# 14 OCTOBER 2023 → 14 JANUARY 2024, OPENING ON 13 OCTOBER 2023

# SOL! THE REGIONAL BIENNALE #2 SOLEIL TRISTE







This autumn, MO.CO. Montpellier Contemporain presents the second edition of its regional biennale. This project takes its roots from a desire to highlight local and regional artistic production and to attempt to characterize the singularity of this artistic landscape. If the first edition focused on "decentralization" and vernacular forms, dependent on specific sites, this second edition takes as its starting point a historical figure, a literary work and a little-known episode in Montpellier's history.

In 1776, the Marquis de Sade has a short stay in Montpellier. This event may appear of little importance. Yet, it is believed that it was here that he met the young woman that would later become the inspiration for the heroine of his first novel, Justine, or The Misfortunes of Virtue. Written while Sade was imprisoned in the Bastille and published anonymously in 1791, the impact of this text on culture, philosophy and modes of thought remains uncontestable.

Soleil Triste (in English: Sad Sun) adopts an esthetic and ethical position close to that of Sade with drawings, paintings, sculptures, installations and videos by over twenty artists, some of which are shown for the first time or produced specifically for the exhibition. Following the example of Sade, the body and language, allies for the transgression of social, moral and institutional norms, sit at the core of the exhibited artists' work. The body, whether monstrous, mutant or violated, desirable or repugnant, mixes with language, its double, which tries to give form to what is forbidden and formless. In his drawings, Soufiane Ababri proposes his personal idea of Sade, in which eroticism aligns itself with what is vile and dirty rather than with classical beauty. Through works injected with humour, the Crumb family probe subject matter such as sex or contemporary socio-political conditions. Joy Charpentier creates an altar dedicated to Saint Sarah (or, Kali the Black), here invested with the power of protecting social and sexual minorities.

If for a long time Sade, the person as as his writing, remained clandestine, the exhibition makes space for stories and forms that are immaterial. ephemeral, sometimes invisible, in keeping with a region formerly known as Languedoc-Roussillon - and a city that historically have maintained a hidden and secret visage. As Simone de Beauvoir already noted in her 1953 essay Must We Burn Sade?, "he [Sade] attempts to communicate an experience whose particularity is its wanting to remain incommunicable". If the exhibition gives corporality pride of place, it does not stop from hiding itself in certain works, dissolving or leaving ghostly traces. It may be a blood-red, glass-bead necklace by Jean-Michel Othoniel, created in memory of the artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres who died prematurely in 1996 AIDS-related illness. It can be found in Lou Masduraud's worker-turnedsexual-fantasy, a medley of sweat and testosterone hinted at by the constant drip-drop of water that makes up her voyeuristic installation Wet Men (2022). And in Sofia Lautrec's Un poème [A Poem] (2022), the body resides simply in an utterance, as the glass bubbles of myriad shapes spread out across the floor are formed around the

As was the case with the Marquis de Sade and Gustave Courbet, both foreigners in this region but whose stays here have left a strong imprint, Soleil Triste reconsiders the notion of "territory" and belonging, and includes work by artists who have either adopted this region as their own (Johan Creten, Paul Maheke, Robert Crumb, Aline Kominsky-Crumb and Sophie Crumb), or have grown up or pursued their education here (Lou Masduraud, Renaud Jerez, Soufiane Ababri, Vir Andres Hera).

enunciation of poem.

Soleil Triste is yet another occasion for MO.CO. Montpellier Contemporain to affirm its support for contemporary art through the production of new works.

PRESS RELEASE
JULY 2023
MO.CO.



Chloé Viton / Oxygène, 2022 / Velours, cheveux synthétiques, argile, paraffine / 160 x 100 x 90 cm / Vue de l'exposition « Mammatus », Galerie Aperto, Montpellier, 2022 / Crédit Photo : Chloé Viton

With Soufiane Ababri, Joy Charpentier, Enna Chaton, Robert Combas, Johan Creten, Sophie Crumb, Robert Crumb, Aline Kominsky-Crumb, Sylvain Fraysse, Vir Andres Hera, Renaud Jerez, Sofia Lautrec, Paul Maheke, Lou Masduraud, Marion Mounic, Jean-Michel Othoniel, Blaise Parmentier, Dominique Renson, Nesrine Salem, Samuel Spone, Chloé Viton

Under the artistic direction of Numa Hambursin, Director of MO.CO.

Curator: Anya Harrison, assisted by Julie Chateignon

The exhibition is supported by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia.

## **EVENTS PROGRAMME** \_

Summer 2023

ANA MENDIETA
From 3rd June to 17th September 2023
Opening: Friday 2nd June at 6pm at MO.CO.

Panacée

NEO RAUCH From 8th July to 15th October 2023 Opening: Friday 7th July at 6pm at MO.CO. Autumn 2023

SOL! LA BIENNALE DUTERRITOIRE #2
From 14th October to 28th January 2024
Opening: Friday 13th October 2023 at 6pm at MO.CO. Panacée

HUMA BHABHA

From 18th November 2023 to 28th January 2024 Opening: Friday 17th November 2023 at 6pm at MO.CO.

### PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS \_\_\_

Communication contacts MO.CO. Montpellier Contemporain Margaux Strazzeri Communication director +33 (0) 4 99 58 28 40 +33 (0) 6 29 86 46 28 margauxstrazzeri@moco.art

Press and media relations department Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole and City of Montpellier direction-presse@montpellier3m.fr Tel: 04 67 13 48 78 www.montpellier3m.fr - www.montpellier.fr Open from Tuesday to Sunday, from 11am to 7pm (june-september) and from 11am to 6pm (october-may) MOCO. 13 rue de la République, Montpellier

Open from Wednesday to Sunday, from 11am to 7 pm (june-september) and from 11am to 6pm (october-may) MOCO. Panacée 14 rue de l'École de Pharmacie, Montpellier

Photos and credits

Visuals of the exhibition available online on the press area www.moco.art

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#### CONTACT PRESSE\_



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