



THE
COMMUNITY
CENTRE
18.9-9.10.2021
-
LISTE SHOWTIME
ONLINE
15-30.9.2021

SOUS LA TERRE
2012-2015

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE
9 RUE MÉHUL 93500 PANTIN FRANCE
WWW.THECOMMUNITY.IO - Liste WWW.LISTE.CH

MELCHIOR TERSEN

SOUS LA TERRE 2012–2015

18 SEPTEMBER — 9 OCTOBER 2021

The Community is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of French artist Melchior Tersen in Paris.

As the exhibition title, “SOUS LA TERRE 2012–2015,” suggests, the body of work on view is entirely dedicated and shot in the Parisian catacombs over the course of three years. This archival documentation is an ode for the city that is dear to him and is a celebration that brings forward bits and glimpses of an underground universe widely known in popular imagery yet rarely witnessed beyond its touristic appeal. The exhibition at The Community Centre will feature a vast collection of imagery from the series comprising of more than 1000 photographic works on film, a new series of paintings, and various memorabilia collected by the artist during his balades in the catacombs. The Community will present three works from the series “SOUS LA TERRE 2012–2015” in the Liste Art Fair 2021 online edition in conjunction with the exhibition. The Community was awarded the Impact fund, an opportunity provided by the Swiss Eckenstein-Geigy Foundation, which gives financial support to participate in Liste.

Paris has a deep and rich connection to its underground, with the oldest and densest subway network in the world, with endless tunnels pulsating beneath our familiar streets. These tunnels bear a dense cultural history, ranging from agricultural tentatives to hiding Resistance fighters and rave parties. Today, the tunnels are taken over by different clandestine groups, a loosely-knit community whose members might spend nights and days below the city. They also go by the name cataphiles. Melchior Tersen’s series documenting the subculture of the underworld began in 2012 when the artist started to have weekly strolls – balades – with a group of friends, sometimes strangers, to discover the secrets of the underground scenes and the vibrant cavities of the catacombs. In these works, the viewer can find everything (un)imaginable, ranging from never-ending parties and artefacts, refined architectural elements and graffiti. The photographer went there weekly for four years, always without a prearranged plan or idea, while having a tourist-like approach to the subject matter. The catacombs are an object of fascination – everybody knows them, rare are those who have visited.

Born in 1987 in Paris, Tersen mainly uses photography as his artistic medium, documenting and archiving the contemporary culture. Inspired primarily by different scenes and expressivities in popular culture, he is constantly photographing and documenting while experiencing and understanding the manifold expressions of commodity pop culture. He also looks for the debris of this culture: the cans, the plastic, the worn sneakers, and branded t-shirts are also of interest to him, placing them in everyday imagery. Grown-up in the Parisian suburbs, Tersen explores and maps the city during his nightly and daily wanderings, walking for hours on end while searching for the unknown. Obsessed with collecting and documentation, the artist goes towards the excess, relentlessly creating his personal, self-styled mythology and cult of images. Tersen explores different genres of subcultures, not through simple documentation or approaching them through a sensational point of view, but rather is exploring their importance and reflecting and bringing forward the urban cultural sensibility.

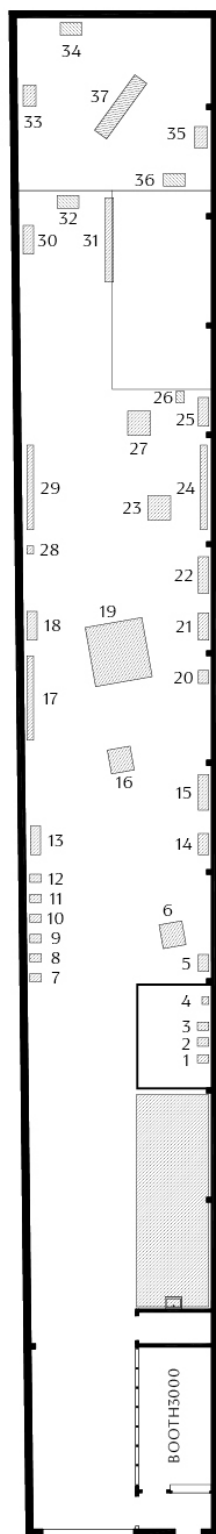
There is no moralizing, no fetishes, nor idealizing in these moments of the Parisian mood that Tersen captures so accurately. His photography is a pure product of inclusion and observation: providing extensive documentation of contemporary culture, he manages to capture the essence of things that all too many among us fail to see. There is no place for provocation in his body of work but rather a laborious day-to-day observation. His work speaks of the demolition of structures, broadening of views, attitudes and behaviour: Tersen describes the actual world by working with the raw matter that composes it. Through his practice, he has captured a myriad of Parisian moods and temperaments his entire adulthood. This series of the catacombs is just one among a series of five about the city of Paris.



MELCHIOR TERSEN

SOUS LA TERRE 2012–2015

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1. ROAD OF HELL, 2015
2. MANGO, 2014
3. PISCINE, 2014
4. CATALAMPE, 2012–2016
5. HEINEKEN ADVERTISING, 2021
6. MUNITIONS, 2021
7. CATALAMPE RED-BULL, 2014
8. PARTAGE, 2014
9. PÈRE ET FILS, 2014
10. EXCALIBUR, 2015
11. FONTAINE DES CHARTREUX, 2014
12. VERBATIM, 2014
13. LA PLAGE, 2012
14. MANGO 2, 2014
15. MANGO 1, 2014
16. ANDROS DIY BANG, FOUND IN 2015
17. CATALAMPE, 2012–2016
18. SKIN, 2012
19. PLAN DE CATACOMBES DE PARIS
20. SOURCE DES PINS, 2015
21. ROYALE COBRA (CARRIÈRE DE MEUDON), 2015
22. SOUS LA TERRE (CARRIÈRE DE MEUDON), 2015
23. NEW BALANCE, 2015
24. CATALAMPE, 2012–2016
25. LABYRINTHE, 2012
26. BOB L'ÉPONGE, 2014
27. LAMPE ET PYRO FUMIGÈNE
28. CATALAMPE, 2012–2016
29. JEWELS OF PARIS, 2012–2016
30. THE ROAD OF HELL, 2015
31. MILWAUKEE ADVERTISING, 2021
32. CATACOMBE ADVERTISING, 2021
33. BAISE MACABRE 1, 2021
34. BAISE MACABRE 2, 2021
35. BAISE MACABRE 3, 2021
36. OSSUARY, 2012–2016
37. CROCODILE DE PARIS

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LA PLAGE, 2012

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass
80 x 120 cm
Edition of Two

As part of
LISTE SHOWTIME ONLINE
15 — 30 September 2021

Prix: €4,500.00



SKIN, 2012

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass
60 x 90 cm
Edition of Three

As part of
LISTE SHOWTIME ONLINE
15 — 30 September 2021

Prix: €3,500.00



LABYRINTHE, 2012

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass
60 x 90 cm
Edition of Three

As part of
LISTE SHOWTIME ONLINE
15 — 30 September 2021

Prix: €3,500.00

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CATALAMPE RED-BULL, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00



MANGO, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00



PISCINE, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00

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EXCALIBUR, 2015

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish), custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00



BOB L'ÉPONGE, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish), custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00



PÈRE ET FILS, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish), custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00

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FONTAINE DES CHARTREUX, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish), custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00



VERBATIM, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish), custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00



ROAD OF HELL, 2015

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish), custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass

20 x 30 cm

Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00

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PARTAGE, 2014

Ultra-chromatic inkjet print on 260g Hahnemühle Fine Art paper (satin finish),
custom aluminium framing, anti-reflective glass
20 x 30 cm
Edition of Three

Prix: €950.00

FOR MORE INFORMATION
AND QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER WORKS
PLEASE CONTACT:
THE COMMUNITY
INFO@THECOMMUNITY.IO



MELCHIOR TERSEN

SOUS LA TERRE 2012–2015

TEXT BY VALENTIN VENNESSON

Melchior Tersen's art is about collectibles. He accumulates and absorbs objects and images that fascinate him: collections of clothes, figurines, books, VHS tapes... His photographs act in a like manner; he captures scenes that are built into his vast library of moments and subjects that provoke his interest. He opts for a wide range of topics, from football fans to rap or metal concerts. His photographs are snapshots of our contemporary culture. What can be considered mass or commercial culture becomes approachable under his gaze.

His work is captured from the spectator's point of view. He finds himself amid the crowd, in front of the stage or the parking lot of a festival. Once, he shot a series of photographs at the new Booba record launch in the Champs-Élysées Virgin Megastore, where he went initially as a fan who couldn't miss the event, and by being there, he documented a moment of French rap history. He himself is an admirer of the culture he portrays. But above all, this is what he's passionate about and what drives his everyday life. Melchior Tersen is a first-person photographer.

He is also an explorer of Paris' greater area and uncovers locations that are not easily accessible. He wanders in the hidden places of the region. It is by adventuring that he found himself in the Meudon stone-pit. Guided by acquaintances that he came across by chance, he ended up walking around the cave with his friends. At this moment, he was struck by a snake throne sculpture that he captured in a photograph. The stories surrounding Melchior Tersen form a universe he conveys as much as the objects we can see in his photographs.

There, he experienced many different universes, and this exhibition summarizes his discovery of the network of underground cemeteries beneath Paris. The work presented is as much about the catacombs as the trip he had with his friends to discover this labyrinth.

"I enjoyed discovering new rooms: there was the cubic room where we hang out after entering from Port Royal, the spacious room Z with its rock columns, the book room, the castle room, the 'Chartreux' room where we saw fish one time, the Camelot room with 'Excalibur' planted into the rock... When my friends took me to this room, I was destroyed, like a zombie. When I saw the sword, I had the impression of being in a fantasy movie. It was incredible."

In these photographs, we can witness the preparation for the descent, the necessary equipment, the visited spaces, and the encountered objects. We move away from objective documentation and set foot in a personal experience of the catacombs. It is everything that surrounds these underground moments – as much as the place itself – that makes the body of the exhibition.

"In the following years, we went to a few parties. Sometimes concerts were organized by friends, where we had to bring our equipment, batteries, tables, and find a suitable room. Occasionally we had trouble with the electricity, but we managed to get a connection; the difficult logistics of this place gave me as much pleasure as going to see a concert underground."

"Arrête, ici commence l'empire de la mort" (Stop, here begins the empire of death). The well-known quote engraved into the header at the entrance of the public ossuary also symbolically marks the separation between the exterior world and the underground. The sun does not shine for cataphiles. Time does not pass normally under Paris.

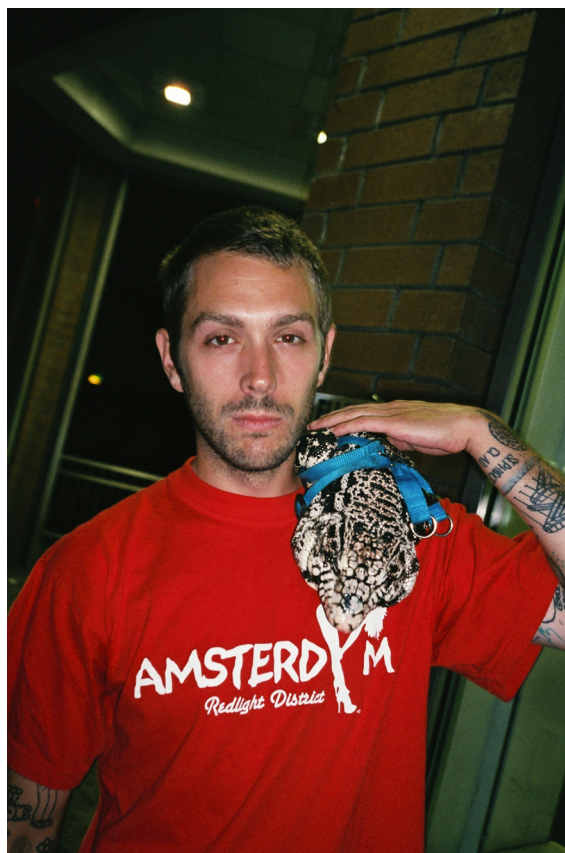
"It is a pleasure to be seated in a room and to light candles. To eat and to share what you have brought. To drink, smoke, listen to music, not be bothered by the passing time, and not have a phone connection. This is a real break from the modern world; since we are underground: clothes don't matter anymore... a beer, a cigarette, a long rolling paper, and batteries become scarce, the only products to be missed. I liked spending the days underground. By descending, time disappears. Alone with ourselves, without the intrusion of the world upstairs."

Melchior Tersen documented the events he experienced in the underground galleries. In this exhibition, he presents the public parts of his travel diary and opens up the doors of this hidden world.

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www.instagram.com/melchiortersen

Melchior Tersen (b. 1987) is a French multidisciplinary artist, working mainly with photography, publishing projects, clothing, and music. Having spent his entire life in the Parisian suburbs, Tersen is vastly inspired by diverse youth, popular and underground movements of contemporary society, which he has documented for the past fifteen years. His work is an iconic reference when it comes to the documentation of underground cultural communities. Recently, Tersen expanded his photographic practice by approaching the language of object making.

Tersen's recent exhibition projects include "Cardigan Show" at agnès b., 2020 (New York and Shanghai), entrance, 2019 (New York), 22 Ludlow, 2019 (New York), "Le Rolling Paper with Red Lebanese" at Le Bal, 2019 (Paris), and "Manifesto" at Lafayette Anticipations, Printing Room, 2019 (Paris).

Tersen is also known for his editorial work with recent collaborations, including M Le Monde, Balenciaga, and Dazed.

Later this year, Tersen is part of group exhibitions at Whaam! in New York from September 9th to October 3rd and the Parisian La Fab. agnès b opening in November. Also, in 2021, he will release two new publications, "Voyage Voyage" and "Climax", with London-based TOPSAFE.

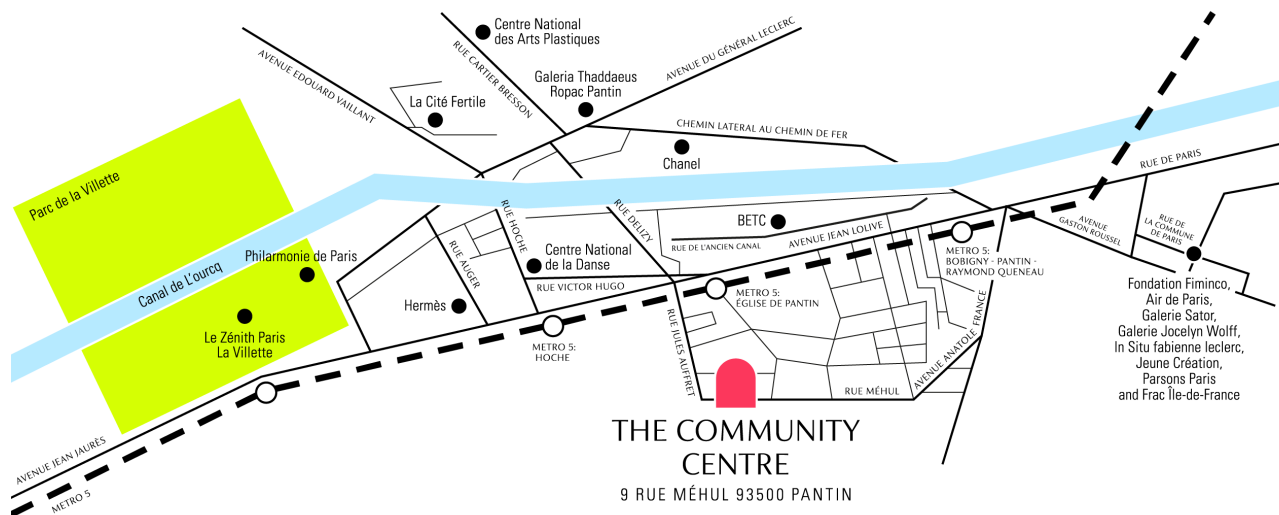


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ADDRESS
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METRO: ÉGLISE DE PANTIN (LINE 5)

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE WEEKLY OPENING HOURS

FRIDAY – SATURDAY

12H – 20H

SUNDAYS

12H – 18H

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE
IS ALSO OPEN BY APPOINTMENT OUTSIDE OF REGULAR OPENING HOURS.
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