

MAC

Press release

VAL

Lignes de vies - une exposition de légendes

Lifelines - an Exhibition of Legends

Group show from 30 March to 25 August 2019

Opening on Friday 29 mars, 6:30 pm

Curator Frank Lamy assisted by Julien Blanpied and Ninon Duhamel

With works by Soufiane Ababri, Art Orienté Objet, Paul Auster, Joël Bartoloméo, Pauline Bastard, Taysir Batniji, Sadie Benning, Karina Bisch, Christian Boltanski, Daniel Bosser, Édouard Boyer, Candice Breitz, Genesis Breyer P-Orridge, David Brognon & Stéphanie Rollin, Jean Brolly, Elina Brotherus, Emilie Brout & Maxime Marion, Sophie Calle, Philippe Cazal, Ludovic Chemarin ©, Leo Chiachio & Daniel Giannone, Claude Closky, Steven Cohen, Béatrice Cussol, Sépànd Danesh, Edi Dubien, Elsa & Johanna, Raphaël Fabre, Simon Faithfull, Esther Ferrer, Jakob Gautel, GRAND MAGASIN, Joseph Grigely, Joël Hubaut, Ilanit Illouz, Princia Itoua, Janez Janša, Lydie Jean-Dit-Pannel, Michel Journiac, Paul Kindersley, Arnaud Labelle-Rojoux, Matthieu Laurette, Leigh Ledare, Édouard Levé, Claude Lévêque, Ariane Loze, Kristin Lucas, MADEleINE ERIC, Roberta Marrero, Annette Messenger, Aleksandra Mir, Pierre Moignard, Jacques Monory, Tania Mouraud, Valérie Mréjen, Zanele Muholi, Antoinette Ohannessian, ORLAN, Cécile Paris, Philippe Perrin, Grayson Perry, Françoise Pérovitch, Abraham Poincheval, Laurent Prexl, Prinz Gholam, Hubert Renard, Santiago Reyes, Colin Roche, Damien Rouxel, Sandro, Jim Shaw, SMITH + Cellule URS, Tsuneko Taniuchi, Philippe Thomas, Unglee, Hélène Villovitch....

Press Contacts: anne samson communications

Morgane Barraud +33 1 40 36 84 34 morgane@annesamson.com

Federica Forte +33 1 40 36 84 40 federica@annesamson.com

Musée d'art contemporain
du Val-de-Marne

Place de la Libération 94400
Vitry-sur-Seine

T +33 (0)1 43 91 64 20

www.macval.fr
contact@macval.fr

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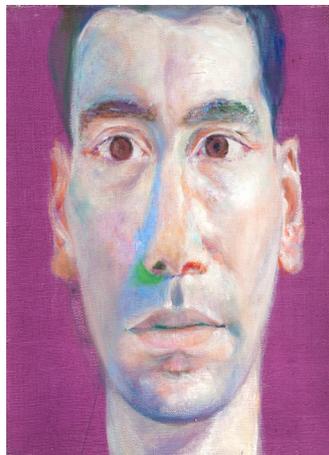
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Conceiving one's life as a creative force is the vector shared by the 80 international artists featuring in the new temporary exhibition at MAC VAL. Titled "Lignes de vies – une exposition de légendes" (Lifelines – an Exhibition of Legends), and running from 30 March to 25 August 2019, this new highlight in the life of the Musée d'Art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne brings together work by several different generations of artists, representing every kind of practice, from photography to video via painting, installation, performance and writing. It continues a programme that, ever since the museum first opened in 2005, has worked to question modalities and instances in the construction of identity – or rather, identities, initiated with the exhibitions "Détours" by Jacques Monory (2005) and "Le Grand Sommeil" by Claude Levêque (2006). With the cycle "Zones de Productivités Concertées" (2006–7) and again the group show "Emporte-moi/Sweep me off my feet" (2009–10), it then went on to analyse the role of the economy and of emotion in our lives. Next it was on to gender (and, more precisely, masculinity) with "Chercher le garçon" (2015) and even cultural identity in "Tous, des sang-mêlés" (2017).

All the works shown in the extensive exhibition space deconstruct, analyse, critique or interrogate the phenomena and processes that shape and legitimise identity/identities. There are no narcissistic or self-centred gestures here; rather, the artists reconstruct and propose – more than new identities: chosen identities.



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Text by Frank Lamy, curator of the exhibition, head of temporary exhibitions at MAC VAL

"I quite agree with you,' said the Duchess; 'and the moral of that is--"Be what you would seem to be"--or if you'd like it put more simply--"Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise.""

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*,
chapter 9

"We drank to Ulysses. And while Lestranger was reading random passages from the book, slightly woozy, in the cigarette smoke, I said to myself: I too need to tell stories. Live or tell the tale, someone once said. But no, narrating is not the opposite of living. You do not destroy what you are experiencing by recounting it; on the contrary, what you relate only intensifies it. I am quite happy, like Ulysses, to get lost on my way, to stray into the shadows of the borderlands. Telling, I say to myself, is part of the path; telling extends the adventure and opens it to all paths."

Yannick Haenel, *Cercle*, Gallimard, 2007,
Folio, 2009, p. 84

"...I have always considered social identity to be the only real identity; and the other, the so-called personal identity, to be an illusion as absolute as it is persistent..."

Clément Rosset, *Loin de moi*,
Minuit, 1999, p. 11

For "Lignes de vies - une exposition de légendes," we are turning towards more intimate and personal territories. Indeed, the works (by both men and women) assembled in the exhibition, take autobiography and biography as a visual raw material, generating a reflection on identities, from the presentation and the construction of the self. The aim is to interrogate the relations between art and life and, eventually, to question the effectiveness of art, its inscription in the real, through various artistic positions that all put into practice (between illustration and activation) the dissolution of this purported frontier.

T +33 (0)1 43 91 64 20

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Considering that identity is a fiction that is performed, a multiple and fragmented narrative, telling one's story and making one's life – one's gesture – a raw material, is therefore an act of deconstruction, of affirmation, of empowerment – a kind of molecular revolution. The political gesture of taking control of the narrative of one's own legend.

The self is a "political fiction" (Paul B. Preciado and others), a "social puzzle" that "stands in for identity, which is as variegated as the imaginary unity which is supposedly its base is non-existent" (Clément Rosset): a legend.

Following the parallel between person and fictive personage (character) established by Clément Rosset, it is possible to state that the self "does not constitute the unity of a personal identity but the aggregate of qualities it is recognised or not as having, depending on the mood of its entourage." (Loin de moi, Minuit, 1999, p 88). Or, to put it another way: "The 'I' takes all its substance from the 'you' that grants it to him/her" (ibid, p. 50).

Me, a legend?

The works brought together in this exhibition deconstruct, analyse, critique and call into question the phenomena, processes and instances of construction and legitimation of identity/identities.

There are no narcissistic or self-centred gestures here; rather, these artists and these works reconstruct and propose – not so much as new identities as chosen identities.

The individual subject, capitalism and the self-portrait all developed along parallel historical paths and each constitutes an element within a control system of domination and global. Deconstructing the self-portrait, self-representation, could be part of a general struggle. Essentially, writing one's autobiography (whatever means of writing one chooses) certainly comes down to writing one's own life, to inventing it. Self-portraits, private diaries, memoirs, emotional cartographies, bio art and corporeal modifications, attitude art, autofiction, self-staging, and infiltrating systems of representation (TV, cinema, YouTube, Facebook, literature, etc.) and legitimation (author, civil status, etc.) are so many fictions acted out by the artists, so many tools. This reflection partakes of the critical

re-examination of contemporary narcissism and exhibitionism, but also the promise of fulfilment through consumption touted by marketing. It is a matter, here, not so much of representing as of constructing, inventing oneself, of choosing and refusing to be assigned.

What place should be left to the family, to history, transmission and heritage? To names? To relations with other life forms, with the cosmos? What is a life? An event? What of destiny? What roles should we play? What masks should we wear? How to negotiate with others, gender, the economy, memory, passing time, fluid, multiple identities, fragmentation, disguise, hybridisation, staging, masks, characters?

Works that are situated,
between self and play

A reading space is located at the centre of the exhibition room, offering books of different kinds (novels, catalogues, artists' books, theoretical works, etc.), whose common feature is that they were all written in the first person singular by an artist. This reading area points to the origin and literary dynamic behind this project which offers visitors a suspended time.

Throughout the duration of the exhibition and, in partnership with Synesthésie ▽ **MMAINTENANT**, the HERstory project initiated by Julie Crenn and Pascal Lièvre will also be activated. A veritable compendium of feminist, activist speech and a mobile archive, this protocol invites various figures to talk about their experience and ideas in front of the camera and the public (6 and 7 April, 4 and 5 May, 1 and 2 June, 7 and 8 July at MAC VAL, from 13 to 17 May at Synesthésie ▽ **MMAINTENANT**).

To extend this exploration, a publication accompanies the project. With some ten first-person-singular contributions, it opens windows onto research, cinema, post-feminism, pop, literature and art history, with texts by Noémie Aulombard, Érik Bullot, Julie Crenn and Pascal Lièvre, Éric Fassin, Agnès Gayraud, Yannick Haenel, Sophie Orlando, and Philippe Vasset...

*"All this must be considered as being said
by a character from a novel"*
Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes,
Seuil, 1975



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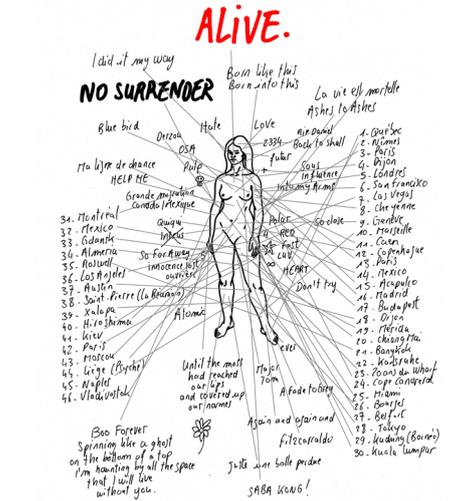
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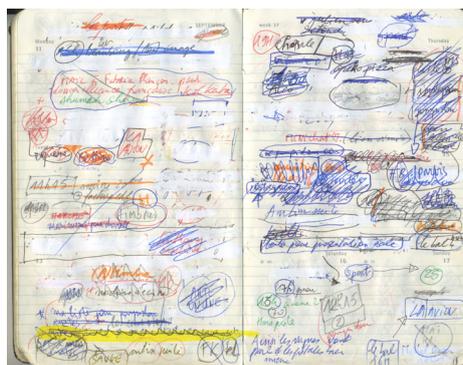
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1 Pierre Moignard, (*autoportrait*)
5 VI 97, 1997.
Oil on canvas, 27 x 22 cm. Photo ©
Alberto Ricci. Courtesy galerie anne
barrault.

2 Pierre Moignard, (*autoportrait*)
12 I 92, 16, 1992.
Oil on canvas, 27 x 22 cm.
Photo © Alberto Ricci. Courtesy galerie
anne barrault.

3 Edi Dubien, *À 6h du matin*
l'hiver, 2017.
Acrylic on canvas, 162 x 130 cm. Photo
© Edi Dubien. © Adagp, Paris 2019.

4 Sèpànd Danesh, *Léviathan*, 2017.
Oil on canvas, 80 x 60 cm. © DR.

5 Abraham Poincheval, *Ours*, 2014.
Mixed materials, 160 x 220 x 110 cm.
© Musée de la chasse et de la nature.
Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris.
Photo © S. Lloyd. © Adagp, Paris 2019.

6 Christian Boltanski, *Essais de*
reconstitution en pâte à modeler
d'objets ayant appartenu à C.
Boltanski entre 1948 et 1954,
1970 - 1971. Metal and plastiline,
43 x 60 x 40 cm. Collection FRAC
Occitanie Montpellier. © Adagp, Paris
2019. Photo © Florian Kleinfenn.

7 Pauline Bastard, *Alex*, 2015.
Dimensions variable. © Adagp, Paris
2019.

8 Lydie Jean-Dit-Pannel, *ALIVE.*, 2018.
Three-colour silkscreen on Fabriano
Rosaspina, 70 x 50 cm, edition of 40,
numbered and signed. © Lydie Jean-
Dit-Pannel, La Belle Epoque.
© Adagp, Paris 2019.

9 Simon Faithfull, *0°00 Navigation*
Part I: A Journey Across England,
2009.
Video and super-8 transferred onto
DVD, 51 min. Courtesy Galerie Polaris.

10 Michel Journiac, *La Bourgeoise au*
musée, 1994.
Gelatin silver print on paper,
23.8 x 17.8 cm. Photo © Eric
Lamouroux, Galerie Christophe
Gaillard, Paris. © Adagp, Paris 2019.

11 Karina Bisch, *Le Marabout*, 2018.
Various materials (paint, mannequin,
h. 175 cm, Palette Hat 50 x 43 x 0.5 cm,
Painted Painter Blouse
180 x 106 x 2 cm, painting: 195 x 114 cm)
(The Wink Chair, Toshiyuki Kita:
102 x 90 x 83 cm). © Adagp, Paris 2019.
Courtesy Karina Bisch, Galerie Thomas
Bernard.

12 Candice Breitz, *Profile*, 2017.
(Seen Here: Steven Cohen)
3 single-channel videos, colour, sound,
loop. Variation A - Duration: 2 minutes,
20 seconds. Variation B - Duration: 3
minutes, 27 seconds. Variation C -
Duration: 3 minutes, 21 seconds.
Commissioned by the South African
Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2017.
Courtesy KOW, Berlin.

13 Cécile Paris, *3977*, 2019.
Unique piece constituted by a set of
written and sewn notebooks,
21 X 13 cm, épaisseur 7 cm.
© Cécile Paris. © Adagp, Paris 2019.

14 Sadie Benning, *It Wasn't Love*,
1992.
Video, U-matic, PAL, b/w, sound, 20'.
Collection FRAC Occitanie Montpellier.
© Sadie Benning.

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