

Press release

24 February

Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg

- 9 July 2023

The Skin is a Thin Container

MACLYON



Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg

Dark Side of the Moon, 2017

Stop motion animation, music – Duration: 6'40"

Courtesy of the artists, Gió Marconi, Milan, Lisson Gallery, London/New York/Los Angeles/
Shanghai/Beijing and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles

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The animated films and sculptures of artist duo Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg play on fantasies, obsessions and fears in a “primitive” deliberately shocking, aesthetic that delves wryly into the subconscious and the dark side of every one of us.

Nathalie Djurberg shapes her little figures in clay and plasticine, then dresses them in fabrics and wigs and animates them in stop motion. Hans Berg, musician and composer, creates a hypnotic soundtrack that adds vitality and intensity to their films. Together, they create works that are allegorical and grotesque, chaotic and euphoric, comical and critical, featuring characters with exaggerated, sometimes tortured bodies, in conflict or in osmosis with other creatures – often animals or creatures inspired by tales.

The transgressive narratives of their whimsical pieces are presented in all-encompassing settings in which moving images, sculptures and musical compositions are combined with astonishing stage sets.

**Curator:
Marilou Laneuville, head of exhibitions at macLYON**

The exhibition *The Skin is a Thin Container* is the first solo exhibition in France of artistic duo Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg.

The animated films and sculptural installations by Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg address the human condition, particularly the desires, impulses, and vices buried in our subconscious, and at the origin of our fantasies and obsessions. Their works are marked by irony and dark humour, provoking a feeling of unease, through plural reflections on sexuality, violence, and sometimes macabre pleasures, cruelty and perversion, amongst others. Characters with exaggerated, deformed, and even tortured bodies interact with other strange anthropomorphic creatures, often personified by animals or other figures inspired by tales and depicting deviant behaviours.

Since 2001, Nathalie Djurberg has developed a distinctive style, by creating animated films using figurines modelled from clay, which she dresses and then films in stop motion. She creates characters both intuitively and manually, endowed with outrageous features that she fashions and animates herself in her studio, thereby exaggerating their appearance with a crude materiality. She associates this technique with the pleasures of the flesh, with the feeling we get when we walk barefoot in earth, crushing it between our toes. This feeling, which she experiences by manipulating the materials, awakens her primary instincts, but also her fears. The artist explores what troubles her, in order to better understand it.

Inspired by childhood memories and books, by what she sees and hears, Nathalie Djurberg assembles her references to create a story, a scenario. The narrative, often transgressive and disturbing, recounts the darkest of desires—jealousy, revenge, greed, submission, and lust—in a rudimentary staging with an intense rhythm. Although the artist has a precise idea of the scenario, she admits that an element of improvisation remains necessary during the creation process, especially in the interactions between characters. Her films are often linked to her emotional state at the time of their production. Although she occasionally finds the result excessive, with too many textures, colours, or elements, this is precisely what gives the work a comical dimension, despite the harshness of the subjects addressed.

The feelings generated by the films are accentuated by the music and atmospheric sounds that form their soundtrack. These are imagined by Hans Berg as soon as they are shot. He is also the only person that Nathalie Djurberg lets into her studio when she brings her plasticine characters to life. The artistic duo began their collaboration in 2004. Using sound effects, and acoustic and synthetic instruments, as well as electronic music, Hans Berg's soundtracks follow the rhythm of the animated film and are composed simultaneously. Hans Berg begins to reflect on the soundtrack of each new film as soon as the scenario has been established, but he finalizes the composition only after production. While the sound score may be considered an emotional response to the images, it does not replace the spoken word. It harmonizes with what we see, or goes against it, thus provoking a dissonance. According to Hans Berg, music is a way of amplifying the complex emotions that emanate from each scene.

Since 2009, Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg's works have taken the form of elaborate environments where videos, sculptures, and musical compositions comprise a surreal universe. Their installations allow visitors to immerse themselves in their world and fully experience it.

While the music in their films is much more narrative, that used in their installations is more focused on a hypnotic atmosphere. The latter embody moods and feelings, dramatized by the relationship between the sound and image. The working dynamic of this artistic duo has evolved over the years, reinforcing the sensory experience of spectators.

For their exhibition at the macLYON, Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg have created a gigantic soup, a metaphor for the human body. The scenography invites the public to enter a pot, where several foods serve as allegories of body parts. Amongst the ingredients, Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg voluntarily chose to highlight root vegetables, as these vegetables grow out of sight. They develop underground and it is only when we dig them up that we become aware of what they are. In the same way, our body is imbued with emotions, most of them invisible, at times unconscious, or even partly buried. Yet, everything we feel as individuals has an impact on our body, inside and outside. The two artists explore, in an intuitive way, the difficulty we have in experiencing our emotions and the way in which our bodies express themselves.

Despite the darkness of their animated films, a hard-hitting humour emerges from these whimsical and grotesque stories. The works oscillate between innocence and traumatic experience, between the cruel and the cute. This ambivalence is what gives their work its strength, softening the violence thanks to this humorous discrepancy.

Curator:

Marilou Laneuville, head of exhibitions at macLYON



Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, *A Pancake Moon*, 2022
Stop motion animation, music – Duration: 6'14"
Courtesy of the artists, Gió Marconi, Milano, Lisson Gallery, London/New York/
Los Angeles/Shanghai/Beijing and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles
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In this exhibition showcasing fifteen years of work, Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg invite visitors to stroll through an immense space reminiscent of a pot of soup filled with various foods in the form of sculptures produced for the occasion. There is a monumental onion in which a new animated film is screened; a potato; cabbage leaf; carrot, and bacon... The soup symbolizes the interior of the human body and the sculptures, the organs that generate the feelings and emotions that we often try to bury.

The Potato is an exceptional loan from the Prada Foundation in Milan, for which the work was produced specifically as part of the *Turn into Me* exhibition in 2008. It takes the form of a germinating potato, half-rotting half-sprouting, which visitors can enter. Three animated films made by the artistic duo are screened inside this space:

Once Removed on My Mother's Side (2008),
We Are Not Two, We Are One (2008),
It's the Mother (2008).

Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg's animated world fills the space and immerses the public in their whimsical and allegorical universe. The animated film *Dark Side of the Moon* (2017), projected on a giant screen, questions the feelings of torment experienced by characters who are tempted to enter a house in the forest. Inspired by the world of fairy tales, the film features a young woman befriending a number of strange creatures: a wolf, a pig, and a moon. Some of these characters reappear in the new films *Howling at the Moon* (2022) and *A Pancake Moon* (2022). These three seemingly innocent stories explore contradictory feelings such as fascination and repulsion, the familiar and the terrifying.



Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, *Howling at the Moon*, 2022

Stop motion animation, music – Duration: 5'33"

Courtesy of the artists, Gió Marconi, Milan, Lisson Gallery, Londres/New York/Los Angeles/Shanghai/Beijing and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles

© Adagg, Paris, 2023

Nathalie Djurberg was born in 1978 in Lysekil (Sweden). Today, she lives and works in her home country. She studied at the Hovedskous Art School in Göteborg before pursuing her studies at the Malmö Art Academy (Sweden).

Hans Berg was born in 1978 in Rättvik (Sweden). He lives and works in London (United Kingdom). He is a musician, composer, and producer.

Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg have been working together since 2004.

Spotted in 2008 by the macLYON in the *Rendez-vous* exhibition, dedicated to young creation, the artistic duo has since been widely recognized on the international art scene. Recipients of the Silver Lion at the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009), they have been the subject of an increasing number of solo and collective exhibitions, including *A Moon Wrapped in Brown Paper* at the Prada Rong Zhai in Shanghai, China (2021-2022) and *The Soft Spot* at the Gió Marconi Gallery in Milan, Italy (2021). Their exhibition *A Journey Through Mud and Confusion with Small Glimpses of Air* was presented at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden (2018), Museo de Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART) in Rovereto, Italy (2018-2019), and at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt in Frankfurt, Germany (2019).

Their works now feature in the collections of numerous cultural institutions, such as the Prada Foundation in Milan (Italy), the Moderna Museet in Stockholm (Sweden), and MoMA in New York (United States).

Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg like to play with the frontiers between artistic forms like sculpture, cinema, and music, resulting in some surprising collaborations. In 2022, the artists joined forces with the prestigious ready-to-wear label Miu Miu for the presentation of its 2022-2023 Autumn-Winter collection. For the occasion, the duo created the visual identity of the fashion show, the accessories, jewellery, and deckchairs, as well as the soundtrack for the event.

The artists are represented by three galleries: Gió Marconi (Milan), Lisson Gallery (London/New York/ Los Angeles/ Shanghai/Beijing), and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery (New York/ Los Angeles).



Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg during the opening of the exhibition *Mondjäger: Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg in Dialogue with Asger Jorn*, Kunstmuseum Ravensburg, Germany, November 2019
© Djurberg & Berg; Photography Wynrich Zlomke

Solo shows (selection)

2022

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, Los Angeles (coming soon)
 Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, in collaboration with the
 Fumetto Comic Festival Luzern, Kunstmuseum Luzern,
 Luzern, Switzerland
Like Beads on a String, Lisson Gallery, London,
 United Kingdom
A Stream Stood Still, Lisson Gallery, Shanghai, China

2021

A Moon Wrapped in Brown Paper, Prada Rong Zhai, Shanghai,
 China
Can't Keep It in, Can't Lock It Away, Futura Gallery, Stockholm,
 Sweden
The Soft Spot, Gió Marconi, Milan, Italy

2020

ESTO ES EL CIELO, C3A Centro de Creación Contemporanea
 de Andalucía, Córdoba, Spain
Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Julia Stoschek Collection,
 Berlin, Germany
Flowers in the Attic, Kistefos Museum, Jevnaker, Norway

2019

One Last Trip to the Underworld, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery,
 New York, USA
*Mondjäger: Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg in Dialogue with
 Asger Jorn*, Kunstmuseum Ravensburg, Ravensburg, Germany
Rites of Passage, Porta Sant'Agostino, Bergamo, Italy
Delights of an Undirected Mind, Baltimore Museum of Art,
 Baltimore, USA
*A Journey Through Mud and Confusion with Small Glimpses
 of Air*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany

2018

*A Journey Through Mud and Confusion with Small Glimpses
 of Air*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden ; Museo de Arte
 Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto,
 Italy

2017

Who Am I to Judge, Or, It Must Be Something Delicious,
 Lisson Gallery, London, United Kingdom
Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Salon Berlin, Museum Frieder
 Burda, Berlin, Germany
Dark Side of the Moon, Stavanger Art Museum (MUST),
 Stavanger, Norway

2016

In Dreams, Wanås Konst, Knislinge, Sweden
Dark Side of the Moon – Worship, Kunstraum Dornbirn,
 Dornbirn, Austria
The Secret Garden: Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Shanghai
 21st Century, Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China ; Perth
 Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA), Perth, Australia

2015

Nathalie Djurberg, Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany
The Secret Garden: Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Australian
 Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Melbourne, Australia
*ARoS Focus // New Nordic: Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg
 – Flickers of Day and Night*, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum,
 Aarhus, Denmark

2014

A World of Glass, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, USA
Maybe This Is a Dream, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Köln,
 Germany
The Gates of the Festival, Lisson Gallery, London,
 United Kingdom

2013

Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Kunsthalle Helsinki, Helsinki,
 Finland
The Black Pot, Garage Center for Contemporary Culture,
 Moscow, Russia
Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Zach Feuer Gallery, New York,
 USA

2012

Vain Attempts, Röda Sten Art Centre, Göteborg, Sweden
Nathalie Djurberg e Hans Berg – Premio Pascali 2012,
 Fondazione Museo Pino Pascali, Polignano a Mare, Italy

2011

A World of Glass, Camden Arts Centre, London,
 United Kingdom
The Parade, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA ;
 New Museum, New York, USA; Yerba Buena Center for the
 Arts, San Francisco, USA
I Found Myself Alone, Mumbai Art Room, Mumbai, India
Human Behaviour, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus,
 USA

Group shows (selection)

2022

Panorama Monopoli, Monopoli, Italy
 OpenArt Biennial, Orebro, Sweden
Into the Unknown, in collaboration with the Museum of
 Modern Art in Warsaw, Salt Beyoglu, Salt Galata, Istanbul,
 Turkey
Human Conditions of Clay, John Hansard Gallery,
 Southampton, United Kingdom

2021

Human Conditions of Clay, Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff,
 United Kingdom
MOTHER!, Louisiana Museum, Humlebæk, Denmark
Delights of an Undirected Mind, Lisson Gallery, London,
 United Kingdom

2020

Underneath, Nordic House, Reykjavik, Iceland
Manifesta 13, Marseille, France

2019

Sculpture, Sculpture, Sculpture!, CFHILL Art Space,
 Stockholm, Sweden
BEYOND..., Collectors Room, Berlin, Germany

2018

Foresta Urbana, Museo Rio, Palermo, Italy
*Nordic Impressions: Art from Åland, Danemark, the Faroe
 Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden,
 1821-2*, The Phillips Collection, Washington DC, USA

2016

Swedish Art: Now!, Sven-Harrys Konstmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden

Performer/Audience/Mirror, Lisson Gallery, London, United Kingdom

Love, Devotion, and Surrender, 22 London, Asheville, USA

I Prefer Life, Weserburg Museum of Modern Art, Bremen, Germany

Naturally Obscure, Centre d'art contemporain, Brest, France

2015

The Great Mother, Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Palazzo Reale, Milan, Italy

Screen Play: Life in an Animated World, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, New York, USA

Turn On – Time-Based Media Art from the Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf, Germany

Inhabitations: Phantasms of the Body in Contemporary Art, Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau, Switzerland

Arts & Foods, La Triennale di Milano, Milan, Italy

Yes We're Open, Gió Marconi, Milan, Italy

2014

Passo a Due, Museo d'arte della Provincia di Nuoro, Nuoro, Italy

One's Own Voice, Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö, Sweden

Broken: Slapstick, Comedy und schwarzer Humor, Sammlung Goetz im Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany

Inside, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

2013

Matthew Brannon, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Simon Fujiwara, Markus Schinwald: Gió Marconi @ Gerhardsen

Gerner, Gerhardsen Gerner, Berlin, Germany

Flowers & Mushrooms, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, Austria

2012

Desire, Bergen Kunstmuseum, Bergen, Norway

Riotous Baroque: From Cattelan to Zurbarán – Manifestations of Precarious Vitality, Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland

Zoo, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Montreal, Canada ; *Dak'Art*, Dakar, Senegal

The Supersurrealism, Moderna Museet, Malmö, Sweden

Ideas Variations Unique Works: Selected Parkett Artists' Editions 1984-2012, Parkett, Zurich, Switzerland

Francis Bacon and the Existential Condition in Contemporary Art, Centre for Contemporary Culture at Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, Italy

4th Narracje Festival, Gdansk, Poland

2011

Anonymous Sculpture: Video and Form in Contemporary Art, Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, Austria

X, Gió Marconi, Milan, Italy

Music in Art, Milliken Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden

Future Generation Prize @ Palazzo Papadopoli, Venice, Italy

Fondazione Prada, Calle Corner della Regina, Venice, Italy

Watch Me Move: The Animation Show, Barbican Art Gallery, London, United Kingdom

Awards

2012

Premio Pino Pascali Award, Polignano a Mare, Italy

2010

Cairo Biennale Prize, 12th International Cairo Biennale, Cairo, Egypt

2009

Silver Lion for a Promising Young Artist, 53rd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

2008

Scholarship, Carnegie Art Award, Sweden

2007

Anna Nordlander Prize, Museum Anna Nordlander, Skellefteå, Sweden

2006

Beckers Konstnärstipendium, Stockholm, Sweden

Collections

Fondazione Prada, Milano, Italy

Julia Stoschek Collection, Berlin, Germany

Weserburg Museum of Modern Art, Bremen, Germany

Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany

Borås Konstmuseum, Borås, Sweden

Galleria d'arte Moderna, Torino, Italy

Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA

Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland

Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö, Sweden

Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden

Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA

Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

Sprenghel Museum, Hanover, Germany

Jesper Just

24 February – 9 July 2023

Jesper Just's works are, more often than not, large, aesthetic, sculptural video installations with an enigmatic and immersive quality, in which the viewer is invited to move around.

The almost surreal, ambiguous trajectories and encounters of his figures, which transcend the usual codes and stereotypes, are an enthralling experience. Although his works have a cinematic quality, they diverge from film in their rhythm and the artist's tendency to shift from narrative to total experience.

In his recent productions, Jesper Just has created ecosystems that combine technology, the body and nature, using, for example, electrodes connected to dancers' bodies, aquaponic systems, and networks of tubes, cables and LED screen panels. Technology and nature converge and merge in what the artist himself calls a techno-poetics.

For his exhibition at macLYON, Jesper Just will present a new film featuring the emotional topography of Matt Dillon (*Outsiders, Rusty James, Singles, Sexcrimes, There's Something About Mary, Collision, The House that Jack Built...*) captured by an MRI scanner during a soliloquy.



Jesper Just, production still, 2023
Courtesy Perrotin and Galleri Nicolai Wallner

The Body in the collection, act 1

24 February – 9 July 2023

First created in 1984, the macLYON collection has been built up with works that have appeared in exhibitions at macLYON and the Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art. The collection is regularly supplemented by purchases and donations. Many of the themes running through art history and social history are reflected in the works in the collection. They date from the 1960s through to the present, and reveal specific perspectives on the various issues that have marked that period, from post-modernity to the present.

Since the second half of the twentieth century, artists have been preoccupied with exploring the body as artistic object and as an object of study, but also as a medium. This theme has been the subject of many, sometimes radical, approaches and treatments that have followed the ebb and flow of societal change. Artists have addressed the physical body, confronting its fragility as well as its strength, the body in isolation or in a group, and the social body, which has either supported or challenged social change, whether in the form of deprivation or in gaining space for freedom. Several works directly or indirectly champion the expression of violence against bodies subjected to the dictates of power and the tyranny of beauty norms. In response, artists have gone beyond the canons of classical art and consumerism in order to reassert the diversity and plurality of body types.

The first part of this exhibition focuses on the notion of the "body as boundary" (February-July 2023). The second part will focus on the social body (September-December 2023).



Alex Da Corte, *Taut Eye Tau*, 2015
Installation
Collection macLYON
Photo: Blaise Adilon

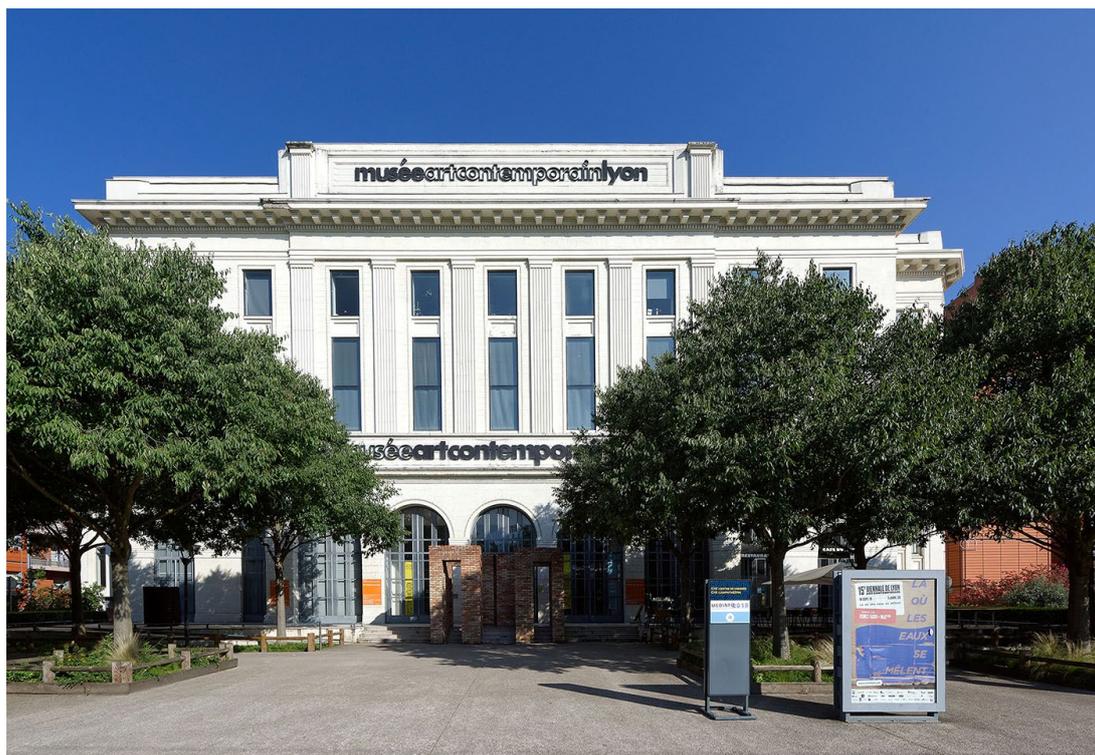
Established in 1984 in a wing of the Palais Saint-Pierre, in 1995 the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon moved to the site of the Cité internationale, a vast architectural ensemble spread over one kilometre on the edges of the Parc de la Tête d'Or, in Lyon's 6th arrondissement and gathering hotels, restaurants, offices, housing but also a casino or a cinema.

Entrusted to the architect Renzo Piano, who designed the entire site, the museum conserves the facade of the atrium of the Palais de la Foire, designed by Charles Meysson in the 1920s, on the park side.

The 6,000m² museum is spread over several floors and presents modular spaces that are perfectly adapted to the needs of the different artistic projects welcomed by the museum, as well as new forms of contemporary expression. The macLYON focuses on current national and international art, in all its forms, offering exhibitions and a wide programme of transdisciplinary events.

Its collection includes over 1,400 works. A selection of these is shown in rotation at the macLYON as well as in several partner structures. Works of its collection are regularly loaned for exhibitions in France and all over the world. It consists mainly of monumental works and ensembles of works, dating from the 1940s to the current day, created by artists from all over the world, the majority for exhibitions at the museum or for the Biennales d'art contemporain de Lyon, for which the museum oversees the artistic direction.

Brought together in an arts pole with the MBA since 2018, the two collections form a remarkable ensemble, both in France and in Europe.



View of the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon
Photo Blaise Adilon

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OPENING HOURS
Wednesday to Sunday
[from 11am to 6pm]

ADMISSION
● Full: 9€
● Reduced: 6€
● Free for visitors under 18

ACCESS
● By bike
Several Vélo'v stations around the museum
Cycle lane from the Rhône's banks to the museum
● By bus
Stop Musée d'art contemporain
Bus C1, Gare Part-Dieu/Cuire
Bus C4, Jean Macé/Cité internationale
Bus C5, Cordeliers/Rillieux-Vancia
● Ridesharing
www.covoiturage-pour-sortir.fr
● By car
Along quai Charles de Gaulle, carpark
P0 and P2, reduced rate for our visitors