

#### PRESS RELEASE

AN EXHIBITION BY THE CENTER PHOTOGRAPHIQUE ROUEN NORMANDIE AT THE CHÂTEAU DE FLAMANVILLE, COTENTIN, NORMANDIE. FROM JULY 21 TO NOVEMBER 5, 2023

#### À TIRE D'AILE

## Figures de l'oiseau

Marion Dutoit, Léa Habourdin, Florim Hasani, Sanna Kannisto, Christophe Maout, Dillon Marsh, Francesca Todde

After the dahlia conservatory garden, explored last year in an exhibition devoted to the flower, this year it's another part of the Château de Flamanville's environment that forms the starting point for the summer themed exhibition: the rookery, which has taken up residence in the Château's grounds. Made up of a colony of rooks, it consists of a series of nests perched high up, around which the birds fly in circles. The presence of the rook in the grounds of the Château goes hand in hand with that of several other species, including swallows and their nests, which dot the windows of the main building and wings of the Château.

For centuries, the corvid has been the prey of our obsession with it: few birds as much as the crow have been 'charged' - and the task is a heavy one - with embodying the projections of human beings, essentially their fears. While the Vikings surrounded their god Odin with two ravens, one personifying thought and the other memory, Christianity made the raven an animal of evil for a long time to come. In medieval times, the black bird symbolised the fallen man, stained with the mud of his sins. Later, from Romanticism to the present day, it remains associated with the announcement of certain misfortune: a bad fortune built up over the course of representations, two famous examples of which remain the poem Two famous examples are Edgar Allan Poe's poem *The Raven* and Hitchcock's film The Birds, with its famous and terrible raven attack scene. It is only very recently, thanks in particular to new research into animal intelligence, that the way we look at corvids has changed, and we now acknowledge their learning faculties, their sociability and their appetite for play, making them a species with exceptional cognitive abilities, equalling or even surpassing those of the great apes. And here we have the wild raven, once again approaching the man, this time from the highest spheres rather than the underworld.

This succession of interpretations, these 'uses' of

the raven, form the starting point for this thematic exhibition. Combining photography, drawing and volume, the exhibition looks at different representations of the bird. Florim Hasani, in residence at the Château, observes the crow's nest and then takes his turn in nesting there his imaginary bird, which he deploys in a swarm of drawings; Marion Dutoit, proposes a collaborative project, creating a giant nest of wood, straw and ceramics; Christophe Maout, from his 'nest' on the top floor of a building, captures the graceful silhouettes of birds crossing the Parisian skyline; Francesca Todde, working alongside Tristan, a bird educator, documents the possible empathy between species, and Dillon Marsh, who, from the Kalahari desert, records the formal variations of the monumental nests built for his colony by the so-called 'social republican', a form of finch. Sanna Kannisto sets up her studio right on the ornithological station, meticulously documenting endogenous and threatened species, while Léa Habourdin follows the life of an osprey nest online from her home, using a remote surveillance camera.

The artists bring the acuity of their gaze to the observation of birds, placing at the heart of the exhibition the questions of habitat and the adaptation of these creatures to their changing environments.

#### CHÂTEAU DE FLAMANVILLE

Every day from 10:30 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 19:00 1, rue du Château - 50 340 Flamanville Contact: Mairie de Flamanville T./ 02 33 87 66 66 communication@flamanville.fr

Echoing the exhibition, ornithological tours accompanied by Laurent Legrand, L'Oiseau arpenteur, are offered in the Château grounds on July 21, August 4 and 18, and September 17, at 10 am. Free, booking required:
mairie@flamanville.fr
T. 02 33 87 66 66

### Sanna Kannisto

#### Observing Eye



Sanna Kannisto, Carduelis flammea, 2015. Courtesy of the artist and La Ferronnerie gallery.

It is in a studio set up in nature that Sanna Kannisto photographs birds. Begun in Finland in 2014, in the ornithological station of a nature reserve in the outer archipelago of Hankoniemi, this wide-ranging and demanding work on birds has continued more recently in Italy, in the Lake Baikal region of Russia and in Costa Rica. With the help of scientists who capture birds using mist nets, Sanna Kannisto sets up her studio close to their nets.

"Proximity is a key element in bird photography. My work is related to the tradition of staged photography, portraiture and still life in the visual arts. I try to plan everything, such as the branches and the lighting, so that I don't have to change scenery during the shoot. While I'm photographing, I usually stay calmly in my place and react to what the bird is doing. The animal's gaze is important in the images: I look at the bird and the bird looks at me.

Sanna Kannisto chooses to photograph them alone or in a group against a white background, with the only external element being a branch punctuated here and there by a few leaves or berries. The photographic vision is clear and documental. The print shows the birds larger than lifesize, revealing the contours of their silhouettes, the colours and textures of their feathers and even the reflections in their eyes. The precision of these bird portraits is reminiscent of the long tradition of naturalist study, and they also represent a record of species that are all threatened in one way or another.

**Sanna Kannisto** (1974) is a Finnish photographer based in Helsinki. She studied at the Turku Acad-emy of Arts and the Aalto School of Art, Design and Architecture in Helsinki. For over twenty years, she has

#### Francesca Todde

#### A Sensitive Education



Francesca Todde, A Sensitive Education, 2017-2019. Courtesy of the artist.

A Sensitive Education by Francesca Todde is the result of three years of research and work the photographer carried out with Tristan Plot, a bird trainer and his companions, the birds.

The narrative of the series hovers around the silent dialogue between Tristan, the human, and Bayo, the raven. The human tames and trains birds for documentary films, theatre performances and ballets. He is also working on the concept of ornithotherapy, creating contact between birds and people with disabilities, the elderly and prisoners, in order to stimulate new sensations and create a profound reconciliation between birds and humans. His educational technique is at the point where imprinting, traditional training and 'positive training' meet; his method is a combination of observation and respect for the tacit rules that exist between humans and animals.

Tristan's complicit relationship with Bayo gives Francesca Todde the opportunity to question the documentary genre and make their secret, inaccessible world tangible. The ornithologist's practice of slowness and respect for the rhythm of nature transforms what was intended to be a strict fixation on reality into a nuanced reflection on the possibility of empathy between species. Rather than offering us a univocal, politically-

charged reading, Francesca Todde chooses to plunge the spectator into the hushed world of introspection.

After an initial encounter in Avignon, South of France, the exchange between the educator and the photographer turned into a cohabitation. This familiarity has enabled Francesca Todde to delve deeper into her photographic research: based on recent studies revealing the bird's tetrachromatic vision (it perceives a wider range of colours), she tries here and there, as in the photograph of this starling with its purplish-black plumage, to come closer to a photographic translation of their perception.

Francesca Todde (1981) is a photographer and publisher living in Milan and working between Italy and France. She is co-founder, with artist Luca Reffo, of the independent publishing house Départ pour l'image. She is interested in human-animal interspecificity and the potential of shared experiences. Her work is distributed by Contrasto.

## Christophe Maout

Le Ciel de Paris



Christophe Maout, Le Ciel de Paris, 2020. Courtesy of the artist.

In the spring of 2020, while we all shared the lock-down and its solitude, the only window to the outside world was, literally, that of our houses and flats. So it was from a distance that we could still experience a little of the world. In Paris, photographer Christophe Maout, from the top of his seventh and last floor, equipped with binoculars, observes the birds roaming the space now emptied of our comings and goings. He holds the camera up to the eyepiece of the binoculars and either photographs them in clouds, in the far distance, or catches them in flight, in unexpected proximity.

The light changes, the sky fills in or clears, the frame narrows in on the rooftops or widens and rises to take in only the skies, and the species of birds vary too. The lens hovers, capturing black accents here and there, like fine brushstrokes against the backdrop of chimneys or cloudy skies. From his vantage point in the heart of the city, the photographer depicts an infinity of landscapes and a timeless Paris.

Presented as a three-screen projection, the photographs return to the darkness in which they were formed, the uninterrupted flight of birds lulled to sleep by a hypnotic soundtrack with distant urban resonances. The black ring around the edge of the photograph, a consequence of the technique used, in turn places the peeping spectator in the concentration of the act of observation. In this world that unfolds behind the eyepiece, free and liberated from human interaction, the silhouette of the corvid flies across the sky. In its wake, a question emerges: who is the pest?

Christophe Maout (1967) works regularly for the French and international press. At the same time, he has developed a personal body of work in which, over the years, the most immediate everyday situations have become the main source of his inspiration. Le Ciel de Paris will be published in 2021 in the Des Oiseaux collection, by Editions Xavier Barral. His work has been exhibited at the Château d'eau in Toulouse and at the Landskrona Foto festival in Sweden.

#### Dillon Marsh

#### Assimilation



Dillon Marsh, Assimilation 9, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.

The Assimilation series by South African photographer **Dillon Marsh** (1981) unfolds a series of twelve landscapes, vast bare expanses in which stand strange architectures: nests of "social republicans".

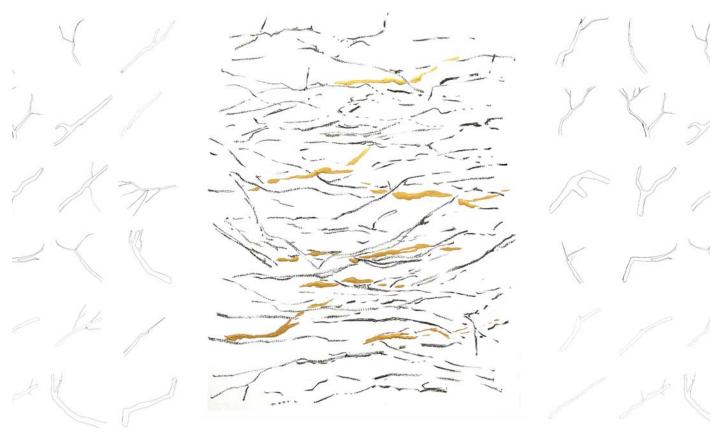
The little brown birds that inhabit the Kalahari desert are cousins to the sparrow. They bear the evocative name of "social republicans" because, like crows, they form colonies. They are spectacular: collective nests can reach up to seven meters in height. These refuges, sometimes a hundred years old, can serve several generations and be inhabited simultaneously by hundreds of birds, sometimes also by other species. These large masses are ingeniously pierced with circular holes on their underside. These are the entrances to this vast collective habitat, leading to interior galleries. The structure of the nest enables the central chambers to maintain a suitable temperature at night, while the peripheral galleries provide shade during the day.

To build their nests, social republicans choose solitary trees on the edge of the forest or in the desert. Historically, however, it was rare to observe large specimens in very arid environments... until certain areas of the Kalahari desert were connected to electricity. The birds then adapted, using the telephone poles that punctuate the landscape instead of trunks. Year after year, as the nests grow, they become these flourishing structures with organic, evolving forms whose volume and weight defy their ability to resist gravity.

"The twigs and grass gathered to build these nests combine to give these inanimate poles strangely recognizable personalities." Dillon Marsh remembers the shapes that filled him with wonder as a child, as he came across them on family walks. Now an adult photographer, he returns to these familiar places to record these architectures, their ornamental quality and ingenuity, and extend his exploration of interspecific relationships and adaptive phenomena.

#### Marion Dutoit

Le nid



Marion Dutoit, The Nest, 2023. Studies for clay branch sculpture. Courtesy of the artist.

"The crow is the bird of paradox. It repels us with its darkness, its mystical appeal. We associate it with evil forces, and imagine it on a witch's shoulder. We find it intelligent without giving it human traits, so stubborn and reasoned is it to achieve its ends.

Corvid nests are swirls of material: cones of branches, mud, twigs. Crows and ravens build their nests in a network on trees, pitchforks of the sky. It's in the depth of their blackness that you can see the blue reflections in their feathers, the iridescence of the black.

The nests are just like it: a paradox. They are high, on the spire-shaped tops of the poplars, floating in the air, yet heavy they are, thick, black and dark when seen from the ground."

For this work created especially for the exhibition À Tire d'aile, Figures de l'oiseau, Marion Dutoit proposed the construction, on site and in collaboration with local residents, of a giant nest. Participants ga-

thered dead wood in the park, then bending, braiding and intertwining it to form a swirl of branches.

In her studio, the artist has created black ceramic branches, heavy and fragile straw and clay braids, which she will propose slipping into this imposing construction.

Marion Dutoit (1978) is a landscape architect and visual artist. Her studio is in Le Havre. Her projects are characterized by simple, surprising gestures: they colonize space through repetition and spread over time. Her model is plants, and her projects are cross-disciplinary, willingly crossing the fields of landscape, culture and dance, and raising the question of a resilient society. Inert matter is transformed and brought back to life: man, plants and animals are her favorite means of expression. Today, she uses ceramics in large-scale installations, sculpture and object creation.

#### Florim Hasani

#### La Corbeautière



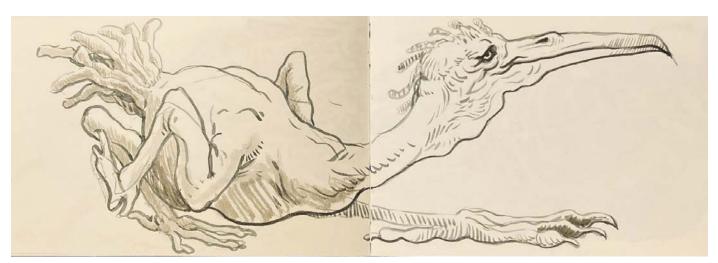
Florim Hasani, La Corbeautière, 2023. Watercolor ink on inkjet photographic paper. Detail. Courtesy of the artist.

Florim Hasani sculpts and draws in watercolor, graphite, red chalk and charcoal. Born in 1980 in Kosovo, he left his war-torn country in the late 1990s to study at the Rouen School of Fine Arts. Since then, settled in Normandy, he has pursued a body of work haunted by houses, refuges and ruins, which, in a single movement, he populates with traces of teeming lives, covering multiple sketchbooks.

The themes of habitat, animals and animality lie at the heart of his artistic work. He was offered a residency as part of the exhibition À Tire d'aile, Figures de l'oiseau. The imaginary world of the raven, combined with the experience of observing it in situ, in the grounds of the Château de Flamanville, would be her starting point. The artist takes up the form of the scroll he experimented with during confinement, and unfurls his hallucinated frescoes. Using the white of the paper as a reserve, his colored drawings conjure up fantastic scenes where man and animal observe, mime, intimidate and merge. In the three-four meters

of each of these rolls produced during his residency, we recognize the seeds of his work: it's a question of territory, of power relations. A palpable tension emerges, between life and death. The format of the roll, the drawing covering the paper edge to edge, the sensation of an uninterrupted gesture, carry us into the gesture of the artist's hand, which only the limit of the strip of paper seems able to contain.

In addition to the scrolls and leporello (accordion-sized notebook) produced during the first half of 2023 in Flamanville and in the artist's home studio, several display cases containing some of these numerous sketchbooks have been added to the exhibition. Here, among so many other studies, we discover a few figures of birds and nests. The drawn figure stands alone on the white page, like a counterpoint to the tempestuous frescoes with which the small sketchbooks coexist in the exhibition.



Florim Hasani, La Corbeautière, 2023. Sketch, ink on paper. Courtesy of the artist.

### Léa Habourdin

and everything becomes nothing again



Léa Habourdin, and everything becomes nothing again, 2015-2016. Detail. Courtesy of the artist.

"In 2014, the Latvian Fund for Nature and the Estonian Ornithological Society joined forces to set up the Eagles Cross Borders project.

Researchers installed a webcam on the border between the two countries (Estonia and Latvia) to observe an osprey nest twenty-four hours a day. The initial aim was scientific, but the project quickly became an unprecedented success among the general public. For the first time, it became possible to follow the life of a pair of wild birds of prey, from nesting to the fledging of their young, from an insider's point of view. This is what I did.

For several months, I watched this nest, a theatre of infra-ordinary events in which the protagonists, actors in their own lives, never ceased to fascinate me. The result of this adventure is a body of 515 screen photographs, the grain of which is reminiscent of video surveillance cameras, simply retracing four months in the life of these birds."

Interested in the medium of the book and the ways in which it can be materialised, Léa Habourdin has crafted the book herself, and everything becomes nothing again. She assembled her 515 photographs in 32 note-

books, simply bound with white thread.

The exhibition presents this book, published in 24 copies, in an installation that offers a mise en abîme of the subject: "this live camera enabled me to be both here - in my studio - and there, - overlooking this nest - 24 hours a day. I'm reactivating this ubiquity here with an installation featuring an artist's book, its manipulation by the public and the simultaneous broadcasting of this act on a screen via a surveillance camera.

Previously, the artist had 'activated' the book in a different way, proposing during a performance to deconstruct it and scatter the 32 notebooks in the hands of 32 people, who would have to be reunited to reconstitute the book as a whole.

**Léa Habourdin** (1985) first studied printmaking at the École Estienne, then photography at the École d'Arles. Exploring fields such as ethology, applied science research and botany, she has developed a body of work in drawing and photography in which the place of the book and the printed object is crucial. She directs the 104 Photo Gravure workshop at the Ateliers de Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris.

## L'OISEAU: UNE SÉLECTION DE LIVRES PRÉSENTÉS DANS L'EXPOSITION



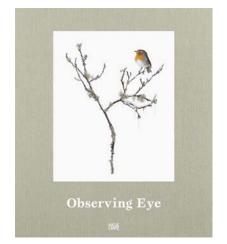
Céleste Boursier-Mougenot États seconds 2008 Les presses du réel



Thom van Dooren

Dans le sillage des corbeaux
2022

Actes sud



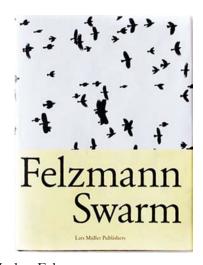
Sanna Kannisto Observing Eye 2020 Hatje Cantz



Christophe Maout Des oiseaux 2022 Atelier EXB



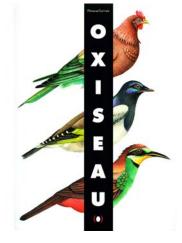
Francesca Todde A Sensitive Education 2020 Départ pour l'Image



Lukas Felzmann Swarm 2011 Lars Müller Publishers



Jean-Luc Mylayne *Tête d'or* 2009 Cinq continents



Pittau & Gervais

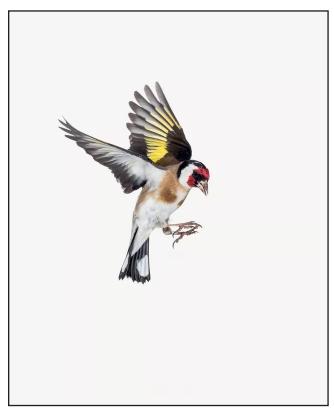
Oxiseau

2017

Les Grandes Personnes



Benoît Lemennais, Marianne Ferrer *Main-Oiseau* 2019
Motus



Sanna Kannisto, *Carduelis carduelis*, 2019. Courtesy of the artist and La Ferronnerie gallery.



Sanna Kannisto, *Carduelis flammea*, 2015 Courtesy of the artist and La Ferronnerie gallery.



Sanna Kannisto, *Luscinia svecica*, 2018 Courtesy of the artist and La Ferronnerie gallery.



Francesca Todde, Mildred la cigogne, La Maison Neuve, 2017, from the series *A Sensitive Education*, 2017-2019. Courtesy of the artist.



Francesca Todde, Le corbeau Bayo joue avec Tristan, Valvidienne, 2019 from the series *A Sensitive Education*, 2017-2019. Courtesy of the artist.



Francesca Todde, Mildred la cigogne, Valvidienne, 2019, from the series *A Sensitive Education*, 2017-2019. Courtesy of the artist.



Francesca Todde, Le dos doré de la chouette effraie Boubo, Paris, 2017, from the series *A Sensitive Education*, 2017-2019. Courtesy of the artist.











Dillon Marsh, Assimilation 3, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.



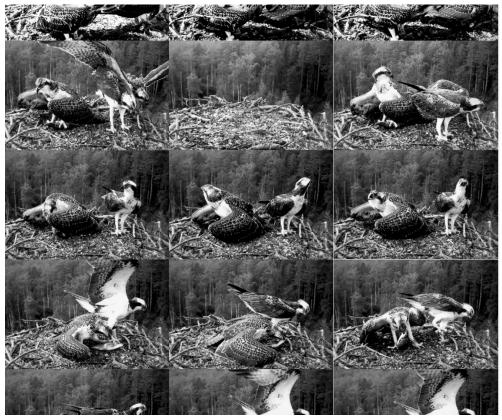
Dillon Marsh, Assimilation 9, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.



Dillon Marsh, Assimilation 10, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.



Florim Hasani, La Corbeautière, 2023. Watercolor ink on inkjet photographic paper. Detail. Courtesy of the artist.



Léa Habourdin, *and everything becomes nothing again*, 2015-2016. Montage of screenshots. Courtesy of the artist.

## LE CHÂTEAU DE FLAMANVILLE



Facade of Château de Flamanville, Dahlias, Et cætera exhibition, June 2022.

Now an exhibition site, the Château de Flamanville is hosting a summer program by the Centre photographique Rouen Normandie for the third year running.

Comprising a chapel, two small pavilions, a vigorous wooded park covering some hectares, three ponds, a greenhouse, an arboretum and, above all, the dahlia garden, the estate - with its long seigniorial history dating back to the 14th century - has been listed on the supplementary inventory of Historic Monuments since 1930.

In 1986, the Château and some twenty hectares of land became the property of the commune of Flaman-ville, which, after renovation and consolidation, now regularly organizes cultural events, sporting activities and associations.



Tour of the *Normandy* exhibition, Simon Roberts, July 2021.

## LA CORBEAUTIÈRE, CHÂTEAU DE FLAMANVILLE



The rookery in the grounds of Château de Flamanville, February 2023. Photogram. Florim Hasani

The rookery of the park at Château de Flamanville announces itself before you can even see the nests perched high in the poplars - the cawing obliges.

The rook is a gregarious species. They gather together in colonies to nest in a rookery, which can include hundreds of nests. Located at the top of tall trees, the nests are built side by side, in poplars or plane trees. This is why it is common to find them in the parks of castles. The voluminous nest is made of branches and dry grass, lined with moss and placed at great height.

The nesting sites of these crows offer an admirable and somewhat worrying sight: our imagination, nourished by a bad reputation for corvids, is quick to get carried away. The habitats of corvids are still divisive, as much in the countryside, where they provoke the anger of farmers by eating seedlings, as in the city, where their hoarse voice elicits grumbles.

However, a rookery, or freurie, is a birdwatcher's delight: "Due to the often imperfect synchronisation of the different pairs in terms of settlement dates, and the large number of birds present in a small area, these colonial species offer particularly favourable conditions for observing the different stages of reproduction: in the largest colonies, it is not unusual to be able to observe courtship, nest building, prey offerings and

nest reliefs during the same outing".

And then there's the nest. As the colony is perennial and returns each year to settle in the tops of the same trees, the nests are also "recycled". Each pair works in symbiosis: the male collects dead wood and gathers small branches while the female builds a solid habitat, reinforced by mud. Later, she will lay three or four celadon-coloured eggs, spotted with brown, and the corvid symphony will continue until autumn. creation.



Florim Hasani, *La Corbeautière*, 2023. Watercolor ink on inkjet photographic paper. Detail. Courtesy of the artist.

# PRÉCÉDENTES EXPOSITIONS DU CENTRE PHOTOGRAPHIQUE ROUEN NORMANDIE AU CHÂTEAU DE FLAMANVILLE

DAHLIA ET CÆTERA • 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY - 30 OCTOBER 2022

With over a thousand varieties from all five continents, the Château de Flamanville is home to Europe's only dahlia conservatory garden. Dedicated to the preservation of dahlia species, it showcases the collection of the Société française du dahlia, whose many varieties bloom until the last months of summer. Taking the garden's territory as a starting point, the Centre photographique Rouen Normandie has designed an exhibition involving four photographers united around the flower: **Marion Maimon**, a French photographer, was first invited to document the various varieties present in the conservatory during the past flowering season in autumn 2021. She was then joined by three photographers, each of whom has recently developed a personal work on the flower. Dutch photographer **Popel Coumou**'s skilful architectures of coloured paper and modelling clay flowers



oscillate between naivety and precision. **Hubert Crabières**, a French photographer, portrays the artificial flower, between realism and fantasy, while **Jason Evans**, an English photographer and member of *The Garden Gate* project, a community garden in Margate (Kent), makes still life a place of social connection, through his photographic workshops. Punctuating these contemporary works, a selection of amateur films from the collections of Normandie Images evokes the making and practice of flower corsos in Normandy.



#### SIMON ROBERTS • NORMANDY • 26 JUNE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2021

From the Seine-Maritime to the Manche, English photographer Simon Roberts traveled the region in search of outdoor leisure time. The photographic commission, placed by the Centre photographique Rouen Normandie, was carried out between 2014 and 2016; the context was quite different then. The exhibition at Château de Flamanville is an opportunity to (re)discover this photographic ensemble in the light of the last few months of confinement and the radical changes that have taken place in our social practices. It is also an opportunity to extend the commission to the Manche region, with a visit by the photographer to Flamanville and the surrounding area. Simon

Roberts surveyed local festivals, parades, commemorations and garage sales. When all is movement, flux and mobility, he stops. Camped on the roof of his van, or perched at the top of a ladder, he composes vast photographic tableaux, like stories of encounters between an environment and its occupants for a day. Counterpointing these vast contemporary landscapes are excerpts from amateur films from the Normandie Images collections, shot between the 1920s and 1960s, old postcards and reproductions from the Gain collection and the Victor Lefrançois collection of the Archives départementales de la Manche. These archival documents add a vernacular, historical and intimate touch to the picture of the region sketched out in this exhibition.

#### LE CENTRE PHOTOGRAPHIQUE ROUEN NORMANDIE





Exposition Eva O'Leary - Happy Valley, novembre 2021 - février 2022

Exposition Daniel Blaufuks - Tentativa de esgotamento, juin - novembre 2022

The Centre photographique Rouen Normandie, located in the heart of the city center, has been awarded the «Centre d'art contemporain d'intérêt national» label, and offers an annual program of three to four exhibitions, complemented by off-site events in partnership with regional and national institutions, and a program of artistic residencies.

Through its programming, which brings together historic figures and «emerging» artists, the Centre photographique defends singular artistic proposals, in touch with the realities of the world, through exhibitions for the most part unseen on French territory and offering an international panorama of photographic creation. A sustained policy of educational projects and a rich program of visits, debates, screenings, workshops in photographic practice, literary writing and performances, offer the widest possible audience the opportunity to apprehend the world of the image (photography and the moving image) in a different way, to bring to light its resonances with other forms of artistic expression and its ramifications in society.

Portfolio readings, workshops and a bursary are all part of the program, providing support for regional and national professional photographers. As part of the European FUTURES project, the Centre photographique Rouen Normandie is developing the Frutescens program, dedicated to emerging French photographic creation.

The Centre also regularly organizes photographic residencies in Normandy.

Center photographique Rouen Normandie receives support from:









It is a member of the following networks:









