

MAC

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Opening hours

Tuesday to Friday, 10 am–6 pm. Saturday, Sunday and public holidays, noon to 7 pm. Last admissions 30 minutes before closing. Closed on 1 January, 1 May, 15 August and 25 December.

VAL

Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne

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Related events

Discussing legends

The artists in the exhibition tell us about their “legend” and about the way their work is constructed and articulated around their life.

Sunday 31 March 2019, 4 pm: David Brognon & Stéphanie Rollin

Sunday 14 April 2019, 4 pm: MADEleINE ERIC

Sunday 21 April 2019, 4 pm: Edi Dubien

Sunday 28 April 2019, 4 pm: Princia Itoua

Sunday 12 May 2019, 4 pm: Sépand Danesh

Saturday 18 May 2019, 6 pm: Matthieu Laurette
9 pm: Claire Burrus and Émeline Jaret (on Philippe Thomas)

Sunday 26 May 2019, 5 pm: Raphaël Fabre

Sunday 2 June 2019, 4 pm: Art Orienté Objet

Sunday 9 June 2019, 4 pm: Karina Bisch

Sunday 23 June 2019, 4 pm: Antoinette Ohannessian

Complete programme on macval.fr

HERstory

Weekends of 6 and 7 April, 4 and 5 May, 1 and 2 June, and 7 and 8 July

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 to camera, and to the public.

This exploration is continued in a publication with some ten first-person-singular contributions that open windows onto research, cinema, post-feminism, pop, literature and art history. Texts by Noémie Aulombard, Érik Bullot, Julie Crenn and Pascal Lièvre, Éric Fassin, Agnès Gayraud, Yannick Haenel, Sophie Orlando, and Philippe Vasset.

HERstory brings us the voices of feminists, of cisgender, transgender and intersex men and women around the world. It is an invitation to see, listen, read, inform, discover, exchange, meet, propose, debate, question and explore post-feminist thought.

The exchanges are filmed in the exhibition and uploaded to the Internet. Members of the public are invited to attend the verbal sessions and to take part in the ensuing discussions and debates. The archives are freely accessible in the MAC VAL resource centre.

IN partnership with Centre d'Art Synesthésie ↗ MMAINTENANT (Saint-Denis)
HERstory is being presented at Synesthésie ↗ MMAINTENANT from 13 to 17 May 2019
archivesherstory.com

Performances

During the exhibition, some of the artists in “Lignes de vies,” such as Steven Cohen, Esther Ferrer, GRAND MAGASIN, Laurent Prexl, SMITH + Cellule URS and Hélène Villovitch, will put on performances that activate their pieces or shows.

Exhibition tours

Sunday 7 April 2019, 4 pm

Tours of “Lignes de vies” with Frank Lamy, curator of the exhibition.

Sunday 5 May 2019, 4 pm

Gestural tour by Levent Beskardes, artist and hearing impaired actor and sign artist.

Sunday 12 May 2019, 4.30 pm

Tour of the exhibition “Lignes de vies” in French sign language by Audrey Taguet.

Regular tours

Free with the entrance ticket on Wednesday at 3 pm and Saturday and Sunday at 4 pm.

Young visitors

Artist's book workshop

Saturday 13 April 2019, 3–4.30 pm

“Imitation of Life” by Santiago Reyes
Workshop with the artist
Discover the adventures of Sandro, the alter ego of this Ecuadorian who talks about his life in photography and fiction: a love story, discovering football, his problems with the administration, and more....

Free, parents and children upwards of 5
Information and reservation:
cdm.macval@macval.fr or 01 43 91 14 64

Lignes de vies – une exposition de légendes

Lifelines – an Exhibition of Legends

Curator: Frank Lamy assisted by Julien Blanpied and Ninon Duhamel

With works by de 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, Émilie Brout & Maxime Marion, Sophie Calle, Philippe Cazal, Ludovic Chemarin ©, Leo Chiachio & Daniel Giannone, Claude Closky, Steven Cohen, Béatrice Cussol, Sépand 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 Pétrovitch, 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...

English

From 30 March to 25 August 2019

“Lignes de vies – une exposition de légendes” brings together work by some eighty artists representing different generations and using different practices. The exhibition seeks to question modalities and instances in the construction of identity – or rather, identities.

Autobiography and biography are invoked here as visual material, a reflection on the staging and the construction of the self. If identity is a fiction that is performed, a multiple and fragmented narrative, then making one’s life a raw material is therefore an act of affirmation, of empowerment. It is the political gesture of taking control of the narrative of one’s own legend. There are no narcissistic or self-centred gestures here; rather, the artists and the works in the exhibition reconstruct and propose – not so much as new identities as chosen identities.

Empowerment: according to Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Carole Biewener, the authors of *L’empowerment, une pratique émancipatrice* (2013), this term references both power and the learning process involved in gaining access to it. “It can designate both a state and a process [...] implying an effort at individual self-realisation and emancipation”¹.

Deconstructing self-representation, rewriting one’s own life, could be part of a general struggle against a capitalist system of global domination and control which turns the Subject and the self-portrait into tools of manipulation. Private diaries, memoirs, emotional cartographies, bio art and corporeal modifications, attitude art, autofiction, self-staging, and infiltrating systems of representation (TV, cinema, literature, social media, etc.) and legitimation (author, civil status, etc.) are the tools, a host of fictions acted out by the artists.

In this process of emancipation, what role should be allowed to the family, to history, to transmission, to relations with other life forms, with the cosmos? What is a life, an event? What is destiny? What roles should we play? What masks should we wear? The exhibition also invites us to question the effectiveness of art, that is to say, its inscription in the real, through artist postures that call into question the dissolution of this purported frontier.

In devising the exhibition, the curator Frank Lamy worked with a number of literary and philosophical references. Here are some accompanying commentaries.

“‘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

This excerpt from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll echoes the central question in the exhibition: identity. Alice wonders about her name and her age and undergoes disturbing physical metamorphoses. Her companions, the White Rabbit and the Hatter, declare, with a hint of irony: “This is not the real Alice!” In this irrational world she loses all the bearings that have allowed her to construct herself for herself and for others.

“ ... 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 [...] the world of facts and actions, like that of papers and documents, which have to do with social identity, is the only one to have official

value; the rest, all the things you may provisionally think or picture, belongs to the forever unverifiable and uncertain world of your fantasies and dreams, of what Descartes would call your cogitationes privatae, in a word, to a personal identity that nobody will ever know or officially make known.”

Clément Rosset, *Loïn de moi*, Minuit, 1999

Loïn de moi, an anti-Cartesian book by the philosopher Clément Rosset, reminds us that self-knowledge is an impossible undertaking because the private self has no real existence. Facts and actions, ID papers and narratives of the self are the only evidence, not of our existence, but of our identity, a social, variable and mobile identity, which depends on others, on something outside the self. Following the parallel between the person and the fiction character set out by the philosopher, the works in this exhibition follow the idea 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.” (*Loïn de moi*, Minuit, 1999).

“All this must be considered as being said by a character from a novel”

Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes, Seuil, 1975

The book *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes* can be seen as an autofiction, an autobiographical form that is not inscribed only in the real but assigns a key role to the reader, who must rewrite this fragmentary narrative. More than a reflection on the genre of autobiography, it questions its limits: “All this must be considered as being said by a character from a novel”: this phrase on the back cover immediately raises the question of sincerity in autobiography and its supposed reality. The writing of the self, interspersed with scientific and literary questions, is fragmented and presented in the form of a dictionary articulating some hundred entries in alphabetical order. Autobiographical narrative reveals its plasticity, its fragmentary and incompletable nature.

In the exhibition, a reading space

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 moment out of time.

Going further

Publication *Lignes de vies – une exposition de légendes*
Publication on 2 June 2019, launch with the authors

Featuring some ten first-person-singular texts, this publication relates the exhibition to research, cinema, post-feminism, pop, literature and art history.

Lignes de vies – une exposition de légendes

Texts by Noémie Aulombard, Érik Bullo, Julie Crenn and Pascal Lièvre, Éric Fassin, Agnès Gayraud, Yannick Haenel, Frank Lamy, Sophie Orlando, Philippe Vasset...

224 pages, 13×20 cm, 20€.

Resource centre

A team of documentary specialists is on hand to help you continue and extend your visit with a broad range of reference books.

Admission free, Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 pm and Saturday, noon to 7 pm.
cdm.macval@macval.fr or 01 43 91 14 64

¹ Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Carole Biewener, *L’empowerment, une pratique émancipatrice*, Paris: La Découverte, 2013

The MAC VAL thanks its partners:

