

Mohamed Bourouïssa. Sans titre, 2014. Photographie couleur. Photo : Lucia Thoma. Courtesy des artistes et kamel mennour, Paris/London © ADA Gallery 2017

MOHAMED BOUROUISSA

URBAN RIDERS

26 janvier – 22 avril 2018

MUSÉE
D'ART
MODERNE
DE LA VILLE DE PARIS

PARIS
MUSÉES
LES MUSÉES
DE LA VILLE
DE PARIS



Groupe
Lafayette

Galerie
Lafayette

LUMA
FOUNDATION



BeauxArts
magazine

Inrockuptibles

Libération

TROISCOULEURS

PARIS
PREMIÈRE



#expoBourouïssa | www.mam.paris.fr

CONTENTS OF THE PRESS KIT

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Press release | p.3 |
| Biography | p.4 |
| Exhibition layout | p.5 |
| Practical information | p.8 |

Mohamed Bourouissa *Urban Riders*

26 January – 22 April 2018

Press preview: 25 January 11 am – 2 pm

Official opening: 25 January 6 – 10 pm

The Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris is presenting Mohamed Bourouissa's first solo exhibition in a French museum. After catching the critics' eye at the emerging talent exhibitions *Younger than Jesus* at the New Museum in New York (2009) and *Dynasty* at the Palais de Tokyo and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2010), this Franco-Algerian artist, born in Blida in 1978, is now one of the major figures of his generation.

In the early photographic series *Périphérie* (Peripheral; 2005–2008) and *Temps mort* (Down Time; 2008) the basic principles of his work were already evident: observation of society through its margins and collective activities that emphasise the human dimension.

The "Urban Riders" exhibition revolves around Bourouissa's film *Horse Day*, shot in the North Philadelphia neighbourhood of Strawberry Mansion. The film was a decisive stage in his artistic development.

During an eight-month residency he became interested in the Fletcher Street community stables, which he discovered thanks to the images of American photographer Martha Camarillo. Founded by African-American riders, the stables are a place of healing and imaginative crystallisation for local young adults and a refuge for abandoned horses. While not opting for a documentary approach, Bourouissa addresses the history of the stables, together with cowboy imagery and the conquest of wide open spaces.

As the months went by he worked at making contact and sharing with the local community. His cinematically meticulous film retraces this project, offering a powerful account of an urban utopia. Fascinated by the representation of America's black cowboys, Bourouissa tackles the recurring issues of territorial appropriation, power and transgression.

Horse Day comes with some hundred related items, graphic works conveying the artist's freedom of approach and the rich variety of his visual language. On-the-spot sketches, preliminary drawings, storyboard, collages, ink roughs and watercolours fill out the project's origins and development. There are, too, portraits of riders and of costumed horses whose "customising" metaphor is extended by images from the film printed onto sections of car bodies.

After being shown in different versions, notably at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, the exhibition has been enlarged and revamped for the Musée d'Art Moderne. In addition a programme of workshops with guest artists will delve deeper into the questions of collective history and representation of identity.

With this project the museum renews its support for an artist whose photographic series *Temps mort* and film *Legend* are part of its permanent collection. To mark the exhibition an artist's book containing all Mohamed Bourouissa's works on paper will be published by Paris Musées.

Special thanks to The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia

With the backing of



Mohamed Bourouissa

Sans titre, 2014

Photographie couleur : Lucia Thomé

Courtesy des artistes et

kamel mennour, Paris/London

© Adagp, Paris, 2017

Museum Director

Fabrice Hergott

Curators

Odile Burlaux

Jessica Castex

Press officer

Maud Ohana

maud.ohana@paris.fr

Tel. 01 53 67 40 51

Visitor information

Musée d'Art Moderne
de la Ville de Paris

11 Avenue du Président Wilson

75116 Paris

Tel. 01 53 67 40 00

www.mam.paris.fr

Open Tuesday – Sunday

10 am – 6 pm

Open late: Thursday until 10 pm

Admission

Full rate: 8 €

Concessions: 6 €

Cultural activities

Information and bookings

Tel. 01 53 67 40 80

Follow MAM



#expoBourouissa

Biography

Born in 1978, Mohamed Bourouissa lives in Paris.

His work has been shown in France as well as abroad, in numerous **solo exhibitions** : at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, USA, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, Basis in Frankfurt am Main, the Bal in Paris, the Riso museo d'arte contemporanea della sicilia in Palermo, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Museum für Modern Kunst - MMK in Frankfurt am Main, the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in Washington, the Museo Marco in Vigo, the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, the Saatchi Gallery in London, the Dublin Gallery of Photography, the Museum of Modern Art of Istanbul, the MAXXI the Rome, the New Museum in New York, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Fotomuseum in Rotterdam, the KW Institute for Contemporary art in Berlin, the Haus der Kuns in Munich, the Musée Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Museo Marco in Spain, the Frac Franche-Comté in Besançon, the centre d'art contemporain la Galerie Édouard Manet à Gennevilliers, the Maison Rouge - Fondation Antoine de Galbert, the Finnish Museum of Photography. He is invited to exhibit in a solo show at the musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris early 2018.

His work has been also part in numerous **group exhibitions** : Studio Museum, Harlem, Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, la Havana Biennale, Cuba, the Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France, the Triennale of Milano, the PhotoEspaña in Madrid, the Centre de la photographie in Geneva, the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, the Museum of Modern Art in Istanbul, the Monnaie de Paris, the Palazzo Grassi - Fondation Pinault in Venice, the Musée des Confluences in Lyon, the Berlin Biennale, the Fresnoy - Studio national des arts contemporains in Tourcoing, the Biennale Méditerranéenne d'art contemporain in Algiers. His work has been also part of the Berlin Biennale and the 54th Venice Biennale.

Exhibition layout

Mohamed Bourouissa, *Urban Riders*

The Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris presents the first-ever institutional exhibition devoted to Mohamed Bourouissa in France. Born in 1978, the Franco-Algerian visual artist from Blida, who attracted attention in the 2010 show *Dynasty* at the Palais de Tokyo and Musée de la Ville de Paris, has today become one of the major artists of his generation.

Urban Riders is structured around the film *Horse Day*, shot in the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood of north-west Philadelphia, PA (USA), a work that constitutes an important milestone in the artist's œuvre.

Over the course of eight months, Bourouissa became interested in the non-profit Fletcher Street stables, created and frequented by Afro-American riders. Eschewing a straightforward documentation of reality, the artist seized on the history of the site, the imagery associated with cowboys, and the conquest of new ground, to forge a contemporary Western within the city. The film relates the preparations for an event – a day-long equestrian show organized by Mohamed Bourouissa – that involved collaborative efforts between local artists and riders.

The exhibition brings together close to a hundred works. A corpus of drawings illustrates the impetus for the project and its development. Portraits of the riders in the form of photographs and 3D sculptures, as well as the costumes for horses designed for the parade, are all part of the exhibition's first section. Extending the metaphor of "tuning", staged pieces of automobile bodywork become surfaces supporting the artist's photographs in the last space.

Mohamed Bourouissa has invited the visual artists Gaëlle Choisne and Fayçal Baghriche, as well as the rapper Casey the host a series of workshops that further explore reflections on shared history, representations of identity and cultural referents.

This project reaffirms the museum's support for the artist, whose photographic series *Temps Mort* and film, *Legend*, are part of the permanent collection.

Horse Day Tuning Expo

From the beginning of the Horse Day project as imagined by Mohamed Bourouissa, the collaborative approach included inviting local artists to pair with riders in designing and making costumes for the horses.

For the "horse tuning" competition, a nod to the practice of personalizing a car's bodywork, unexpected shapes were produced from recycled materials (jump-ropes, CDs and more). Inspired by equine accessories (blankets, collars, saddles and the like), these costumes conjure the colorful aesthetic of a parade. Designed by Mohamed Bourouissa for rider Tim Smith, the Flying Horse costume refers to the mythical Pegasus.

The image of a rider astride a costumed horse covers the walls of the exhibition's entrance. This picture was used to promote the original event, held on July 13th 2014. The installation of this image alongside the costumes creates an atmosphere reminiscent of the tack room at a stable.

On the day competitions were held, Horse Day ignited a synergy among riders, artists and local-residents that recalled other urban celebrations of the neighborhood.

Drawings

A corpus of works on paper covers the origin and development of the Horse Day project. Little shown in the past, these drawings occupy a fundamental and autonomous place in both Bourouissa's oeuvre and the exhibition plan. Sketches from life, preparatory drawings in pencil and ink, watercolors and storyboards from the film bring to life the freedom and richness of the artist's visual idiom. From initial studies to more recent visual compositions, these works on paper differ in their making, but are not hung to reflect any hierarchical arrangement. American cinema of the 1950s is considered through collages composed of stills from cult Westerns, including John Ford's *The Searchers*. This highlights the Hollywood studios' penchant for stereotypical representations of cowboy figures. The juxtaposition of images echoes the exhibition's several

examples of photographs on pieces of automobile bodywork, developed in keeping with a concept of fragmented unity.

Annotated drawings and watercolors painted with liquid squeezed from horse dung demonstrate the hybridization of references and materials. Beyond the clichés of wide open spaces and freedom exalted by the film industry, organic matter serves as a reminder of the harsh reality and labor of ranch hands.

The drawings bear witness at once to the city of Philadelphia, the paths taken by the riders and their mounts, the neighborhood Mohamed Bourouissa lived in, and the faces of those he spent time with- Fletcher Street riders and residents of Strawberry Mansion.

In amongst this sequence are posters inviting neighbors to convene for refreshments or other festive moments, while thirty or so family photographs belonging to rider Devon Teagle provide a close-up look at local history.

The raw mood installation traces a path that ends with a projection of the film and promotes and interweaving of static and moving images

Horse Day

The film *Horse Day* plays a central role in the *Urban Riders* exhibition. Struck by the work of Martha Camarillo, an American photographer who documented the Fletcher Street Riding Club over several years, Mohamed Bourouissa selected this iconic Strawberry Mansion site. The non-profit riding club, founded by Afro-American riders in the early 1900s, is a place for young adults to express themselves, and a refuge for horses saved from slaughter. Mohamed Bourouissa's intent was to produce a contemporary Western within the city. After his initial stay, he conceived an event, a "horse day" inspired by the practice of car tuning. The ensuing film cannot be dissociated from the event. Inviting artists to take part in the project by designing the horses' costumes, Bourouissa created conditions for sharing and exchange. The film is a telling of this adventure.

Mixing various forms of expression –cinematographic, documentary and experiential, the artist takes humanity as his core subject, capturing and rendering a moment of urban Utopia. The project spurred a number of collaborations as, for instance with Calvin Okunoye, an American hip-hop artist who was invited to produce the film's soundtrack. Fascinated by how black cowboys have historically been depicted, Mohamed Bourouissa seizes on recurrent issues: appropriation of land, power, and transgression. The notions of fragmentation and distortion are conveyed by the mechanism for presenting the film, which sets up a dialogue between two projections and reimagines the space in terms of oblique lines. The modifications make it possible to experience the discrepancy between reality and stereotypical perceptions of hybrid cultural identities.

The Hood

Based on photographs from *Horse Day*, the sculptures belonging to the group entitled *The Hood* extend the project undertaken in the Fletcher Street neighborhood by giving it concrete form. These pieces expose hybridization of notions that touches both subject and form – photography/sculpture, or horse/automobile, for instance.

Using a special technique developed by the artist in his studio, the photographs are developed on pieces of car bodywork (hoods, side panels, doors), which are then sliced up, rearranged and assembled in ways that are irregular and organic, in some cases combined with a variety of materials like metal plates, or riding equipment (such as blankets, bridles and bits). Here, traditional photography sheds its flatness. The images seem to intermingle through the different layers of the sculpture. Some appear slightly blurry, almost evanescent. The portraits are recognizable, as are the streets and stone houses. *The Ride*, a sculpted relief that offers a sort of cinematic dolly shot, is a monumental and manifold evocation of the city.

"In Philadelphia, I was inspired by the reflections on cars of the city and its inhabitants. I felt a need to deconstruct that a rearrange it, cutting up the bodywork and my images to describe how this fragmentation is experienced by the neighborhood". Deconstruction of the underlying surface reveals a fragmentation and distortion of representation, recursively echoing investigations undertaken in the drawings and the film. Unstable and frail, these stories, whether individual or collective, take shape as contemporary social realities, in an America that no longer offers the "American Dream".

Workshops

The Horse Day project offered Mohamed Bourouissa an opportunity to observe how communities in America coexist, how they are represented and their ties. In reimagining the project for a French museum context, the artist examines these considerations in light of his personal history and national consciousness. Exploring the notion of cultural referent, he invited artists engaged in similar enquiries to conduct workshops in a dedicated area of the exhibition space while the show is on. Addressing heterogeneous publics—middle-schoolers, migrant populations and families—these workshops establish an area dedicated to creation, exchange and debate.

Mohamed Bourouissa studied the permanent collection, looking for artists from the Maghreb amongst acquisitions made by the museum in and around 1962, the year of Algeria's independence. As a result, visitors have an opportunity to discover the works of Abdallah Benanteur (1934–2017), and Ahmed Cherkaoui (1934–1967), alongside documentary materials. Students from the Collège Marx Dormoy middle school in Paris will be invited to discuss issues raised by the exhibition with Mohamed Bourouissa.

In response to this invitation, Gaëlle Choisne (b.1985, Cherbourg, France) has proposed an exchange focused on the work of Hessie, a Cuban artist (1936–2017) who moved to France in 1962 and exhibited at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 1975. Fayçal Baghriche (1972, Skikda, Algeria) is looking to organize a discussion between students from the École municipale des Beaux-Arts/Galerie Edouard Manet in the Paris suburb of Gennevilliers, and a contemporary Algerian artist. Last but not least, the rap artist Casey (b.1976, Rouen) will conduct a writing session centred on 'percussive speech' for a public largely unfamiliar with urban music.

Practical information

Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris

11, avenue du Président Wilson

75116 Paris

Tel: +33 (0)1 53 67 40 00 / Fax : +33 (0)1 47 23 35 98

www.mam.paris.fr

Transportations

Subway : Alma-Marceau or Iéna

RER : Pont de l'Alma (line C)

Bus : 32/42/63/72/80/92

Station Vélib' : 3 av. Montaigne or 2 rue Marceau

Station Autolib' : 24 av. d'Iéna, 33 av. Pierre 1^{er} de Serbie or 1 av. Marceau

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday from 10am to 6pm (ticket desk closes at 5.15pm)

Late opening on Thursdays until 10pm only for special exhibitions (ticket desk closes at 9.15pm)

Closed on Mondays and during bank holidays

Admission

Combined ticket Jean Fautrier / Mohamed Bourouissa

Full price €15

Concessions €13

Ticket desk

No-queue tickets available on www.mam.paris.fr

| |
|-----------------------|
| Press officers |
|-----------------------|

Maud Ohana

Tél. 01 53 67 40 51

E-mail maud.ohana@paris.fr

Victoire Le Mat

Tél. 01 53 67 40 71

E-mail victoire.lemat@paris.fr