



Daido Moriyama
Love Letters to Photography

—

Nuits Balnéaires
Eboro

Press opening of the exhibitions

Tuesday, May 19, 2026
2 PM – 4 PM

Press contact

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From Tuesday to Sunday: 11 AM – 7 PM
Full rate 10 € / Reduced rate 6 €

For Daido Moriyama, photography is alive, very much alive. Since the early 1960s, he has maintained a daily, almost existential relationship with it. He addresses photography through images, books and writing, each time a declaration. In 1972, his book *Shashin yo sayonara* [*Farewell Photography*] broke from the rules of “good” photography.

At the same time, he published essays in Japanese photography magazines (*Asahi Camera*, *Provoke*, *Shashin Jidai*, etc.), each a kind of manifesto. He would also make repeated pilgrimages to sites associated with the very first photographer, Nicéphore Niépce. Many of his everyday images turn the medium back on itself—they hold up a mirror to it. The exhibition at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson is not a traditional retrospective organized around a chronological sequence of masterpieces. It is structured around a single, decisive premise: Moriyama’s obsession with photography itself.

Curator of the exhibition

Clément Chéroux

Director, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition *Love Letters to Photography* consists of 60 prints accompanied by documents and publications, mainly drawn from the archives of the Moriyama Foundation, and is organized into 4 sections.

Manifestos

"It might seem like a somewhat ironic title [*Farewell Photography*], but it's about my feelings of hate and wanting to say farewell to spiritually peaceful photographs, to photographs that show no doubt about what photography means, in other words photographs that lack all reality."

Daido Moriyama, 1972

At the end of 1972, Daido Moriyama published a radically experimental book titled *Shashin yo sayonara* [*Farewell Photography*]. The book is both a provocation and a declaration of war against the photographic establishment. With deliberately blurred, dark, off-center images—grainy and often difficult to read—he challenged everything that defined “good” photography at the time. For him, this marked a break from tradition. But after this rupture, photography had to be relearned. Moriyama then set out to rediscover photography by exploring its basic properties: framing, reproducibility, documentary value, etc. The printed image, whether in books or magazines, was central to his work. Each publication stands as a manifesto.

Pilgrimages

In the mid-1970s, the artist discovered what is considered the earliest surviving photograph, *View from the Window at Le Gras*, made by Nicéphore Niépce between 1826 and 1827 from a window of his house in Saint-Loup-de-Vareannes. Moriyama became fascinated by this foundational image, which contains the essential questions he continues to ask about the medium. In 1990, he published *Lettre à St. Lou.* [sic], a work that reads as a love letter to photography. In 2008, he traveled to the site to photograph the window from which Niépce worked. In 2015, he went to Austin, Texas, where the original plate is now preserved. He also keeps a poster of the image at home, which he has photographed repeatedly over the years. Brought together here for the first time, these different series form a set of tributes to photography’s earliest moments.

Daido Moriyama, Love Letters to Photography

May 20 – October 4, 2026

CUBE



Daido Moriyama, Saint-Loup-de-Varennes, France, 2008, in *Jikkenshitsu kara no nagame* / *View from the Laboratory*, 2013

“I felt the desire to offer a kind of tribute to Niépce, who had always remained somewhere in my heart, and to that photograph taken long ago. This is why I chose this title. It was a love letter to Niépce and to his photograph.”

Daido Moriyama, 2017

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Metaphors

Alongside his exploration of the medium—through self-reflexive series and tributes to Niépce—Moriyama developed a highly recognizable style: a direct, rapid approach to photography, often shot in the street. Many of these images function as metaphors for photography itself: a camera, rolls of film, a portrait studio display window, a red light, a few sunflowers—a photographer’s favorite flower, because it always turns toward the sun. He also practiced self-portraiture extensively. When he photographs his shadow or his reflection in a mirror, it is not out of narcissism. Through the figure of the photographer, he is ultimately addressing photography itself. From the beginning, Moriyama works within what might be called meta-photography—with evident pleasure.

Writings

Moriyama’s best-known photograph is that of a stray dog, taken in 1971 in the low, raking light of an early morning, almost backlit. Present in nearly all his exhibitions and publications, printed in both orientations and reproduced across multiple formats, it has become one of the iconic images of 20th-century photography. It has appeared on whiskey and olive oil bottles, as well as on pins, plates, and magnets. For Moriyama, this image is a self-portrait. It appears on the cover of his first collection of writings, published in 1984 under the title *Inu no kioku* [*Memories of a Dog*]. Alongside his photographic work, Moriyama has written extensively, publishing more than a dozen volumes. The publication accompanying this exhibition presents, for the first time in French, twenty-two of his texts on photography. Long overdue.

DAIDO MORIYAMA

Born in 1938 in Osaka Prefecture, Japan, Daido Moriyama lives and works in Tokyo. Trained as a graphic designer, he turned to photography and became the assistant of Eikoh Hosoe, founder of the Vivo agency, before launching his career as an independent photographer in 1964. He published various photographic series in magazines such as *Camera Mainichi*, where he documented the rapid transformations of Japanese society. This work earned him the New Artist Award from the Japan Photo Critics Society in 1967.

Daido Moriyama quickly emerged as a leading figure through a radical approach to the photographic medium and a distinctive aesthetic, famous for his blurred and grainy black-and-white images notably developed within the magazine *Provoke*. He does not seek to document the world objectively, but rather to capture its vibrations, its invisible details, its fragments of life. His camera becomes an extension of his gaze, guided by instinct and curiosity. This visceral quest is especially evident in *Farewell Photography* (1972), a manifesto-like work in which he deconstructs the traditional codes of the image.

After experiencing a profound personal and artistic crisis, Daido Moriyama returned to photography in the early 1980s, determined to explore his identity, the essence of the image, memory, and history. It was also during this period that he renewed his interest in street photography. He roamed the streets of Tokyo, New York, and Paris in a state he described as a “photographic trance.”

He has received some of the most prestigious awards in photography and culture, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Center of Photography (2012), the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from the French Ministry of Culture (2018), and the Hasselblad International Photography Award (2019).

Daido Moriyama, Love Letters to Photography

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“As I enlarged the image of this dog in my darkroom, a shiver ran down my spine. Because the photograph had been taken quickly, certain details had escaped me at the time. The animal’s eyes—its whole body—expressed a mix of hostility and deep sadness, as if it were challenging whoever looked at it.”

Daido Moriyama, 2009



Daido Moriyama, *Stray Dog*, Misawa, Aomori (1971)

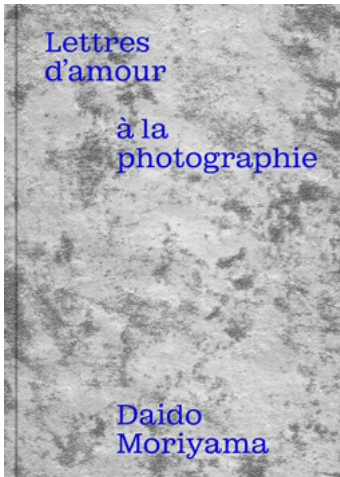
Daido Moriyama

Love Letters to Photography

May 20 – October 4, 2026

CUBE

PUBLICATION



"Is photography either mirror or window?
I just think it is both."
Daido Moriyama, 2012

Daido Moriyama

Lettres d'amour à la photographie [Love Letters to Photography]

Publishers: Éditions Delpire and Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

Editor: Clément Chéroux

Scientific advisor: Jean-Kenta Gauthier

Texts: Daido Moriyama, Clément Chéroux, and Jean-Kenta Gauthier

French edition

This volume extends the exhibition Daido Moriyama – *Love Letters to Photography* by providing access, for the very first time in French, to a selection of twenty-two texts by the photographer. Written over the decades, these essays, fragments, and statements shed light on his practice and his reflection on the medium. They reveal a free, direct, and often radical way of thinking that accompanies and extends his photographic work.

Hardcover

17 x 24 cm

256 pages

100 color and black-and-white photographs

May 2026

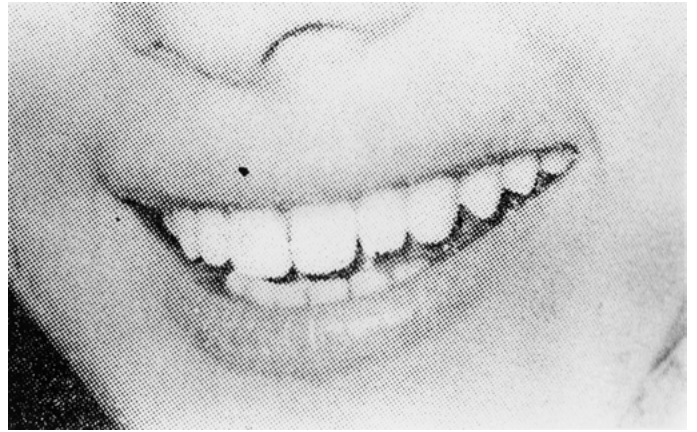
ISBN : 979-10-95821-86-1

42 €

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01
Daido Moriyama, Saint-Loup-de-Varennes, France, 2008, in *Jikkenshitsu kara no nagame* / *View from the Laboratory*, 2013



02
Daido Moriyama, Tokyo, Japon, 1969, in *Shashin yo sayonara* [Adieu photographie], 1972



03
Daido Moriyama, Shibuya, Tokyo, 1964-1968, in *Nippon gekijo shashin-cho* [Théâtre japonais – album photographique], 1968



04
Daido Moriyama, Ikebukuro, Tokyo, Japon, 2011, in *Jikkenshitsu kara no nagame* / *View from the Laboratory*, 2013

Daido Moriyama

Love Letters to Photography

Press images

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05
Daido Moriyama, *Documentary 78*, Setagaya, Tokyo, Japon, avril 1986



06
Daido Moriyama, Shinjuku, Tokyo, Japon, 2002



07
Daido Moriyama, Komoro, Nagano, Japon, 1977



08
Daido Moriyama, *Stray Dog*, Misawa, Aomori, 1971

Over the past few years, Nuits Balnéaires has established a practice that is hybrid in many ways. The Ivorian artist moves between fine art, fashion, and research-based practices; his influences are a blend of cinema, literature, theater, performance, and cultural history; his life is both rooted in the small coastal town of Grand-Bassam, east of Abidjan, and involved with many more international cultural communities.

Eboro was created as part of the Latitudes program of the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, of which Nuits Balnéaires is the second laureate. This project introduces a more autobiographical dimension to Nuits Balnéaires' work. The project begins in Dakar, Senegal, where, on July 22, 1986, his uncle, Noël X. Ebony, a distinguished journalist and playwright, died in unresolved circumstances. "There is an inexplicable connection between us, perhaps stemming from transgenerational memory", Nuits Balnéaires has said. In the Agni-Bona tradition of Côte d'Ivoire, which has profoundly shaped the artist, the nephew plays a key role in accompanying the uncle during his transition into the afterlife. For the artist, this took the form of an exploration of how prior trajectories, whether distant or familial, may influence or even predetermine our own life paths.

Nuits Balnéaires created *Eboro* by intuition, allowing the affective power of place and familial memory to shape the interconnected visual chapters of this multilayered work. He welcomes the melancholy and trauma of his uncle's story with gentleness and hope, probing how imagination can contribute to healing transgenerational wounds.

Curator of the exhibition

David Company,
Creative Director, International Center of Photography
(ICP), New York

NUITS BALNÉAIRES

Multidisciplinary artist and poet Nuits Balnéaires was born and raised in Abidjan, into a family with Akan Agni-Bona and Malinké origins. With intimate connections to both peoples' traditions, culture and spirituality, his work creates a parallel space-time beyond the constraints of geography, while embracing the universality of oceans as the connective tissue between worlds.

Nuits Balnéaires cultivates powerful ties with the energy of the Gulf of Guinea and its landscapes, hence the omnipresence of water in his photographic practice, films and poetry. Haunted by the duality of life and death, and the possibility of communication between these states, his works convey a euphoric sense of tranquillity that feels both classical and contemporary.

In 2019, Nuits Balnéaires settled in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, to develop his artistic practice, drawing on his years as a fashion and conceptual photographer. He secured a one-year bursary in visual journalism with the World Press Photo Foundation, and was among the winners of a 2020 call for projects from the Goethe-Institut and the Prince Claus Fund, which supports cultural and artistic responses to environmental change. Nuits Balnéaires's work has been exhibited at Art X Lagos, Paris's 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, FNB Art Johannesburg, and in numerous exhibitions across Côte d'Ivoire, Canada, the US, the UK, France, the Netherlands and Australia.

THE EXHIBITION

Ivorian photographer Nuits Balnéaires is the second recipient of the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès' Latitudes program, mentored by David Company, Creative Director at the International Center of Photography (ICP), New York. The exhibition presented at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson is the photographer's first monographic exhibition in France.

THE LATITUDES PROGRAM

Inaugurated in 2024, Latitudes is a Fondation d'entreprise Hermès program developed in partnership with the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson in Paris and the International Center of Photography (ICP) in New York.

It broadens the scope of Immersion, the former French-American photography commission launched in 2014 with the same partners, a cross-residency between France and the United States.

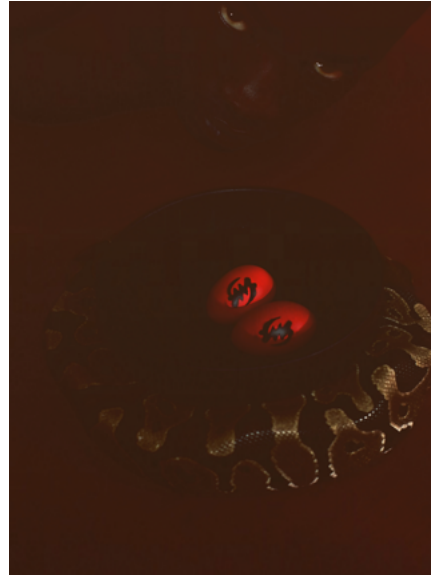
This program supporting contemporary creation takes its name from a geographical concept, affirming its ambition to shed light on artists from scenes that are still underrepresented on the international stage. In practice, the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson and the ICP select a country from which photographers are invited to submit a project. A jury composed of representatives from the three institutions selects the annual winner.

The chosen photographer receives a grant to produce a new series. The resulting work is exhibited in Paris at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, in New York at the ICP, and in the winner's home country.

In 2024, Côte d'Ivoire is the first country to be honored with two laureates (2024 and 2025).



PUBLICATION



Nuits Balnéaires *Eboro*

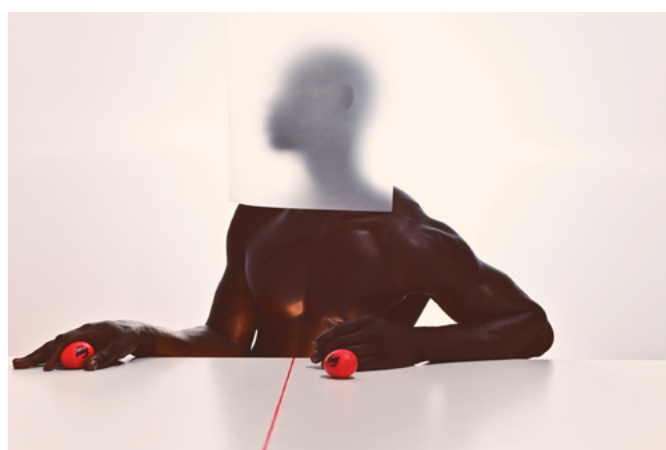
Publishers: Atelier EXB and Fondation d'entreprise Hermès
Interview with David Company, Creative Director at ICP,
New York
Poems by Noël X. Ebony
Available in two versions: French and English

Swiss binding, paperback
22.5 × 30 cm
140 pages
January 2026
ISBN: 978-2-36511-446-2
45 €

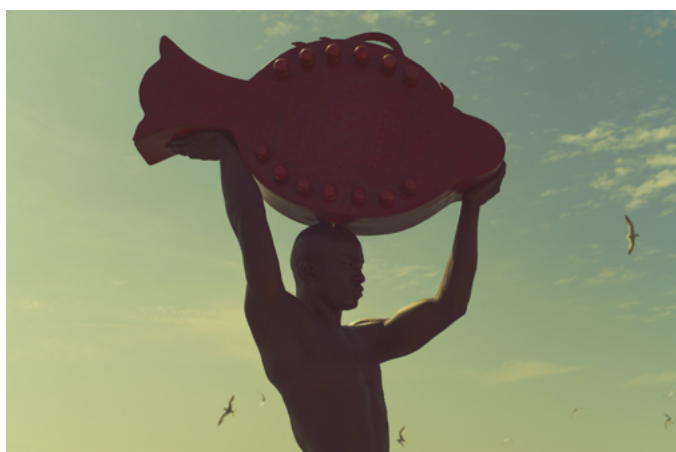
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Nuits Balnéaires, *Adama et Awa 2*, Eboro, 2025
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02
Nuits Balnéaires, *Adama et Awa 3*, Eboro, 2025
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Nuits Balnéaires, *Le Mat 6*, Eboro, 2025
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07
Nuits Balnéaires, *Passages 5*, Eboro, 2025
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01
Hervé Abbadie, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, 79 rue des Archives, Paris, September 2025



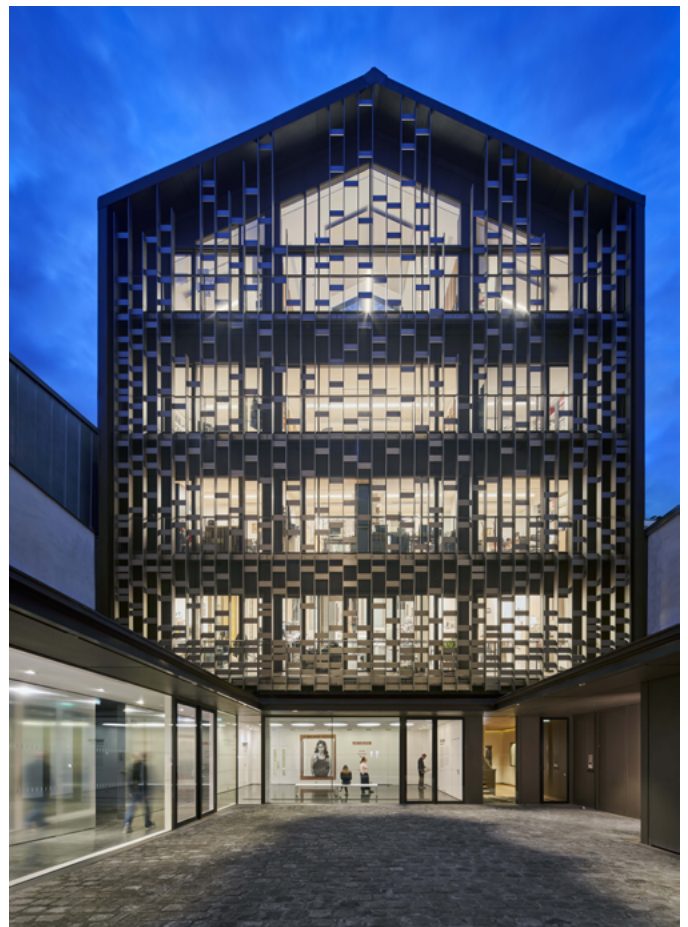
02
Entrance and bookstore
Hervé Abbadie, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, 79 rue des Archives, Paris, September 2025



03
Exposition Richard Avedon - *In the American West*
Hervé Abbadie, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, 79 rue des Archives, Paris, September 2025



04
Exposition Mame-Diarra Niang - *Remember to Forget*
Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, 79 rue des Archives, Paris, October 2024



05
Hervé Abbadie, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, 79 rue des Archives, Paris, September 2025

