

MEP

MAISON
EUROPÉENNE
DE LA
PHOTOGRAPHIE

**Press
release**



Love Songs

Photography and intimacy

30.03.2022 - 21.08.2022

President : Jean-François Dubos
Director : Simon Baker

Institutional partner



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The MEP would like to thank the Collector's Circle of the MEP and the Friend's Association of the MEP for their continued support.

#ExpoLoveSongs

#MEPParis

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The group show *Love Songs* proposes a completely new vision of the history of photography through the prism of intimate relationships, like those between lovers. Bringing together 14 series by some of the most important photographers of the 20th and 21st centuries, it comprises both masterpieces from the MEP collection and loaned works by important contemporary artists, many of which will be exhibited in Europe for the first time. As such, *Love Songs* will show both the importance of this subject to those working now as well as its rich history.

At the heart of the exhibition, and forming the twin points of departure for the history it proposes, are landmark series by Nobuyoshi Araki and Nan Goldin. These seminal works will be exhibited in relation to those produced by other major historic figures including Larry Clark, Emmet Gowin, René Groebli, Herve Guibert, Sally Mann and Alix Cléo Roubaud, as well as series by leading contemporary artists like JH Engström & Margot Wallard, Leigh Ledare, RongRong&inri, Collier Schorr, Hideka Tonomura and Lin Zhipeng (aka No 223).

Taking inspiration from Nan Goldin's 'Ballad' ("The Ballad of Sexual Dependency", 1986) *Love Songs* is conceived and organised like a musical compilation or mix tape offered to a lover, with Side A, the first half of the show, made up of series from 1950-1990 and Side B, the second half from 1980 to now.

Taking us through many different stories and scenarios photographed between different couples and situations, from the first days of an affair through marriages, honeymoons, domestic bliss and the pain of separation, even to the last days shared between loves, the intimacies shared on film are revealed in all their poetry and honesty.

Love Songs, however, is, above all, a proposition about the nature of the photography: the fact that although the camera is often believed to be 'objective', it has frequently been used to record something about which we can agree on almost nothing, objectively speaking - something entirely subjective. We may not agree on what love is, or how it is supposed to look, how it makes us look, or how it makes us see, yet it has been the subject of some of the most important and moving photographic work of the past century.

Catalogue

The exhibition's catalogue, published by Atelier EXB, will include all the series presented in *Love Songs* as well as the series "Lovesody" by Motoyuki Daifu and "Another Love Story" by Karla Hiraldo Voleau, which will be presented in the MEP Studio.

Love Songs, photographies de l'intime, published by Atelier EXB, Paris, 19 x 27 cm, 228 pages, 230 photos, €45

Cover image

René Groebli
from the series "L'œil de l'amour", 1952
© René Groebli, courtesy Galerie Esther Woerdehoff

Nan Goldin

"For me it is not a detachment to take a picture. It's a way of touching somebody—it's a caress. I think that you can actually give people access to their own soul."

Nobuyoshi Araki

Excerpt from the book *Sentimental Journey*, 1971

"This 'Sentimental Journey' is a symbol of my love, the resolve of a photographer. I'm not saying that these are truthful photographs just because I photographed my own honeymoon. My point of departure as a photographer was love, and I just happened to have started from the idea of the 'I' novel."

JH Engström and Margot Wallard

"We don't overthink things, we just live out our story and take photographs."

Emmet Gowin

"Photography is a tool for dealing with things everybody knows about but isn't attending to. My photographs are intended to represent something you don't see."

René Groebli

"If I had been a writer, I would probably have gone to the nearest cafe to write love poems. To me, the photographs just showed my love for her."

Alix Cléo Roubaud

Journal (1979-1983), éditions du Seuil, 1984

"The photograph of a loved one, even the very closest of those near to you, has the power to restore love from afar: the intangibility and that first strangeness, forever fascinating, of a face that one has not seen."

Lin Zhipeng (aka n°223)

"Eroticism and voyeurism are as common as walking, eating or taking a shower. Love and sex are absolutely not taboo to me. I don't know if I will keep on running all my life with my camera after naked bodies, but I think I'm still young and curious enough about this world and everything that revolves around me."

Press images

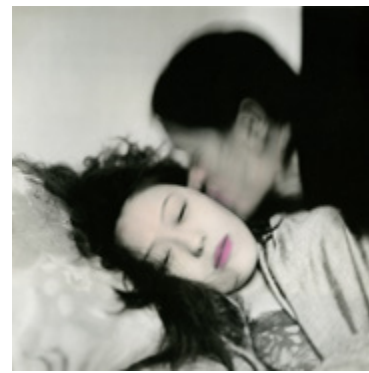
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LS01
René Groebli
from the series "L'œil de l'amour", 1952
Gelatin silver print
© René Groebli, courtesy Galerie Esther Woerdehoff



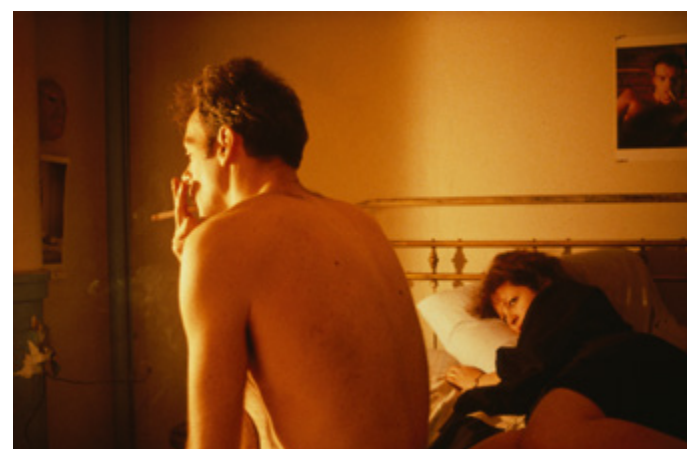
LS02
Lin Zhipeng (aka N°223)
Green light, 2010
Pigment print
© N°223, courtesy in)(between gallery



LS03
RongRong&inri
23rd November 2000
From the series "Personal letters", 2000
Gelatin silver print
© RongRong&inri



LS04
Nobuyoshi Araki
from the series "Sentimental Journey", 1971
Gelatin silver print
Collection MEP, Paris. Donation from Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd.
© Nobuyoshi Araki, courtesy Taka Ishii Gallery



LS05
Nan Goldin
Nan and Brian in bed, New York City, 1986
from the series "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency"
Cibachrome print
Collection MEP, Paris
© Nan Goldin, courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery

Useful information

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Opening hours

Wednesday and Friday from 11 am to 8 pm
Thursday from 11 am to 10 pm
Saturday and Sunday from 10 am to 8 pm
Ticket office open till 7:30 pm
Closed on Monday and Tuesday

Admission fee

Full price: €10
Reduced price: €6
Pass MEP* : €40
Pass MEP* 18-30 : €25
Pass MEP* Donator : €120
*Pass for two people for an entire year

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