



# **Mathieu Pernot**

Document/Monument

September 22, 2023 – January 7, 2024

# The exhibition

The exhibition *Document/Monument* covers more than thirty years of Mathieu Pernot's work: a wide selection ranging from the early 1990s to the present day. The approach to the show, the author's first retrospective in Spain, diverges from the pattern of previous exhibitions, as it brings together bodies of work produced at different times and which in some cases had never been viewed before. Of particular note are the pictures taken in the boxing clubs of Marseille in 1994 and the most recent series, done a few months ago in Melilla, commissioned by Fundación MAPFRE. Also on display for the first time there are photographs of destroyed buildings in Beirut in 2000, after the Lebanese civil war, which in the present exhibition are located near images of controlled demolition works undertaken in French *banlieues*. The series "The Shouters" is exhibited alongside graphic material from the Paris prison of La Santé.



Mathieu Pernot,  
*Untitled*, from the  
series "Boxers", 1994



Mathieu Pernot,  
*Mickaël*, from the  
series "Fire", 2013

The selection includes "The Gorgans", one of the author's key works, which has accompanied Pernot from the beginning of his photographic career until the present time. The Gorgan family, featured in different parts of the exhibition, is the main set of characters in several series. They have become the protagonists of Pernot's artistic discourse, not only due to their magnetism and the embodied power of the individual family members, but also because their lives intersect with the history of the Gypsy community over the centuries.

Pernot's books play a prominent role in his career, with almost twenty titles published to date. The present show also shines the light on the photographer's significant work as an editor, a facet that has allowed him to engage in distinctly autonomous publishing projects that complement his exhibitions.

# Keys

## Archive and materials

For many of his series, Mathieu Pernot uses material from different types of archives: historical, family and personal documentation, as well as family picture albums. These found images mingle and intertwine with photos taken by the author himself, who often makes no distinction between the origins of the pictures. In this way, his work poses a profound and ongoing reflection on the role of the photographer and the different functions of the photographic medium.

## Moving images

Pernot's photographs not only reflect different temporalities and geographies; they are also in constant interconnection, and in transit within the exhibition space itself. The purpose of many of the pictures when they were taken has shifted and evolved over



Mathieu Pernot, *La Santé*, 2015.

Graphic material collected by Mathieu Pernot from the cell walls and doors of La Santé prison.



Mathieu Pernot,  
*Implosion (Mantes-la-Jolie)*, from the series  
“Le grand ensemble”,  
July 1, 2001



Mathieu Pernot,  
*Brave New World*,  
from the series  
“Le grand ensemble”,  
2005

time, generating new interpretations. What were once postcards of ideal housing estates (“Brave New World”) are today the testimony of the failure of a social utopia (“Implosions/Clouds”); what was a family album of a trip made in 1926 reveals, almost a hundred years later, the destruction caused by wars and religious fundamentalism (“The Ruin of His Home”).

### **Displaced persons**

Many of the characters in the situations and realities depicted in Mathieu Pernot’s work find themselves on the margins of society: migrants, Gypsies, displaced persons and victims of war. Pernot presents us with their concrete, everyday lives, far removed from the grand narratives of history and its more or less tragic events.

Mathieu Pernot,  
*Melilla*, 2022



Over the years, all these characters mix and intertwine in his series and albums, creating an artistic discourse that proposes new and different readings of our own history.

Mathieu Pernot, born in 1970 in Fréjus (France), lives and works in Paris. After training in science, he enrolled at the École Nationale de Photographie d'Arles, where he graduated in 1996. Since his 1997 exhibitions at the Centre national de la photographie in Paris and the Rencontres d'Arles, Pernot has been featured in multiple exhibitions and publications and has received numerous awards.

*Victoria del Val, curator*

# Mathieu Pernot

Document/Monument

## Fundación MAPFRE

Paseo de Recoletos, 23  
28004 Madrid  
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cultura@fundacionmapfre.org

## Curator

Victoria del Val

## Dates

From September 22, 2023  
to January 7, 2024

## Opening times

Mondays (except public holidays): 2 pm to 8 pm  
Tuesdays to Saturdays: 11 am to 8 pm  
Sundays and public holidays: 11 am to 7 pm  
(Last access: 30 minutes before closing time.  
Visitors must leave the galleries 10 minutes  
before closing time)

## Ticket prices

Standard: 5 €  
Reduced: 3 €  
Free entry: Mondays (except public holidays)

## Commented tour

Brief explanation of the main artistic aspects  
of the exhibition and its most outstanding works.

Hours:

Wednesdays and Thursdays: 5 pm to 8 pm

Fridays and Saturdays: 12 am to 2 pm and

5 pm to 8 pm

Sundays and holidays: 12 am to 2 pm

No additional cost upon entry.

Information at reception desk

## Audio guide

4 €. Spanish and English

## Bookshop

LAIE  
Tel. 911 703 851  
fmapfre@laie.es



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[https://exposiciones.fundacionmapfre.org/  
PernotFMexhibition](https://exposiciones.fundacionmapfre.org/PernotFMexhibition)

Cover:  
Mathieu Pernot, *Untitled (Ana)*, from  
the series "The Gorgans", 1996-2015

All images: © Mathieu Pernot

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