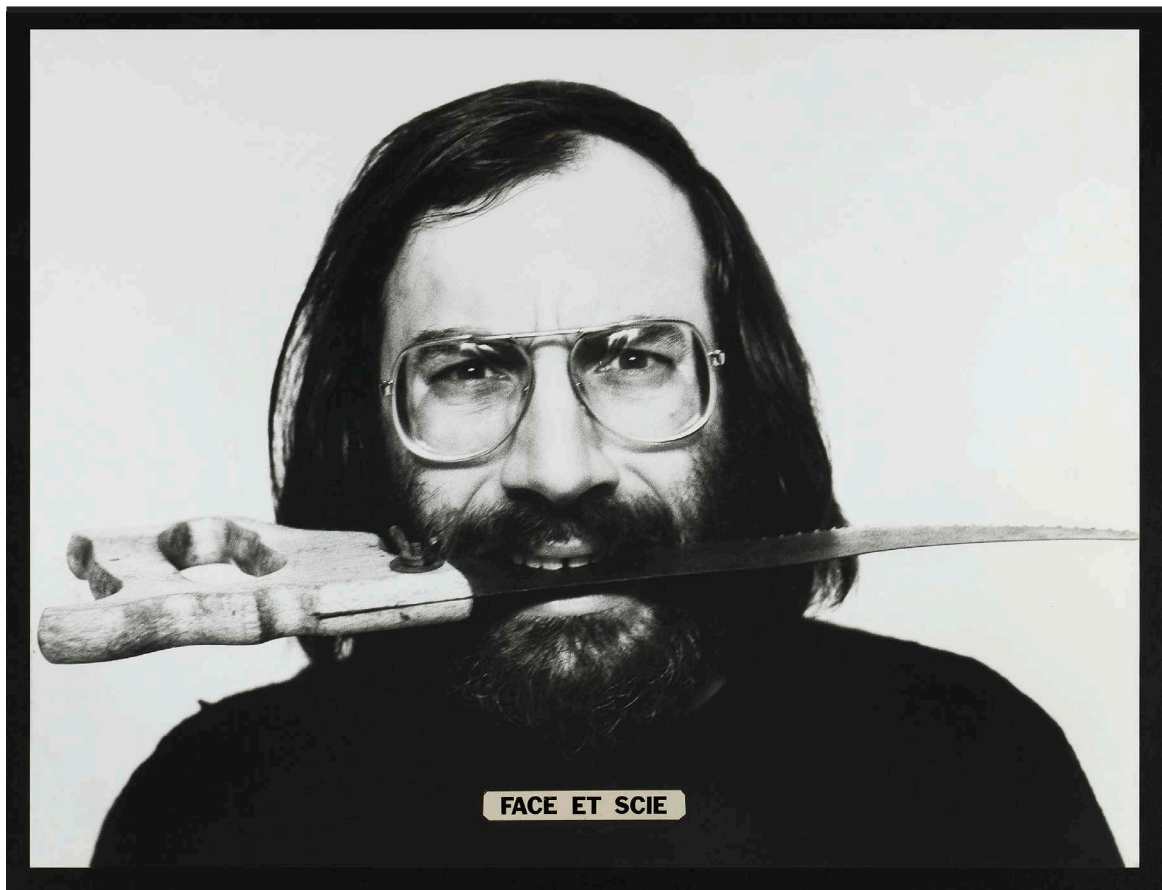


HIM AGAIN!**An exhibition of Jean-Claude Guillaumon**

macLYON



FACE ET SCIE

Jean-Claude Guillaumon,
Face et Scie, 1975
Photographie noir et blanc
Reproduction photographique :
Blaise Adilon
Courtesy Famille Guillaumon

Press visit
Wednesday, 4 March 2026

Exhibition presented
on the 1st floor of the museum.

Curator :
Matthieu Lelièvre
Head of macLYON collection

A self-taught artist and avid practitioner of happenings and other forms of ephemeral art, Jean-Claude Guillaumon, who died in 2022, made a significant impact on the Lyon art scene. The macLYON is holding the first retrospective devoted to his work, which defies categorisation but is run through with humour and irony.

Born in Lyon in 1943, Jean-Claude Guillaumon started out as a painter before discovering happenings and environmental art at the 1964 Venice Biennale. He was open to all the different forms that creativity could take and got involved with the Fluxus movement, working with artists like Ben, George Brecht, and Robert Filliou, as well as Daniel Buren, Olivier Mosset, and ORLAN. Under the motto 'Art is life', he organised several happenings and was instrumental in the rise of this alternative movement in the Lyon region, giving a good shake-up to the local art scene and its institutions in the process. At a time when emerging new art forms from that second avant-garde were very centralised (mainly in Paris), those artists who were doing it in the regions came to be seen as real pioneers.

In the 1970s, Jean-Claude Guillaumon gradually turned away from happenings and Fluxus in favour of black and white photography. He used his own body in what were often bizarre, comical compositions, reflecting a sense of mischief that was nonetheless totally committed to society and art.

'[...] I have taken countless photographs of myself in compositions where I act out all the different roles that human beings adopt. Humour and self-mockery, which are everywhere in this work, are my way of dispelling the vanity of portraying my own image. So my role is that of Everyman, but also the role of the artist and his place in society, as reflected in the history of painting.'

Throughout his life, his work, which he created with limited resources, championed the indissoluble link between art and life. Long before the age of the selfie, his own body was both subject and object of his art, travelling through time and space and bearing witness to the central role of art in all his relationships, whether personal, family or on the art scene.

The exhibition

This monographic, retrospective exhibition features over a hundred photographs and videos, most of which are from Jean-Claude Guillaumon's studio and have rarely been shown in public. It is organised chronologically, to trace the constantly changing nature of his work. We discover the exquisite self-deprecating humour with which he challenged convention in the public arena, interacting with his own image, endlessly making pictures of himself, full-length, full-face or side-on, with paint or with his family, in black and white or in colour, in his studio or with his feet in water... Always him. *Him again!* Everywhere. Using his own image to poke fun at art – it is virtually his only subject. He regularly depicted himself in dramatizations of scenes from everyday life: love, laughter, fear, the ego, playfulness, stress, mannerisms, manias, manoeuvrings, disagreements – the whole thing spiced up with puns to add piquancy to the mischievous wit of this supreme *agent provocateur*.

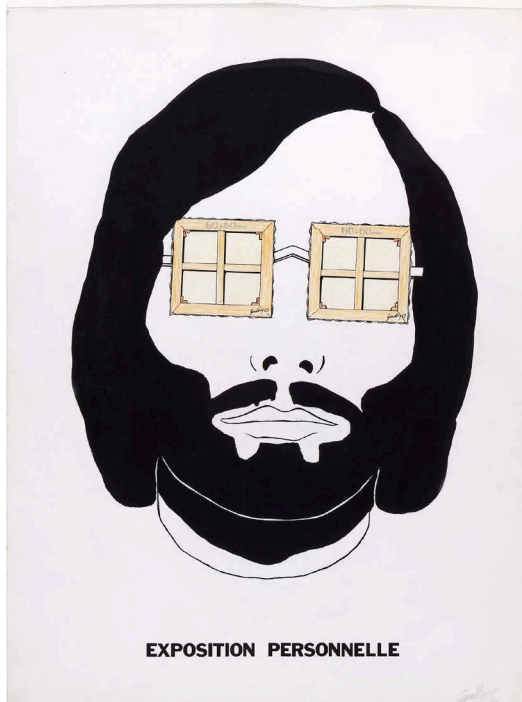
'I define myself neither as a painter nor as a photographer. I don't really know where I stand, I'm a jack-of-all-trades really, a bricoleur.'

A commitment to art and artists

Jean-Claude Guillaumon was a tireless and committed participant in the world of art. He successfully combined his own work as an artist with being an exhibition curator, director of various institutions, and a teacher; providing the next generation with the kind of guidance that he had never received himself. Throughout his career, he forged close links with fledgling cultural venues and, with his critical eye and gift for innovation, he had no qualms about giving them a contemporary nudge. They included: Octobre des Arts, the precursor to the Lyon Biennale; BF15, a non-profit enterprise for the production and dissemination of contemporary art; Traboule 91, an emblematic non-profit gallery on the Lyon alternative scene; and the Hot Club, a jazz club where he would combine visual arts, music, performance art and gastronomy. He founded and directed the Centre d'art de Genas with his wife Colette, and later the Centre d'art de Saint-Fons. His work was a constant and highly idiosyncratic mirror of the cultural, political and social changes of the times he lived through, making him both a precious commentator on his era and a deeply singular artist.

The catalogue

A richly illustrated 300-page catalogue is to be published to accompany the Jean-Claude Guillaumon exhibition — *Encore lui!* It will be the first retrospective work devoted to Guillaumon's career, and will cover more than five decades of his creative output, with texts by Isabelle Bertolotti, director of macLYON; art critic Anne Giffon-Selle; and the director of the macLYON collection, Matthieu Lelièvre. Jean-Claude Guillaumon's own voice will be present in the form of comments and views from various interviews in which he reflects on his artistic career and the emergence and development of contemporary art in Lyon.



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1. *Solo exhibition*, 1969 - drawing - photographic reproduction: Blaise Adilon - courtesy Guillaumon family — 2. *Portrait of a painter*, ca 1995 - photograph - photographic reproduction: Blaise Adilon - courtesy Guillaumon family — 3. *The customs officer painter*, undated (before 1984) - coloured pencil drawing - photographic reproduction: Blaise Adilon - courtesy Guillaumon family — 4. *Guillaumon in town*, 1978 - photomontage - photographic reproduction: Blaise Adilon - courtesy Guillaumon family — 5. *Tension n°8*, 1984 - photograph - photographic reproduction: Blaise Adilon - courtesy Guillaumon family.