



# EUGÈNE ATGET VOIR PARIS

FONDATION HCB  
17 NOVEMBER 2020 - 21 FEBRUARY 2021



MUSÉE  
CARNAVALET  
HISTOIRE  
DE PARIS

PARIS  
MUSÉES



4 PARIS, BY EUGÈNE ATGET (1857 - 1927) AND HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON (1908 - 2004)

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## FROM 17 NOVEMBER 2020 TO 21 FEBRUARY 2021

79 rue des Archives – 75003 Paris  
01 40 61 50 50  
[henricartierbresson.org](http://henricartierbresson.org)

## HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday : 11am – 7pm

## ADMISSION

Full rate 9€ / Concessions 5€

## SOCIAL NETWORKS



## PRESS OPENING ON 16 NOVEMBER AT 4PM

## PRESS CONTACT

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## PARTNER



GUTENBERG

Front cover :  
*Coin de la place Saint-André-des-Arts et de la rue Hautefeuille, Vie, 1912*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris

# PARIS BY EUGÈNE ATGET (1857 – 1927) AND HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON (1908 – 2004)

Approximately two generations separate these two photographers. Eugène Atget gave up a career as an actor, Henri Cartier-Bresson that of a painter, in order to pursue a relatively new art: photographic recording. In an unprecedented double exhibition and a new approach, Fondation HCB (November 17, 2020 to February 21, 2021) and musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris (Spring 2021), bring their collections together to reveal the essence of Paris in the work of these two great figures of French photography.

Fascinated by Atget's approach, Cartier-Bresson would imitate him until the moment he discovered the Leica camera and started to practice street photography. "To run away" he'd say, after capturing the photo. That was his preferred position. As for Atget, at dawn with a heavy load on his back, recording was very deliberate; little is left to chance, but a pleasure of vision can be seen over time.

From the most classical architecture to the most remote courtyards, Atget, more interested in the city, obsessively depicted a Paris marked by history, offering his prints to painters and libraries. Characters that show up in the frame blend into the background. Cartier-Bresson, having frequented the Surrealists in the 1920s, proved to be a long-haul traveler with Paris as his home base. More than the city, it was humans that interested him. He captured them on the streets or during encounters. He always carries his camera with him. Taking a photograph was taking a breath, it was affirmation, sometimes protest, and a stroll at times guided by a reportage that was asked of him.

Atget said little to nothing about his own work. Reported statements served to define his project as essentially documentary, but it was his direct, poetic approach that fascinated many of his contemporaries. This produced contradictory commentary on his unusual œuvre. With a rich collection of his work held at the musée Carnavalet, Cartier-Bresson made many statements about his own work, much of it in opposition to what one wanted it to be saying. What results is another type of complexity, attested to through the study of the archives conserved at his foundation.

The two photographers were also avid readers. Both figures were fundamentally independent, a bit austere, and fostered neither intellectual concepts nor artistic principles as foundations from which to value experience. They invite us to exercise our gaze, to consider the complexity of the world as the source of our faculty of imagination. Fate would have it that these two bodies of work, emancipatory for photography, first find acknowledgement in the United States before achieving a vast posterity. The two curators conceived this original selection to reflect the poetic dimensions of the two artists.

For the re-opening of the musée Carnavalet and the two-year anniversary of the Fondation HCB's arrival in the Marais, these exhibitions celebrate Paris through singular perspectives prior to its status as one of the world's-most-photographed city.

## CURATORS OF THE TWO EXHIBITIONS

Anne de Mondenard, Head of the Photography and Digital Images Department, musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris

Agnès Sire, Artistic director, Fondation HCB



# EUGÈNE ATGET VOIR PARIS

NOVEMBER 17, 2020  
FEBRUARY 21, 2021

## EXHIBITION

This exhibition, presented at the Fondation HCB, is the fruit of long research efforts jointly undertaken by the two institutions throughout the musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris' collections. The result is an outstanding presentation of the œuvre of Eugène Atget (1857-1927), a unique figure and photography pioneer. Above all an artisan, Atget's prolific output of photographs was intended for artists and lovers of the old Paris; he rose to fame posthumously. A forerunner of modernity is seen in his work by art critics and photographers, among them Henri Cartier-Bresson, whose early work sought to imitate Atget. Paris' place within the œuvre of Cartier-Bresson is also the subject of an exhibition at the musée Carnavalet in the spring of 2021, a project in partnership with the Fondation HCB.



Coin de la place Saint-André-des-Arts et de la rue Hautefeuille, VI<sup>e</sup>, 1912  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris

First acknowledged in the United States and by the French surrealist scene before finding acclaim with succeeding generations of photographers, Atget still exerts unprecedented influence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, though reception of his work remains mixed. Bearing a view camera and glass plates,

he often captured his subject at dawn. For almost thirty years, he sought to make a collection of the Paris of his time. He also explored city limits, what is known as “the zone”. Today, his images of nearly-deserted streets, store fronts, and courtyards evidence urban change at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Vieille maison, 6, rue de Fourcy, IV<sup>e</sup>, 1910  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris

Beyond its documentary aspects, Atget's photography expresses a deep aesthetic sensibility, illustrating the incalculable contribution he made to the medium. As Paris changed, Atget's work method evolved accordingly, becoming more and more sensitive to the light and to atmospheric effects. This devotion to detail (using a modest subject matter), in contrast to the triumphant pictorialism of the time, is also singularly modern, allowing a notion of pleasure to surface—one which is rarely mentioned in reference to Atget. The exhibition and its accompanying publication propose sharing this pleasure.

The exhibition is organized by the musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris, Paris-Musées and the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson. The musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris houses a collection of over 9,000 prints by Atget, the largest archive on the photographer. The exhibition Eugène Atget – Voir Paris presents a selection of around 150 of the artist's original prints.



### BIOGRAPHY

Eugène Atget was born in Libourne, France in 1857. He gave up a career as an actor and took up photography starting in 1888. He was self-taught. In 1890, he began producing material for use by artists: shots of plants, landscapes and diverse objects. In 1897, he started to take photographs of the Paris of his time systematically, attentive to scenes of urban life, architectural detail and the capital's topography. Towards the end of his life, he met Man Ray's assistant, Berenice Abbott, who took two portraits of him. He died in Paris in 1927. Abbott learned of his death just as she was planning to offer him the portraits. Along with gallerist Julien Levy and Atget's executor, André Calmettes, Abbott aided in rescuing Atget's studio archive, the recognition of his work through various publications, and the admission of the Abbott/Levy collection to the New York Museum of Modern Art's collection in 1968.

### CURATORS

Anne de Mondenard, Head of the Photography and Digital Images Department, musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris  
Agnès Sire, Artistic director, Fondation HCB

“Eugene Atget, so determined to rigorously constitute this ‘collection’, nevertheless imbued a good part of his photographs with a ‘pleasure of the eye’, one which is altogether “Bressonian”, and without which his œuvre would probably have remained simple documentation.”

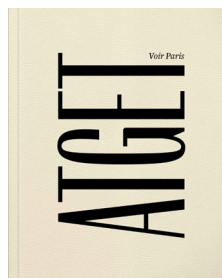
Excerpt from the essay *Le plaisir de voir* by Agnès Sire in *Voir Paris*, Atelier EXB, 2020

“We should see [...] this [selection] as the restitution of a deambulation seeking to highlight Atget's contribution to photography, emphasizing the liberty and poetry, coherence and resolution of his gaze, sometimes turned to the simplest of objects to which his sense of frame confers a surprising aura.”

Excerpt from the essay *Le photographe et son musée - Atget et Carnavalet* by Anne de Mondenard in *Voir Paris*, Atelier EXB, 2020

### PUBLICATION

Accompanying the exhibition is a book entitled Atget - *Voir Paris*, published by Atelier EXB.



Bound

42€

21 x 26 cm

Around 170 photographs, 224 pages

Only available in French

Texts by Anne de Mondenard, Agnès Sire and Peter Galassi

ISBN 978-2-36511-281-9



# PRESS IMAGES EUGÈNE ATGET VOIR PARIS

## PRESS IMAGES

All visuals must be used with their captions and copyrights. No cropping is permitted.



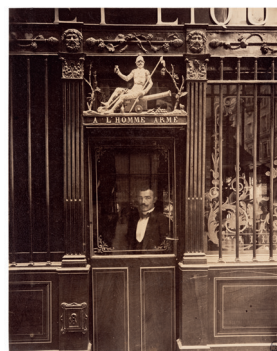
001  
*Parc Delessert, XVI<sup>e</sup>, 1914*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



002  
*Fortifications, porte de Sèvres, XV<sup>e</sup>, 1923*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



003  
*Place du Tertre, Montmartre, XVIII<sup>e</sup>, 1922*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



004  
*Cabaret de l'Homme armé, 25, rue des Blancs-Manteaux, IV<sup>e</sup>, septembre 1900*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



005  
*Vieille maison, 6, rue de Fourcy, IV<sup>e</sup>, 1910*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



006  
*Ancien hôtel Sully-Charost, 11, rue du Cherche-Midi, VI<sup>e</sup>, 1904*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



007  
*Fontaine du passage des Singes, 6, rue des Guillemites, IV<sup>e</sup>, 1911*  
© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris

# PRESS IMAGES EUGÈNE ATGET VOIR PARIS

## PRESS IMAGES

All visuals must be used with their captions and copyrights. No cropping is permitted.



011

*Église Saint-Médard, V<sup>e</sup>, 1900-1901*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



008

*Un coin de l'entrepôt de Bercy, rue Léopold, XII<sup>e</sup>, 1913*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



012

*Coin de la place Saint-André-des-Arts et de la rue Hautefeuille, VI<sup>e</sup>, 1912*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



009

*Ambassade d'Autriche, 57, rue de Varenne, VII<sup>e</sup>, 1905*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



013

*Rue des Chantres, IV<sup>e</sup>, 1923*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



010

*Coin, pont Marie, IV<sup>e</sup>, 1921*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



014

*Maison de Balzac, 24, rue Berton, XVI<sup>e</sup>, 1913*

© Paris Musées / musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris



## UPCOMING

### HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON PARIS SPRING 2021

#### EXHIBITION AT THE MUSÉE CARNAVALET

In its first exhibition after re-opening, the musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris joins the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson to highlight the importance of Paris in the life and work of Henri Cartier-Bresson, one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most important French photographers. The museum revisits the relationship between the artist and the city he lived in, a city which nourished him artistically.

Following a debut marked by the influence of photographer Eugène Atget and surrealist artists, Cartier-Bresson proved to be a long-haul traveler with Paris as his home base. In this city, which he constantly rediscovered, it was above all humans that interested him. He captured them on the streets and during encounters. He also bore witness to great events—the Liberation of Paris in August 1944; May 1968. He arrived immediately on site at protests. In Paris, as elsewhere, he never left his camera behind him. Taking a photograph was taking a breath, it was affirmation, and sometimes protestation.

A prominent feature of his work, his photos of Paris testify to his roaming. Though some are taken in the context of photo-reports and commissions for the international press, he often retained only one image in his books and exhibitions. This medley describes a flaneur particularly drawn to the banks of the Seine and the fringes of Paris.

The exhibition presents original prints, publications and audiovisual materials on the artist. The majority of the photographs come from the collections of the musée Carnavalet and the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson. Co-produced by the two institutions, the project echoes the exhibition Eugène Atget - *Voir Paris* presented from November 17, 2020 to February 21, 2021 at the Fondation HCB using material from the musée Carnavalet's collections.

#### CURATORS

Anne de Mondenard, Head of the Photography and Digital Images Department, musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris  
Agnès Sire, Artistic director, Fondation HCB



*Behind Saint-Lazare station, Place de l'Europe, Paris, 1932*  
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



*Under the outdoor metro, Boulevard de la Chapelle, Paris, 1951*  
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

## EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME

In 2021, the Fondation HCB will offer several exhibition series presenting a unique hit list of photography:

- **November 17, 2020 / February 21, 2021**

**Eugène Atget - Voir Paris**

**Paris, by Henri Cartier-Bresson and Eugène Atget**

In an extraordinary dual exhibition using a fresh approach, the musée Carnavalet and the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson bring documents from their collections together to show the essence of Paris in the oeuvres of these two great figures of French photography. The Fondation HCB presents a remarkable set of prints by Eugène Atget, whose poetic documentary works have left their mark on the medium's history.

- **March 9 / June 6 2021**

**Jan Groover - Laboratoire des formes**

In collaboration with the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne, the Fondation is presenting an exhibition dedicated to the American photographer Jan Groover (1943-2012) for the first time in France. Through her constant experimentation with the photographic medium, Jan Groover's work features an exceptional diversity of subjects, formats and technical processes.

- **June 18 / September 2021**

**Mathieu Pernot - Le Grand Tour**

Winner of the 2019 HCB Award, Pernot presents a photo series taken over the last two years in Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon on the ruins of geopolitical tensions and the traces of his family history. The Fondation d'entreprise Hermès is the patron of the HCB Award.

- **October 2021 / January 2022**

**John Coplans**

In collaboration with the Point du Jour in Cherbourg-en-Cotentin, the Fondation HCB presents the first major retrospective of the photographer in France. The exhibited prints, from public and private collections, bear witness to the daring of this artist, best known for his vast study of the human body, which was undertaken over a period of more than thirty years.

### EVENTS

The Fondation HCB's mission is to become a place of exchange, education and dissemination of knowledge of photography for a variety of audiences. Each exhibition includes conferences, discussions, screenings and signings.

### PEARLS FROM THE ARCHIVES

The conservation department of the Fondation HCB tells the story of Henri Cartier-Bresson's remarkable life through a few isolated images. These pearls personify the journey of a twentieth century man, shaped by art and literature, whose curiosity was matched only by his freedom. The collection, which includes more than 30,000 original prints selected by the photographer and is the object of an ever-growing documentation, is full of surprises. Each new exhibition at the Fondation HCB will reveal rarely published photographs. This programme is supported by the Gutenberg Agency.



# EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME

## EXHIBITIONS ABROAD

Beyond its own site, the Fondation will continue to support the works of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Martine Franck being shown in many institutions around the world and promote 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, continues to handle requests for copyright syndication.

- **Until November 1st, 2020**  
**Henri Cartier-Bresson - China, 1948-49 | 1958**  
TFAM, Taipei, Taiwan
- **Until March 20, 2021**  
**Henri Cartier-Bresson - Le Grand Jeu**  
Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italia
- **September 23 2020 / January 31 2021**  
**Henri Cartier-Bresson - Tête à tête**  
Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- **October 2 2020 / January 24 2021**  
**Martine Franck**  
FOMU, Antwerpen, Belgium
- **Spring 2021**  
**Henri Cartier-Bresson - Paris**  
Musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris, Paris, France
- **April 13 / August 22, 2021**  
**Henri Cartier-Bresson - Le Grand Jeu**  
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, France

Spring 2021 in Paris will thus be remarkable, with an exhibition on Paris at the musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris, and the exhibition *Le Grand Jeu* at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France—seven curators express different views on the œuvre of Henri Cartier-Bresson.

# PRESS IMAGES 79 RUE DES ARCHIVES



**001**  
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018  
Reception  
© Cyrille Weiner



**004**  
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018  
Pearls from the Archives and bookshop  
© Cyrille Weiner



**002**  
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018  
Salle H, exhibition space  
Martine Franck exhibition  
© Cyrille Weiner



**005**  
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, February 2020  
Salle H, exhibition space  
Marie Bovo exhibition  
© Matthieu Samadet



**003**  
Fondation HCB, 79 rue des Archives, November 2018  
Pearls from the Archives  
© Cyrille Weiner

## SPONSOR OF THE FONDATION HCB

### L'AGENCE GUTENBERG

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 started 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.

[www.gutenberg.agency](http://www.gutenberg.agency)



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