



Mondes

#1

en commun

1st June - 22nd September 2024

The new *Mondes en Commun* festival at the musée départemental Albert-Kahn takes up the themes of the Archives de la Planète, a vast project to visually capture the world, carried out from 1912 to 1931 at the instigation of the banker and philanthropist Albert Kahn. The festival establishes links between the museum's historical collections and contemporary photographic creation around the notion of inventory, echoing the purpose of Kahn's project, "a vast photographic inventory of the surface of the globe occupied and developed by man as it appears at the beginning of the 20th century".

Mondes en Commun (Worlds in Common) showcases documentary-inspired works that seek to methodically represent reality in all its diversity, from the near to the far, from the living to the inanimate, with a didactic, poetic or sometimes militant intention.

Like the operators of the Archives de la Planète, driven by the urgent need to record "once and for all" the traces of a changing world, the artists presented evoke, each in their own way, the permanence and transformations of the contemporary world, its wonders, and also its concerns.

This first edition, which takes place mainly outdoors, weaves a close link between the museum's image collections and its plant collection. The garden with its landscape scenes and a wealth of diversity, designed by Albert Kahn as a metaphor for a world at peace, is now the site for eleven photographers whose work forms a journey through and a constellation of monographic exhibitions. Each series reveals a singular view of the world, presented in a specific scenography in dialogue with the garden.

Thierry Ardouin, *Histoires de graines* (Winner of the Prix des Amis du musée départemental Albert-Kahn)

Aurore Bagarry, *Glaciers*

Maryam Firuzi, *In the Shadows of Silent Women*

Nicolas Floc'h, *Initium Maris*

Sanna Kannisto, *Observing Eye*

Daniel Meadows, *The Free Photographic Omnibus, Now and Then*

Yan Morvan, *Champs de bataille*

Antonio Jiménez Saiz, *Félix*

Bertrand Stofleth, *Atlantides, Hyperlendemains, Recoller la montagne*

Eric Tabuchi and Nelly Monnier, *Atlas des régions naturelles*

Anaïs Tondeur, *Tchernobyl Herbarium* (Special Mention of the Prix des Amis du musée départemental Albert-Kahn)

Maryam Firuzi

In the Shadows of Silent Women

Weavers in Algiers, Buddhist nuns and novices in Hanoi, water carriers in Agra, Swedish peasant women in festive costume: the 'living' humanity of the operators of the Archives of the Planet was very largely feminine. Women were often depicted in groups, as guardians of traditional practices and know-how.

The work of artist Maryam Firuzi also explores traditions and the place of women in Iranian society. For *In the Shadows of Silent Women*, she anchors her usually more urban and conceptual photography in rural Iran, guided by her mother who accompanies her on this journey. Each image bears witness to a triple encounter: with a group of women, with a landscape, and with a minority lifestyle or culture. Between documentary vision and staging, between family roots and inner exile, we are told another story of daily life in Iran.



Born in 1986, Maryam Firuzi lives and works in Tehran. Her photographic work is introspective and metaphorical, inspired by Persian painting, poetry and cinema, and revolves around themes of gender, identity and self-expression in contemporary Iranian society.

Sanna Kannisto

Observing Eye



Born in Finland in 1974, Sanna Kannisto studied photography at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki. She is interested in the human desire to control nature, while seeking to preserve things as they are, in all their "splendour", through photography. Her photographic work, which combines artistic practice with a scientific approach, is devoted to the natural world.

In Archives of the Planet, rare birds are caged or imprisoned in painted or engraved motifs: the autochrome technique wasn't conducive to capturing rapid movements, and Jean Bruhnes, a specialist in human geography, had little interest in non-domesticated animals.

In contrast, Sanna Kannisto's Observing Eye series focuses on wild birds, their fragile splendour and declining diversity. Since 2014, in collaboration with scientists, she has been photographing European birds methodically and as close as possible to their natural habitats with an aesthetic verging on naturalist illustration.

Using a digital camera and a portable studio of her own design, she captures her subjects against a brightly lit white background, magnifying every detail, creating a poetic, fleeting link between the animal, motionless for an instant, and the eye of the observer.

Daniel Meadows

The Free Photographic Omnibus, Now and Then

As early as 1916, Albert Kahn's guests in Boulogne were immortalised by portraits posed in front of a green curtain. The models were the banker's close friends and collaborators, political and military leaders, artists and intellectuals. The elite of the era paraded before the lens of the operators, constituting over time a "history gallery", in the words of Albert Kahn.

Nearly six decades later, Daniel Meadows, then aged 21, formed a portrait of British society from his Free Photographic Omnibus, a double-decker bus converted into a home, gallery and darkroom. From 1973 to 1974, he criss-crossed English towns and villages, taking almost a thousand photographs. There are no crowned heads in his travelling gallery: he captures the faces of working-class England, in collaboration with his models, to whom he gives their portraits, staged by them and supplemented by interviews and reportage images. In the 1990s, he added a new chapter by rephotographing some of his former models, found through classified ads, for the National Portraits series: Now & Then.



Born in 1952 in south-west England, Daniel Meadows has a degree in art from Manchester University. For the past 50 years he has worked as a photographer, documentarian, teacher and "digital storyteller".

Nicolas Floc'h

Initium Maris



Born in Rennes in 1970, Nicolas Floc'h teaches photography at EESAB. He is interested in the construction of the landscape image and the myth of exploration.

Coasts, harbours, ships, waves and rocks: the surface of seas and oceans is a leitmotif of Archives of the Planet and the peregrinations of Albert Kahn, who was a tireless transatlantic traveller.

Nicolas Floc'h's Paysages productifs - the title of his long-running work, of which this series is a part - reveals another side of the coin, the beginning of the sea; Initium Maris. This refers to the Latin etymology of the Finistère region: Finis Terrae, the end of the earth. He captures never-before-seen images of Brittany's underwater forests, photographed at depths of between two and 50 metres.

For 150 days, the photographer led an artistic expedition at sea, assisted by scientific teams. Data collection, carried out in parallel with his underwater shooting protocol, transforms these images into an archive of coastal ecosystems disrupted by global warming.

Both cartography and inventory, Nicolas Floc'h's work renders visible places as sublime as they are fragile, as close as they are strange, and which we sense are in urgent need of conservation.

Aurore Bagarry Glaciers

Glaciers in France and elsewhere were extensively photographed by the operators of the Archives of the Planet. These shots reflect the interest in geology of Jean Brunhes, the project's scientific director, as well as Albert Kahn's taste for spectacular images.

As she traverses the mountain landscapes, Aurore Bagarry also takes an inventory of the peaks of the Mont Blanc Massif, photographing 73 of its 80 glaciers. Equipped with her view camera, a heavy and time-consuming instrument, she captures the image of these glaciers between June and September, after the winter snow has melted. In dialogue with art historians and glaciologists, she captures the beauty of an eroding world, creating a romantic, methodical atlas of these fragile, monumental sites.



Born in 1982, Aurore Bagarry is a graduate of the Ecole des Gobelins and the Ecole Nationale de la Photographie d'Arles. Her photographic practice offers a personal interpretation of natural landscapes, focusing on the geological elements that shape them.

Eric Tabuchi & Nelly Monnier Atlas des régions naturelles



Born in 1959, Eric Tabuchi, after studying sociology, developed a body of photographic work focused on architectural typologies. The artistic practice of Nelly Monnier, born in 1988 and a graduate of the Beaux-Arts in Lyon, focuses on the distinctive signs that animate rural environments.

In 1913, Jean Brunhes, scientific director of Archives of the Planet, sent a memo to the operators instructing them to focus their shots on “palaces, secular, religious or equivalent monuments, cemeteries [...], types of houses, interior and exterior decorations [...], general aspects of urban agglomerations, fields-crops-enclosures, roads-streets-gardens-yards etc.”

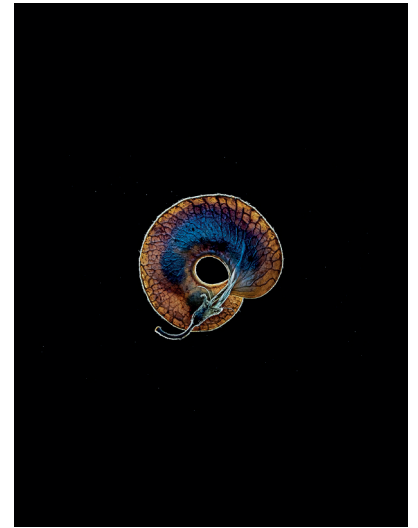
This is more or less the programme of the Atlas of Natural Regions, a vast photographic inventory of the diversity of French buildings and landscapes undertaken in 2017 by the duo Tabuchi-Monnier. Eventually, 50 shots will be taken in each of the 450 ‘natural regions’, for a total of 22,500 photographs (there are currently 15,000). The Atlas surveys and documents commercial and administrative architecture, industrial relics and monuments with the same attention to detail, equally and patiently surveying city entrances and agricultural areas, coastal zones and depopulated areas. A thematic classification is superimposed on the geographical classification, creating typological comparisons that reveal both the diversity of forms and their progressive standardisation, as in the plates presented here.

Thierry Ardouin

Histoires de graines

To enchant his guests, Albert Kahn liked to show them The blossoming of a few flowers, a film made in 1919 by the biologist Jean Comandon. Jean Comandon, whose laboratory was located in Kahn's gardens from 1927 to 1932, was a pioneer of microcinematography.

A century later, Thierry Ardouin's work bears witness to the same wonder at the infinite diversity of living things. Histoires de graines (Seed stories) begins in 2009 with the discovery of the Official Catalogue of Cultivated Plant Species and Varieties. Thierry Ardouin subsequently collaborated with the French Natural History Museum's seed library in Paris, which supplied him with the majority of the 500 or so specimens comprising his photographic inventory. For each 'seed portrait', he uses a macroscopic binocular magnifier to reveal unsuspected colours and shapes, strangely functional and poetic.



Born in 1961, Thierry Ardouin is a co-founder of the Tendance Floue collective. Since his early days in photography, he has been interested in the relationship between humans and their environment.

Bertrand Stofleth

Atlantides, Hyperlendemains, Recoller la montagne



Born in 1978, Bertrand Stofleth graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie d'Arles in 2002. He observes and documents the intermediate spaces and infrastructures of modernity in France.

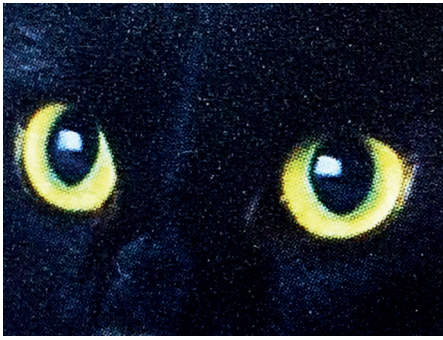
"Establish as a record of humanity captured in the midst of life [...] at the critical hour of one of the most complete economic, geographic and historical shifts ever witnessed." This is how geographer Jean Brunhes described the purpose of Archives of the Planet in 1913, shortly after being appointed scientific director.

This human geography is also the subject of Bertrand Stofleth's work, which examines the emergence of truly contemporary landscapes, listing their uses, representations and modes of habitation.

The three series presented: Atlantides, Hyperlendemains and Recoller la montagne document the consequences of human activities on spaces where they are displayed in the most banal ways. They explore areas - the Atlantic seaboard, Eastern France and the mountains of the Alps - where the dual impact of social transformation and climate change can be seen.

Antonio Jiménez Saiz

Félix



Born in 1959, Antonio Jimenez Saiz is a self-taught writer and photographer. His experimental work, carried out as he wanders around Brussels, touches on the intimate and the materiality of the image.

“Workers, stand idle on Mayday!”, “Women must vote” but also “Spring, summer sales” or “Moulin Rouge: hide your nude!” the towns in the Archives of the Planet are covered with posters and slogans, both serious and funny. For lack of ears, their walls have voices.

Antonio Jimenez Saiz’s Félix project, which began ten years ago and now includes over 400 photographs of posters of lost cats in Brussels, is in a more offbeat vein.

This practice is one of the last modes of free, intimate and non-advertising display in public spaces. Born of the democratisation of personal printers, it is now disappearing, replaced by online advertising and social networks. This singular inventory explores the fatality of erasure, that of the image – these heart-rending cries for help disappear under the effect of bad weather – and that of a popular creative practice rendered obsolete by the digitisation of the world.

Yan Morvan

Champs de bataille

From the very beginning of the First World War, Albert Kahn sent his operators to document the devastation caused by the conflict, sometimes accompanying them in the field. Driven by an ideal of universal peace, Kahn devoted a considerable part of the Archives of the Planet to depicting war, or rather, its traces.

A similar obsession drives Yan Morvan, who, between two ‘live’ theatres of operation, has been recording the traces of past wars since 2004.

From Asia to Europe, from Antiquity to the beginning of the 21st century, over 250 battlefields have been inventoried with a film camera, some 3,000 shots that constitute a geography of “human insanity”. Do these wounded landscapes, peaceful or majestic, in which vegetation has reclaimed its rights, still recount history?

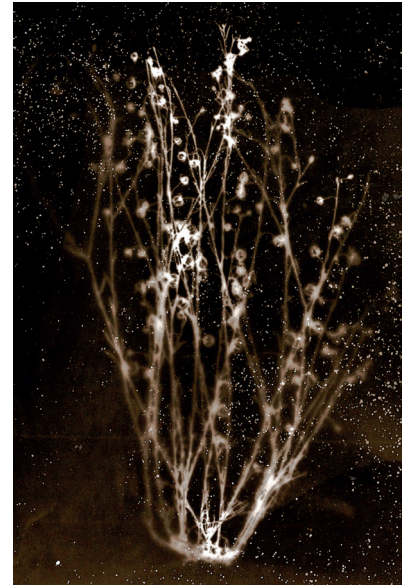


Born in Paris in 1954, Yan Morvan has been a press photographer since 1974, and has twice won the World Press Photo award. His “combat” photojournalism covers conflicts the world over.

Anaïs Tondeur Tchernobyl Herbarium

For Albert Kahn, the plant world was a source of delight and curiosity. He enacted this in his gardens, where species from all over the world lived side by side. He explored it in the micro-cinematographic experiments of biologist Jean Comandon, whose films distort as much as they emphasise the rhythms of life and the power of plant growth.

Anaïs Tondeur's artistic practice also tracks the invisible in the very substance of images. For Chernobyl Herbarium, year after year since 2011, she has made an inventory of the plants grown in the Chernobyl exclusion zone by bio-geneticist Martin Hajduch's team, who study the impact of radioactivity there. Inspired by the rayographs invented by Man Ray in 1922, Anaïs Tondeur uses contact with the surface of photosensitive paper to create an original imprint. These portraits of flowers, at once marvellous and monstrous, are the testimony of survival and the traces of an active present.



Born in 1985 and a graduate of the Royal College of Arts (London), Anaïs Tondeur works with geologists, physicists, philosophers of the living and anthropologists in changing environments, paying renewed attention to forms of living things.



01 juin

22 sept 2024

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Poursuivre l'inventaire
Musée départemental
Albert-Kahn

Festival
photo

hauts-de-seine
LE DÉPARTEMENT



