

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON



EXPOSITION INÉDITE

CHINA



1948-49

1958



15 OCT

2019

2 FEB



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OCTOBER 15 2019 - FEBRUARY 2 2020

79 rue des Archives – 75003 Paris

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henricartierbresson.org

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday: 11am to 7pm

ADMISSION

Full rate 9 € / Concessions 5 €

SOCIAL NETWORKS



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Front cover:
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos
Graphic design : Atalante-Paris

A YEAR AT RUE DES ARCHIVES

It has already been a year since the Fondation opened its doors at 79 rue des Archives, after fifteen wonderful years spent in Montparnasse. This new location is certainly bearing fruit, with average attendance over the year on track to double. Many visitors, from abroad and from other French regions in particular, are finding their way to the Fondation more easily. The summer opening seems to have welcomed a foreign audience but also many Parisians spending August in the city.

The design of the highly adaptable space has accommodated four very different settings, allowing the content of exhibitions to be presented in parallel with Henri Cartier-Bresson's archives. The Pearls from the Archives programme, initiated with the Fondation's Collections department, captures visitors' attention, giving them an insight into the unique personality of Henri Cartier-Bresson.

The ability to accommodate researchers has been greatly enhanced, notably enabling the exceptional HCB and China exhibition, opening in October, which will be the first Henri Cartier-Bresson exhibition to occupy the whole of Gallery H. This exhibition will then travel abroad, like others already planned for the coming two years.

The Fondation HCB will be diversifying its programmes in 2019-20, once again offering conference cycles, often linked to current exhibitions, and organising signatures that will take place for the first time at the weekend. We hope to extend the spaces available with the development of a 100m² basement, which will accommodate additional programmes enhancing the visitor experience.

Finally, the triple transition – the move, change of management and change of chairman, Serge Toubiana having taken over from Kristen van Riel - was led by the Fondation team with great dedication and professionalism, under the watchful eye of its co-founder and continuing artistic director, Agnès Sire. We are thankful to the French and foreign media who are massively accompanying this trajectory.

François Hébel
Director

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON: CHINA 1948-1949 | 1958

OCTOBER 15 2019
FEBRUARY 2 2020

EXHIBITION

On 25 November 1948, Henri Cartier-Bresson was commissioned by *Life* magazine to shoot a story on the “last days of Beijing” before the arrival of the Maoist troops. Having gone for two weeks, he would stay for ten months, mainly in the Shanghai area, witnessing the fall of the city of Nanjing held by Kuomintang, then forced to stay in Shanghai under Communist control for four months, leaving China a few days before the proclamation of the People’s Republic of China (1 October 1949).

As the months went by, his accounts of “traditional” lifestyles and the establishment of a new order (Beijing, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Shanghai), produced with complete freedom of action, met with great success in *Life* and top international news magazines (including *Paris Match*, which had just been founded).

This long stay in China proved to be a seminal moment in the history of photojournalism: this reportage series came at the beginning of the Magnum Photos agency, which Henri Cartier-Bresson had co-founded eighteen months earlier in New York, and brought a new, less event-based, more poetic and detached style, attentive as much to the people as to the balance of the composition. A great many of these photos remain among the most famous in photography (such as “Gold Rush in Shanghai”).

One of the repercussions of “China 1948-1949” was that, from the fifties onwards, Henri Cartier-Bresson became a major benchmark in “new” photojournalism and the renaissance of photography in general. The books *The Decisive Moment* (Verve, 1952) and *D'une Chine à l'autre* (Delpire, 1954), prefaced by Jean-Paul Sartre, confirmed this supremacy.

- For the first time, the Fondation HCB is entirely devoting its new space to Henri Cartier-Bresson
- An exceptional body of photographic and documentary work: vintage prints, documents and original publications from the Collection
- An unprecedented account of two key moments in China’s history: the fall of Kuomintang and the establishment of the Communist regime (1948-1949) and Mao Zedong’s “Great Leap Forward” (1958)
- A major moment in the history of photojournalism and Henri Cartier-Bresson’s personal approach
- A book published by Delpire



Gold Rush. At the end of the day, scrambles in front of a bank to buy gold. The last days of Kuomintang, Shanghai, 23 December 1948

In 1958, as the tenth anniversary drew near, Henri Cartier-Bresson set off again on a journey of discovery, yet under completely different conditions: constrained by an accompanying guide for four months, he travelled thousands of kilometres on the launch of the “Great Leap Forward” to report on the results of the Revolution and the forced industrialisation of rural areas. He nonetheless succeeded in also showing the least positive aspects, such as the exploitation of human labour and the hold of the militias. Once again, the report met with international success.

The exhibition at the Fondation HCB brings together 114 original prints from 1948-1949, 40 prints from 1958, and many archive documents.

Curation: Michel Frizot, Ying-lung Su
Artistic Director: Agnès Sire
Collection Curator: Aude Raimbault

PUBLICATION

The exhibition is accompanied by the book *Henri Cartier-Bresson: Chine 1948-1949 | 1958* by Michel Frizot and Ying Lung Su, published by Delpire.

PARTNER

This exhibition is presented with the support of the Gutenberg Agency.



GUTENBERG

BOOK

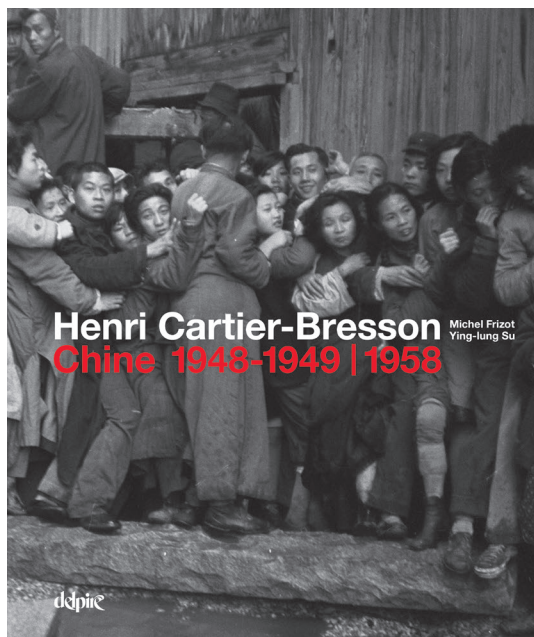
HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON CHINE : 1948-1949 | 1958 ÉDITIONS DELPIRE

EXTRACT FROM THE BOOK

This project was inspired by a somewhat forgotten book by Henri Cartier-Bresson, *D'une Chine à l'autre*, published by Delpire in 1954, and the idea, approved by Agnès Sire, then director of the Fondation HCB, of turning this book into an exhibition. We were initially interested in the historic events the photographer had witnessed over a ten-month period from December 1948 to September 1949 – a period that saw the fall of the Kuomintang government and the emergence of the People's Republic of China. We thought we should take a fresh look at the photographs themselves (some of them still among Cartier-Bresson's most famous images), generally as a record of events and ways of life, but also particularly for their empathetic and poetic qualities.

It was clear from the archives the Fondation made available to us that Cartier-Bresson's long stay produced more than just "reportage". This was an exceptionally large collection of photographs and documents, giving an insight into the methods, intentions and perceptions of a major figure in the world of photography. We needed to examine this previously unpublished material in minute detail: several hundred original prints intended for distribution, all the contact sheets, the typed notes Cartier-Bresson wrote for each roll, the correspondence with the Magnum photo agency and with his parents, and all the articles published at the time that reproduced his photographs.

We also had to take another look at the material against the background of the political instability at the time: Cold War troubles, decolonization, and the rise of Communism in Central Europe and Asia. A member of the very new Magnum agency, Henri Cartier-Bresson had gained his artistic reputation from his 1947 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, but he was not yet fully recognized as a photojournalist. The international magazine *Life*, which commissioned his original *story* on Peking, had long been a supporter of the Kuomintang Nationalists, whereas Cartier-Bresson's sympathies lay more with the Communists. All these unusual circumstances made the 1948–9 stay in China a high point in Cartier-Bresson's career. It was then (at the age of forty) that he developed the completely individual style of photojournalism which he never lost.



Bound
29 x 24 cm
150 photographs in black and white
approximately 288 pages
Texts by Michel Frizot and Ying-lung Su

65 €
ISBN 979-10-95821-16-8

Deeply affected by the chaotic episodes during this Chinese adventure (in Peking, Qingdao, Hangzhou, Nanking and Shanghai), and fascinated by Chinese culture (he later became a Buddhist), Henri Cartier-Bresson wanted to return to China to see the effects of the change of regime. The planned return took place in 1958, in the middle of the "Great Leap Forward" proclaimed by Mao Zedong. The wish of the Fondation HCB to include that second four-month stay in this project considerably widens the scope, in both resonance and contrast. Because *China 1958* is the opposite of a retelling. Under the watchful eye of a guide and interpreter, Henri Cartier-Bresson travelled thousands of miles, from a great dam to steelworks, from a new oil well to a nursery school, from a peasant village to a collective commune. But he remained faithful to the familiar characteristics of "Henri Cartier-Bresson the photographer", with his stealthy approach, the expressive structure of his images, and the self-effacing presence that enabled him to see into the true nature of his subjects. As he said: "Personally, I am interested almost exclusively in human beings."

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON CHINE 1948-1949 | 1958 ÉDITIONS DELPIRE

As Henri Cartier-Bresson's captions indicate, two portfolios of 112 and 39 photographs for 1948-9 and 1958, respectively, contain sequences of images related to a place or an event as well as images that Cartier-Bresson saw as "single" or "individual" in the sense that they could stand alone. Some of them had not been seen again since they were taken, although they had been approved by the photographer. With access to a unique collection of original material, we wanted to take a documentary approach and explore every facet of a method of reportage that – although unusual – would nevertheless become a "style". We would follow it up to the final publication of the images, from the stage at which the photos were taken, through the preparation of notes by the photographer linked to the ideas expressed in his correspondence, making him an unsuspecting chronicler.

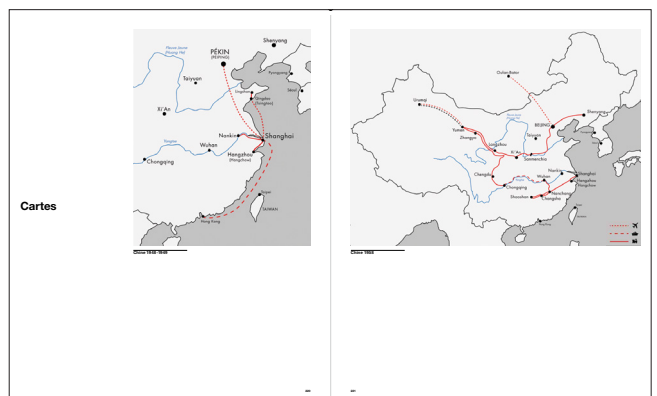
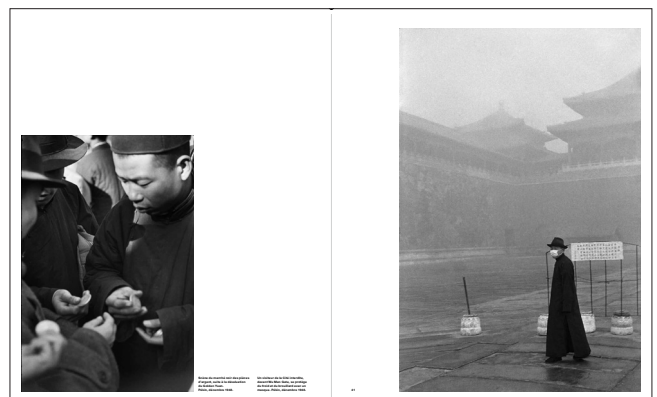


An introduction explains the context and conditions in which *China 1948-1949* was produced. This would remain a unique experience for Henri Cartier-Bresson, from which he developed his international name and his unrivalled reputation for individuality. To do justice to the large number of ever-relevant images, we have arranged them in a section entitled "Reportage Sequences and Single Images" to reflect his practical and mental approach to a thematic or improvised topic and to illustrate his mastery of the intuitive images in which he always excelled.

The reproductions of pages in magazines that then published his photos with various different narratives show that Henri Cartier-Bresson had no control over the way his work was used subsequently (and he was aware of that). Finally, to explain the relevance of the images, we have included a chronology of political and military events in parallel to the life of the photographer and the progress of his work.

Always quick to move on, and with little interest in the preparations for a book or an exhibition, Henri Cartier-Bresson turned straight to the next image that could still surprise him. In these two episodes, *China 1948-1949* and *China 1958*, which clearly took place in different political and social conditions, he managed to reinvent the standard reportage or *story* model and provided a large number of magazines with material to illustrate that "look at life" which captivated and moved him like "a kind of endless questioning and an instant response".

Michel Frizot
Ying-lung Su



PEARLS FROM THE ARCHIVES

SIX NEW PEARLS

The Fondation's conservation department regularly presents stand-alone images along the visitors' journey through the space, telling the unique story behind them and thereby unravelling the life of the man who bears the name of the institution. These pearls embody the remarkable career of a 20th century man, steeped in literature and art, whose curiosity was only equalled by his freedom.

Many photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson are now part of the collective memory and have left a lasting impression due to their link with history, each individual appropriating and forming an attachment with the images depending on their own sensitivity and personal experience.

The collection of more than 30,000 original prints selected by the photographer has many surprises in store. Each new exhibition at the Fondation HCB will reveal rarely published photographs.

This programme is supported by the Gutenberg Agency.



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NATCHO AGUIRRE SANTA CLARA MEXIQUE 1934



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CARTIER-
BRESSON
HCB

PERLE DES ARCHIVES #HCB1934001W0063DC



Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018
Pearls from the Archives
© Cyrille Weiner

Natcho Aguirre, Santa Clara, Mexico, 1934

Henri Cartier-Bresson is 26 years old. According to the curator Peter Galassi, this is when he created “one of the most powerful photographs he’s ever taken”. “Cartier-Bresson usually found his collages, but at least twice, in Mexico, he helped to create them. Exploring a hacienda with his friend Ignacio Aguirre, Cartier-Bresson noticed an open cabinet with six pairs of shoes whose varied positions comprise an abbreviated catalogue of sexual permutations – it was made up of elegant, ladies’ white heels and one male intruder, a pair of dark, heavy boots. Amid the chaos, Cartier-Bresson noticed a heart formed between two of the ladies’ shoes. He asked his friend to pose with arms crossed beside the box. Formally, the picture’s taut frame and geometric compartments, each neatly enclosing its contents, recall an early series of paintings by Magritte. But here the similarity ends, for Cartier-Bresson has replaced Magritte’s artificially banal illustrator’s style with the blunt, exacting realism of photography.”

PRESS IMAGES HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON: CHINA 1948-1949 | 1958

The use of press images is exempt from royalties when this is strictly for the purposes of promoting the exhibition and new spaces of the Fondation. All visuals must be used with their captions and copyrights. No cropping is permitted and only three images per medium can be published.



001
Scene from the black market for silver coins, Beijing, December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



002
A visitor to the Forbidden City, Beijing, December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



003
At the entrance to a tavern, Beijing, December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



004
Near the Forbidden City, a simpleton whose job is to escort brides in a sedan chair, Beijing, December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



005
Early in the morning, in the Forbidden City, ten thousand new recruits have gathered to form a Nationalist regiment, Beijing, December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

PRESS IMAGES
HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON:
CHINA 1948-1949 | 1958



006
Gold Rush. At the end of the day, scrambles in front of a bank to buy gold. The last days of Kuomintang, Shanghai, 23 December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



009
Celebrations for the 9th anniversary of the People's Republic, Beijing, 1 October 1958.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



007
Cultural meeting at the Canidrome, Shanghai, 4 July 1949.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



010
Construction of the Beijing University swimming pool by students, June 1958.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



008
The window display of a brush merchant in the antique dealers' street, Beijing, December 1948.
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

PRESS IMAGES 79 RUE DES ARCHIVES



014
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018
Reception
© Cyrille Weiner



017
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018
Pearls of the Archives and bookshop
© Cyrille Weiner



015
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018
Room H, exhibition space
Martine Franck exhibition
© Cyrille Weiner



018
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018
Room H, main exhibition space
Martine Franck exhibition
© Cyrille Weiner



016
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018
Pearls from the Archives
© Cyrille Weiner

SUPPORTERS OF THE FONDATION HCB

THE GUTENBERG AGENCY

Specialised in the publication and production of images for 50 years, the Gutenberg agency chose to support the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson and its exhibitions in its new location in the heart of the historic Marais district. This partnership will begin on the opening of the “Martine Franck” exhibition and the launch of “Perles des Archives” and continue with an initiative to raise the profile of the foundation’s archives and educational programmes.

With a natural predisposition for photography and photographic archives, but also new creations, the Gutenberg agency (DDB/Omnicom group) combines artistic creation with innovative production and implementation processes, from traditional communication to digital, and has been working with major brand names and communication and publishing agencies since its creation.

The agency also plays a key role in the provision of training in image-related activities, from taking photographs to graphic design, and includes a publishing house, “Les Cahiers Intempestifs”, dedicated to coffee table books with a focus on graphic and visual creation.

www.gutenberg.agency



GUTENBERG

IGUZZINI

In 2018, iGuzzini contributed its expertise in museum lighting to the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson’s new space on rue des Archives, a prestigious centre for photography in Paris.

This partnership marks the beginning of a great collaboration between the two entities.

Founded in 1959, iGuzzini is a leading international group in the sector of architectural lighting. As an international community dedicated to architecture and the culture of light, we’re committed to a mission of social innovation through lighting. Our business consists in researching, designing and making systems in partnership with the finest architects, lighting designers, interior designers and engineers across the world. With locations in over 20 countries across 5 continents, iGuzzini works with light to improve the relationship between people and their environment through research, industry, technology and know-how, in the areas of culture, the tertiary sector, retail, towns and cities, infrastructures and public and residential spaces.

iGuzzini

PROGRAMME

Further to the inaugural exhibition dedicated to Martine Franck, the programme of this first year reflects the diversity so important to the Fondation HCB which has always made a point of presenting talented artists:

— October 15 2019 / February 2 2020

Henri Cartier-Bresson - China : 1948-1949 | 1958.

After the book *D'une Chine à l'autre* (1954), with an introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre, the work done by Henri Cartier-Bresson in China has never been seriously looked at again. The Fondation has now worked with the historian Michel Frizot who will offer a detailed study thanks to the many documents kept in the archives and will curate the exhibition and create the book.

The exhibition will subsequently be shown in Taiwan.

— February / May 2020

Marie Bovo. Born in 1967 in Alicante, Marie Bovo lives and works in Marseille. Her work is organised in series capturing a slow, patient time, different from that of instant perception. The exhibition will reveal her fixed or moving night images. By using a long exposure time, Marie Bovo draws a very particular light from this darkness, a twilight, both melancholy and vibrant.

Portraits - Martine Franck. The Fondation is dedicating its Collections gallery to the portraits of Martine Franck. "Portraiture fascinates me. It's a new encounter every time. Before the take, I get nervous, then gradually tongues loosen and we get to know each other... What I try to capture is the light in the eye, the gestures, a moment of listening or concentration - exactly when the model isn't speaking."

EVENTS

The aim of the Fondation HCB is to become a forum for exchange and education where knowledge about photography can be shared with a variety of audiences. For each exhibition a rich programme of events is offered.

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKS

Beyond its own site, the Fondation supports the works of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Martine Franck being shown in many institutions around the world and promotes the work of researchers by giving them the best access to archives. The Magnum Photos agency, created by Henri Cartier-Bresson, at the instigation of Robert Capa, along with George Rodger and David Seymour, handles requests for copyright syndication.