

Press release

Mary Sibande

The Red Ventriloquist

11 February -

10 July 2022

MAC LYON



Mary Sibande, *The Locus*, 2019
Series *I Came Apart at the Seams*
Inkjet on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag,
Daisec Mount
200 × 136 cm
Courtesy of the artist and SMAC Gallery,
Cape Town/Johannesburg

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For her exhibition *The Red Ventriloquist* at macLYON, South African artist Mary Sibande has raised sculpture and installation to a level not seen before in her work.

Over the last few years, using different characters and colour codes, she has been developing an art of sculpture and installation that reflects the lives of the women in her family and, through them, the living conditions of black South African women and their place in the complex history of a country built on racial segregation.

The ingrained violence in the lives of disadvantaged populations has inspired the artist to reflect on the channelling of anger, the subject of a vast sculpture and sound installation covering an entire floor at macLYON

Curator: Matthieu Lelièvre

For her exhibition *The Red Ventriloquist* at macLYON, South African artist Mary Sibande has raised sculpture and installation to a level not seen before in her work.

Over a number of years, Mary Sibande has been developing a deeply biographical and personalised combination of sculpture and installation, which has generated several characters and colours derived from the lives of the women in her family. Through these avatars she reflects the living conditions of black South African women and their place in the complex history of a country built on racial segregation. The figure of Sophie, whom the artist presents as her alter ego, exposes the classism, the racism and the sexism that shape the lives of black women in South Africa. The story of her life, like those of her predecessors, is deeply intersectional and lies at the interface of all of those forms of inequality that impact on black women both socially and economically, despite the promises made after the end of apartheid in 1991.

The artist explains that although the conditions prevailing at the time may have given the black majority civil rights, ensuing political decisions prevented any real social and economic overhaul of the country. The situation has not improved over the years, and the resulting frustration and sense of injustice have led to forms of violence that Mary Sibande associates directly with these structural injustices.

While from a political point of view the end of apartheid is a reality and a victory, it has been widely noted that economically it is an incomplete victory. Many structural inequalities persist in a country where, in 2015, the average annual income of black families was €6,444, while it was €30,800 for white families. This gap reflects many other inequalities, for example in access to work and health insurance.¹ Reforms have enabled the emergence of a black middle-class elite, but most South Africans, especially township residents, feel a very real sense of alienation. These inequalities have been confirmed in study after study. They have been further exacerbated by the Covid crisis. This period has seen an escalation of tensions in the form of riots and looting which, beyond the political demonstrations and systemic insecurity, reflect the reality of people who can no longer afford the basic necessities. This violence, which is deeply ingrained in the lives of the disadvantaged sections of the population, has led the artist to reflect on the management of their anger.

Particularly marked by these recent events, Mary Sibande has conceived her exhibition at macLYON as a full-blown theatre of violence, in the form of a vast sculpture and sound installation. She sees it as an expression of and a response to the tensions generated and perpetuated by an inequitable situation. The artist uses colour to give tangible expression to these issues.

In her work, Mary Sibande explores the evocative, symbolic and political power of colour, alternating and overlaying various different colours like blue or purple. For some years now, red has played a major role in her sculptures and photographs. She began by using it to cover the bodies of dogs and vultures. Then it began to appear in the folds of her figures' clothes, until eventually it completely enveloped the bodies of women who now have to be considered as High Priestesses. The "red ventriloquist's" scarlet shades have developed into a symbol of public anger in Sibande's work.

This parallel between emotion and colour has its origins in expressions that exist in several of the eleven languages and dialects spoken in South Africa. In Zulu, which is the artist's mother tongue, there is an expression that associates the feeling of anger with a red dog. Mary Sibande was inspired by this idiomatic use of colour to construct an installation in which the red priestess teaches an army of dogs of the same colour to control and adapt their anger. After Sophie, the persona that featured in the artist's work for several years, comes the ventriloquist – she who lends her voice to those who have none – a new avatar that re-examines the role of the artist on a societal scale and the political involvement he or she is willing to take on. The figure also evokes the way in which languages – which are capable of bringing people together but also of dividing them – can create resonances

Matthieu Lelièvre, Exhibition Curator

¹ Jean-Hugues Chérif N'doli, «Du rêve au cauchemar sud-africain», jeuneafrique, September 9, 2019

The exhibition at macLYON

The exhibition at macLYON is both immersive and monumental: while voices speak out in the eleven languages of South Africa, the visitor is drawn into a beam of light that projects the outline of a dog and reveals a huge amphitheatre facing a stage.

As Mary Sibande sets her work firmly in the current history of South Africa, she opens a new chapter on the theme of channelling anger, symbolised by her use of the colour red and allegorical figures of carved dogs. This is the first time she has worked on this scale, as a fully-fledged sculptor of (hi)stories.



Sketch by Mary Sibande, 2021
Courtesy of the artist and SIMAC Gallery, Cape Town/Johannesburg

Born in 1982 in Barberton, South Africa, Mary Sibande graduated in 2007 from the University of Johannesburg, where she lives and works.

Sibande represented South Africa at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011, and in 2013 she exhibited at macLYON for the 12th Biennale of Contemporary Art. In the same year she won the Standard Bank Young Artist Award, part of the prize for which was a touring exhibition across South Africa. Her work is represented in the collection of the Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas and in many public collections around the world.

Mary Sibande has had exhibitions at leading international museums and institutions including the Kiasma Museum in Helsinki, Finland; the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum in Port Elizabeth, South Africa; the Museum Beelden aan Zee in The Hague, The Netherlands; the Whitworth Museum in Manchester, UK; the British Museum in London, and Somerset House in London in 2020.

The artist was born at a critical time in South African history, during the transition away from apartheid. "I grew up in Barberton, a small town five hours drive east of Johannesburg. As a child I knew I was going to work in the arts. I had a lot of sketchbooks and books of collages. When I was in high school, I wanted to be a fashion designer, I was determined to do it! But when I got to university, I ended up taking art, not fashion design. That was the best decision I ever made in my life, although I didn't know it at the time."

Mary Sibande explored the construction of identity in South African society through an alter ego, a persona by the name of 'Sophie', the archetypal black maid in the apartheid era. Sophie was inspired by the artist's own personal history, as several generations of women in her family were domestic servants. Transitioning from blue to purple to red, her works evolved in cycles of symbolic colours and she gradually dropped the figure of Sophie and her maid's uniform.

Working with fabric is an integral part of Mary Sibande's art. She says: "I try to explore the full potential of the cloth. I dismantle the body, I take it apart and make all sorts of creatures out of it."



Portrait of Mary Sibande, 2017
Photo Jodi Bieber

Degrees

2007

B-Tech Degree in Fine Arts, University of Johannesburg (UJ), Johannesburg, South Africa

2004

Diploma in Fine Arts, Witwatersrand Technical College, Johannesburg, South Africa

Solos shows (selection)

2022 (upcoming)

SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2021

Blue Red Purple, Frist Art Museum, Nashville, Tennessee, USA
Unhand Me, Demon!, Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, USA

2019

I came Apart at the Seams, 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, Somerset House, London, UK
Leroy Neiman Gallery, New York City, USA

2018

The Armory Show (Gallery MOMO), Piers 92 & 94, New York City, USA
A Crescendo of Ecstasy, Keyes Art Mile, FNB Joburg Art Fair, Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa

2016

Right Now!, Woordfees Festival, Stellenbosch University Museum, Stellenbosch, South Africa
The Armory Show (Gallery MOMO), 92 & 94 Piers, New York City, USA

2014

The Purple Shall Govern, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
The Purple Shall Govern, Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

2013

Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art, macLYON, Lyon, France
The Purple Shall Govern, Grahamstown National Arts Festival, Grahamstown, South Africa
The Purple Shall Govern, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Museum, Port Elizabeth, South Africa
The Purple Shall Govern, Val-de-Marne Contemporary Art Museum, Vitry-sur-Seine, France
The Purple Shall Govern, IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
The Purple Shall Govern, North-West University Gallery, Potchefstroom, South Africa
The Purple Shall Govern, Tatham Art Gallery, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

2012

Mary Sibande and Sophie Ntombikayise Take Central Court, Central Court, Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA

2010

Long Live the Dead Queen, downtown Johannesburg, display on panels of 19 buildings, Johannesburg, South Africa
Long Live the Dead Queen, The Albany History Museum, Albany, USA
Long Live the Dead Queen, Grahamstown, South Africa

Group shows (selection)

2021

West Bund Art & Design Fair (Bloom Galerie), West Bund Dome, Xuhui District, Shanghai, China
Paris Photo Fair, Grand Palais Éphémère, Paris, France
TEXTURES: the history and art of black hair, Kent State University Museum, Kent, USA
Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), digital event
Memoria : Récits d'une autre Histoire, Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA, Bordeaux, France
Black Luminosity, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa
Margins of Error, NIROX Foundation Sculpture Park, Krugersdorp, South Africa

2020

BredaPhoto, Bréda, Netherlands
Reclaiming Power: Womxn and Intersecting Inequalities, Oxfam South Africa, The Worker's Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa
NOW LOOK HERE. The African Art of Appearance, Asterweg 17, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Making of Ourselves, BKHZ, Johannesburg, South Africa
Radical Revisionists: Contemporary African Artists
Confronting Past and Present, Moody Centre for the Arts, Rice University, Houston, USA
Soos Familie / Like Family, Rupert Museum, Stellenbosch, South Africa

2019

Ngoma: Art and Cosmology, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Felix Fair (Kavi Gupta), Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Los Angeles, USA
Art Basel Miami (Kavi Gupta), Miami Beach, Miami, USA
ArteBOTANICA, Nirox Sculpture Park, Krugersdorp, South Africa
Frieze London (Kavi Gupta), Regents Park, London, UK
1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Somerset House, London, UK
To Reclaim, Kavi Gupta, Chicago, USA
That Was Then, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
My Africa. Our Art, Javett Art Centre, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
Open Borders, 14th Curitiba international Biennale of Contemporary Art, Curitiba, Brazil
N'GOLÁ Festival of Arts, Creation, Environment And Utopia, São Tomé e Príncipe
Ampersand Foundation Award 21 years celebration exhibition, University of Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa
Construction of the Possible, 13th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba
Made Visible, Contemporary South African Fashion and Identity, Boston Museum of Fine Art, Boston, Massachusetts, USA
FNB Art Joburg (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa

2018

The Red Hour, Biennale of Contemporary African Art, Dakar, Senegal

In Their Own Form, Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), Chicago, USA

Shifting Boundaries: A Selection of Works Showcasing South African Women Artists of the Past 100 Years, Welgemoed, Cape Town, South Africa

Not a Single Story, collaboration between NIROX Foundation and The Wanas Foundation, Nirox Foundation Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, South Africa

Continental Drift: Black / Black Art from South Africa and North Australia, Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns, Australia

Like Life: Sculpture, Color, and the Body (1300–Now), The Met Breuer, New York City, USA

Cultural Threads, TextielMuseum, Tilburg, Netherlands

Friends50, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

Extra/Ordinary, Plugin New Media Section, Contemporary Istanbul, Istanbul, Turkey

2017

South Africa: The Art of a Nation, British Museum, London, UK

PLATFORM, The Amory Show, New York City, USA

All things being equal, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art

Africa, Cape Town, South Africa

African Mosaic: Selections from the Permanent Collection, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, USA

Dress Code, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa

1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, Somerset House, London, UK

Art on Paper, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa

Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa

The Evidence of Things Not Seen, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

Another Antipodes/Urban Axis, PS Art Space, Fremantle, Australia

Beauty and Its Beasts, Durban Art Gallery, Durban, South Africa

Identitet/Identity Avesta Kommun, Verket/Avesta Art, Avesta, Sweden

Deep Memory, Kalmar konstmuseum, Kalmar, Sweden

Residencies

2019

Textiel Museum, Tilbourg, Netherlands

2014

Artist in residence, Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship, Umbertide, Italy

Léon Dierx Museum, Saint-Denis, Reunion Island, France

2013

Val-de-Marne Contemporary Art Museum, Vitry-sur-Seine, France

STAMPS School of Art & Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA

2011

Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, USA

2010

Kunstraum Sylt Quelle, Sylt, Germany

2009

Ampersand Foundation Scholarship, New York City, USA

2008

Prohelvitia-IAAB, Basel, Switzerland

2006

Cité internationale des arts, Paris, France

Awards

2021

Helgaard Steyn Sculpture Award, Helgaard Steyn Trust, South Africa

2019

Virginia C. Gildersleeve Professor at Barnard College, Columbia University, New York City, USA

2017

Smithsonian Award for African Artist, National Mall, Washington, USA

GLAMOUR Woman of the Year, Winner for Art Category, Johannesburg, South Africa

2014

Alumni Dignitas Award, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa

2013

Standard Bank Young Artist (SBYA), Johannesburg, South Africa

Collections

Iziko Museums, Cape Town, South Africa

Pérez Art Museum, Miami, USA

Regional Contemporary Art Fund, Marseille, France

Bowman Gilfillan, Johannesburg, South Africa

Standard Bank South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa

SASOL South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa

TELKOM South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa

Iziko South Africa National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA

Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

UNISA Art Gallery, Pretoria, South Africa

Norton Museum of Art, Florida, USA

National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, USA

Frank and Lizelle Kilbourn Collection, Cape Town, South Africa

Toledo Museum of Art, Tolède, USA

Scheryn Art Collection, Cape Town, South Africa

University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa

Regional Contemporary Art Fund, Reunion Island, France

Val-de-Marne Contemporary Art Museum, Vitry-sur-Seine, France

Collection Leridon, France

Theo Danjuma Collection, UK

Barlow World, Johannesburg, South Africa

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, USA

Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, USA

Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA

Jorge Pérez Art Collection, Miami, USA

The persona Sophie: background

Mary Sibande has created a fictional character, Sophie, an alter ego that inhabits her artistic production. Sophie is more than an autobiographical figure, however; she invokes wider meanings in the context of South African history. The first name Sophie inevitably recalls the apartheid law that required children to have a Western Christian name in order to attend school.

The artist structured the imaginary life of Sophie in a series of life-size sculptures, moulded directly on her own body. With her eyes permanently closed, Sophie emancipates herself from the tedium of everyday life by means of dreams. "If she can dream it, she can experience it," says the artist. She dresses this persona in servants' uniforms that gradually transmute into spectacular ceremonial costumes. These heavy outfits that make it nigh impossible to move about are a symbol of protest against the burdens of the laborious daily life of the maid, while at the same time providing a facade that allows her to embody her fantasies.

"Sophie is the embodiment of the maid," Sibande explains. "Through her I give voice to countless myriads of South African domestic workers."

The letter S, which is found in some of her installations, stands for the artist's name, the first name "Sophie" and the word "superwoman". All three in one letter. The artist symbolises the plight of black women and gives them power, strength and dignity. Sophie can represent any person who feels connected to her, whether politically or as an individual.

As the artist explains: "Sophie's stories are intrinsically linked to what the women in my family told me when I was young, but they also go beyond this. Most of my grandmother's stories were about aspiration. I assumed similar circumstances for Sophie, but wanted to make sure that she went further and actually gained what she wished for. [...] Sophie's most powerful gift is her ability to dream. She goes to work wearing her maid's uniform. But then she closes her eyes and starts to imagine things. [...] Most of those situations depict a woman overcoming the stereotypes that are usually attributed to black women, such as the culturally ambiguous topic of hair that has defined and labelled us for centuries."*

* Conversation between Mary Sibande and Elisabeth Wellershaus for the journal *ContemporaryAnd*, 2013



Mary Sibande, *They Don't Make Them Like They Used To*, 2008
Archival digital print
86 × 130 cm
Courtesy of the artist and SMAC Gallery, Cape Town/Johannesburg

Blue

In the artist's early work, Sophie wore voluminous dresses in a colour reminiscent of the uniforms of domestic workers, one of the few occupations available to black South African women. At the same time, the extravagant arrangement of tulle and chiffon in these outfits is reminiscent of the Victorian crinolines worn by white upper-class women in nineteenth-century British South Africa. Bringing together two opposing worlds in these costumes, the artist made the body and the garment a space from which she could bring her own perspective to bear on South Africa's colonial history.



Mary Sibande, *A Reversed Retrogress, Scene 1*, 2013
Fiberglass, resin, fabric, and steel
180 x 120 x 120 cm sculpture
Courtesy of the artist and SMAC Gallery, Cape Town/Johannesburg

Purple

Her palette then shifted to purple, a sign of the transmutation of Sophie's character into a hybrid figure, animated by the revolutionary spirit that characterised the last years of apartheid.

In works such as *A Terrible Beauty is Born*, which was shown at the Lyon Biennale in 2013, purple symbolises majesty, spiritual fulfilment and power. It is also a reference to a march that took place in Cape Town in 1989, where the police sprayed protesters with purple dye to mark them for arrest after the march. The slogan that emerged in graffiti all over the town was: "The purple shall govern" – an echo of the words, "The people shall govern", the opening demand of the Freedom Charter of the African National Congress.

"In a way, purple for me has become about taking control of elements that were not afforded to black people in apartheid South Africa," Mary Sibande explains. "Purple for me is a colour of privilege, I am attempting to use this privilege afforded to me by those who have fought for it."

The purple figure represented the dismantling of identity in the post-apartheid era. She was no longer 'Sophie'; her body was deconstructed and gave birth to new creatures. These creatures emerged from the woman's womb, in the guise of organic forms, evoking both maternity and the identity of life-bearing woman. Mary Sibande was inspired by her own pregnancy to create this new persona, these creatures and this dark, colourful, baroque universe.



Mary Sibande, *A Terrible Beauty Is Born*, 2013
Archival digital print
110 x 320 cm

Courtesy of the artist and SMAC Gallery, Cape Town/Johannesburg

Red

In 2019, the female figure with the expressionless face from the purple period turned red. She became a powerful figure whose gestures are accentuated even more by the organic forms that issue from her body. She is surrounded by a pack of red dogs, which have been present in the artist's work since 2015.

The colour red has gradually taken over her recent sculptures and photographs, to colour the new avatars of Sophie, who has become a High Priestess.

The artist has taken vocabulary from religious and shamanic language to endow this new iteration with an almost supernatural power.

For Mary Sibande, the colour red is a strong symbol of the anger, resentment and frustration that still define the atmosphere of present-day South African society.

Sibande argues that, although the black majority did win civil rights in the political context of the end of apartheid, the political decisions that followed prevented any genuine social and economic overhaul of the country. The white minority has retained its hold over the economy, leaving most of the black population in a state of financial insecurity. This phenomenon has not been resolved over the years, and the frustration and sense of injustice have fostered a violence that Mary Sibande associates with these persistent structural inequalities.



Mary Sibande, *Good is bad and bad is good*, 2020
Oil on Bronze

68 × 34 × 34 cm

Courtesy of the artist and SMAC Gallery, Cape Town/Johannesburg



Mary Sibande, *There's a Storm in My Heart*, 2019

Inkjet on Hahnemühle photo rag

106 × 300 cm

Courtesy of the artist and SMAC Gallery, Cape Town/Johannesburg

Thameur Mejri, *Until my veins collapse* *(States of emergency)*

11 February - 10 July 2022

Thameur Mejri (born in 1982 in Tunis) blurs the boundaries between public and private in an effort to confront individual and collective values, particularly in contemporary Tunisian society.

For this purpose, he takes the human body as a tool to measure both possibilities and prohibitions, making it a central element of his artistic practice.

Through his drawings—vast compositions on stretched or floating canvases—as well as murals, Thameur Mejri's works question the notions of humanism and the construction of human beings on a social scale, by representing several paradoxes that emerge from political and cultural practices. His precise and prolific iconography constitutes a device critical of our relationship with the objects and symbols that surround us in daily life and which impose, whether consciously or not, certain forms of alienation.



Thameur Mejri, *The Walking Target*, 2020

Acrylic, charcoal and pastel on canvas

180 × 150 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Selma Feriani Gallery, Tunis/London

Little odyssee, The collection presented to children

11 February - 10 July 2022

The macLYON is experimenting the co-conception of an exhibition of work from its collection especially for younger audiences, in collaboration with a group of Masters-level students of Heritage and Museum Studies at the Université Lyon 3. The students, accompanied by a team of experts, have spent time discovering the rich and unique collection of the macLYON, in order to devise an exhibition resolutely focused on the needs of young audiences, in all their plurality. The organization of this exhibition takes into account a child's shorter concentration span and the impact of sensory experiences as they make their way from one room to the next, creating an exhibition that optimizes the young visitor's comfort, understanding, well-being and encounter with the artworks.

Little odyssee is designed as a sensory and experimental journey in three parts, inspired by a child's developmental cycles: an ode to discovery and experimentation. It questions the body's interaction with its surroundings, illustrating the different degrees of involvement between the child and their world. Moving from inside to outside, and from physical perception to a more intellectual approach, younger audiences can experience art in all its dimensions.

This initiative is part of the macLYON's cultural development projects with schools and third-level establishments, built around an innovative hands-on approach.



Ange Leccia, *Arrangement*, 1991

Collection macLYON

© Adagp, Paris, 2022

Photo Blaise Adillon

Crossover : David Posth-Kohler × Bruce Nauman

11 February - 10 July 2022

In 2019, in the framework of the Biennale de Lyon, the CIC – Lyonnaise de Banque commissioned a monumental work from sculptor David Posth-Kohler for its atrium.

After the Biennale, *Sténos* was given to the museum collection by the artist. With *Sténos*, David Posth-Kohler brings giants to life. These possess the ability to construct and deconstruct themselves into a multitude of alter-egos. Although David Posth-Kohler has always been interested in the question of the body, his recent work is more particularly oriented towards *mise-en-scène*. He designs and makes models of figures – gesticulating, disjointed automatons – and explores the theatricality of the body. David Posth-Kohler manipulates the extremes, he contorts, changes the scale and likes to «de-normalise».

Crossover is an exhibition that strives to create a dialogue between a work from the collection and an emerging artist. After Jimmy Richer and Héléne Hulak, David Posth-Kohler is the third artist invited to invest the Museum entrance. For the occasion, the works of David Posth-Kohler will echo Bruce Nauman's videos from our collection. Bruce Nauman, in the 1960s, questioned the body and everyday gestures, staging himself during filmed performances.



David Posth-Kohler, *Sténos*, 2019
Exhibition view in CIC, Biennale de Lyon 2019, 2019
Collection macLYON
Photo Blandine Soulage

Established in 1984 in a wing of the Palais Saint-Pierre, in 1995 the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon moved to the site of the Cité internationale, a vast architectural ensemble spread over one kilometre on the edges of the Parc de la Tête d'Or, in Lyon's 6th arrondissement and gathering hotels, restaurants, offices, housing but also a casino or a cinema.

The work of architect Renzo Piano, responsible for the entire site, the museum conserves the facade of the atrium of the former Palais de la Foire, overlooking the park. The Palais was designed by Charles Meysson in the 1920s.

The 6,000m² museum is spread over several floors and presents modular spaces that are perfectly adapted to the needs of the different artistic projects welcomed by the museum, as well as new forms of contemporary expression. The macLYON focuses on current national and international art, in all its forms, offering exhibitions and a wide programme of transdisciplinary events.

Its collection includes over 1,400 works. A selection of these is shown in rotation at the macLYON as well as in several partner structures. Works of its collection are regularly loaned for exhibitions in France and all over the world. It consists mainly of monumental works and ensembles of works, dating from the 1940s to the current day, created by artists from all over the world, the majority for exhibitions at the museum or for the Biennales d'art contemporain de Lyon, for which the museum oversees the artistic direction.

Brought together in an arts pole with the MBA since 2018, the two collections form a remarkable ensemble, both in France and in Europe.



View of the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon.
Photo Blaise Adilon

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OPENING HOURS
Wednesday to Sunday,
[from 11am to 6pm]

ADMISSION
● Full : 6€ from February to April then 8€
● Reduced : 3€ from February to April then 4€
● Free for visitors under 18

ACCESS
● By bike
Several Vélo'v stations around the museum
Cycle lane from the Rhône's banks to the museum
● By bus
Stop Musée d'art contemporain
Bus C1, Gare Part-Dieu/Cuire
Bus C4, Jean Macé/Cité internationale
Bus C5, Cordeliers/Rillieux-Vancia
● Ridesharing
www.covoiturage-pour-sortir.fr
● By car
Along quai Charles de Gaulle, carpark P0 and P2, reduced rate for our visitors