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VALÉRIE JOUVE

23 JUNE - 13 SEPTEMBER 2010

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Centre
Pompidou

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MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE,
GALERIE D'ART GRAPHIQUE, LEVEL 4



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CONTENTS

1. PRESS RELEASE	PAGE 3
2. INTERVIEW WITH VALÉRIE JOUVE	PAGE 5
3. ARTIST BIOGRAPHY	PAGE 7
4. PUBLICATION	PAGE 11
5. VISUALS FOR THE PRESS	PAGE 12
6. PRACTICAL INFORMATION	PAGE 14

31 May 2010



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Valérie Jouve, Untitled, 2010
© Valérie Jouve



PRESS RELEASE
VALÉRIE JOUVE
23 JUNE – 13 SEPTEMBER 2010

MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE,
GALERIE D'ART GRAPHIQUE, LEVEL 4

The Centre Pompidou is to stage an exhibition of the work of photographer Valérie Jouve. Featuring images of people and place taken in the Palestinian autonomous territories in 2008 and 2009, like her earlier work it represents a reflection on the human presence in the city.

“I see the exhibition space as a great visual composition that doesn't so much propose an understanding of the Arab world but rather generates resonances of line and colour to produce a physical sense of that world in the viewer.”

As in her earlier projects, Valérie Jouve's work in this exhibition combines the documentary, the poetic and the political, as she uses framing and sometimes photomontage to relate the individual to the urban space. Here the fluidity of the body encounters the fixity of structures: this opposition is fundamental to her approach, organizing both films and photographs. Valérie Jouve has specifically designed this exhibition for the Centre Pompidou, exploiting to the full the possibilities offered by the Galerie d'Art Graphique, marshalling together images of different kinds and sizes to generate a dialogue between them.

Born in Saint-Étienne in 1964, Valérie Jouve lives and works in Paris. An anthropologist by training, she decodes our society and its everyday theatre through the staging of moments of life in photographs "played" or "performed." She believes these images to have a documentary value, testifying to the underlying political and social situations. Yet her work is always charged with a certain poetic melancholy.

The urban world is one of the central themes of Jouve's work. Fascinated by the city, she captures its inhabitants and their behaviours, grasping the everyday performance that the city requires of us, pinning down through photography what makes for its identity. The treatment of space is crucial, the question being how the human figure confers presence on its surroundings. Architecture appears as the emblematic form of the space the individual creates in and for living. The gap between collective and individual is thus posed in aesthetic terms.

A book to accompany the exhibition is to be published (bilingually in French and English) by Éditions du Centre Pompidou.

2. INTERVIEW WITH VALÉRIE JOUVE

In this exhibition at the Centre Pompidou Valérie Jouve presents some thirty photographs taken in 2008 and 2009, chiefly in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, the first elements of a larger project looking at city and territory in the Arab world. She captures her subjects in images that lie between the documentary and the staged.

The title of the exhibition, “En attente” (in waiting, or “On Hold”), evokes the moment of pause and pose that she asks of her “characters,” women and men photographed in urban contexts: suspended in time, the arrested gazes and gestures are often endowed with additional force by the photographer’s interrelation of different images. What is more, although no direct reference is made, most of these pictures were taken in the Palestinian territories, themselves also “in waiting.”

In the interview that follows, the photographer discusses her highly distinctive approach, which makes the encounter with individuals the cornerstone of her work.

What does it mean for you, this exhibition at the Centre Pompidou?

VJ – It’s a pleasure to show here in this space I’ve loved so long. It’s a nice coincidence, too, because it’s a decade since I’ve shown at a major French institution – the last big exhibition here was in 1998, a dialogue with the photographer Andrea Keen, at the Centre National de la Photographie, in the Rue Berryer in those days. I’m showing a selection of my work that reflects a shift from the urban life of the West to the Arab city. This has meant my eye having to adjust to new realities: Arab cities are constructed on different principles. But it’s really only the beginnings of this investigation that I’ll be showing. What I’m showing, really, is my first contact with Palestine; and today I can see in these first images all the feelings I experienced.

How did you conceive of the exhibition?

VJ – It’s intended to be very low key, because I wanted to get across this idea of a beginning. Every image has an iconic aspect – perhaps they’re actually more autonomous. I didn’t want to do what I usually do, a distinct montage of images; what I wanted was a simple play of format and height, like notes on a stave. The relationship I have to the country, too, calls for a sobriety, a simplicity, as if too forceful a gesture would be out of place, or that it might be too early, too, to make any claim to a radical encounter. I always need time to understand places, and even more here.

You’ll be showing a group of photographs, most of them taken in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories. What ideas were you exploring in doing this?

VJ – I began working on the Arab world in 2008. For twenty years, I had been working on the Western world, as the photographer Boris Mikhailov once made clear to me at an exhibition: “As someone from the East, I can tell you now that you are picturing the Western world.” This remark stayed with me for three years, and prompted the shift to working on the Arab city.

As for the experience that underlies my work, I would say that every part of the world is in the care of all the world’s inhabitants, and thus possesses a universality that permeates all my pictures. In this series, I wanted to show nothing of the conflict, but to express in images what Palestine is to me. My relationship to this country is still recent, which is why no doubt the images communicate a very direct and emotional relationship to this society. If I carry on working there, I think the images will come to reflect a more complex and more developed relationship.

This exhibition is about thinking about the Arab city, but that is accompanied by reflection on what it is that makes a country. On this land, one faces the problem of the very recognition of a country. Perhaps my work there will go on some years, because I find myself face to face with a people and a land, both clearly identifiable to my eyes, but which nonetheless don’t exist! So how might photography represent a national identity? I would like viewers to leave this exhibition having recognized a country.

Framing is very important to you, and you sometimes make use of photomontage. If photography is indeed able to communicate something of the real, is this by taking a distance from it, through the construction of the image?

VJ - My relationship to photography has always been highly conflicted, and it seems to me that the real, or more precisely my relationship to the real, is mediated by something far wider than the merely visual, the visibility of things. Most often, in my work, with the very limited resources offered by the photographic apparatus, I try to give expression to what I feel (sensation, reflection, my relation to the world). And most of the time, it's a matter of gymnastics, whether with the large format camera, or the photomontage, or indeed the spatial organisation, that is, the establishment of the relation, a vibrant relation between the different elements that go into the image. It is the deployment of these resources that brings me closer to what I see, to what I live.

In your photographs, men and women are most often presented life-size, as if suspended in space and time. You speak of them as "Characters"? What do you mean by that exactly?

VJ - Printing life-size comes from my need to place the viewer in a physical and emotional relationship to the individuals represented. As for the Characters, what gives them their status as Characters is the encounter with distinct individuals, whom I try and represent "using" images. Yet since I've been going over there, I feel that my images have been developing, I have less inclination to "stage" them. The modesty that is part of the culture requires a simplicity in the pose, and perhaps I now want to be more simple, to intervene less.

They have their life in cities in transition. We see walls, fences. In this series, the limit, which is recurrent theme in your work, seems to find particularly emphatic expression...

VJ - I feel myself to be in a world that I've been working on for a long time, but which here finds full-scale expression. The problems on which I work [the individual in relation to the world, territory and boundary] are more intense and more visible in this corner of the world than anywhere else. What I am experiencing here is the Arab city, which although transformed by new urban layouts remains for me a distinctive form of urban and territorial organisation. Its spatiality has a different rhythm, the dialogue of solids and voids sings a different melody. Perhaps that's what creates this very distinctive resonance. My work feels at home in these places, with these people.

In your diary you write: "My work attempts to rehabilitate the image of the marginal and the different, which for me are essential to the openness of society." That is to stake out a political position. Could you say more about your relationship to the political?

VJ - I've always refused to talk about politics, because in this context words seem to me to be dangerous. The images have an openness, a certain abstraction, that enables me to raise the question of the political. But actually to speak of politics would only limit the image's capacity to communicate the idea. It would be like putting it into a self-sealing box. The argument of the image has to remain in motion if it is to live.

To accompany the exhibition, you have created a catalogue or book in which you reproduce a diary written between 2008 and 2010. How do you conceive the relation between the book and the exhibition?

VJ - The book is very different from the exhibition, it's a different kind of work. It's not a catalogue of the exhibition but extracts from a diary I have kept since November 2008, recording different journeys and residences. Spatially it's a very different experience from the exhibition, given the break represented by shift from one page to another. The exhibition has an unfolding continuity, you can physically walk through it. It is constructed as a more abstract visual composition that becomes inhabited by the space of a felt world.

3. ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Born in Saint Étienne, France, in 1964.
Lives and works in Paris.

Solo Exhibitions

2010

Université de Rennes 2 – screening of *Time Is Working Around Rotterdam* and *Grand Littoral*.

2009

Galerie Xippas, Paris, France.

2006

Galerie Xippas, Paris, France - screening of *Time Is Working Around Rotterdam*.

"Dwelling on Move", Art France Berlin, The Cultural Forum for Photography, Berlin, Germany - screening of *Time Is Working Around Rotterdam*.

2005

Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany- screening of *Grand Littoral*.

2003

"Synopsis d'un territoire," MAC/VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine (photographic commission).

Centre d'Art Contemporain, Vénissieux (photographic commission).

Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris.

Fotomuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland.

"Salamanca. Un proyecto Fotográfico," Consorcio 2002, Salamanca, Spain

2001

Index, The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden.

2000

Shoshana and Wayne Gallery, Santa Monica, California, USA.

Galerie Charlotte Moser, Geneva, Switzerland.

Espace Culturel François Mitterrand, Beauvais.

1999

Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris.

Imago 99, Encuentros de Fotografía y Video, Salamanca, Spain.

Melbourne International Biennial Collaborating Country Project: French Pavilion, Ian Potter Museum, Melbourne, Australia.

1998

École des Beaux-Arts, Valence, France.

1996

Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris.

Group Exhibitions

2010

"Copacabana n'existe pas!", École des Beaux Arts de Besançon, France – screening of *Münsterlands*.

2009-10

elles@centrepompidou, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2009

"L'espace d'un instant," La Mire, Orléans, France - screening of *Grand Littoral*.

"Reflexio," Santander Cultural, Porto Alegre, Brazil- screening of *Münsterlands*.

"Mythologies urbaines," organized by Frac Champagne-Ardenne, Musée Municipal de Saint Dizier.

2008

"Letter to Leopold," Extra City at the Brussels Biennale, Kunsthal Antwerpen, Antwerp, Belgium - screening of *Grand Littoral*.

"Mondo e Terra, La collezione del Frac Corsica," Museo d'Arte Provincia di Nuoro, Nuoro, Italy.

"Street & Studio: An Urban History of Photography," Tate Modern, London; Folkwang Museum, Essen, Germany.

"100 x France – Photographies francaises des origines à aujourd'hui," travelling exhibition: CCF 218, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Ayala Museum, Manila, Philippines; Kyungsung University, Busan, South Korea; Queen's Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.

2007

"Projections," Le 10Neuf, Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain, Montbéliard.

Skulptur Projekte Münster 07, Münster, Germany.

"Airs de Paris," Centre Pompidou, Paris - screening of *Time is Working Around Rotterdam*.

"Marc Bijl, Gerard Byrne & Valérie Jouve," aliceday, Brussels, Belgium - screening of *Time is Working Around Rotterdam*.

"Towards A New Ease – Set 4 from the Collection of the Fotomuseum Winterthur," Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland.

"Toucher l'indicible" (Monique Deregibus, Juan Manuel Echavarria, Valérie Jouve, Boris Mikhailov), Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain, Sète.

"La région humaine," Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon.

"Marcher," Maison des Arts Georges Pompidou, Cajarc.

"Les peintres de la vie moderne, donation collection photographique de la Caisse des dépôts," Centre Pompidou, Paris.

"Fête promise," CCC / Galerie Expérimentale, Tours.

"La Force de l'Art," Grand Palais, Paris.

"Cultures amoureuses," Maison de la Villette / Parc de la Villette, Paris.

Fotografia Europea 2006, Reggio Emilia, Italy.

"Channel," Cupola Contemporary Art Ltd, Sheffield, Great Britain.

"Signes d'existence," China Central Academy of Fine Arts/CAFA, Beijing, exhibition organized by the AFAA and presented as part of the "croisement(s)" festival.

2005-06

"D'un moment à l'autre, Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie," Abbaye de Montmajour, Arles; travelling exhibition: le Jeu de Paume «hors les murs», Fondation Nationale des Arts Graphiques et Plastiques and Espace Photographique de la Scène Watteau, Nogent-sur-Marne.

2004

- "L'Ombre du Temps," Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris.
"Autoportrait," Galerie Michel Rein, Paris.
"Conditions Urbaines," Galerie Donzévansaanen, Lausanne, Switzerland.
"Yet Untitled," Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Nuremberg, Germany.
"Ficcions, documentals," screening of Grand Littoral, Fundacio La Caixa, Barcelona, Spain.
"Fabrique de l'Image," Villa Médicis, Rome, Italy.
"Suite 01," École des Beaux-Arts de Lyon.

2003

- "Die Erfindung der Stadt Von Babylon zur Global City," Stadtmuseum, Erlangen, Germany.
"Les affiches ne meurent jamais," Le Bleu du Ciel / Artexte / le Lieu, Bordeaux, Montréal and Québec (poster edition)
"Valérie Jouve, Jean Luc Moulène, Florence Paradeis," Le Plateau / Frac Ile de France, Paris.
"Collection Bernd F. Künne," Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen, Germany.
"Home Sweet Home," Centre Photographique d'Ile de France, Pontault-Combault.

2002

- "Cardinales," MARCO Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Vigo, Spain.
"Paysages Urbains - Paysages Humains," Office Park Nysdam, Brussels, Belgium.
"Formal Social," Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster, Germany.
"Réalités: Hommage à Courbet," La Passerelle, Brest.

2001

- "Footloose : Runa Islam, Valérie Jouve, Vibeke Tandberg," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
"The City / Byen," Galleri Wang, Oslo, Norway.
"Oublier l'Exposition," Huis Marseille, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

2000

- "Cette culture qui vient de la rue," Galerie Municipale, Vitry-sur-Seine.
"Plan B," hARTware projekte, Dortmund, Germany.
"Valérie Jouve, Djamel Tatah," Maison de la Culture, Amiens.

1999

- "Mémoire – Présent: Colección del Museo de Rochechouart," travelling exhibition: Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago de Chile, Chile; Paço dos Artes, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Museo de Arte Moderno, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
"France, une nouvelle génération," Circulo de Bellas Artes, Madrid, Spain.
"Paris en Création," Bunkamura Gallery, Tokyo, Japan.
"Corps Social," ENSBA, Paris.

1998

- "You Talk I Listen," Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei.
"Valérie Jouve, Andrea Keen," Centre National de la Photographie, Paris.
"Singularités croisées" (Rineke Dijkstra, Valérie Jouve, Gillian Wearing), Musée de Rochechouart, Rochechouart.
"Vincent Beaurin, Fabrice Domercq, Valérie Jouve, Franck Scurti," Elga Wimmer Gallery, New York, USA.
"Zeitgenössische Fotokunst aus Frankreich," Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, Germany.
"Tu parles, j'écoute," La Ferme du Buisson, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Marne-la-Vallée.
"Trafic d'influences," Espace Paul Ricard, Paris.

1997-98

- "The Art of Everyday, France in the 90's," Nexus Contemporary Art Center, Atlanta, USA; travelling to Grey Art Gallery, NY University, New York; Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh.

1997

"Photographies d'une collection: 3/97," Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations, Paris.

"In situ/In visu," Cimaïse et Portique, Albi.

1 minute scénario: Printemps de Cahors Photography Festival, Cahors

"Elisabeth Creseveur, Valérie Jouve," Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain, Marseille.

"Transit, collection du Fnac," ENSBA, Paris.

1996

"Prospect 96," Kunstverein Museum, Frankfurt, Germany.

"EVA+A," City Art Gallery, Limerick, Ireland.

1995

"Les Visiteurs," Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille.

"V. Jouve, J. L. Moulène, J. L. Schoellkopf, B. Streuli," Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris

4. PUBLICATION



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CONTENTS

Quentin Bajac

Valérie Jouve, pratiques des lieux p. 9
Valérie Jouve: spatial practices p. 15

Valérie Jouve

Extraits d'un journal en Palestine p. 22
Excerpts from a Palestine diary p. 88

Marc Lenot

L'an dernier à Jérusalem p. 27
Last year in Jerusalem p. 86

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Untitled (Les Personnages avec Mahmoud)
2008/2010
© Valérie Jouve- ADAGP
Courtesy Galerie Xippas





Untitled (Les Paysages)

2009

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Courtesy Galerie Xippas



Untitled (Les Murs)

2008/2010

detail of a 100 x 390 cm triptych

Courtesy Galerie Xippas



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