



**CENTRE PHOTOGRAPHIQUE  
D'ILE-DE-FRANCE**

PRESS RELEASE - January 2024

# ***The World is a Shelter***

## **Valérie Jouve**

**From February 11<sup>th</sup> 2024  
to April 14<sup>th</sup> 2024**



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Façades)*, 2020-2023 / *Sans titre (« Les Personnages » avec Abu Hassan)*, 2009, © Adagp, Paris, 2024

PRESS CONTACT :

Nathan Magdelain – T. 01 70 05 49 81 / [nathan.magdelain@cpif.net](mailto:nathan.magdelain@cpif.net)

# THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

## • Press conference

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February from 11 am

### In the presence of the artist

Free shuttle from Paris (place de la Bastille)

Reservation required, please contact Nathan Magdelain : 01 70 05 49 81  
[nathan.magdelain@cpif.net](mailto:nathan.magdelain@cpif.net)

## • Opening

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February at 3 pm

### In the presence of the artist

Free shuttle from Paris (place de la Bastille). Reservation required.

## • Artist talk

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 3 pm

### In the presence of the artist

Free shuttle from Paris (place de la Bastille). Reservation required.

A few years after her major retrospective at the Jeu de Paume, Valérie Jouve has a new exhibition at the Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France. Comprising around 60 works and a previously unseen film, it brings together images that are emblematic of her work and new photos arranged into carefully designed ensembles that testify to her continued interest in the relationship between people and their environment.

Since the start of her career, Valérie Jouve has been bringing a unique perspective to bear on urban architecture and the human presence in cities. By combining images from different ongoing series (*Les Personnages*, *Les Façades*, *Les Paysages*, *Les Arbres* etc), she creates carefully designed ensembles, compositions of juxtaposed images taken in different places and at different times that together create meaning. Rather than presenting a succession of series, ***The World is a Shelter*** at the Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France from **February 11 to April 14, 2024**, presents a wide variety of her work. By avoiding any sort of classification, chronological or other, it is the way that the images are arranged that gives rise to new levels of meaning. For example, by juxtaposing a portrait shot in Marseille and the photo of a landscape taken during one of her regular visits to the West Bank between 2009 and 2018, Jouve was able to employ a documentary style and address certain universal questions informed by the existence of these bodies of different kinds.



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre*  
(*Les Personnages avec Mey Semtati*),  
2011-2018, © Adagp, Paris, 2024

The notion of shelter lies at the heart of the exhibition, encouraging visitors to consider the close ties that connect human beings and structures, whether natural or man-made. This relationship takes on a tangible form in the act of seeking refuge, something that Jouve considers to be determined today more by the financial economy than by a desire to protect living things. Her idea here is to get back in touch with the protective function of architecture, a direction that takes us back to the origin of the very first settlements, which resulted from the desire of human beings to organise their surroundings. This desire to organise went hand in hand with a fear of the adverse aspects of nature, even if the solution meant wiping out every trace of plant life from our living space. Having said that, a noteworthy feature in the work of Valérie Jouve is that nature is never far away. In the interstices, in those in-between spaces,



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre*  
(*Les Architectures*), 2018,  
© Adagp, Paris, 2024

such as wastelands, building sites and ruins, buildings return to their primordial mineral nature, revealing a materiality that favours the appearance of organic life, as illustrated by Jouve's images of moss and lichen. Her observations of the town take place as it undergoes an enduring process of reconfiguration and renewal, a fluid time frame that resonates with the way in which the photos are presented.

In her most recent productions, Jouve has focused in particular on the idea of natural shelter, notably through photos of trees whose composition and framing establish a



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Façades)*, 2021, © Adagp, Paris, 2024

dialogue with the images in *Les Personnages*. She presents a familiar, welcoming side to nature, which is also evoked in the gentle textures, cracks and crevices of the rocks that contrast with the geometrical rigour of modern architecture. As we observe her photos, we understand however that life does not only exist in the trees and plants, but also in the walls and buildings whose surfaces bear the traces of the lives lived there. The natural environment and urban landscape are therefore never really in opposition; inhabited by the same life force, they meet, mix and develop together. By considering the way in which in the urban environment permeates the rural space and vice-versa, Jouve invites us to imagine a sense of continuity between the agricultural world and the world of labour. Although her camera is pointed at architecture, the main subject is individual experience. Her tightly framed *Personnages* (characters) are immersed in their surroundings, held in the grip of the space around them. Their aloof and sometimes meditative postures should be understood allegorically. They “are more about attitude than behaviour: behaviour is defined within the group



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Roches)*, 2022-2023, © Adagp, Paris, 2024



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Arbres)*, 2021-2022, © Adagp, Paris, 2024

[...], whereas attitude is a personal position in relation to the world<sup>1</sup>". The relationship between the individual and his/her environment is therefore not viewed solely from a sociological perspective, it also reflects personal and existential questions about the intensity of physical presence and how the body is put to the test by the places around it.

The film *Porte d'Aubervilliers* (2020, 20 min), which is being shown for the first time, explores this affirmation of human presence in its poetic account of a journey through a changing landscape. A figure

---

<sup>1</sup> Valérie Jouve, a conversation with Pia Viewing and Marta Gili, *Corps en résistance*, catalogue of the exhibition at the Jeu de Paume, Paris, Filigrane/Jeu de Paume, 2015, p. 21.



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Arbres)*, 2022-2023, © Adagp, Paris, 2024

roams through a corner of Paris marked by the incessant flow of people and suffering from poverty and constant construction work; their wanderings and the accompanying voice-over resonate with the scarred streets. Since her first film (*Grand Littoral*, 2001), Jouve has been using moving images to tell the story of people journeying across landscapes in a ballet of gestures and words. This attention to rhythm



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre*  
(*La Rue*), 2003-2022,  
© Adagp, Paris, 2024

and musicality intensifies the sensation of movement that is already apparent in her large photographic compositions, which are displayed on the wall rather like musical scores. Moreover, the film's soundtrack is played throughout the exhibition at the CPIF, thereby imbuing the images with an almost musical tone that complements the unique colours of Jouve's photos. The vibrant intensity of these photographic frescoes expresses the wealth of specific and legitimate attention that is brought to bear on individuals and their presence in the landscape, a landscape that is in turn rural and urban, mineral and organic, intimate and architectural.

The uncompromising eye that Jouve tirelessly turns on our environments and living spaces continues to inspire a totally unique body of work. The growing place occupied by the plant kingdom and the natural world in her work bears witness to her careful consideration of our ways of being and resonates as a call to think of the world as a place of refuge and hospitality.



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Murs)*, 2019-2023, © Adagp, Paris, 2024



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Murs)*, 2022-2023, © Adagp, Paris, 2024





Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Roches)*, 2023, © Adagp, Paris, 2024



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre (Les Arbres)*, 2021-2022, © Adagp, Paris, 2024



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre*  
(*Les Architectures*), 2021-2023,  
© Adagp, Paris, 2024



Valérie Jouve, *Sans titre*  
(*Les Architectures*), 2023,  
© Adagp, Paris, 2024

## THE ARTIST

Valérie Jouve (born Saint-Etienne, 1964) is a photographer and filmmaker who lives and works in Paris, where she teaches at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts. She studied ethnology at the Université de Lyon and photography at the ENSP in Arles, “My work has always used a dialogue with individuals and quirky locations to challenge dominant frameworks”, she says. A tireless observer of her time, she is on a quest to find perception and a fair perspective.

A unique figure among the artists of her generation, her work has been exhibited in France and abroad since 1996 in both prestigious cultural institutions and alternative spaces. Her exhibitions are often designed as visual ensembles made up of multiple, independent images taken at different times that create meaning when brought together.

Valérie Jouve is represented by Galerie Xippas (Paris, Geneva, Punta del Este).  
<https://www.xippas.com/artists/valerie-jouve/>

## RELATED TO THE EXHIBITION

### At Xippas gallery

From March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024, a monographic exhibition by **Valérie Jouve**  
 Xippas gallery, 108 Rue Vieille-du-Temple, 75003 Paris  
 From Tuesday to Saturday, from 11 am to 7 pm

**xippas**

### *Valérie Jouve*, éditions Flammarion/CNAP, 2022

This publication featuring an ensemble of carefully arranged compositions of images, many of which are previously unpublished, is an opportunity to resume the conversations that the photos of Valérie Jouve weave with our world.



**Texts by :**

**Valérie Jouve**, photograph and filmmaker

**Morad Montazami**, art historian, editor and curator

**Michel Poivert**, photography historian and curator

## LES PARTENAIRES

Valérie Jouve and the Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France would like to thank Xippas gallery (Paris, Geneva, Punta del Este).

### CPIF partners



## LE CPIF

**The Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France (CPIF) is part of a national network of contemporary art centres. It focuses on still and moving images in the broadest sense.**

The CPIF endeavours to support emerging and established French and foreign artists by producing creative projects, organising exhibitions and helping artists to find residencies (research and postproduction workshops, international residencies and the “Ici, maintenant !” [here and now] residency programme).

The centre addresses the relationship between contemporary photography and other creative fields. As part of this interest in the connections between contemporary photography, other artistic disciplines and the human sciences, it organises three solo or group shows every year. These exhibitions address the many and varied practices of photography today, as well as conceptual and reflective approaches to contemporary art.

As a place of exchange and meaningful experiences, the CPIF is also conscious of its role as a relay between artists and the public. To this end, it implements a bespoke outreach programme (guided visits, conferences, workshops, meetings), organises amateur photography workshops (digital and analogue) and residency projects, as well as hands-on workshops in schools.

The CPIF was created in 1989. Located in the granary of an old farm in the Brie region of France, its distinctive architecture and vast 380 m<sup>2</sup> exhibition space make it unique.