

# MUSÉE NATIONAL

marc lathuillière • 2004-2020



*“No, it is not the ‘literature of the absurd’ that first comes to mind when I think of Marc Lathuillière’s photographs; but rather those strange science-fiction short stories where the characters, captured in a time warp, are forced to repeat indefinitely the same gestures (...). These short stories anyhow take place in beautiful weather, beneath a spotless and permanently blue sky. Storms and clouds make instantly for drama; but tragedy, like absolute happiness, requires a constant azure”.*

**Michel Houellebecq**

“A Remedy for the Exhaustion of Being”, foreword to *Musée national*,  
Editions de La Martinière, 2014

*“Marc Lathuillière’s experience is a contribution to the anthropology of globalization. He empowers the people he works with. He places them in situations where they by themselves create the condition of his dreams”.*

**Marc Augé**

Conversation with Pascal Beausse on the exhibition *The Anthropologist and the Photographer, a dialogue between Marc Augé and Marc Lathuillière*, La Friche La Belle de Mai, Marseille, July 2017

# **musée national**

(2004 • 2021)

A critical work on national identity, *Musée national* is a corpus of around 1000 contextual portraits of Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, each wearing an identical mask, that Marc Lathuillière has been developing for the last 15 years.

Defacing and freezing the subjects, the mask casts daily surroundings in an estranging light, revealing the stereotypes upon which they build their lives: clothing, furniture, architecture, landscape, professional or daily rituals... Showing France as a museum, the series exposes a country whose people, fearful of the future, increasingly define themselves in terms of heritage and memory. It also explores the construction of identities, both individual and collective.

*National Museum* met with a significant critical and public success since the 2014 Month of Photography in Paris, where Marc Lathuillière organized a double exhibition with Michel Houellebecq, both in galleries and train stations. The writer wrote the foreword of *Musée national*, a catalogue of the first ten years of the series published by Editions de La Martinière. The Neuflyze Vie Foundation as well as the Musée Français de la Photographie and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF) have acquired prints from this wide inventory, the later in the prospect of *French Landscapes*, the retrospective on landscape photography it hosted in 2017. It followed two large solo shows, one with anthropologist Marc Augé at La Friche La Belle de Mai in Marseille, the other at the Creux de l'Enfer (Thiers) one of France's foremost art centers, for the Lyon Biennale, coupled with a long term exhibition at Galeries Lafayette Clermont-Ferrand. The series has also been exhibited in group shows at Photoszene Festival in Cologne, Paris Photo, Photo London, the Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Strasbourg (MAMCS) and Kolga Tbilisi Photo in Georgia.



*The Quality Meat - Alain Daire, Butcher, Cunlhat (Puy-de-Dôme)*



*The Winemaker - Seppi Landmann, Zinnkoeplé Grand Cru, Soultzmatt (Haut-Rhin)*  
Musée français de la photographie collection



*The Transhumance – Stéphane Chétrit, Deary Sheep Rearer, Artouste, Ossau Valley (Pyrénées-Atlantiques)*



*At the National Stud - Lucie Malval, auxiliary, Le Pin stud farm, Le Pin-au-Haras (Normandy)*  
Mougins Center of Photography collection



*The Museum Space – Jean-François Chougnnet, president, MuCEM, Marseille (Bouches-du-Rhône)*



*The Museum Society – Jean Lorentz, President, Schongauer Society, Unterlinden Museum, Colmar (Haut-Rhin)*



*The Petanque Game – Théodore Dallari, President, Chez Théo club, Marseille (Bouches-du-Rhône)*



*The Breton Musicians – Julien Cornic, biniou player, The Cornic Brothers, Perros-Guirec (Côtes d'Armor)*



*On the Carlton Beach - Christian Toussaint, Producer, Cannes Film Festi-val (Alpes-Maritimes)*



*The Irons - Vanessa Helore, Museum Employee, New Wold Museum, La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime)*



*The Unmoulding - Céline Bourret, Porcelain Worker, Revol, Saint-Uze (Drôme)*



*The Soil - Ahmidou Tarhouchi, Retired Welder, Les Salines Community Gardens, La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime)*  
French National Library (BnF) collection



*The Regional Contemporary Art Fund – Pascal Neveux, Director, FRAC Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, Marseille (Bouches-du-Rhône)*  
Neuflize Vie collection



*The Water Lilies - Gilbert Vahé, chief gardner, Claude Monet Foundation, Giverny (Eure)*



*Fabrique nationale*, Le creux de l'enfer contemporary art center, Thiers, *Lyon Biennale*, October 2017-January 2018, curator Frédéric Bouglé



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*National Corpus #4. 369 C-prints, 15x21 cm each, 250 x 550 cm - Fabrique nationale, Le creux de l'enfer, 2017-2018*



*National Corpus #4 (detail)*  
369 C-prints, 15x21 cm each,  
250 x 550 cm



*Erèbe*, Musée des Beaux Arts de La Rochelle, *Ithaque* art walk, La Rochelle, 2102  
Installation with antique-themed works of the museum (William Bouguereau, Gustave Doré)



*The Anthropologist and the Photographer, a dialogue Marc Augé - Marc Lathuillière*, La Friche La Belle de Mai, Contemporary Art Spring, Marseille, 2017, curator François Saint-Pierre



*Musée national - Portrait Gallery*  
Gares & Connexions SNCF, Austerlitz station, Paris, 2014-2015

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