

Jellel Gasteli

Biography & CV

Born 1958. Tunis, Tunisia

Lives and works Tunis, Tunisia

Jellel Gasteli is a prominent photographer whose practice is closely tied to Africa, the Maghreb region, the Mediterranean, the Sahara, as well as to his French-Tunisian heritage. His photographic approach was once grounded in large-scale black-and-white silver prints and transitioned to digital photography through an appropriation of colour. Vernacular walls—the subject of his fascination— are surfaces shaped by time, gesture, and context and serve as both his subject and frame. These fragments of urban façades, found in cities like Tunis, Tangier, Marrakech, and Cairo, carry layers of anonymous, unintentional marks that resonate with the aesthetic sensibilities of certain painters such as Mark Rothko, Nicolas De Stael...etc. He considers photography a form of subtractive abstraction drawn from reality, using it in a strict, unembellished manner to provoke a shift in perception. His artworks are in a constant dialogue with architectural surfaces—walls where successive layers of paint and plaster reveal the transience of time. As new colours overwrite older ones, the materials and hues that are captured in his work are transformed into witnesses of history.

His photographs have been shown at several prestigious exhibition spaces such as the 32Bis, Tunis, Tunisia, Institut du Monde Arabe, and the Museum Für Moderne Kunst located in Frankfurt, Germany as part of the group exhibition *The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Hell and Purgatory Revisited by contemporary African artists*. His work has also been shown at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. His work forms part of several public collections such as the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain; the Institut du Monde Arabe; La Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, France; the Solomon R. Guggenheim in New York, U.S.A.; the Museum Kunst Palast in Düsseldorf, Germany; the Sindika Dokolo Collection in Luanda, Angola and the Tunisian Ministry of Culture in Tunis.

Education

1985 National School of Photography. Arles, France

Solo Exhibitions

2018 Photographies. Selma Feriani Gallery. Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia

2018 Carnets. Le Salon H. Paris, France

2018 Barkhanes. 32bis. Tunis, Tunisia

2017 Les Carnets de Tanger et Marrakech. Institut Français de Tunisie. Tunis, Tunisia

2012 Rock the Kasbah. Dégagements...la Tunisie un an après. Institut du Monde Arabe. Paris, France

2010 Objects in The Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear. Lubumbashi
Biennale. Lubumbashi, RDC
2002 Série blanche. Institut du Monde Arabe. Paris, France

Group Exhibitions

2017 The Straight Six: Afrique Capitales. Gare Saint Sauveur. Lille, France
Biennale des photographes du monde arabe contemporain. Institut du
Monde Arabe. Paris, France
2014 The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Hell, Purgatory revisited by Contemporary
African Artists. Museum Für Moderne Kunst. Frankfurt, Germany. Smithsonian.
Washington D.C., U.S.A.
2007 2134 TU 74: Rencontres de Bamako. Bamako, Mali
2005 Eclipse: Africa Remix. Italy

Collections

Fonds National d'Art Contemporain. Paris, France
Institut du Monde Arabe. Paris, France
Maison Européenne de la Photographie. Paris, France
Solomon R. Guggenheim. New York, U.S.A.
Museum Kunst Palast. Düsseldorf, Germany
Sindika Dokolo Foundation. Luanda, Angola
Ministry of Culture. Tunis, Tunisia

Publications

2024 Genius of the place: Al-Bunt - Texte de Nabil Naoum, Saudi Arabia
Ministry of Culture. Skira editore
2019 En Tunisie (réédition) - éditions Lalla Hadria, textes de Abdelwahab
Meddeb et de Albert Memmi
2018 Barkanes - éditions Lalla Hadria.
2001 Il Fiore Sbocciato - éditions AF Bari, texte de Abdelwahab Meddeb.
2001 Série Blanche - co-édition éditions Eric Koehler, Alesco et Agnès B.
1998 En Tunisie - éditions Eric Koehler, textes de Abdelwahab Meddeb et de
Albert Memmi.
1991 Blanches Traverses du Passé - éditions Fata Morgana, texte de
Abdelwahab Meddeb.
1991 Tanger Vues Choies - éditions Eric Koehler, textes de Paul Bowles.