SOPHIE RISTELHUEBER

SOLO SHOW
Booth # D 23, GRAND PALAIS
For its second participation in Paris Photo, the gallery Jérôme Poggi is devoting a monographic project to Sophie Ristelhueber, one of the major figures of contemporary art whose work has marked the history of photography since the 1980s. Having been exhibited and acquired by numerous international institutions she was awarded in particular the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize in 2010, subsequent to her retrospective presented at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in 2009.

Articulated around the aspects of landscape, of traces and of the body, the booth will present a grouping of historic and recent works by the artist. Alongside her founding work on modern ruins in Beirut (1984), a series of hitherto unseen color photographs will be exhibited that Sophie Ristelhueber took in Armenia, following the earthquake in 1989. While the entire series of 71 photographs from the Fait series (1992) has just been acquired by the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, three prints from this historic body of work revealing the stigmata of the war in the Kuwaiti desert will be hung opposite Every One # 3 (1994), a monumental silver print photograph depicting the scar left on the body of a man following a surgical operation. In her recent work carried out in Versailles (Sans titre, 2011), it’s on the contrary beneath the surface of things that Sophie Ristelhueber has ventured in order to unveil the depths of the Latona Basin in the gardens by Le Nôtre.

Sophie Ristelhueber (FR, born 1949)

Sophie Ristelhueber has continued a reflection on territory and its history for about thirty years, through a unique approach to the ruins and traces left by mankind in those places devastated by war or by natural and cultural upheaval. Far from the classical photo story, she strives to implement the bare act and the stamp of history on both the body and on the landscape, by rendering visible wounds and scars, veritable memories of the “acts” of history.

If she essentially turns to photography in her work, Sophie Ristelhueber utilizes her shooting to create full plastic works, playing with the material and the format of the image, its status, its framework and its installation in space (photographs, posters, screen printing on glass, painted photographs, installation, artists’ books, films, etc.).

Her work has been exhibited in numerous international institutions, among which MoMA (New York, US), Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, US), Albright-Knox Art Gallery (Buffalo, US), The Power Plant (Toronto, CA), Tate Modern (London, GB), Imperial War Museum (London, GB), biennials of Johannesburg, Sao Paulo, Triennial of Etchigo-Tsumari, Rencontres Photographiques d’Arles, and in Paris, MNAM – Centre Pompidou, Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Musée Zadkine, Musée Rodin ...

Sophie Ristelhueber is represented by the gallery Jérôme Poggi who will devote personal show to her in 2014. Her work will also be shown at Louvres Lens «Les désastres de la guerre» (May 2014) and Tate Modern (Londres, GB) «Conflict, Time and Photography» (November 2014).
This series of 31 black and white photographs was the founding factor for Sophie Ristelhueber’s work. During full civil war, the artist left for Beirut in 1982 with the idea of making a work based on the modern city in ruins. If she utilized the means and took risks, Sophie Ristelhueber found herself at that time to be the exact opposite of the journalistic logic of photojournalism. It was a matter of photographing rather than documenting. Sophie Ristelhueber photographed contemporary ruins with no human presence, voluntarily avoiding any romanticism. This work was based on the terrain of history, and not that of current events which in turn put into perspective the ruins of modernity and those of Antiquity.
Sophie Ristelhueber issued these 31 photographs in an artist’s book published by Hazan in 1984, for which she chose as an introduction a text by Lucretia on earthquakes. Conserved within the collections of the Cabinet des Estampes de Genève and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, this series resulted in individual prints made in the 1980s and limited to 5 copies.

Public Collections
FRAC Basse Normandie
Une série 18 x 24 cm, collection Cabinet des Estampes, Genève
Une série 50 x 60 cm, collection Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Exhibitions (selection)
Institut Français d’Architecture, Paris, 1984
Blue Sky gallery, Portland, USA, 1985
Dissolution, PPOW Gallery, New York, USA, 1986
Beyond the image, Houston Center for Photography, USA, 1988
Cabinet des Estampes, musée d’Art et d’Histoire, Genève, Suisse, 1995
The Power Plant, Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada, 1999
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA, 2001
Galerie Catherine Putman, Paris, 2008
Jeu de Paume, Paris, 2009

Publication (selection)
Beyrouth, Photographies, 1984 ; 21 x 14 cm, 71 pages, 31 photographies noir et blanc, Editions Hazan, Paris
Beyrouth, Photographies, 1984 ; 21 x 14 cm, 71 pages, 31 photographies noir et blanc, Editions Thames & Hudson, Londres
Sophie Ristelhueber, Beyrouth, École Normale, 1984
Tirage argentique, noir et blanc
50 x 60 cm

Sophie Ristelhueber, Beyrouth, Quartier Tayouné, 1984
Tirage argentique, noir et blanc
50 x 60 cm

Sophie Ristelhueber, Beyrouth, Détail Cité Sportive, 1984
Tirage argentique, noir et blanc
50 x 60 cm
After having participated in the famous photographic mission of the DATAR in 1984/1987, Sophie Ristelhueber was invited in 1989 within the context of a twinning between French and Soviet cities. It was proposed that she photograph Armenia that had just been rocked by a major earthquake. Once again Sophie Ristelhueber presented photographs in color this time of a modern but nevertheless timeless architecture in ruins. “There, within the circle of the earthquake, among the cities of Kirovakan, Spitak and Leninakan, I wanted to show that landscape of desolation in color, but with attenuated almost monochromatic colors, with the perspective of those buildings that collapsed from the inside”.

This series of five color photographs has only been exhibited once in 1991 within the framework of an exhibition organized by the Bourse du Commerce.
Fait (1992)

*Fait* originated with a photograph published in the February 25, 1991 edition of *Time* magazine: a monochrome aerial view of the Kuwaiti desert. "I had been obsessed with the idea of this desert that was no longer one", explained Sophie Ristelhueber who had arrived in Kuwait in October 1991, seven months after the end of the war. She succeeded in negotiating in conditions just as precarious as random to fly over the desert in an airplane or helicopter during four weeks, shooting the almost abstract traces of the conflict drawn on the surface of a desert that she was also going to survey on foot with her camera. The 71 photographs of the series *Fait* gave rise to large format prints fitted exactly à fleur de champ in a waxed wooden frame by the artist, hoisting these images to the status of veritable icons. They were published in a work designed by the artist, that hence is out of print, having become a cult object.

The *Fait* series has been exhibited in numerous institutions, among which Museum of Modern Art de New-York, Imperial War Museum in London, Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Albright-Know Art Gallery in Buffalo (US), Power Plant in Toronto, Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris, etc. Each photograph of the series was limited to three copies. The National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa recently acquired the complete series of seventy-one photographs numbered 3/3.
Sophie Ristelhueber, *Fait (37)*, 1992,
tirage argentique monté sur aluminium, avec cadre ciré or, 100 x 130 x 5 cm, Édition 2/3

**Public Collections**
Albright-Knox NY, US
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
MNAM - Centre Pompidou, Paris
Frac Basse Normandie
Frac Bretagne
Frac PACA
Maison Européene de la Photographie
National Gallery of Canada à Ottawa

**Exhibitions (selection)**
Le Magasin, centre d'art contemporain, Grenoble, France, 1992
Sophie Ristelhueber : Aftermath, Imperial War Museum, Londres, 1993
Tréors de voyage, San Lazarro, XLVème biennale de Venise, 1993
Posljeđice, galeria Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 1994
Le Consortium, Dijon, France, 1995
New Photography 12, MoMA, New York, USA, 1996
Face à l'Histoire, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1996-1997
Trade routes, 2nd Johannesburg Biennale, Afrique du Sud, 1997
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, USA, 1998
Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, USA, 1998
The Power Plant, Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada, 1999
Details of the World, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA, 2001
Defying gravity, contemporary art and flight, North Carolina Museum of Art, USA, 2003
Big Bang, Musée National d’Art Moderne, centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 2005
Les Peintres de la vie moderne, centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 2006 /centre Pompidou
Jeu de paume, Paris, 2009
Modernités plurielles, Centre pompidou, Paris, 2013
Sophie Ristelhueber, Fait (67), 1992
Tirage argentique monté sur aluminium, avec cadre ciré or, 100 x 130 x 5 cm, Édition 2/3

Sophie Ristelhueber, Fait (39), 1992
Tirage argentique monté sur aluminium, avec cadre ciré or, 100 x 130 x 5 cm, Édition 2/3

In 1920, Marcel Duchamp, who had allowed the accumulation of a certain thickness of dust on his Grand Verre, was to trace, by skillful levies and by transparency, the drawing in excessive thickness of his own work, which he had photographed by Man Ray. Initially entitled Vue prise en aéroplane by Man Ray before becoming the famous Élevage de poussière, this work occupies a decisive place within the visual culture of Sophie Ristelhueber, who wanted to render homage in 2007 with that aerial photograph of the Kuwaiti desert taken in 1991.

Exhibited for the first time at PS1 in 1997, it wasn’t until 2007 that Sophie Ristelhueber gave a definitive form to this work which, due to the special place it occupies within her work, has been exhibited in several exhibitions: Sculpturenmuseum (Marl, Germany), MAC in Marseille ...

Exhibitions (selection)
Heaven, PS1, New York, USA, 1997
Ausgestellt-Vorgestellt IX, Skulpturenmuseum, Marl, Allemagne, 2007
MAC, Marseille, France, 2007
Sculpturen Glaskasten, 2007
Every One #3 (1994)

Sophie Ristelhueber, Every One (#3), 1994
Tirage argentique noir et blanc contrecollé sur plaque de fibre de bois
270 x 180 cm - Pièce unique
Every One (1994)

“How to render homage while making a work? How to create, approach the acts of society, hold back the anger that is in me, without falling into activism?” Sophie Ristelhueber asked herself. Upon her return from a trip in Yugoslavia in July, 1991, while the conflict between Serbs and Croats was just beginning. With drawings to support her, she projected carrying out a series of photographs of scars, traced upon the bodies following some surgical procedures. The photographs were taken not in Sarajevo but, quietly, in a Paris hospital. “The link with Yugoslavia will be clear”... Arises from this project fourteen black and white silver prints, from which Sophie Ristelhueber then made single prints, enlarging them to the dimensions of an art work of large format.

Out of the fourteen distinct photographs that made up the series Every One, only seven were printed in 1994. Unique editions, the majority of these works are to be found today in public and private collections (Museum of Fine Arts in Boston ; Victoria and Albert Museum London, Musée National d’Art Moderne - Centre Pompidou in Paris). Every One #3 was exhibited in several exhibitions among which the most recent at the Musée Rodin in Paris, confronting this image with sutured plaster casts by Auguste Rodin.

Every One (#3), 1994

Exhibitions (selection)
Centraal Museum, Utrecht, Hollande, 1994
Macht/Onmacht, MUHKA, Anvers, Belgique, 1996
The Power Plant, Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada, 1999
Jeu de Paume, Paris, 2009
Musée Rodin, 2011

Publications (selection)
Radikale Bilder, Neue galerie am landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Autriche, 1996
War Works, Women, photography and the iconography of war, Virago Press, Londres, 1994
Compilation, une expérience de l’exposition, Les presses du réel, Dijon, 1998
Distancing herself more than ever from the idea of documenting or recording reality through photography, the eleven images from Eleven Blowups consist of works in themselves. Particularly marked by the attack that cost the life of Rafic Hariri in 2005, creating a gigantic crater in the street of Beirut, Sophie Ristelhueber viewed three years in the audiovisual archives at Reuters in order to study thousands of images of attacks and bombardments, peering into the craters that thereby resulted, concentrating on their topography while attempting to abstract herself from the human dramas that were linked to them. It’s from a synthesis of these visions that she composed, thanks to computer software, using indistinctly some fragments from her own images taken during twenty years from Asia Minor to the Middle East, and that she realized by digital collage to depict thus a picture, a composite universal landscape.

The eleven photographs from Eleven Blowups were exhibited the first time at the Rencontres photographiques d’Arles in 2006, then at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in 2009. These works gave rise to some silver prints in color (edition of 3) and as well to some serigraphs on glass (120x146 cm, edition of 3).

Public Collections
FNAC
FRAC Basse Normandie

Exhibitions (selection)
Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles, France, 2006
Galerieofmarseille, Marseille, France, 2008
Le spectacle de la ruine, Centre VU, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, 2008
Jeu de Paume, Paris, 2009
Sophie Ristelhueber, *Eleven Blowups 5*, 2006
Tirage argentique couleur, 110 x 133 cm, Édition 3/3.

Tirage argentique couleur, 110 x 133 cm, Édition 3/3.
Sophie Ristelhueber slipped beneath the surface of things to make the three photographs of the series Sans titre in the gardens of the Château de Versailles. It was more precisely beneath the famous Latona Basin dedicated to the child Apollo and his mother Latona, that the artist photographed the original canalizations dating from the 17th century, revealing through flash bulb shots the bowels of lead and copper of the gardens Le Nôtre.