

## THIS SEASON AT THE GRAND PALAIS

### I, AUGUSTUS, EMPEROR OF ROME...

19 March - 13 July 2014

The adopted son of Jules César, Augustus (63 B.C. - 14 A.D.) was the first Roman Emperor in history. His long reign (more than 40 years) was marked by remarkable artistic ferment: the "Augustan Age" and the name "Maecenas", a close friend of the Emperor and patron of Virgil, Propertius and Horace, have become universal cultural references.

### BILL VIOLA

5 March - 21 July 2014

Bill Viola is without doubt the most celebrated exponent of video art. This retrospective, the most important ever dedicated to the artist, will present moving drawings and monumental installations from 1975 to today. Focusing on both intimate and universal experiences, the artist expresses his emotional and spiritual journey through great metaphysical themes: life, death and transfiguration.

### CANDIDO PORTINARI. WAR AND PEACE

7 May - 9 June 2014

"War and Peace" was the last work and the masterpiece of Brazilian neo-realist painter Candido Portinari (1903-1962), considered as one of the leading 20<sup>th</sup> century Brazilian artists. Following a restoration campaign, it will be presented at the Grand Palais with forty preparatory drawings before being returned to the UN Headquarters in early summer.

### MONUMENTA 2014. ILYA AND EMILIA KABAKOV. THE STRANGE CITY

10 May - 22 June 2014

Each year Monumenta invites an internationally renowned contemporary artist to take over the Nave of the Grand Palais. In 2014, Russian artists Ilya and Emilia Kabakov will create a spectacular, mysterious installation: through a Utopian city under the monumental glass roof, it offers the visitor a journey of initiation and a reflection on the human condition.

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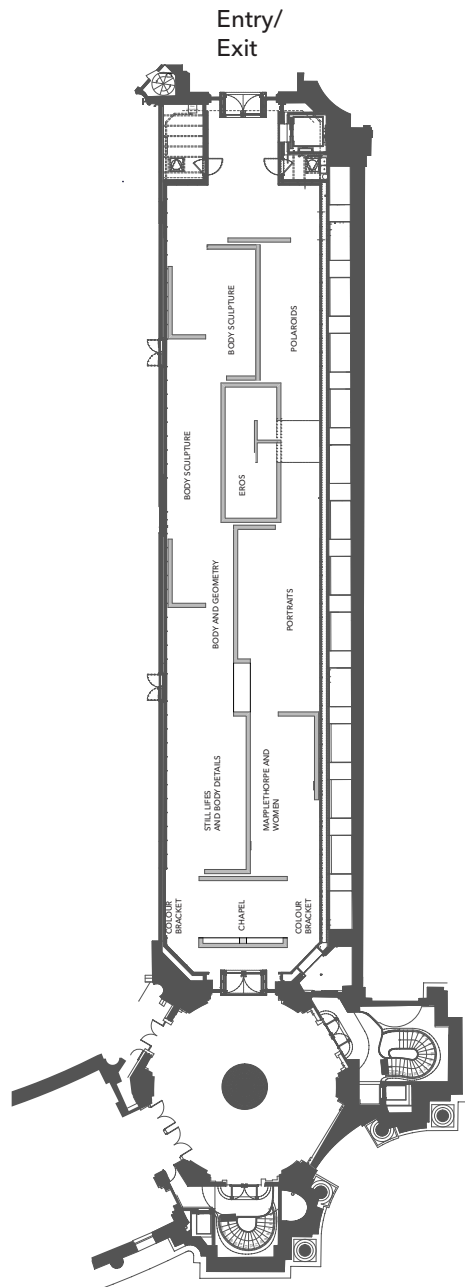
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## EXHIBITION FLOOR PLAN



## AROUND THE EXHIBITION

### CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Free admission to the Champs-Élysées Auditorium For the Wednesday encounters and Friday films, priority access on presentation of an invitation available at [grandpalais.fr](http://grandpalais.fr). Find our conferences online at [grandpalais.fr/itunes.fr/grandpalais](http://grandpalais.fr/itunes.fr/grandpalais) and France Culture Plus.

### ENCOUNTERS WEDNESDAY AT 6:30pm

**Wednesday 26 March.** Guest: Patti Smith (subject to change)

With Jérôme Neutres, general exhibition curator.

**Wednesday 18 June.** Guest: Edmund White

With Jérôme Neutres, general exhibition curator.

### FRIDAY FILMS 12pm / *Mapplethorpe Generation Cycle*

**Friday 28 March: *Midnight Cowboy***

By John Schlesinger, 1969, with Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight, VOST-French, 1h53

**Friday 11 April: *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom***

By Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1975, with Paolo Bonacelli, Giorgio Cataldi and Hélène Surgère, VOST-French, 1h56

**Friday 23 April: *Querelle***

By Rainer Werner Fassbinder, 1982, with Brad Davis, Franco Nero and Jeanne Moreau, VOST-French, 1h48

### EVENT

**Saturday 17 May**

European Museum Night Exceptional opening from 8pm to midnight. Free admission

### MULTIMEDIA

#### WEB DOCUMENTARY

*Mapplethorpe, a life in New-York, an exhibition in Paris*

Online at [grandpalais.fr/mapplethorpe-new-york](http://grandpalais.fr/mapplethorpe-new-york), videos, photos, music on an interactive map of New-York. A one-of-a-kind experience following in the footsteps of Robert Mapplethorpe.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

20.5 x 24 cm, hardback, 272 pages, 320 illustrations

Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais Publications, Paris 2014

Price: €35.

### EVENT MAPPLETHORPE-RODIN

The Musée Rodin is organising an accompanying exhibition entitled *Mapplethorpe-Rodin*, from 8 April to 21 September 2014. More information at [musee-rodin.fr](http://musee-rodin.fr)



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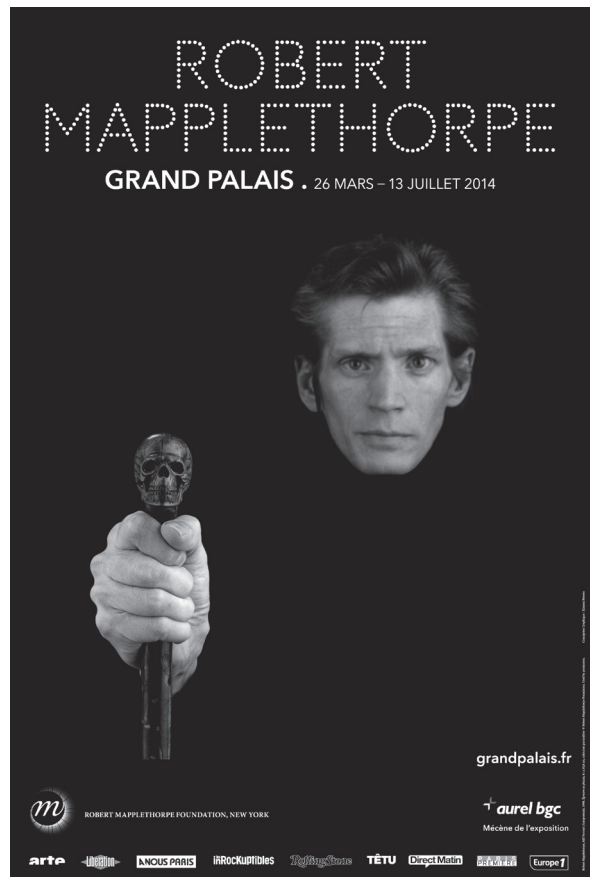
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Grand Palais, Galerie sud-est

## ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE

26 March - 13 July 2014



Discover the online web documentary  
*Mapplethorpe, a life in New-York, an exhibition in Paris*



## OVERVIEW OF THE EXHIBITION

· **The largest museum retrospective** ever dedicated to Robert Mapplethorpe.

· **A fresh look at his work**, emphasising the artistic rather than photographic aspect.

· **A selection of 250 shots**, reflecting the different themes he covered in his work.

· **An insight into the arty New York of the 1970-1980s**, with its emblematic figures: Patti Smith, Iggy Pop, Lisa Lyon, Grace Jones, Andy Warhol...

· **Prestigious loans** from the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and numerous private collectors.

### Epigraph:

“I am looking for perfection in form. I do that with portraits. I do it with cocks. I do it with flowers.”

Robert Mapplethorpe, interviewed by Barbara McKenzie, 1985

### Introduction:

Robert Mapplethorpe was an artist with an obsessive quest for aesthetic perfection. A sculptor at heart, and in his imagination, he wanted “people to see [his] works first as art and second as photography<sup>1</sup>.” An admirer of Michelangelo, Mapplethorpe championed the classical ideal - revised and reworked for the libertarian New York of the 1970s - and explored sophisticated printing techniques to create unique works and mixed compositions, which he framed in unusual ways.

Like the novel by Joris-Karl Huysmans, this exhibition has been organised “À rebours” and examines the work of another dandy, living at the end of another world. It opens with Mapplethorpe’s self-portrait with the skull-head cane: the image of a young man, already old, tragically cut down in the prime of life by AIDS, it also reveals how the master of the realm of shadows - photography - gave free rein to his imagination. Like a modern day Orpheus, beyond death, he seems alive - although only just - yet already in the afterlife of his work, beckoning us with his satanic cane to follow him into the underworld of his life, in search of his desire.

“Photography and sexuality have a lot in common,” explains Mapplethorpe. “Both are question marks, and that’s precisely what excites me most in life<sup>2</sup>.” Exploring the photography of the body, he pushed it to the limits of pornography, perhaps like no other artist before him. The desire we see in these images - often the photographer’s own desire - also reflects life in New York, as lived by some, in the 1970s and 80s, at the height of the sexual liberation movement. “I’m trying to record the moment I’m living in and where I’m living, which happens to be in New York. I am trying to pick up on the madness and give it some order<sup>3</sup>.”

This retrospective of Mapplethorpe’s work - the first in France since he passed away - features some two hundred and fifty images exploring a range of themes. They cover every aspect of Mapplethorpe’s art - bronze bodies and flesh sculptures, geometric and choreographic, still lives and anatomical details, bodies as flowers and flowers as bodies, court portraiture, night photography, and eroticism, soft and hard - interspersed with self-portraiture in all its forms. The works from the photographer’s early career, which close the exhibition, reveal how the path taken by his art was already mapped out in his first Polaroids. The sign of a great artist.

<sup>1</sup>Inge Biondi, “The Yin and the Yang of Robert Mapplethorpe”, *The Print Collector’s Newsletter*, New York, January 1979, p. 11

<sup>2</sup>Mark Thompson, “Mapplethorpe”, *The Advocate*, Atlanta, 24 July 1980.

<sup>3</sup>Sarah Kent, “Mapplethorpe”, *Time out*, London, 3-9 November 1983.

## Robert Mapplethorpe

**1946:** Born into a family of practicing Catholics in Queens, New York, the third of six children.

**1963:** Studies advertising design at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and majors in graphic arts.

**1967:** Enters a relationship with Patti Smith.

**1968:** Creates installations inspired by Joseph Cornell.

**1969:** Moves into the Chelsea Hotel in Manhattan, a haven for emerging artists, with Patti Smith. He produces collages with images cut out from gay magazines and makes talisman necklaces.

**1971:** Meets John McKendry, a curator at the Metropolitan Museum, who introduces him to the history of photography and gives him new Polaroid camera.

**1972:** Enters a relationship with Sam Wagstaff, a rich collector twenty-five years his senior and a former curator, and builds up a collection of photographs with him. Wagstaff buys him a loft at 24 Bond Street.

**1973:** First exhibition of Polaroids at the Light Gallery in New York.

**1975:** Produces the cover photo for Patti Smith’s album, *Horses*. Wagstaff gives him a Hasselblad camera.

**1977:** The Holly Solomon Gallery in New York organises an exhibition of Mapplethorpe’s photographs, while The Kitchen gallery displays his sadomasochistic works. Takes part in Documenta 6 in Kassel.

**1978:** The Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, USA publishes the first catalogue devoted to Mapplethorpe. Exhibits alongside Patti Smith at the Robert Miller Gallery, who becomes his exclusive dealer. First exhibition in Paris at La Remise du parc gallery, run by Samia Saouma and William Burke.

**1979:** Begins working with Tom Baril, who goes on to develop his photographs until his death. Exhibits alongside the photographer Lynn Davis at the International Center of Photography in New York.

**1980:** Meets Lisa Lyon, first World Women’s Bodybuilding Champion, who becomes one of his muses.

**1981:** Keeps his studio at Bond Street but moves to 77 Bleecker Street with Milton Moore, the model for *Man in Polyester Suit*. Travels to Paris for his exhibition at the Texbraun gallery.

**1982:** His brother, Edward, becomes his assistant. Jack Walls, a former sailor, moves into his apartment on Bleecker Street.

**1983:** Mapplethorpe and Warhol produce portraits of each other. Publishes his book, *Lady Lisa Lyon*. The Leo Castelli gallery displays a selection of the images. An exhibition of his work at the Palazzo Fortuny in Venice is forbidden to minors. Exhibition at the Salon Photo, Centre Pompidou, Paris.

**1984:** The Morgans Hotel in New York, decorated by Andrée Putman, commissions a set of photolithographs from Mapplethorpe to decorate its bedrooms.

**1985:** Produces his first platinum prints. Exhibition at the Daniel Templon gallery in Paris.

**1986:** Publication of the *Black Book* featuring 99 photographs of black men. He is diagnosed with AIDS in September.

**1987:** Sam Wagstaff dies of AIDS. Mapplethorpe inherits most of his estate.

**1988:** He sets up the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, a charity devoted to funding research into AIDS and artistic projects. In July, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York holds the first retrospective devoted to Mapplethorpe, who attends the preview in a wheelchair. The Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia organises “The Perfect Moment”, a travelling retrospective organised across the United States. The exhibition opens in December but the artist is too weak to attend.

**1989:** “The Perfect Moment” opens in February at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. Mapplethorpe dies at 6am on 9 March in Boston. He is buried at St John’s cemetery in Queens. A remembrance ceremony is organised at the Whitney Museum on 18 May.

### Exhibition opening hours (26 March - 13 July 2014)

10am - 8pm Sunday and Monday  
10am - 10pm Wednesday to Saturday  
The Grand Palais is closed on Tuesdays. Closed 1 May.

Because of its contents, the access to one of the rooms of the exhibition is not allowed to visitors under the age of 18. Other works may be offensive to some viewers, particularly the young audience..

Exhibition organised by the Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais with the cooperation of the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, New York and in association with the Musée Rodin, Paris.

General curator: Jerome Neutres, advisor to the president of the Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais  
Associate curators: Joree Adilman, manager of the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, Hélène Pinet, curator at the Musée Rodin and Judith Benhamou-Huet, journalist and art critic.



The exhibition has been made possible thanks to the sponsorship of Aurel BGC.



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