

**Personal Stories / Political Realities****Dialogue between the museums  
of contemporary art in Lyon and Belgrade**

macLYON



Sanja Iveković, *NOVI ZAGREB (People at the Windows)*, 1979  
Photocollage, digital printing, 127 × 174 cm. MoCAB Collection

**Press day:**  
Thursday 18 september 2025

**Personal Stories / Political Realities****A dialogue between the museums of contemporary art  
in Lyon and Belgrade**

Exhibition presented at macLYON from 19.09.2025 to 4.01.2026

Levels 1 and 2 of the museum

Art can often provide key insights into the political, social and cultural changes of an era. This is exactly what the double exhibition entitled *Personal Stories / Political Realities*, promises to explore. The exhibition will be presented at the Musée d'art contemporain in Lyon from 19 September 2025 to 4 January 2026 and at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade (MoCAB) in Serbia in spring 2026.

Several years of close collaboration between the teams at the MoCAB and at macLYON have brought us into contact with each other's collections, and prompted a desire to compare and combine the artistic visions and backgrounds of artists who feature in the collections of both museums. The exhibition provides an insight into the tremendous creative productivity of contemporary artists from Serbia and former Yugoslavia, many of whom are sorely underrepresented in French public collections. At the same time, it opens a window onto the international contemporary art scene, which is a defining feature of the macLYON collection.

**Curators :**

**Isabelle Bertolotti**  
Director of macLYON

**Maja Kolarić**  
Director of MoCAB

**Miroslav Karić**  
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When it first opened in 1965, the MoCAB was one of the first contemporary art museums in Europe. (For the sake of context, the Centre Pompidou in Paris was established in 1977). The unique nature of the MoCAB collection reflects the socio-political history of the former Yugoslavia, a socialist state of six republics, all of which are now independent countries. The MoCAB built up an exceptional collection of more than 8,500 works dating from the early 20th century to the present day. The collection includes the most important artists, periods, movements and trends in 20th century Yugoslav, Serbian and international art. Its remarkable depth and quality reflect the museum's acquisition policy, as well as its artistic projects, and the practices and activities that have characterised the first two decades of the 21st century.

The macLYON was founded in 1984 and quickly became one of the first museums exclusively devoted to contemporary art, with a collection firmly focused on the latest developments in the field. After several exhibitions focused on international art scenes, including the United States, Brazil, Asia and India, the macLYON has sought, for several years now, to cultivate closer ties with its European neighbours, particularly with the 'non-aligned'\* countries.

The originality of the exhibition *Personal Stories / Political Realities* lies in a juxtaposition of works by contemporary artists from the collections of both museums as a way of bringing out the historical and societal dynamics they reflect. The exhibition will take place in two stages: initially in Lyon, then in Belgrade. It explores the relationship between art and politics, and that between artists and people's private lives. *Personal Stories / Political Realities* also addresses the question of how a collection is formed, its links with power structures, its ideologies, and its economic and territorial implications. This dialogue between artworks and historical narrative provides a new and interesting perspective for the visitor.

The personal stories touch on the commitment of everyone concerned and their impact on the wider community – both the artists, through their careers and convictions, and the curators and directors responsible for developing institutional collections. The political realities, meanwhile, reflect the role and responsibility of institutions, public funding and of private and corporate sponsors in the approach to social issues implied by their commissions, exhibitions, acquisitions and decisions about how they promote the works.

The exhibition offers several levels of analysis. It begins with the personal experience of the artist as an individual, and then turns its attention to the relationships the artist has developed and interrogated. It continues with an analysis of various different forms of artistic contribution, including documentation, subversion, protest and appropriation.

Through one hundred or so works – paintings, sculptures, video installations, etc. – the exhibition looks back over six decades of creation and shows how contemporary art has challenged society and accompanied, or even anticipated, its changes.

An exhibition catalogue will be published in early-to-mid-2026.

\*The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was founded in response to the specific context of Cold War confrontation. It is a forum of countries not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. Since the end of the Cold War the NAM has focused on developing multilateral ties and connections between its members and all the nations of the world.





**Jasmina Cibic, *Tear Down and Rebuild*, 2015**

Video: 15min. 28sec. MoCAB Collection. Photo: Ivan Petrović



**Neša Paripović. *N. P.*, 1977**

Digitally restored color film, initially 8-mm film tape, duration 22 min, 1977. MoCAB Collection



**Mihael Milunović, *Fallers 1*, 2023**

Oil on canvas, 200 × 200 cm. MoCAB collection.

Photo: Bojana Janjić / MoCAB.



**Terry Allen, *Youth in Asia*, 1983**

macLYON collection

Photo: Blaise Adilon. Art © Terry Allen / Adagp, Paris 2025



**Milica Ružičić, *Zrenjanin – Jugoremedija*, 2010/2013**

Oil on canvas, 213 × 287 cm. MoCAB collection.

Photo: Bojana Janjić / MoCAB



**Simphiwe Ndzube, *Journey to Asazi* (detail), 2019**

Produced for the Biennale 2019. macLYON collection.

View of the Biennale de Lyon 2019.

Photo: Blaise Adilon



**Thameur Mejri, *Hope 2*, 2022**

macLYON collection.

Photo: Blaise Adilon © Thameur Mejri



The exhibition *Personal Stories / Political Realities* will continue in spring 2026 at MoCAB in Belgrade.

## The MoCAB

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade (MoCAB) opened in its present building in 1965. It owns and exhibits works produced since 1900 in Serbia and all the countries of the former Yugoslavia. The permanent collection runs to some 8,500 works. The museum also hosts international exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. The museum was closed for renovation in 2007 and reopened for visitors in 2017. It plays an active role in promoting local art abroad and has often been involved in arranging for national artists to take part in international biennials and triennials, such as those of Venice and Sao Paulo.



Photo: Bojana Janjić

## The macLYON

The Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art (macLYON) was founded in 1984. It moved, in 1995, into an iconic building designed by architect Renzo Piano on the edge of the beautiful Parc de la Tête d'Or in Lyon. Every year, macLYON hosts four to six temporary exhibitions of contemporary art. The museum holds nearly 2,000 works in its remarkable, continually expanding collection, which can be seen in exhibitions throughout the world and, at macLYON, in concert with other collections from major institutions.



Photo: Blaise Adilon