coat
are you afraid of the dark?
i'll tell you where the path is free of
people,
so you don't need to be afraid.
i'm not afraid.
my fear remained in Auschwitz
and in the camps.
auschwitz is my coat
bergen-belsen my dress and
ravensbrück my vest.
what should I be afraid of?

Ceija Stojka

Curators: Xavier Marchand et Antoine de Galbert

Ceija Stojka was born in Austria in 1933, the fifth of six children. Her family were Lovara Roma horse traders from Central Europe. Ceija was ten years old when she was deported with her mother, Marie Sidi, and other family members. She survived three concentration camps: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Ravensbrück and Bergen-Belsen. It was only forty years later, in 1988 at the age of fifty-five, that she felt the need and the necessity to tell her story and embarked on a vast act of memory. Though considered illiterate, she wrote several poignant books in a poetic and highly personal style. In doing

so, she became the first Roma woman to have survived the death camps and recount her experiences so that they can never be forgotten or denied, and to raise a voice against the pervasive racism in Austria when far right and nationalist parties are winning more and more votes.

The four books she published between 1988 and 2005 quickly established her as a pro-Roma militant and activist in Austria. However, her testimony goes beyond the written word. From the 1990s Ceija Stojka threw herself into painting and drawing, again entirely self-taught. She worked every day in her apartment on Kaiserstrasse in Vienna, until shortly before her death in 2013. In two decades she produced more than a thousand paintings and drawings on paper, cardboard or canvas.

Her pictorial work alternates between two broad subject matters:

- Graphic representations of the horrific years of war and captivity which her family and her people endured. Almost five hundred thousand Roma were assassinated under the Nazi regime (the exact number of victims is still unknown).
- Brightly coloured, idyllic landscapes, reminiscent of the pre-war years when the Stojkas and other Roma lived freely and happily in their horse-drawn wagons in the Austrian countryside.

The exhibition shows over 130 works, produced between 1988 and 2012. Though undated, they recount Ceija's life in a thematic and chronological hanging:

 Vienna and deportation: these are representations of the Stojka family in hiding in Vienna, before being



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rounded-up and deported. Ink drawings alternate with charcoal and some paintings.

- The camps: this is the core of Ceija's output and also of the exhibition. More than 200 ink drawings relate to this period (1943-1945), a theme she was still working on shortly before her death. These are nightmarish visions, replete with barbed wire, bodies, smoke, SS, wind, snow and crows. On many works, writing directly on the paper in her clumsy, Austrian dialect, she confides her feelings as a little girl, mixed in with orders given by the guards, brief exchanges with her mother or, on the back of some drawings, longer texts. The written word becomes a motif in itself that extends across the page and also helps us grasp these extreme situations. There are also several acrylic paintings on cardboard or (more rarely) canvas. These are macabre descriptions, precise recreations of her memories or often symbolic evocations of her nightmares, haunted by swastikas, eyes, smokestacks and crows.
- The return to life: Ceija unleashes her love of colour, the open air and the Roma way of life. The backgrounds are applied by hand or using a brush loaded with paint (acrylic on cardboard or, more rarely, canvas).

Ceija Stojka was able to tell her story thanks to the Austrian filmmaker and documentarist Karin Berger, who helped her publish her books and directed two films about her.

More recently, the German art critic Matthias Reichelt, with Lith Bahlmann, proposed a major exhibition of her work and published a catalogue focused on her paintings of the camps. The exhibition was shown three times in Germany between 2013 and 2014.

In France, the Lanicolacheur theatre company discovered Ceija Stojka's work as part of a wider exploration of Roma culture. It had her book *Träume ich, dass ich lebe? Befreit aus Bergen-Belsen* translated and published in French (*Je rêve que je vis – Libérée de Bergen-Belsen*), gave public readings,

and exhibited her paintings and drawings. La maison rouge joined Lanicolacheur to produce the exhibition at La Friche Belle de Mai-Marseille in March 2017 and a second, larger exhibition in 2018, in Paris.

The majority of Ceija Stojka's paintings and drawings belongs to her family. Thirteen are held by the Wien Museum and many others are the property of private collectors, friends and supporters of the Roma cause. The exhibition also features archive documents, photographs and notebooks.



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Lith Bahlmann et Matthias Reichelt

Extracts from Ceija Stojka (1933-2013), Sogar der Tod Hat Angst vor Auschwitz, 2014, Verlag für Moderne Kunst

"... When she was haunted by her powerful memories of the everyday torture, the constant fear and permanent degradation, she often completed several sheets in one night. The result is a testimony to her brutally traumatic experiences in the concentration camps, and the "dark pictures" she left behind confront us unsparingly with these. Her painting and drawing technique was transfused with tis directness and the sometimes applied the paints onto the canvas, cardboard or paper with her bare hands thus articulating expressively the horror of what she had experienced. One apparent feature in her pictures is the repeated presentation of specific elements, for example, ravens; these had obviously bured themselves deep into her memory, becoming a permanent feature among her remembered images and appearing in the works as a motif again and again. In the inhospitable situation in the camps, at the end of the world and with hardly any sign of life, the ravens (die Raben) became Ceija Stojka's constant companions. In the ambivalence she projected, they seem to have been at the same time a source of hope and comfort I love these creatures and a symbol of death, as in the picture Corpses. In many myths, ravens are said to be able to converse with the dead and offer their services as messengers in this respect when handled accordingly. In the agony of the camps, the ravens became symbol of life and thus an expression of Ceija Stojka's authentic spirituality or the religious sentiments with which she encountered these creatures.

Another recurring symbol in Ceija Stojka's pictures was the branch of a tree, which she integrated into

her signature, sometimes more, sometimes less elaborated. It represented the branch of a tree in Bergen-Belsen which, with its resin and leaves, had saved the lives of Ceija Stojka's, her mother and other befriended internees in the last weeks in Bergen-Belsen in the spring of 1945. Both of these motifs show her strong affinity with nature and her love of life, something that she maintained to the very end despite her traumatic experiences. However, not only the images of the violent scenes she faced during her years of endured suffering, which were deeply entrenched in her memory in childhood, in spired her drawings and painting. Images from her memories of real happening fuse and intermingle with images that appeared in her dreams and nightmares; they come together with her hopes and desires, and with images that arose from later reflexion and contemplation. With these, Ceija Stojka brought the past into the present and used these images as the basis for her drawings and paintings. In her works, she attempted to relive past experiences, to gain access in this way to her subconscious in order to find relief and release from the painful memories of the camps and to transform her tramas into something more positive and more just. "



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Biography

1933 Birth of Ceija Stojka at Kraubath (Austria).

1939 Decree assigning Tziganes in residence. Her father and her sisters work in a factory, the younger children go to school.

1941 Her father is arrested and deported to Dachau, Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen concentration camps.

1942 Her father dies in Hartheim Castel Death Camp in High Austria.

1943 The rest of the family is arrested and locked in Rossauer Lände Prison. Then they are deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau where each member of the family gets a matricule tattoo. The family is held among 23 000 other Roms in the section called "Tzigane Camp". Her brother dies from typhus inoculated by the nazis during medical experiments.

1944 Her sister Mitzi is deported to Ravensbrück, and then transfered to Buchenwald. Once the "Tzigane Camp" is dismantled, Ceija with her mother and sister Kathi are deported to Ravensbrück while their brothers, Karli and Hansi, go to Buchenwald.

1945 Kathi is then deported to the forced labor camp of Rechlin/Retzau. Ceija and her mother are sent to Bergen-Belsen. They are released by the British troops on April 15. It takes them four months to walk back to Vienna through Germany. They miraculously find there Kathi, Hans and Karl who also survived.

1946 The family gets back to normal life and horse trading.

1949 She gives birth to her son, Hodja.

1951 She gives birth to her daugther, Silvia.

1955 She gives birth to her son, Jano.

1959 She obtains a license to sell carpets on markets, a job she's been doing until 1984.

1979 Death of her son, Jano.

1986 She meets Karin Berger, a film maker.

1988 Publication of *Wir leben im Verborgenen – Erinnerungen einer Rom-Zigeunerin*. Ceija starts to draw and paint.

1992 Publication of *Reisende auf dieser Welt. Aus dem Leben einer Rom-Zigeunerin* by Ceija

1999 Karin Berger releases her movie Ceija Stojka

2000 Ceija releases her album *Me Dikhlem Suno* [*I made a Dream*].

2001 She gives talks in Japan, England and Germany

2003 Publication of *Meine Wahl zu schreiben – ich kann es nicht*. Poems by Ceija in romani and german.

2005 Karin Berger releases her movie, *Unter den Brettern hellgrünes Gras*. Publication of *Träume ich, dass ich lebe? Befreit aus Bergen-Belsen* by Ceija.

2006 Ceija Stojka and Karin Berger recieve an award from Austrian TV for the documentary *Unter den Brettern hellgrünes Gras*.

2008 Publication of the monography: *Ceija Stojka, Auschwitz ist mein Mantel.*

2013 Death of Ceija Stojka.

2014 A new square on Lerchenfelder Straße in Vienna is baptised «Ceija-Stojka-Platz».

2016 Je rêve que je vis, Libérée de Bergen Belsen, is published in French by Isabelle Sauvage. Group show "Retour sur l'abîme, l'art à l'épreuve du génocide » at Crac / Montbéliard.

2017 Solo show at la Friche de la Belle de Mai, Marseilles



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Catalogue of the exhibition

The catalogue is co-published by éditions Fage and La maison rouge with contributions by Xavier Marchand, Gerhard Baumgartner, Philippe Cyroulnik and Patrick Williams.

Available at Bookstorming bookshop

Ceija Stojka, collection « Paroles d'artiste », éditions Fage, 2017

Ceija Stojka, Poèmes, à paraître en janvier 2018, éditions Bruno Doucey

events related to the exhibition

> theater play

«Je rêve que je vis, libérée de Bergen-Belsen» Xavier Marchand / Cie Lanicolacheur at la Maison de la Poésie 6 March at 8 pm

> lecture in the galleries

Poems from Ceija Stojka by Bruno Doucey at La maison rouge 22 March at 7 pm

All dates to be confirmed on www.lamaisonrouge.org



every Thursdays at 7 pm
 every Wednesdays at 2.30 pm
 the little family visit
 every Saturdays and Sundays at 4 pm

Free with the entrance ticket

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Dailymotion









lamaisonrouge.org #CeijaStojka

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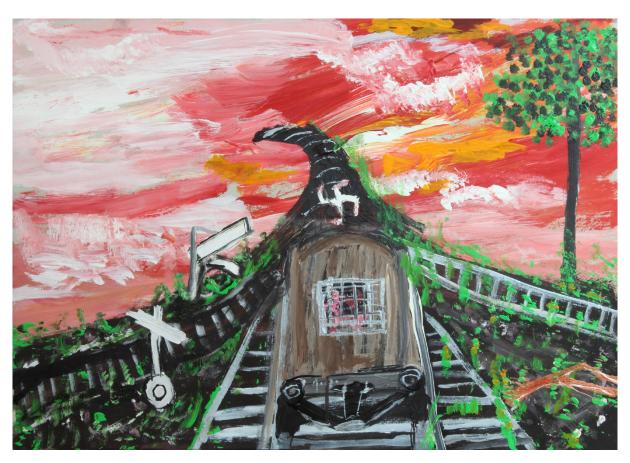
Ceija Stojka, sans titre, 1995 acrylic on cardboard. © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017 Collection Antoine de Galbert





Portrait de Ceija Stojka Photo: Christa Schnepf





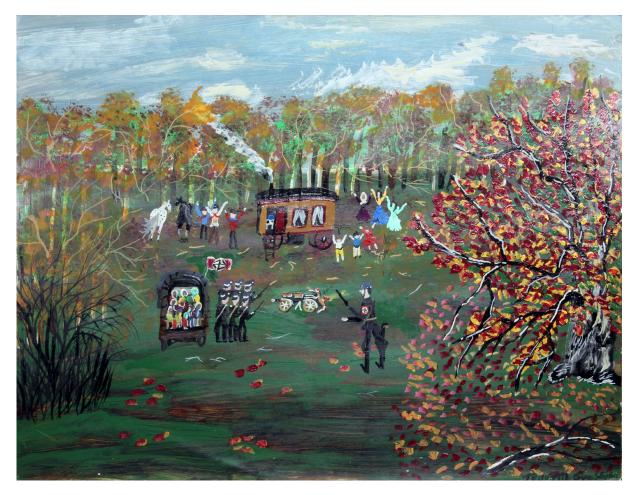
Ceija Stojka, untitled, undated, acrylic on cardboard. Courtesy Hojda and Nuna Stojka © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017





Ceija Stojka, untitled, undated, acrylic on cardboard © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017. Courtesy Galerie Kai Dikhas





Ceija Stojka, *untitled*, 1993, acrylic on cardboard.

© Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017. Courtesy Hojda and Nuna Stojka

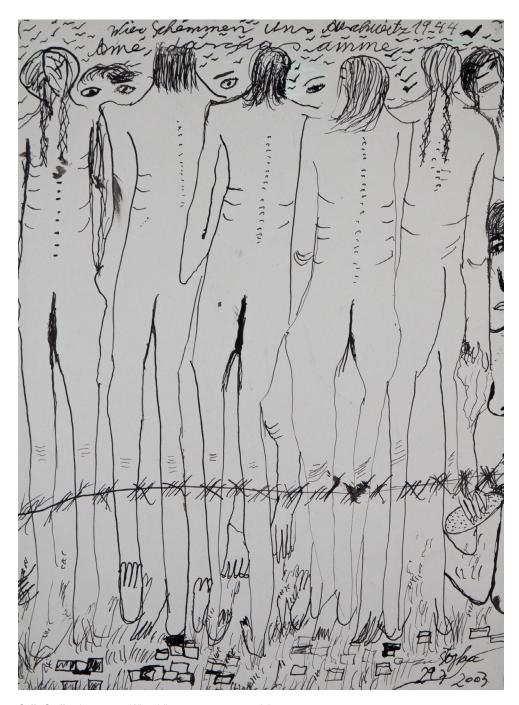




Ceija Stojka, *Z 6399*, 1994, acrylic on cardboard.

© Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017. Courtesy Hojda and Nuna Stojka





Ceija Stojka, *Lazas ame, Wir schämen uns, 1944*, 2003, ink on paper. © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017. Courtesy Galerie Kai Dikhas





Ceija Stojka, *untitled*, 2003, acrylic on cardboard. © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017. Courtesy Hojda and Nuna Stojka



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Ceija Stojka, *Der Krieg ist aus, Bergen-Belsen, 1945*, 2005 ink on cardboard © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017





Ceija Stojka, *Auschwitz 1944*, 2009, acrylic on canvas. © Ceija Stojka, Adagp, 2017. Courtesy Collection Antoine de Galbert



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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 bookshopor enjoy a drink.

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



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
- 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 artistes



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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 t. +33 (0)1 40 01 94 38 amis@lamaisonrouge.org



Bookstorming bookshop

Located next to La maison rouge at 10 bis, Boulevard de la Bastille, the bookshop is run by Bookstorming, 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.

Opening times

Wednesday to Sunday 12pm to 7pm



Rose Bakery culture at maison rouge

Rose Bakery and la maison rouge in 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 "popup" 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.

Rose et Jean-Charles Carrarini

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. They have turned French mealtimes upside down and welcome customers for breakfast, brunch, lunch and early dinner.

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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Getting here

Metro: Quai de la Rapée (line 5)

or Bastille (lines 1, 5, 8) RER : Gare de Lyon Bus : 20, 29, 91

Vélib':

station n° 12 003, opposite 98 quai de la Rapée station n° 12 001, 48 bd de la Bastille station n° 4 006, opposite 1 bd Boudon

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: €10

Concessions: € 7 (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 € 28 Annual pass: concessions € 19

Free and unlimited access to the exhibitions Free access or reduced rates to related events.

