

Centre
de la photographie
de Mougins

A large, bold, black graphic element that is a thick, slanted bar with a rounded end, oriented vertically. It is positioned to the left of the name 'Marie Baronnet'.

Marie Baronnet

Press kit



**Amexica :
Marie Baronnet**

**4.03 –
4.06.2023**

Curators:

**François Cheval
and Yasmine Chemali**

**Opening
on Friday 3.03.
2023
18:30**

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The Mougins Center of Photography is an institution dedicated to still and moving images, tasked with promoting and exhibiting the many trends in contemporary photography. Open to all forms of photographic modernity, the Center, as a municipal institution, boosts the cultural and tourism sector of the town of Mougins, seeking to enhance the region and foster international communication. From its opening on July 3rd 2021, its mission is to support the creation and experimentations of artists of all profiles: from France or overseas, up-and-coming or established. This support takes various forms including producing, exhibiting, publishing and residencies. Other local authorities in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region (PACA), including those of Marseille and Nice, are already demonstrating a dynamic approach to photography by way of varied exhibitions or thanks to proactive publishing houses and diverse residency programs. The Mougins Center of Photography will complement these activities by providing a similar service for contemporary photography.

“What arrives to us here, in full face, unexpectedly, it is not the usual matter of curiosity [...], this precious booty, it was not within the reach of an ordinary tourist, or even to an ethnologist of the usual model, to conquer it [...] Pierre Verger does not say all, and does not show all. For he is also a wise man.”

Foreword by Théodore Monod,
in Pierre Verger,
Dieux d’Afrique,
Paris: Paul Hartmann,
1954.

The exhibition
“Amexica: Marie Baronnet”
is the second part of a two-
phase research project entitled
“Ce qui nous arrive ici,
en plein visage,” a French
expression of Theodore Monod
meaning “What arrives
to us here, in full face.”
The exhibition
“Photographier les vodous:
Catherine De Clippel”
formed the first part
(5.11.2022 – 5.02.2023).

Amexica: Marie Baronnet

A barrier stands at the border between the United States and Mexico, a sinister defensive wall known to all. It alone embodies all walls, all refusals of the other. In Amexica, photography is a battleground, a fight between communities, cultures, countries, and, above all, a merciless struggle taking place between individuals and between genders.

In a territory surrounded with aggressive materials, contradictions cannot be resolved without clashes; an arena where, in the end, the same people always end up accepting defeat. Racial divide, class divide, here everything is opposed in a confrontation in which one of the protagonists begs and the other humiliates. A binary world: blinding daylight alternating with darkness, precarity with abundance, city with desert, DIY with sophistication, militia with coyotes, as if this part of the world only operates in schematic terms! But under the full moon, in the alternance between day and night, it is obvious that a battle between two forces, two impulses, is being played out: between life and death, between love and hate. The dividing line clearly indicates the territory of the master and the territory of the weak.

On the US side, the wall is the starting point of a generalized psychosis, a denial of reality shared by a fearful community. The enclosure is just a question of 'protecting people against crime'. The wall becomes sacred. The construction that is meant to be 'impenetrable, beautiful and solid' (Donald Trump), planned over 3,200 kilometres, sets out the limits of civilization versus or modern Barbarians.

In a photographic series dedicated to the representation of the apocalyptic reality at the Mexico-US border, Marie Baronnet doesn't leave anything hidden. Through her use of strong, often contrasting colour, combined with a dusky tonality, she draws out the nature of a conflict that rips apart communities in which the differences between contradictory aspirations are irreconcilable. Everyday moments captured by the photographer are simply juxtaposed with other scenes that render the process intelligible – the apartheid created by the wall. It is vital to describe, portrait by portrait, all the protagonists of the drama to better understand what is taking place.

Biography Marie Baronnet

During her training at the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Paris, Marie Baronnet (born in Paris in 1972) obtains a scholarship to study at the California Institute of The Arts in Los Angeles in 1997. Marie Baronnet's first works approach photography and video as a strictly artistic medium. In 1996 her multimedia work was presented at the musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris before entering the collections of the Centre Pompidou.

Her abstract self-portraits were presented in New York County, alongside American feminist artists such as Cindy Sherman and Jenny Holzer, in the exhibition "Laughter Ten Years After: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Laughter" before being shown at the musée des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1999.

As a freelance photojournalist for the French and American press (Libération, Le Monde, L'Obs, Newsweek, Sunday Times, etc.), she began to work on documentaries in the 2000s. She moved to Los Angeles in 2011 and published with André Frère Publishers, *Legends: The Living Art of Risqué* (2014), a book on the art of stripping and its pioneers across America. This series is part of the Centre audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir collection.

Between 2009 and 2019, she regularly documents the American and Mexican border and makes her first documentary film on this subject, *Amexica* (95 min, 2020), co-produced by Raoul Peck's company Velvet Film and Arte.

In 2023, the Mougins Center of Photography dedicates a solo show presenting her work on the border as well as the film *Amexica* for the first time since its broadcast on Arte.

Amexica: Marie Baronnet

Amexica Documentary
2020
95', digital, color, VOSTFR
Director: Marie Baronnet
Coproductioin: Raoul Peck
and Rémi Grellety (Velvet Film)–Arte France
Original score: Marc Ribot

In 2009, Baronnet started to regularly photograph and film along the Mexican-American border, walking the line on both sides, from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. Her approach was to explore all the facets of that border without any preconceived ideas. For the next 10 years, Baronnet would meet with migrants and activists, forensic doctors, 'coyotes', sheriffs and Border Patrol officers or Minutemen, and others who make up the rich tapestry of life at the border.

On top of those diverse portraits, the ten-year period allowed Baronnet to follow the daily lives of two families. The first, she followed from their arrival to Tijuana to their attempts and then successful crossing of the border to their subsequent request for asylum and move to Houston. The second, she bore witness as an undocumented worker and mother of two carried on living in Tucson while her husband is deported back to Mexico.

Escaping any kind of sensationalism, *Amexica* reveals a much more complex reality beyond the usual media frames about the Southern border and the immigration struggle. Marie Baronnet, remaining in a constant state of transition between two worlds – between loss and hope – creates a multi-layered, raw documentary that helps us comprehend what is at stake today within this “Amexican” land.

Marie Baronnet

Series

Amexica

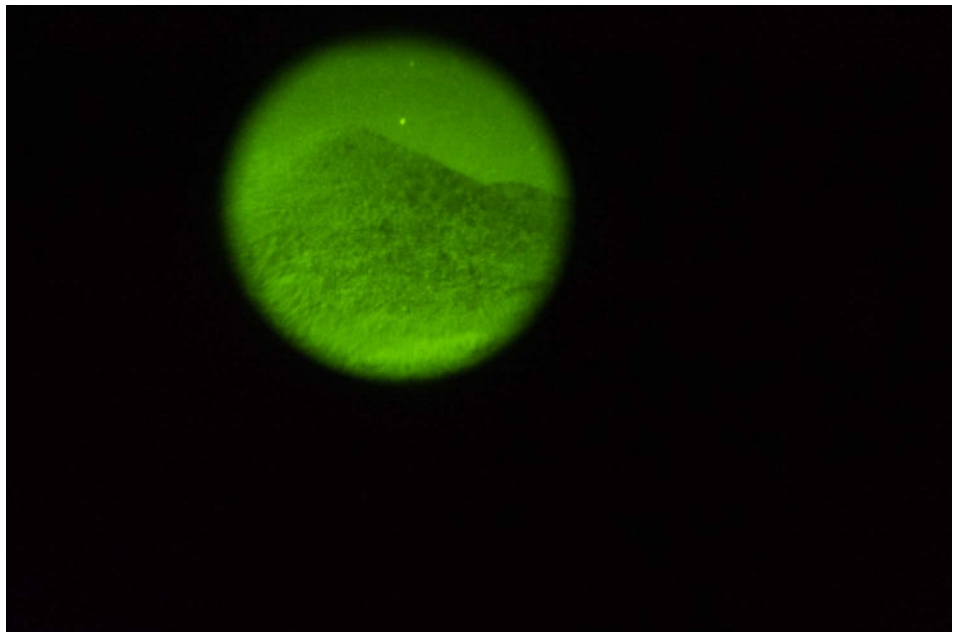
Open wall, the old and new fence. Vietnam-era metal panels that were originally installed in the mid-1990s have been replaced by the new fences. On December 17, 2019, acting Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection stated that 150 kilometres of barriers had been built during the Trump administration, replacing for the most part existing structures.

Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, 2009



Border patrol infrared's glasses.

Sasabe road, Arizona, USA, 2010



Marie Baronnet



Migrants crossing the border
on the US side.

Naco, Arizona,
USA, 2010

Mattress.

Naco,
Mexico, 2010



Marie Baronnet



Ángel
Naco,
Mexico, 2010

Community Garden created
by the inhabitants of the district,
a response to the holes cut
in the wall on the American
side to police and surveil
on the Mexican side.

Tecate, Mexicali,
Mexico, 2009



Marie Baronnet

Crossing the line.
Naco,
Mexico, 2010



Marie Baronnet

These walls called pedestrians walls were originally built from steel landing mats and were replaced by 18- to 30-foot tall steel bollard walls.

Naco,
Mexico, 2010



“Open your eyes close your fear”

Ciudad Juárez,
Mexico, 2011



Marie Baronnet

Border factories in Ciudad Juárez, 80 percent of them are US owned. NAFTA had a lot to do with them coming here. Labor conditions in the *maquiladoras* are based on exploitation and discrimination. Young women workers have been murdered in this tough Mexican-border factory city. Their bodies are found days or months later, abandoned in vacant lots or in the desert. In most of these cases there are signs of sexual violence, abuse, torture or even mutilation. Grassroots women's movements are still seeking answers and justice.

Ciudad Juárez,
Mexico, 2011



Mixed banknotes, dollars
and pesos.

Mexicali,
Mexico, 2009



Marie Baronnet

On March 10, 2009, after years of abuses by Maricopa County jail staff and the death of numerous prisoners, the U.S. Department of Justice finally opened an investigation into Sheriff Arpaio, based on Arpaio's ongoing efforts to arrest undocumented immigrants leading to the separation of families and fuelling the for-profit prison detention industry.

Phoenix, Arizona,
USA, 2011



In an unmarked dirt of lot at the end of the Evergreen Cemetery lie the remains of hundreds of unidentified migrants. Each burial site is marked only with a stone that reads John or Jane Doe.

Evergreen Cemetery,
Tucson, Arizona,
USA, 2010



Cahiers #5

Ce qui nous arrive ici,
en plein visage :

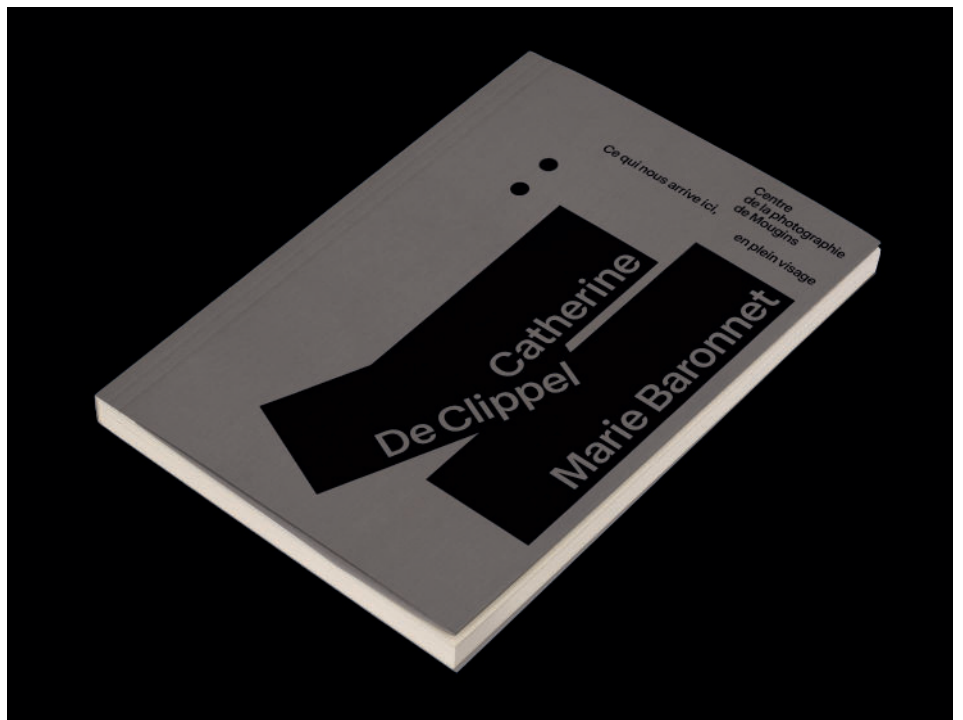
Authors:

François Cheval
Jean-Paul Colleyn
Jérôme Esnouf

Publishing:

31 October 2022
Bilingual French/English
192 pages
29 €
ISBN: 979-10-90698-54-3

On sale
in the Mougins
Center of Photography
store.



A barrier stands at the border between the United States and Mexico, a sinister defensive wall known to all. It alone embodies all walls, all refusals of the other. Elsewhere, in Fon and Ehwe countries, other markers stand in the form of earth sculptures posed directly on the ground. Protuberances that separate the living from the spirits. Between Marie Baronnet's photographs, taken at the Mexican border, and those of Catherine De Clippel, taken in West Africa, a surprising relationship emerges. Both capture what happens between that which closes and that which opens, a beyond that sparks our (very human) curiosity. We must always understand what is hidden, what is on the other side.

Excerpt from the Introduction, François Cheval

Guided tour

by Marie Baronnet

Saturday 4.03**15:00****15:30**Film Screening *Amexica***17:30**

Conversation

with **Marie Baronnet**and **Nicole Fernández Ferrer**

of the Centre audiovisuel

Simone de Beauvoir

Young Audience Film**Screening****Saturday 18.03****10:30**

8+

Free admission

Film Screening**Saturday 25.03****19:00 → 21:00***De l'autre côté*by **Chantal Akerman**

(France, 2002,

documentary, 99',
VOSTFR)and *La promesa*by **Marie Baronnet**(Mexico, 2023,
documentary, 8', VOSTFR)

Free admission

Public programme**Conversation****Wednesday 29.03****18:30 → 20:00**Compares point of view
between **Yvan Gastaut**,

historian and lecturer

at the University of Nice

Sophia-Antipolis

and **Éric Oberdorff**,Compagnie Humaine's
choreographer

Free admission

European Night of Museums**Saturday 13.05****19:00 → 23:00**

Free admission

Film Screening**Wednesday 17.05****19:00 → 21:00***El velador*by **Natalia Almada**(Mexico, 2011, documentary,
72', VOSTFR)and *La promesa*by **Marie Baronnet**(Mexico, 2023, documentary,
8', VOSTFR)

Free admission

Contacts

Centre
de la photographie
de Mougins

43 rue de l'Église
06250 Mougins

0033 4 22 21 52 12
cpmougins.com
info@cpmougins.com
@centrefotographiemougins

Press:

Ludivine Maggiore
lmaggiore@villedemougins.com

Florence Buades
fbuades@villedemougins.com

Informations

Open

4.03 → 31.03
13:00 → 18:00
Closed on Mondays
and Tuesdays

1st.04 → 4.06
11:00 → 19:00
Closed on Mondays

Admission

Adulte → 6 €
Student → 3 €
Group (10 or +) → 4 € / pers.
Works council → 4 €
Guided tours → 10 € / pers

Free

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Kim Peacock
kpeacock@villedemougins.com

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 DE
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