

Press Release

ETERNELLES Jerusalem /Rome

Photographs by **Chantal STOMAN**

From June 6th to July 19 2019



L'image culte series, Rome , 2013
Print size: 50 x 40 cm. Gelatin silver print
© Chantal Stoman courtesy galerie SIT DOWN



Walking distance series, Jerusalem , 2016
Print size: 30 x 40 cm. Gelatin silver print
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The past is eternal, it is the present that passes, a past that flees and fades.

Sit Down Gallery has chosen for its summer exhibition 2019 to show two different projects, made over two different periods, a cross-perspective from the same artist, Chantal Stoman, on two Eternal cities.

What exists in Eternity? The history, the trace. In Rome, then in Jerusalem, the photographer looked around for several weeks to capture a semblance of eternity.

In Jerusalem, it is in its ancient stones that Eternity is palpable. This unique stone unifying the city from the East to the West tells the story of humanity. A thought of the Place where we perceive the 3000 years of history that binds its walls. Often destroyed but still alive, this capital of survival has two faces, one visible and the other elusive. The three times Holy city relies on its writings and through the text, Jerusalem is read like an open book. Because in its stones, the story is told. Here, everything is imagined, nothing is exposed and the word gives the way to the imaginary.

Jerusalem has passed through the millennia, and no other city, Rome, Byzantium, nor has the Mecca gained the privilege of the city named holy. The figure of the eternal city. The place where what has been lost must be found. Therefore, the text gives access to the Place, the letters to life. Passion for writing, love and endurance of the letter of which we cannot say if the subject is the Place or the Letter itself. The root can be common to people and to the writing. But how can we define the writing? Or are we reduced, by speaking of the writing, to describe its movement, or simply to follow this movement which carries man in the Place? The text merely follows a path, precisely the path of writing which is also the path of the Place and traces its groove in the city of Jerusalem.

The adventure of the text gives way to imagination.

Conditioned by listening to a Word, I wished to inscribe my images of Jerusalem in a poetic, half-aesthetic posture. Through this project, I wanted to draw out the contours of the city.

In Rome*, cradle of Christianity, it is the omnipresent image that is Eternity. This shift from the cult register to that of art, and the edifying scope of the image have guided my view to the city whose Latin name means eternal city. The relationship to the image that Christian confessions in Rome have developed over the centuries has forged their visual culture and their attitudes regarding the images tend to converge. Whatever the status assigned to the image, it holds an important place in the city.

Thus, the representation of the sacred conveys a religious message. It becomes the central element of the rite, the incarnation of a character. Thus, the miracles accomplished through the holy images, the apotropaic uses of them through their figurative representation, or the legends that run about the exceptional powers of this or that figure shape the Roman faith.

The quantitative proliferation of Holy images, what they represent, has generated a cult of the image. Thus, offered to my eyes, the omnipresent religious image in the Italian capital guided my steps. I wanted to better understand how the Christian image has been treated since the end of Antiquity. I wanted to observe how a simple idea could develop: to reach the invisible realities through sensible or even material things.

I had a long look at these men, these women who address the images of praise and marks of devotion. I looked for the meanings of the paintings and statues offered to the veneration of the faithful, by feeling the direct presence of the sacred or the consolation in the suffering.

Through this exhibition gathering two cities symbolizing Eternity, two projects, I wanted, not to confront, but to associate two visions.

Two perceptions, however as far away as they may be, come together in photography, the image of the present.

Chantal Stoman

* *L'Image Culte* series was created as part of an invitation in residence at the Villa Medici, Académie de France in Rome and received the generous support of Nicolas Levy.

BIOGRAPHY

Chantal Stoman is a French, Paris-based photographer.

The work of Chantal Stoman is part of an approach based on a thorough observation of the relationship between man and his intimacy and the City.

She began with A WOMAN'S OBSESSION, observing the special relationship between Japanese women and the world of European luxury brands.

Broadening her focus, it is from the elevated freeways that Chantal Stoman continued to observe the humanity hidden in the heart of the major cities of the world with LOST HIGHWAY, A PHOTO PROJECT. Tokyo, Sao Paulo, Cairo, Hong Kong, Mumbai, LOST HIGHWAY tells this tale shared by the great cities, where borders no longer exist.

This passion for the contemporary and its massive embodiment - the «city-world», in a continuous extension from Tokyo to Sao Paulo - does not hinder the sensitivity of her vision of the vertical city and how we live in the thickness of Time.

The work realized by Chantal Stoman, first in Rome, then in Jerusalem, through her projects L'IMAGE CULTE and WALKING DISTANCE, testifies to a tropism towards «myth cities». These cities narrate History and their history so profoundly. Her attention to details - the tracking of a sense, a direction - introduces a questioning, a poetic suspense, adding to the photography the promise of a continuation.

In 2016, invited for an artist-in-residence in Cambodia, she immersed herself in the intimacy of Phnom Penh, a city she knew nothing about, giving birth to a new project ; VIEWS.

Chantal Stoman is now working on a new photographic project entitled ÒMECITTA, thanks to the CNAP's support for contemporary documentary photography. A complementary video project between cinema, art and documentary is also in progress.

EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *Ōmecittà*, Maison Hermès, Tokyo, Ginza
- 2017 *Walking Distance*, Institut Français - Romain Gary, Jerusalem
IEWS, Conservatoire de Montreuil, Mois de la Photo Grand Paris
- 2016 *IEWS*, Angkor Photo Festival, Siem Reap
L'Image Culte, Sept Off / Festival de la photographie Méditerranéenne #18, Chapelle Santa Maria de Olivo, Beaulieu-sur-Mer
Lost Highway, BredaPhoto International Photo Festival, Breda , Pays-Bas
IEWS, Studio Images, Institut Français du Cambodge, Phnom Penh
Lost Highway, ciné-concert, Chapiteau de la Fontaine aux Images, Clichy-sous-bois
- 2015 *Lost Highway*, projection and livre performance, Silencio d'Eté / Maison de Aiguebrun
Lost Highway, Maison d'Architecture en Île de France, Festival Ville et Cinéma, Paris
- 2014 *L'Image Culte*, Espace Wanted Paris, Mois de la Photo, Paris
L'Image Culte, Projection, Le Silencio, Paris
L'Image Culte, Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Festival Fotografia, Rome
- 2013 *Lost Highway*, Studio X Mumbai, Festival "Bonjour India", Bombay
Lost Highway, Manga Museum, Nuit Blanche, Kyoto
- 2012 *Lost Highway*, Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Mois de la photo, Paris
Lost Highway, Light Box project, Nuit Blanche, Installation, Palais de Chaillot, Paris
- 2010 *Lost Highway*, streetcar installation, Festival Plaisirs d'Hiver, Bruxelles
- 2009 *Lost Highway*, Nuit Blanche (« Châtelet » subway station), Paris
Group Show, Fundacion provincial de artes plasticas Rafael Boti, Cordoue
- 2007 *A Woman's Obsession*, FIAF Gallery, New York
- 2006 *A Woman's Obsession*, Mois de la Photo, Hotel de Sauroy, Paris
A Woman's Obsession, Nexus Foundation, Tokyo
- 2005 *Le Pletzel*, Institut Français, Barcelone
- 2003 Exposition personnelle, Première Vision, Paris
- 1999 Exposition personnelle, Galerie PONS, Paris
- 1997 Exposition personnelle, Cinémathèque française, Jérusalem
- 1996 Exposition collective, International Festival of Fashion Photography, Monaco

EDITIONS

- 2019 *Ōmecittà* (à paraître bientôt)
- 2017 *VIEWS, Phnom Penh*, Editions Rue du Bouquet
- 2016 *Walking Distance*, Coll. Portrait de Ville, Editions Be-Pôles
- 2014 *L'Image Culte*, Editions Le Joker
- 2012 *Lost Highway*, More, Factory Editions
- 2006 *A Woman's Obsession*, La Martinière (Epuisé)
- 2004 *Maw Money*, Steidl
- 2002 *Strip*, Steidl

ACQUISITIONS

Bibliothèque Nationale de France - Chanel KK - Collection Friedman, La Nouvelle Orléans - Enchères Artcurial - Groupe Hélios - Hadassa Institute of Photography, Jerusalem - Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome - Galerie Jansem, Paris - Maison Européenne de la Photographie - Sala 1, Centro Internazionale d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome - Collection Wertheimer, New York.

AWARDS

- 2018 CNC Edition project Prize for OMECITTA
- 2017 Contemporary documentary photography support, CNAP, France
- 2012 Premio dos Caminos de Hierro, Fundación de los Ferrocarriles Españoles, Madrid.
- 2008 III Premio Internacional de Fotografía Contemporanea Pilar Citoler, Edita Fundacion Provincial de Artes Plasticas Rafael Boti, Universidad de Cordoba.

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GALERIE SIT DOWN

Established in *Le Marais* area in Paris, close to the Picasso Museum, SIT DOWN gallery was founded by Françoise Bornstein in 2005 and is a member of the French "Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art".

Since 2013 the gallery has been entirely devoted to photography, and its programming consists primarily of documentary and fine-art photography. The gallery aims to showcase young emerging photographers and support renowned international photographers such as Tom Wood, Yan Morvan, and Sacha Van Dorssen.

In addition to organizing personal exhibitions, Françoise Bornstein invites curators to participate in exhibition projects during special events or art fairs.

Through artist representation, SIT DOWN gallery has established itself as a major figure in documentary photography and opens its doors to the creativity of young photographers who bring new vision to this medium.

Françoise Bornstein is also a nominee for the Niépce prize and an expert at the Photo Folio Review of The Rencontres d'Arles.

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Anne France Abillon
Aurore Bagarry
Jean-François Bauret
Gilles Coulon
Olivier Culmann
Jean-Gabriel Lopez
Marie Maurel de Maillé
Marie pierre morel
Sandra Mehl
Robert McCabe
Yan Morvan
Salvatore Puglia
Florian Ruiz
Myriam Richard
Richard Schroeder
Silvi Simon
Sacha Van Dorssen
Laure Vasconi
Charles Xelot
Tom Wood

INFORMATION

Eternelles : Jerusalem / Rome
Photographs by **Chantal STOMAN**
June 6th > July 19th 2019

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