



Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

Romain Bernini
Voyages à Giphantie

—

Henri Cartier-Bresson
The Europeans

Press release

January 28, 2025 — May 3, 2026

Press opening of the exhibitions

**Tuesday, January 27, 2026
2 p.m. – 4 p.m.**

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From Tuesday to Sunday: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Full price 10€ / Reduced price 6€

Henri Cartier-Bresson et Martine Franck created the Fondation in 2023 with the intention to dedicate its spaces not only to photographers of all styles and generations, but also to “painters, sculptors, and draftsmen.” After the exhibition of Alberto Giacometti’s sculptures in 2005, followed three years later by Saul Steinberg’s drawings, the Fondation now renews its commitment to presenting other types of practices by showing the paintings of Romain Bernini. For around twenty years, this French artist, born in 1979, has been developing an impressive body of work situated at the crossroads of figuration and a form of urban esotericism. He captures moments that function as hypotheses. His compositions depict latent situations in which figures in search of meaning embody kinds of living enigmas.

The series of paintings presented here for the first time is inspired by a curious little eighteenth-century book, *Giphantie*, by Charles Tiphaigne. Guided by a “prefect,” this journey through an imaginary land inhabited by “elemental spirits” belongs to the tradition of utopian tales. It allows its author to criticize the society of his time while giving free rein to his imagination. Published in 1760, this short work is best known for predicting the advent of modern technologies such as the remote transmission of images and sound, surveillance techniques, contact lenses, freeze-dried food, and many others. But above all, it describes—more than half a century before Nicéphore Niépce’s earliest experiments in 1816, and nearly eight decades before the official announcement of Louis Daguerre’s invention in 1839, a method of producing images that already resembles photography, and so we find our way back to it.

Curator of the exhibition

Clément Chéroux

Director, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1979, Romain Bernini lives and works in Paris. He creates a body of pictorial work shaped by reflections on color and space. His figurative practice draws inspiration both from American Color Field painting and from other artistic traditions as well as popular culture. Whether depicting enigmatic scenes, masked figures, animals, or imaginary spaces, his works invite a sensory and contemplative experience, somewhere between reality and utopia.

Romain Bernini is represented by Suzanne Tarasiève Gallery (Paris) and HdM Gallery (London and Beijing). A resident at the Villa Medici in Rome in 2010–2011, he has participated in numerous exhibitions in France: *Zeugma* (jointly at the Abbaye Royale and the Musée d’art moderne de Fontevraud in 2025), at MO.CO in Montpellier, Parvis Contemporary Art Center in Tarbes, MUba Eugène-Leroy in Tourcoing, Tripostal in Lille, Collège des Bernardins in Paris, Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry, and abroad: at K11 in Wuhan and 1905 Art Space in Shenyang, China, at Daegu Art Factory and Wooyang Museum of Contemporary Art in South Korea, at the Institut Français du Cambodge in Phnom Penh... .

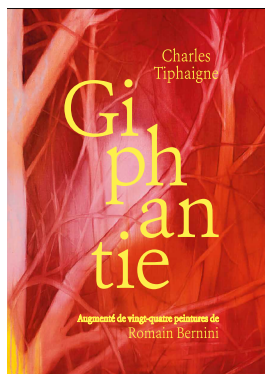
His works are included in numerous public collections such as the Centre Pompidou, the Centre national des arts plastiques, the Musée des Abattoirs in Toulouse, MAC VAL, Frac Île-de-France, and Frac des Pays de la Loire. A large tapestry has been woven from one of his works at the Cité internationale de la Tapisserie in Aubusson.

Since 2023, he has been teaching at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris.



Romain Bernini, *Autopsy*, 2025, oil on canvas, 150 x 120 cm

PUBLICATION



Giphantie

Text by Charles Tiphaigne, with twenty-four paintings
by Romain Bernini
Postface by Clément Chéroux

Publishers: Atelier EXB and Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

Publication date: January 29, 2026

French version only

14.5 × 20.5 cm

184 pages

Price: €39

Press visuals must not be altered or cropped under any circumstances.



01
Romain Bernini, *Song to the Siren*, 2025, oil on canvas, 200 x 250 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025



02
Romain Bernini, *Discoverers*, 2025, oil on canvas, 180 x 220 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025



03
Romain Bernini, *Him VII*, 2025, oil on canvas, 200 x 220 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025

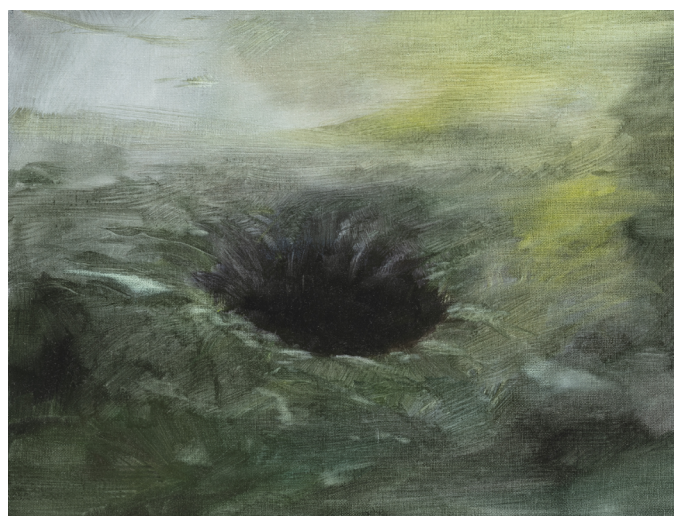


04
Romain Bernini, *Solar Ghost*, 2025, oil on canvas, 200 x 160 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025

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05
Romain Bernini, *See Through*, 2025, oil on canvas, 150 x 120 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025



06
Romain Bernini, *Fontanelle*, 2015, oil on canvas, 27 x 35 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025



07
Romain Bernini, *Autopsy*, 2025, oil on canvas, 150 x 120 cm
Credit: Romain Bernini © Adagp, Paris, 2025

Henri Cartier-Bresson was a convinced European. While he traveled all over the world, he also explored Europe extensively. After the Second World War, the continent was a vast field of ruins haunted by rupture and desolation. In the context of the Cold War, the construction of the European Union was one of the major geopolitical issues of the time. After producing numerous photographic series for magazine press in Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Switzerland, and France, Cartier-Bresson wanted to bring them together in a single volume. He did not intend to create a travel book about these countries, as many existed at the time, but rather a portrait of the people who inhabit them. The book was indeed not titled *Europe*, but *The Europeans*.

His aim was to show what makes each people of this geographical area unique, while highlighting their shared humanity. Featuring a stunning cover by the Catalan painter Joan Miró, the book was published in 1955 by Verve, as a follow-up to *The Decisive Moment*. It had never been republished since. The present exhibition brings together some of the most important photographs from the book on the occasion of its reissue.

Curator of the exhibition

Clément Chéroux,
Director, Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON (1908–2004)

Henri Cartier-Bresson is regarded as one of the greatest photographers of the 20th century. After studying painting and associating with the Surrealists, he adopted photography as his means of expression in the early 1930s.

He witnessed and documented the major political and social upheavals of the 20th century: taken prisoner during World War II, he escaped and joined the Resistance. He photographed the final days of Gandhi in India, Communist China, the USSR during the Cold War, postwar United States, and the struggles for independence in Africa.

In 1947, he co-founded the Magnum Photos cooperative with Robert Capa, George Rodger, and David Seymour, an organization designed to give photographers control over the distribution of their images. That same year, the Museum of Modern Art in New York held a retrospective of his work.

From the 1970s onwards, after dedicating his career to photography and making several documentary films, he turned away from these mediums to focus on drawing.

In 2003, one year before his death, he co-founded the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson with his wife, the photographer Martine Franck, and their daughter Mélanie.

Henri Cartier-Bresson

The Europeans

January 28, 2025 — May 3, 2026



Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Venice, Italy*, 1953
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

Henri Cartier-Bresson

The Europeans

January 28, 2025 — May 3, 2026

TUBE

PUBLICATION

Published by Verve in 1955, three years after the resounding success of *The Decisive Moment*, *The Europeans* brings together 114 photographs taken by Henri Cartier-Bresson between 1950 and 1955 across ten European countries. Taken during assignments for *Harper's Bazaar*, *Life*, *Holiday*, and *Paris Match*, these images form a unique visual testimony of post-war Europe in the midst of reconstruction.

From the revelers of Bastille Day in Paris to midnight masses in the Abruzzi, and from the funeral of George VI to the dockworkers of Hamburg, *The Europeans* does not aim to provide an exhaustive inventory, but rather composes a vibrant portrait of the inhabitants of a continent undergoing profound change.

Beyond national borders, the book evokes a broader sense of European identity, shaped as much by everyday life as by the major upheavals of the time.

The Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson now offers a reissue of *The Europeans* in a smaller more and accessible format, while remaining faithful to the spirit of the original edition. Seventy years after its first publication, this reissue provides a unique opportunity to rediscover a major work of Henri Cartier-Bresson's oeuvre, enriched with a text by Clément Chéroux replacing the work in its historical and artistic context.

Henri Cartier-Bresson — *The Europeans*

Publisher: Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

Available in French and English

Hardcover, 170 × 230 mm

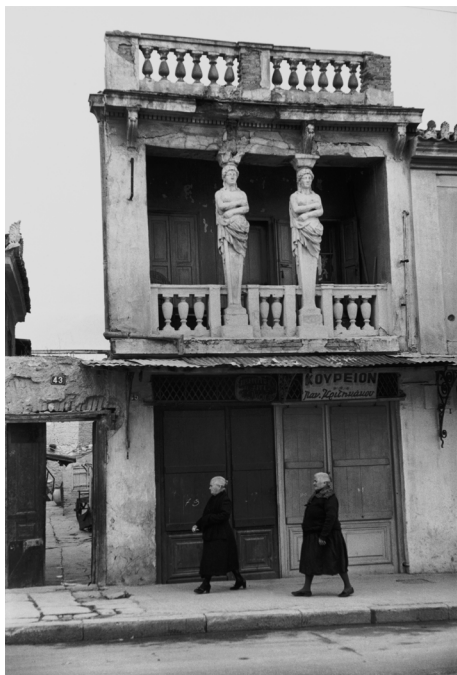
156 pages

November 2025

Price: €42



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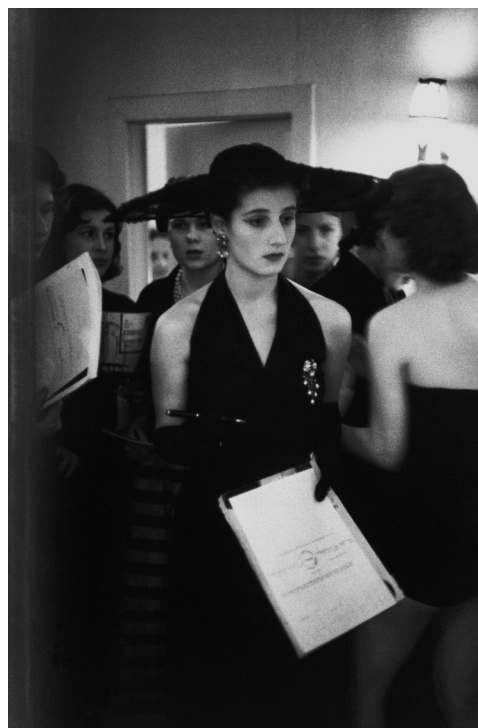
01
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Athens, Greece*, 1953
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



02
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Burgos, Spain*, 1953
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



03
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Hamburg, West Germany*, 1953
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



04
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Hamburg, West Germany*, 1952
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

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05
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Funeral of George VI, Trafalgar Square, London, United Kingdom, 1952*
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



06
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Zugdidi, Georgia, 1954*
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

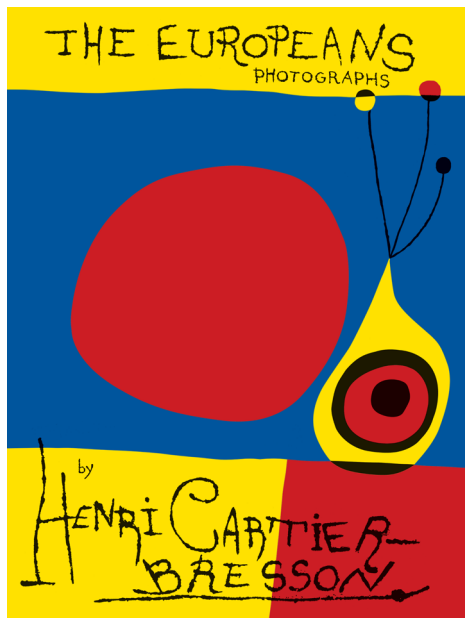


07
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Venice, Italy, 1953*
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos



08
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Les Halles, Paris, France, 1952*
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson / Magnum Photos

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09
Joan Miró, *The Europeans*, 1955
© Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris, 2025



01
Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, 79 rue des Archives, Paris
September 2025 © photo Hervé Abbadie



02
Reception and bookshop of the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, June 2024
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson



03
Exhibition: Mame-Diarra Niang – *Remember to Forget*, October 2024
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson



04
Exhibition: Vasantha Yogananthan - *Mystery Street*, May 2023
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05
Exhibition: Stephen Shore - *Vehicular & Vernacular*, June 2024
© Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson



06
Exhibition: Richard Avedon - *In the American West*
September 2025 © photo Hervé Abbadie

