

*L'esprit français*Countercultures, 1969-1989

exhibition: February, 24 - May, 21 2017

opening: Thursday 23 February, 6 pm - 9 pm

La maison rouge presents L'Esprit français, Countercultures, 1969-1989, a thematic group exhibition by curators Guillaume Désanges and François Piron.

From Narrative Figuration to the hardcore graphics of Bazooka, from Les Editions Champ Libre to the first «radios libres» (a form of pirate radio), from Hara-Kiri to Bérurier Noir, the exhibition looks at the formation of a critical, irreverent, dissenting «French spirit» by proposing a multitude of crossovers and affinities. Through some sixty artists and over seven hundred works and documents, spanning newspapers, flyers, posters, and extracts from films, videos and television shows, it purposely looks to other creative «genres» than those generally in the spotlight of contemporary art. It is an opportunity to show rarely-seen pieces, such as notebooks from the Dziga Vertov Group (formed by Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin), a monumental sculpture by Raymonde Arcier, and Henri and Marinette Cueco's «school books», and to commission original works from Kiki Picasso (II n'y a pas de raison de laisser le blanc, le bleu et le rouge à ces cons de français, 2016-2017), Jean-Jacques Lebel (L'Internationale Hallucinex, 1970-2017) and Claude Lévêque (Conte cruel de la jeunesse, 1987-2017).

France as a country doesn't like itself, yet invariably

sees itself at the centre of a self-reflexive, selfcelebrating cultural model. A generation was shaped by the ideas thrown into the ring by May '68, which advocated every kind of freedom - political, social, aesthetic, freedom to live as one pleased; meanwhile, the country remained in what amounted to a political status quo. This situation would have a lasting impact on different countercultures, liberation movements or protest movements and, without realising, give rise to new forms of avant-gardism whereby popular culture such as film, rock music, comics, journalism, television and graffiti influenced the more traditional cultural productions of literature, philosophy, contemporary art and the theatre. They produced an indefinable nebula of autonomous practices that came and went between these different fields, demonstrating a singular «French spirit» made up of idealism and nihilism, caustic humour and eroticism, darkness and hedonism. A distinct brand of humour appeared to permeate the fringes of French society, from the emergence of a «youth movement» irreverent, arrogant and politically ambiguous, one that grew up in the shadows of Guy Debord's «society of the spectacle» - to the crisis that monopolised political thinking from Giscard to Mitterrand.

Working within this diachronic («the French spirit») and synchronic (1969-1989) framework, the exhibition seeks to pinpoint an impossible identity by exploring its cultural backroads and alternative branches (from which, paradoxically, an excellence recognised beyond French borders grew). Emphasis is therefore on deviant figures, anti-heroes and creators from outside accepted history, because they were either



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too marginal or too mainstream.

Themes of sexualities, militancy, dandyism and violence run through the exhibition, which is structured as chapters. The focus of these chapters includes alternative education and sabotage of the French identity, but also the influence of Marquis de Sade on certain radical practices. Alternative means of production and diffusion in the media and the press, ongoing protestatory violence and its equally brutal repression contributed to a darkening social landscape against a backdrop of crisis, growing mass unemployment, segregation, and the soulless, tightlywound housing projects that became a catalyst for social malaise.

This original and subjective mapping of very different personalities takes in every type of creative expression - plastic arts (Lea Lublin, Pierre Molinier, Pierre Klossowski, Michel Journiac, Claude Lévêque, Daniel Pommereulle, Jacques Monory, Françoise Janicot...), comics and illustration (Roland Topor, Olivia Clavel, Kiki Picasso, Pascal Doury...), literature and thinking (Félix Guattari, Guy Hocquenghem...), music (Marie-France, Serge Gainsbourg, Bérurier Noir...), theatre (Copi, Jean-Louis Costes...), film and video (Carole Roussopoulos, Jean-Claude Averty, Paul Vecchiali, Jean-Pierre Bouyxou...) - and also explores important sites such as La Borde psychiatric clinic, La Grande Borne housing projects, Les Halles shopping mall and the Palace nightclub. In France, it's just a short step from counterculture to subculture, and many of the artists shown deliberately and openly chose not to go towards art but nonetheless stayed close, sometimes very close, as though to tap into it without having to conform to it. Others, within this field, never strayed from ways that «weren't the done thing»: figuration, caricature, ethnography, political militancy. These aesthetic dissidences are all forms of resistance to a formal order of things, and which restore diversity to a rather colourless history of French art. The purpose of this invocation of once marginalised ideas and practices is to shed a non-nostalgic light on cultural mutations,

but also bring a certain form of energy back to life.

Chapters in the exhibition: Fire away!, Forbidden/ Tolerated, Good Sex Illustrated, Sentimental Sordid, Dancing on Ruins, Diagonal Parallels, Cold Cuts, Inner Violence.

Guillaume Désanges and François Piron

Extracts from the exhibition catalogue *L'esprit français*, *Countercultures*, *1969-1989*Published by La Découverte and La maison rouge, 2017

Fire away!

Here's an idea: what if France's "beloved liberty" didn't actually exist, wasn't even a dot on the horizon; what if it were just a hypothesis to be experienced in the present tense, a hypothesis whose boundaries need to be pushed at all times? Countercultures express this idea by way of a provocative spirit and the symbolic destruction of society's political, administrative and moral structures. There is indeed a fundamental tendency in France to criticise rather than celebrate. Protest is never-ending, never enough, intransigent almost. Instead of trying to build alternatives to the dominant model, it seeks to exercise a kind of self-nourishing, self-sufficient "critical function". This malefic, insolent poltergeist, shooting down everything in its path, deliberately defies censure and includes its very self in its negativity. The seeds of this opposition – more ironic than idealistic - were sown in the slogans of May '68 and continued to grow throughout the '70s and into the dark days of the 1980s.



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Forbidden/Tolerated

The emancipatory movements that emerged following May '68 – feminism in particular – brought about increased awareness of instances of domination and the unequal balance of power that existed across institutions, both in the social space and in private/domestic space. What May '68 had revealed about work-related alienation existed in any institution whose purpose was to separate certain types of people from society, such as asylums and prisons. The La Borde clinic, directed by Jean Oury and Félix Guattari since the early 1950s and which practised François Tosquelles' method of institutional psychotherapy, became the epicentre of a movement to rethink "care" institutions. By extension, feminist and homosexual militants denounced domination and the allocation of both gender-based and social roles, patriarchy, and the normativity of social structures.

Good Sex Illustrated

For a few fertile years in the early '70s, sexual liberation movements became a melting pot for political affinities and aesthetic preferences. Heirs to May '68's theoretical pairing of freedom and Marxism, they sought to make a direct connection between the body and social issues. Sexuality, desire and politics were the watchwords of a new morality which, rooted in homosexual and feminist issues, contested society's patriarchal foundations and traditional models of the family. Militants from the women's liberation movement (without capitals) were the first to welcome gays into their midst (Front Homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire/Homosexual Front for Revolutionary Action, and its lesbian breakaway movement, Les Gouines Rouges/The Red Dykes, a women-only movement in response to

"phallocracy" within the FHAR itself) in a common battle against male chauvinism.

Dancing on Ruins

Towards the middle of the 1970s, when economic crisis and mass unemployment had rendered several of May '68's key slogans null and void (starting with the Situationist movement's famous injunction "Never work") and the epitome of French-style modernity was its young, but very old school, president, a change of mood began to emerge. It marked the end of idealistic expectations as they gave way to the double paradox of proclaimed nihilism and festive despair. And the diagnosis was this: the patient had a fever, in every sense of the word - both ecstatic and sickly. This unexpected reaction to the doom and gloom fed on darkness. both spiritual and physical. More out of insolence than joy, an enlightened French youth rejected politics, substituting dance floors for debating floors. Was Paris still burning? Yes – but this time with lights and sequins, from the decadent parties at Le Palace and La Main Bleue to dazzling ads, video clips and the kitsch, baroque style of the trendsetters. A forerunner of the post-modern power-dressing of the '80s now began to emerge into the daylight (or rather into the dusk); an updated dandyism exhibiting a falsely naïve, if not downright cynical, superficiality. Because the only way to deal with despair was to be beautiful, creative, artistic, egotistical - and brainless. No doubt France, whose influence had been on the wane since the early 20th century, would find this emerging crisis the perfect setting in which to polish its deadpan irony, in a state of despair but still wanting instant gratification. A motley mix of dark superficiality; futile but still refined, and with an all-ornothing attitude to pleasure.



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Diagonal Parallels

After May '68 "failed", in strictly political terms, countercultures shifted their sights. Rather than attack the system, they sought to extricate themselves from it and find alternative means to pursue their resistance. The usual strategy was to take a sideways step which, in the early '70s, often meant joining a commune or even abandoning the city in favour of a (frequently brief) rural idyll, in an attempt to express resistance through selfsufficiency. The need to foster such deliberately dissident, marginal stances was heightened by the fact that centralism, the structural counterpart of France's intangible universalism, was extending into its territory. This "do-it-yourself" attitude was illustrated by the unprecedented wave of publications in every sphere of society: students, conscientious objectors, prisoners, doctors, psychiatrists, patients, artists, women and homosexuals formed networks through which they wrote, printed, stapled, dispatched and swapped leaflets and handouts frequently home-made - with an irrepressible desire to express themselves and share their thoughts.

Cold Cuts

1960s housing projects and the "new town" policy, alongside more experimental programmes such as those by the architect Émile Aillaud in Pantin (Cité Courtillières, completed in 1964) and Grigny (La Grande Borne, completed in 1971), reshaped the French landscape. But during the economic crisis of the 1970s, these "modern" suburbs, built to accompany the earlier industrial boom, gradually went from a feeling of hope to one of menace and from utopia to dystopia, creating a sinister image that mirrored the mood of the country as a whole. The particular architecture of these housing projects crystallised critical opinion while at the same time

fostering – even fascinating – a fertile popular imagination that alternative cultures were quick to appropriate.

Inner Violence

"France is afraid," as a television newsreader put it. More to the point, France was overheating. Heroin, disillusionment and self-hatred contributed to a tense atmosphere in which young people quickly went from peace and love to punk aggression. This abrupt change in ideology was perhaps less about the arrival of a new generation and more a sign that countercultures had reached the end of the diplomatic road. The talking is over, the shooting begins. The pervading fascination with violent motifs in the broadest sense of the term (fighting, prison, terrorism, crude pornography, psychiatry) was picked up by a prolific graphic movement, led by groups such as Bazooka and Elles sont de sortie whose graphzines took comics into an angry, adult age. Their provoking images turned their back on the more idealistic political agenda of their elders; their format deliberately harked back to the visual codes of totalitarianism and advertising in a kind of critical mimicry. Their schoolboy gravitas inspired an "alternative" wave of feverish French punk which in the 1980s, with Bérurier Noir as its spearhead, crisply and intelligently set youth alight with its hymns to the darkness of the world.



Curator biographies

Guillaume Désanges is an exhibition curator and art critic. He is also the director of Work Method, an independent production structure. His recent projects include Erre (2011, Centre Pompidou Metz, France); Amazing! Clever! Linguistic!, An Adventure in Conceptual Art (2013, Generali Foundation, Vienna, Austria); Une Exposition Universelle (Section Documentaire) (2013, Louvain-la-Neuve biennial, Belgium); Curated Session #1: The Dora Garcia Files (2014, Perez Art Museum, Miami, USA); Nil Yalter 1973/2015, (2015, La Verrière, Brussels, Belgium); Ma'aminim / Les Croyants (2015, Musée d'art et d'histoire, Saint-Denis, France & Tranzitdisplay, Prague, Czech Republic); The Méthode Room (2015, Chicago, USA); Poésie balistique (2015, La Verrière Hermès, Brussels, Belgium).

François Piron is an exhibition curator and art critic. He is also co-director of Paraguay publishers in Paris, and since 2002 has taught contemporary art history and theory at the school of fine arts (Ensba) in Lyon, where he coordinates the post-graduate programme. He was artistic director for the 2016 Ateliers de Rennes-Contemporary Art Biennial. His work as an exhibition curator includes Habiter poétiquement le monde (LAM, Musée d'art contemporain, Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2010); Ignasi Aballi, This Is Not The End (Artium, Basque Museum and Centre of Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz, 2012); Locus Solus, Impressions of Raymond Roussel (Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid and Serralves Foundation, Porto, 2011-2012); Nouvelles Impressions de Raymond Roussel (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013); Mangelos, miroirs noirs (Galerie Frank Elbaz, Paris, 2013); In These Great Times (Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo, 2014); The President of the Republic of Dreams (Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Berlin, 2013 and New York, 2015).

M

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artists and authors of the exhibition

Djouhra Abouda
et Alain Bonnamy
Olivier Agid
Émile Aillaud
Gilles Aillaud
Malek Alloula
Raymonde Arcier
Adolfo Arrietta
Jean Aubert

Jean-Christophe Averty

Igor Barrère Cathy Bernheim Bérurier Noir et Laul

Alain Bizos Julien Blaine Bertrand Blier Jean-Pierre Bouyxou et Raphaël Marongiu

Régis Cany Claude Caroly

Henri Cartier-Bresson

Jules Celma Olivia Télé Clavel Nicole Claveloux Collectif Eugène Varlin et Jacques Kebadian le Collectif Mohammed

Coluche

la Coopérative des Malassis (Henri Cueco, Lucien Fleury, Jean-Claude Latil, Michel Parré, Gérard Tisserand, Christian Zeimert)

Copi

Jean-Louis Costes Alfred Courmes Jean Criton Marinette Cueco Jorge Damonte
Jacqueline Dauriac
Pierre Desproges

Elles Sont De Sortie (Pascal Doury

et Bruno Richard) Catherine Faux

Dan & Guy Ferdinande

Lucien Fleury Marie France

Bernard Froidefond (Lastar

Crémière)
Dominique Fury
Serge Gainsbourg
Jean-Pierre Gallèpe

Jean-François Gallotte et Joëlle

Malberg Gébé

Michel Giniès

le Groupe Dziga Vertov (Jean-Luc Godard et Jean-Pierre Gorin) Daniele Huillet e t Jean-Marie Straub Les Insoumuses (Nadja Ringart

Carole Roussopoulos Delphine Seyrig et Ioana Wieder) Françoise Janicot et Bernard Heidsieck

Michel Journiac
Jean-Paul Jungmann
Peter Klasen

Pierre Klossowski Eustachy Kossakowski

Claude Lalanne Lulu Larsen Alain Le Saux Jean-Jacques Lebel Jean-Patrick Lebel Claude Lévêque Lea Lublin

Annette Messager

Pierre Molinier
Jacques Monory
Alain Montesse
Philippe Morillon
Didier Moulinier
Edgard Naccache

ORLAN
Frédéric Pardo
Michel Parmentier
Kiki Picasso
Loulou Picasso
Pierre et Gilles
Daniel Pommereulle

Reiser

Michel Saloff-Coste

Professeur Choron

Siné

Romain Slocombe Lionel Soukaz Lucien Suel T5Dur Thierry Tillier Roland Topor Jean-Marc Toulassi Clovis Trouille le Groupe Utopie Paul Vecchiali Bernard Vidal Georges Wolinski

Henri Xhonneux

Rocking Yaset

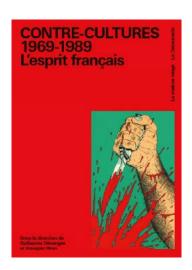
Pierre Zucca



Catalogue of the exhibition

A book, published by Les Editions La Découverte and edited by Guillaume Désanges and François Piron, accompanies the exhibition, with contributions from Philippe Artières (historian), Thibaud Croisy (director, writer), François Cusset (sociologist, historian of ideas), Alexandre Devaux (art critic and historian), Fabienne Dumont (art historian), Julien Hage (historian), Antoine Idier (writer, academic), Nathalie Quintane (writer), Kantuta Quiros and Aliocha Imhoff (curators of «Le Peuple Qui Manque»), Elisabeth Lebovici (art critic and historian), Olivier Marboeuf (writer, director of Espace Khiasma, Les Lilas), Peggy Pierrot (activist, sociologist) and Sarah Wilson (art historian).

Available at Bookstorming bookshop 320 pages, 18 x 25 cm, French 35 €





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events related to the exhibition

► Thursday 23 February at 10.30 pm

concert of Marie France at Divan du Monde Fee: 10 € / booking: 01 40 05 08 10

► films, talks

check our webiste lamaisonrouge.org

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Within Mois de la Photo du Grand Paris, April 2017.

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Fire away!



Michel Journiac, Hommage au Putain Inconnu, 1973 © Archiv Acquaviva, Berlin, photo: Thierry Ollivier / ADAGP, Paris 2017

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Fire away!



Alfred Courmes, L'Intervention de l'armée est demandée, 1969. © Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris / ADAGP, Paris 2017



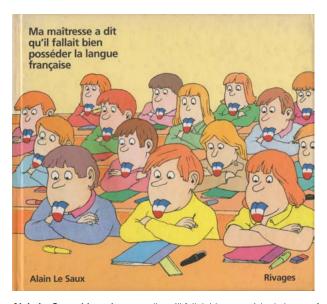
Coopérative des Malassis, détail de *Qui tue? ou l'affaire Gabrielle Russier,* sous-titré « L'histoire vraie d'une jeune femme, de son histoire d'amour, de sa mort », 1970 © Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dole / Photo: Claude-Henri Bernardot



Forbidden/Tolerated



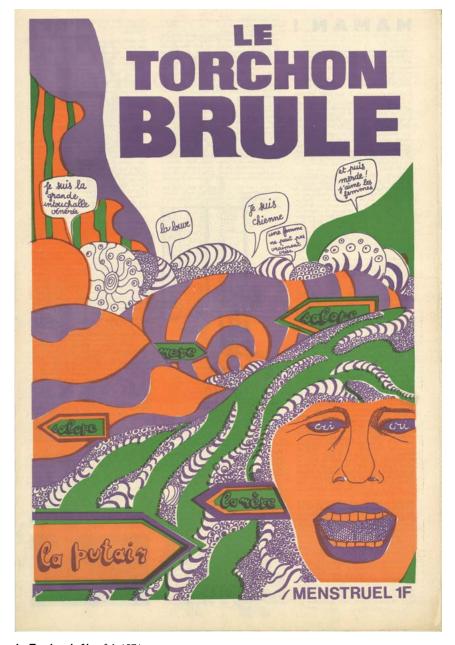
 $\textbf{Jacques Monory,} \textit{Antoine } n^{\circ}\textit{6,} \ 1973 \\ \textcircled{0} \ \textit{Jacques Monory /} \ \textbf{ADAGP,} \\ \textit{Paris 2017.} \ \textit{Courtesy de l'artiste}$



Alain Le Saux, *Ma maîtresse a dit qu'il fallait bien posséder la langue française,* Paris, Éditions Rivages, 1985. © Editions Rivages / Alain Le Saux



Good Sex Illustrated



Le Torchon brûle, n° 1, 1971 © *Le Torchon brûle*, Courtesy Collection Dixmier



Good Sex Illustrated



Cathy Bernheim, *Manifestation contre les appels au meurtre d'homosexuel.le.s lancés par Anita Bryant aux USA*, Paris, 1977 © Cathy Bernheim



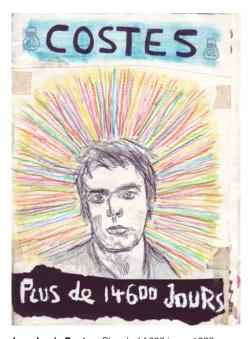
Raymonde Arcier, Au Nom du père, 1977 © Raymonde Arcier, Courtesy de l'artiste



Sordide sentimental



ORLAN, *Titre d'un film virtuel: ORLAN avant Sainte-ORLAN*, 1988 © ADAGP, Paris 2017. Courtesy de l'artiste et de la Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, Bruxelles



Jean-Louis Costes, *Plus de 14 600 jours*, 1988. © Jean-Louis Costes, Courtesy de l'artiste



Dancing on Ruins



Philippe Morillon, Membres des bandes des Gazolines et To the bop devant la boutique Pendora de Luxe aux Halles, 1975 © Philippe Morillon



Pierre et Gilles, Marie France, 1980 © Pierre et Gilles. Courtesy Pinault Collection



Cold Cuts



Studio Bob - Photocine (photographie), Émile Aillaud (architecture), La Grande Borne, Grigny, ensemble de 3 685 logements, 1965-1970. Courtesy SIAF/Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine/Archives d'architecture du xx° siècle



Régis Cany, Les Photographittis, Paris et région parisienne, 1977-1982 © Régis Cany



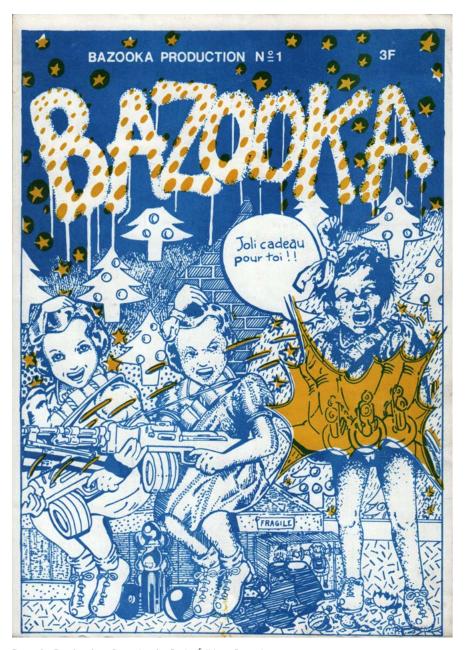
Inner Violence



Kiki Picasso, 1974, élection de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing à la présidence de la République (19 mai); réalisation du dernier des essais nucléaires français atmosphériques (15 septembre) de la série « Il n'y a pas de raison de laisser le blanc, le bleu et le rouge à ces cons de français », 2016-2017. © Kiki Picasso



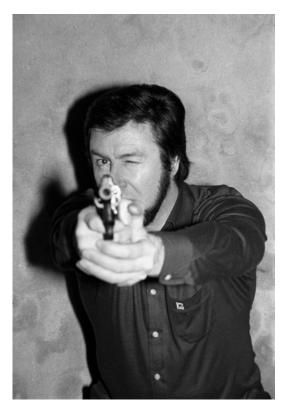
Inner Violence



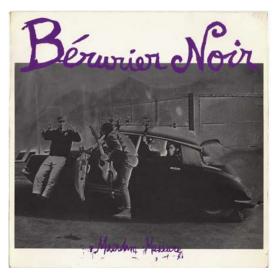
Bazooka Production, Bazooka n° 1, Paris, Éditions Bazooka, 1975



Inner Violence



Alain Bizos, En joue!, 1979 © ADAGP, Paris 2017. Courtesy de l'artiste



Bérurier noir, *Macadam Massacre* (album 33 tours), 1984



Diagonal Parallels



Éditions Champ Libre, *La Jungle nue* de Philip Jose Farmer, illustration d'Alain Le Saux, Paris, 1974 © Editions Champ Libre / Alain Le Saux





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).

amis

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
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- 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
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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

fondation antoine de galbert 10 bd de la bastille - 75012 paris france tel. +33 (0) 1 40 01 08 81 fax +33 (0) 1 40 01 08 83 info@lamaisonrouge.org 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

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..

