



19 January 2016



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Agnès Bonnot

[Sans titre], 1982

40,2 x 26,4 cm

Epreuve cibachrome

Collection Centre Pompidou, Paris

Centre Pompidou / P.Migeat / Dist. RMN-GP

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PRESS RELEASE

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS THE 1980S

PHOTOGRAPHY, FILM

24 FEBRUARY – 23 MAY 2016

PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY, FORUM-1

Heterogeneous, elusive, painful, fantastical, still too close, as light-hearted as they were serious, the Eighties were full of contrasts and paradoxes. With films and photographs from its collections, the Centre Pompidou cast a fresh eye on this decade in an exhibition featuring over 20 artists and some 60 works in a completely new circuit.

From Florence Paradeis to Jean-Paul Goude, and from Karen Knorr to Présence Panchounette by way of Martin Parr and Pierre and Gilles, the works selected mostly express criticism of culture and society through various strategies, such as irony, realistic or imaginative staging, pastiche, subverted sets and odes to artifice. The history of Eighties photography somewhat eludes comprehension even today.

While neo-documentary forms (such as “The Düsseldorf School”, the photographic project of DATAR, the Interdepartmental Delegation for Territorial Development and Regional Attractiveness) were positively received by critics overall, the same was not true of “manufactured”, staged or possibly “Baroque” photography, which represented much of the work produced in the Eighties. Beyond the sometimes too all-inclusive concept of post-modernism, the Eighties saw the emergence of new issues that were both poetic and political. Hybridisation, humour, irony, eroticism and nostalgia are all possible keys to interpreting the art of this period, particularly its photography.

Mainly dedicated to the Western and American scene of the 1980s, well-represented in the Centre Pompidou’s collection, this exhibition reflects the geopolitical and economic order of a time when the ideological divisions between North and South, East and West, capitalist democracies and centralised totalitarian regimes were being swept aside by the new global economy.

With a mix of famous works and others awaiting rediscovery, the exhibition draws us into the aesthetics and sometimes popular iconography typical of this period and geography.

In France, the Eighties were crucial for photography in terms of art and heritage. Several major



photography museums and collections sprang up or developed under a new impulse. At the same time, a new generation of "painter-photographers" appeared, who were keen to do away with the barrier between photography and painting and rebelled against the language of the previous generation. This new photography, often highly "pictorialist" in Western countries, developed forms that were closely connected with technical advances in this area: the availability of good-quality colour photography, the possibilities provided by large formats and the instantaneousness of Polaroid. The meeting between these new production methods and the search for different forms and themes in classic photography created another paradox: works that were openly anti-documentary proved to be such an accurate reflection of the reality they came from that in the end they were its best representation.

The exhibition of the Centre Pompidou brings together for the first time the works of Bazile Bustamante, Agnès Bonnot, David Buckland, Ellen Carey, Clegg & Guttmann, Tom Drahos, Jean-Paul Goude, Hergo, Karen Knorr, Elizabeth Lennard, Joachim Mogarra, Patrick Nagatani, Paul de Nooijer, Alice Odilon, Florence Paradeis, Martin Parr, Pierre et Gilles, Présence Panchouette, Alix Cléo Roubaud, Sandy Skoglund, Unglee, Boyd Webb, Mark Wilcox.

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PRATICAL INFORMATION

Centre Pompidou
75191 Paris cedex 04
telephone
00 33 (0)1 44 78 12 33
metro
Hôtel de Ville, Rambuteau

Opening hours
Exhibition open every day
from 11 am to 9 pm except on
Tuesday
Closed on May 1st

Price
Free admission

www.centrepompidou.fr

AT THE SAME TIME IN THE CENTRE POMPIDOU

CHÂTEAUX DE SABLE
ARCHITECTURES DE RÊVE
JEAN-YVES JOUANIS
UNTIL 7 MARCH 2016
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Dorothee Mireux
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ANSELM KIEFER
UNTIL 18 APRIL 2016
Galerie 1, Level 6
press officer
Elodie Vincent
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GÉRARD FROMANGER
17 FEBRUARY - 16 MAY 2016
Galerie du musée, galerie art
graphique, Level 4
press officer
Céline Janvier
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CHER(E)S AMI(E)S
HOMAGE TO DONORS OF THE
CONTEMPO-RARY COLLECTIONS:
PART 1 / GIFTS AND DONATIONS
STARTING 16 MARCH 2016
Museum, Level 4
press officer
Anne-Marie Pereira
01 44 78 40 69
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FOCUS AT THE MUSEUM:

HOMAGE TO VITTORIO GREGOTTI
30 MARCH - 16 MAY 2016
Museum, Level 5
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PAUL KLEE
L'IRONIE À L'ŒUVRE
6 APRIL - 1^{ER} AUGUST 2016
Galerie 2, Level 6
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PIERRE PAULIN
11 MAY - 22 AUGUST 2016
Galerie Sud, Level 1
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Karolina
Ziebinska-Lewandowska
curator, photography
department at the Musée national
d'art moderne

In collaboration with Marie Auger,
Emmanuelle Etchecopar-Etchart,
Jonathan Pouthier

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