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## Rencontres d'Arles 2019 | Four Must-See Exhibitions



The Saga of Inventions exhibition view © Marine Cabos-Brullé

*This week is dedicated to summaries of what happened during the Rencontres d'Arles opening week [1-7 July 2019]. Below is a selection of shows that particularly caught our attention.*

**The Saga of Inventions: From the Gas Mask to the Washing Machine**  
**Venue: Croisière, 65 boulevard Émile Combes, 13200 Arles**  
**Date: Until 22 September, 2019**

Thousands of photographs and films were produced in France between 1915 and 1938 as part of a national policy to encourage scientific and industrial research.

ongoing story of the institutionalization of research. These histories of innovations began in 1915 with the creation of the Inventions Department—serving national defence purposes— by minister and mathematician Paul Painlevé, and ended with the dissolution of the National Office of Scientific Research and Inventions (ONRSI), which was replaced, in 1939, by the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), under the initiative of physicist Jean Perrin.

From the beginning, a systematic archive policy was implemented. The inventions were photographed against a neutral background, either centered or captured from above, and, at times, portrayed in front and side views, like a mug shot. An individual— often the inventor himself—poses with the object of innovation, whether it is a machine gun during the war or a rubber broom produced after the war. These chronological series are just as demonstrative. They unfold the potential and operation of the objects, ranging from a birdwatching turret to a washing machine.

The institution produced an enormous volume of these administrative images. Their visual rigor is striking. Behind these images are hidden the visionaries and pioneers who used and played with the still and animated image, mastering their demonstrative, archival, educational, and communicative powers.





Left: "The Saga of Inventions" exhibition view © Marine Cabos-Brullé

Right: National Scientific and Industrial Research and Inventions Office, Louis Lapicque's visual field shutter goggles, December 1926. CNRS collection, B\_6127. (*The Saga of Invention* exhibition)

### **The Anonymous Project: The House**

***Special mention for its stunning exhibition design***

**Venue: Maison des Peintres, 45 Boulevard Emile Combes, 13200 Arles**

**Date: Until 22 September, 2019**

The Anonymous Project is proud to present The House. Moments and memories once lost in time brought back to life to illustrate the importance of the home in our daily lives.

What makes a house a home? The simple answer is the people that live in it. A home is built not with bricks or wood, but with the bond of family. A home is a place that reminds us of countless memories and values when we walk down a hall or look at one of our belongings. A home gives people a place to care about the people that mean the most to them. It is a place to tell amusing tales, a good story, or make lasting memories with one another. Furthermore, home is more than a place; it is a feeling. It is a feeling of contentment and happiness that we share with our loved ones.

When filmmaker Lee Shulman bought a random box of vintage slides, he fell completely in love with the people and stories he discovered in these unique windows into our past lives. The Anonymous Project was born. Collecting and preserving unique colour slides from the last 70 years, the project was born out of a desire to preserve this collective memory and give a second life to the often





Anonymous, 1972. Courtesy of The Anonymous Project.



The Anonymous Project: The House exhibition view © Marine Cabos-Brullé





The Anonymous Project: The House exhibition view © Marine Cabos-Brullé



The Anonymous Project: The House exhibition view © Marine Cabos-Brullé

### **Clergue & Weston: First Show, First Works**

**Venue: Croisière, 65 boulevard Émile Combes, 13200 Arles**

**Date: Until 22 September, 2019**

In July 1970, the Festival d'Arles opened the first Rencontres Photographiques under the leadership of Lucien Clergue, Jean-Maurice Rouquette and Michel Tournier with An Homage to Weston, a show of 36 prints by Edward Weston, whose photographs were then very rare in France.

That first edition featured the great American master, but Clergue and Weston went back together long before then. In 1965, Clergue met Jérôme Hill, a multifaceted artist and great patron of the arts. When Clergue told him that he and Rouquette planned to create a photography department at the Musée Réattu in Arles, Hill donated ten Weston prints. "And there I was piously handling the



exhibitions complete the program of the first edition: Photography Is an Art—a “modest survey of the quintessential 20th-century art form”, a true manifesto in favour of the recognition of photography —and prints by Gjon Mili in the Musicians of Our Times show.

To mark the festival’s 50th anniversary, we are recreating the Weston show as it was presented in 1970. At the same time, we wanted to celebrate the festival’s founder: photographer and curator Lucien Clergue. Weston seems like a tutelary figure who guided Clergue’s first steps as a photographer, as his notebooks, most dating from the 1950s and unknown until now, attest. We have brought them together for this show.

Reuniting them for this anniversary is a way of recognizing that the history of photography is written in successive strata. Clergue’s fossilized carrion respond singularly to the anthropomorphic minerality of Weston’s works.



Lucien Clergue, *Dead Flamingo in the Sand, Faraman Lighthouse*, 1956. Courtesy of the Atelier Lucien Clergue. Courtesy of the Atelier Lucien Clergue and Saif 2019.





Lucien Clergue, *The Rag-picker's Mannequins*, Arles, 1956. Courtesy of the Atelier Lucien Clergue.  
Courtesy of the Atelier Lucien Clergue and Saïf 2019.

### **The Zone: At the Gates of Paris**

**Venue: Croisière, 65 boulevard Émile Combes, 13200 Arles**

**Date: Until 22 September, 2019**

Some words are vague: the overall meaning can be grasped, but it is hard to define them with exactitude. “Zone” is one. In French, it means the blur of the suburbs, a kind of boredom or the threshold of delinquency, but few people are aware that it is rooted in a precise historical reality.

At first, the Zone designated a 250m-wide strip of land running along the 34km of fortifications built around Paris in 1844. This area had to remain empty for military defence, but it gradually filled up with poor people. They put up flimsy structures, cabins and huts of every kind, eventually building a huge shantytown where over 40,000 people lived between the wars. That period saw the first expulsions, which gathered pace during the Vichy regime. The building of the ring road (1956-1973) definitively paved over the last remnants of this outsider area.

Except for some famous figures such as Eugène Atget, Germaine Krull or André Kertész, few photographers took an interest in this urban and social phenomenon between the wars. Consequently, most of the pictures exhibited are by anonymous photographers, who often worked on commissions aiming to document the



This group of documentary photographs, which have never been shown before, recalls an impoverished population relegated to the outskirts of Paris, like a subconscious memory of the modern city that people were in a hurry to repress.



Anonymous, *View of the Zone near Porte de Clignancourt, the City of Saint-Ouen in the Background*, France, ca. 1940.







Left: The Zone: At the Gates of Paris exhibition view © Marine Cabos-Brullé

Right: L. Chiffot, *The Zone, Gentilly, France*, ca. 1939.

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**More information:** [www.rencontres-arles.com](http://www.rencontres-arles.com)

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