

「
LE LAVOIR
NUMÉRIQUE
」
PRESS RELEASE



SEQUENCE #8 :
TAIWAN
FROM 20 SEPTEMBER 2024
TO 16 FEBRUARY 2025

VERNISSAGE: THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 6 PM

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A cultural facility of Grand-Orly Seine Bièvre
The Lavoir Numérique
An arts centre focusing on audio-visual practices
lavoirnumerique.fr





Le Lavoir Numérique started out as the “Lavoir-Bains-douches municipal”, in other words the public baths in Gentilly on the outskirts of Paris. In 2020, they were given a new lease of life when they were completely transformed to fulfil a new function. Today, the Lavoir Numérique, a unique cultural institution focusing on audio-visual creation, is truly one of a kind.



Both a venue (exhibitions, screenings, debates, concerts, shows) and a place to work (workshops, courses, residences), its events programme organised into “Sequences” addresses a broad spectrum of digital practices considered from the point of view of both images and sounds.

You could say that the Lavoir Numérique encourages you to keep both your eyes and your ears wide open!

SEQUENCE #8 :
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EXHIBITION

Yang Shun-Fa

Taiwan, of Land and Sea

Vernissage: Thursday 19 September 2024 at 6 pm

CINÉMA

A film cycle devised by Loïc Blanchefleur (cinema co-ordinator at the Lavoir Numérique).

RENCONTRES DU LAVOIR

Les Rencontres du Lavoir

Each rencontre (get-together) is filmed and can be watched online at a later date or listened to as a podcast!

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THE SEQUENCE

What image do we have of Taiwan?

When thinking of Taiwan, the first thing that comes to mind is its troubled history over the course of the 20th century and a geopolitical context that still remains uncertain today. The island's history is also marked by a spectacular period of economic growth at the turn of the 1980s and it is known today as a world leading supplier of cutting edge technology. But Taiwan also boasts age-old traditions and a rich artistic heritage as well as, for the last four decades at least, a surprising and particularly dynamic cinema industry. And we could go on describing the multiple facets of this island because Taiwan is a vast subject in its own right.

And to do it justice, for the very first time the Lavoir Numérique and Maison Doisneau have joined forces to present a common programme around the same theme. However, the image of Taiwan we have chosen to address is one that is little or poorly known here in Europe. The exhibition at Maison Doisneau looks back at the recent history of the island as seen in the pages of militant photographic magazine *The Human World* (Ren Jian), which was published between 1985 and 1989. The Lavoir Numérique explores more contemporary aspects of Taiwan, in particular with another photographic exhibition featuring the work of Yang Shun-Fa. These two projects have in common the fact that they present how Taiwan is seen from the inside, sharing the critical analysis of artists and authors who, by taking a closer look at the social and environmental realities of their own society, have pinpointed its paradoxes and revealed the complex and sometimes sombre nature of its reality. The photographers featured in *The Human World* documented the injustices, social inequalities and environmental catastrophes prevalent in Taiwan at a time when the country was solely focusing on economic development. One could say that Yang Shun-Fa is, in his unique and highly personal manner, continuing their work. His series of photos of periurban and coastal landscapes illustrate a metamorphosis that continues today, humankind's sempiternal moments of folly, but also nature's backlash.

Sequence #8 at the Lavoir Numérique, which as usual comprises an exhibition, a film cycle, a broadcast, a podcast and practical workshops, opens our eyes to a very different Taiwan.

Michaël Houlette

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THE EXHIBITION

Yang Shun-Fa

Taiwan, of Land and Sea

From 20 September 2024 to 16 February 2025

Curated by: Ying-Lung Su

Vernissage (open to the general public)

Thursday 19 September 2024 at 6 pm

An exhibition produced with the support of the National Culture and Arts Foundation and CSC Groupe Education Foundation, Taiwan.



Yang Shun-Fa (1964) was born into a farming family in Tainan. After military service, he started working at China Steel Corporation (a steel manufacturer based in Kaoshiung) where he has worked ever since. He learnt photography on his own, taking part in various photo clubs and beginning his photographic career in parallel to working as an engineer. He has been taking photos for over 30 years, producing a considerable body of work that focuses on social and environmental questions. His work has been presented all over the world.

Taiwan, of Land and Sea comprises 35 prints divided into 4 series:

Home and Rootless

The Submerged Beauty of Formosa (Parts I and II)

Ocean Theater

Taiwan To-Go



In parallel at the Maison de la Photographie Robert Doisneau (Gentilly)

The Human World (Ren Jian), a Taiwanese magazine 1985-1989

The vernissage will also take place on Thursday 19 September 2024 at 6 pm. From 20 September 2024 to 16 February 2025.



Since the 1980s, in parallel to working as an engineer in the steel industry, Yang has been producing a rigorous and poetic body of photographic work divided into series, focusing on each over a period of several years.

For this exhibition at the Lavoir Numérique, we selected recent works that make use of digital technology, something to which this country with its pioneering electronics industry is no stranger. Yang Shun-Fa's photographic practice has always been grounded in a militant approach to social and cultural issues that are specific to the island of Taiwan. His photos endeavour to give a physical presence to the contradictions of a society in constant transformation, the disastrous effects of excessive industrialisation on a natural environment that is less and less natural and the consequences on morale among a population that is still very fond of its Chinese traditions.

The three digital series on show are part of The Island Project, a project focusing on the coast of Taiwan that Yang has been doggedly working on for years. This junction between land and sea has always been the essence of Taiwan, both a nerve centre and an area that epitomises the weaknesses of a country whose development was both tardy and chaotic. The Submerged Beauty of Formosa (Parts I and II) provides visual proof of the wounds inflicted upon nature and local fishermen by the errors of "modernisation", natural disasters and fantasies of domination over the Pacific. Taiwan To-Go portrays the stray dogs that live along the coast and which are used as a metaphor both for the doubts of the Taiwanese people and their determination. Home and Rootless is an older series of analogue photos about an abandoned fishing village whose inhabitants were forced to leave in order to make way for the construction of a container port.

Yang's photos evoke dramatic situations, while preserving a certain distance and subtly reflecting the underlying emotions. They play with the equivocal relationship between the concrete reality of the images and what the mind perceives beyond these concerns in the impalpable world of ideas and sensations.

Ying-Lung Su
curator



Home and Rootless

These panoramic colour photos of the fishing village of Hongmaogang were taken over an 8-year period following the forced displacement of its population of 7,000 inhabitants in 2006 to make way for Taiwan's largest container port. In the completely empty village of almost intact houses waiting to be demolished, numerous home interiors can still be seen that are full of damaged or dated objects and souvenirs that, deprived of their original meaning, have now become obsolete.

The way in which the villagers were abandoned by the impassive authorities is reflected in the accessories and utensils left behind by the former inhabitants, while the ghosts that are omnipresent in the imagination and culture of the people of Taiwan wander silently through the ruins.

Ying-Lung Su



The Submerged Beauty of Formosa (Parts I and II)

The Submerged Beauty of Formosa (Parts I and II) focuses on the coastal areas of Taiwan that have been flooded since the 1980s. There are several causes to this phenomenon, from rising sea levels and Typhoon Wayne (1986) to the excessive pumping of groundwater to meet the needs of new fish farms that has caused land subsidence, not forgetting the disruption to tides because of the haphazard construction of factories and ports along the coast.

This series of photographs that are, to all intents and purposes, images of flooding shows the extent to which the forces of nature can prevail over or even obliterate the chaotic and incoherent actions of man. In another series, Yang takes an ironic look at Taiwan's military defences that were built in the 1950s, some of which unceremoniously replaced fishing villages with no consideration for their inhabitants. The unstable pillboxes seem pathetic and incapable of resisting any sort of invasion (The Silent Fortresses). In passing, Yang highlights Taiwan's failures and the economic, social and political transformations underway on the island, while stigmatising the lack of human action.

Ying-Lung Su



Ocean Theater

This series sets out to establish an imaginary theatre whose stage is the Pacific coastline itself. It provides the photographer with a way of paying tribute to all those who earn their living from the sea and live a life of hardship. He photographs the people, mainly women, who work up to their waists in water digging for clams. This traditional activity that was once widespread here is now condemned to disappear because of plans to build a power station.

Two photos illustrate the practices that live on in a village along the vast foreshore where the difference between high and low tide reaches five kilometres and where the oyster farmers use a special breed of “sea oxen” to work in the oyster beds. The last photo shows how nets are installed to fish for elvers at night. The latter are considered a real delicacy in Taiwan.

Every scene from this “theatre” is the result of the combination of digital images (around one hundred for each photograph) that assemble different postures, attitudes and accessories to create a dynamic narrative that retraces the age-old bond between the people of Taiwan and the ocean, an adventurous population whose very origins lie in migration over the seas.

Ying-Lung Su



Taiwan To-Go

Inspiration for this series came from the stray dogs paddling in the sea that Yang often comes across as he travels the coast taking photos. The behaviour of the alpha male leading the pack across the sandbanks is an allegory for the vitality of the Taiwanese and their tenacity. “To-Go” is also a play on words based on the Chinese word for these stray dogs, a term that suggests going from one place to another, being in perpetual movement without fear of the unknown, while continually questioning why you are walking.

By precisely combining individual views, Yang manages to create the illusion of a snapshot in which the contrast between the vastness of the space and the derisory presence of the dogs is reinforced. This symbolises the relationship between Taiwan and the outside world and the island’s capacity to survive in the face of an infinite and yet uncertain future.

Ying-Lung Su

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THE EVENTS PROGRAMME

During Sequence #8: Taiwan, the Lavoir Numérique presents a multi-disciplinary events programme with an exhibition, get-togethers and workshops.

The cinema shows all sorts of films (documentaries, fiction and animations) in connexion with the theme of the sequence, on the subject of photography, or aimed specifically at a younger audience, not forgetting special screenings.

The Rencontres du Lavoir are both broadcasts and events in their own right that provide moments of exchange during which the audience can meet artists, authors, researchers and journalists (amongst others) during a themed evening. Each "Rencontre" (get-together) is filmed and can be watched online at a later date or listened to in podcast format!

Truly a place to think, create and make that's open to one and all, amateurs, professionals, beginners and experts alike, the Lavoir Numérique boasts an important programme of cultural activities implemented by its art mediators, outreach team and outside contributors.

Guided tours, workshops, courses, discussions, projections accompanied by a commentary, group listening sessions and themed evenings are just some of the formats that allow an exploration of both image and sound-based art forms and always in connection with the theme.

**CONSULT THE ENTIRE EVENTS PROGRAMME ON OUR WEBSITE :
LAVOIRNUMERIQUE.FR**

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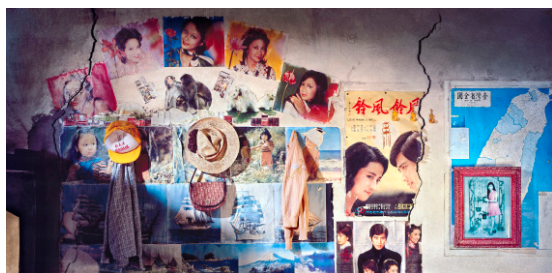
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Digging for clams at the mouth of the Zhuoshui River, 2020 © Yang Shun-Fa



Oxen working on the foreshore, 2020 © Yang Shun-Fa



Homeless and Rootless, Hongmaogang village, 2006 © Yang Shun-Fa



"To Go" dogs No 6, 2020 © Yang Shun-Fa



Qigu district in Tainan County, 2015 © Yang Shun-Fa



Jishui River, Beimen, Tainan, 2018 © Yang Shun-Fa

Cultural facilities of Grand-Orly Seine Bièvre, the Lavoir Numérique et the Maison de la photographie Robert Doisneau have joint missions and are managed by the same team.

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Exhibitions

Free
From Wednesday to Friday : from 13:30pm to 18:30pm. On week-end : from 13:30pm to 19pm. Closed bank holidays.

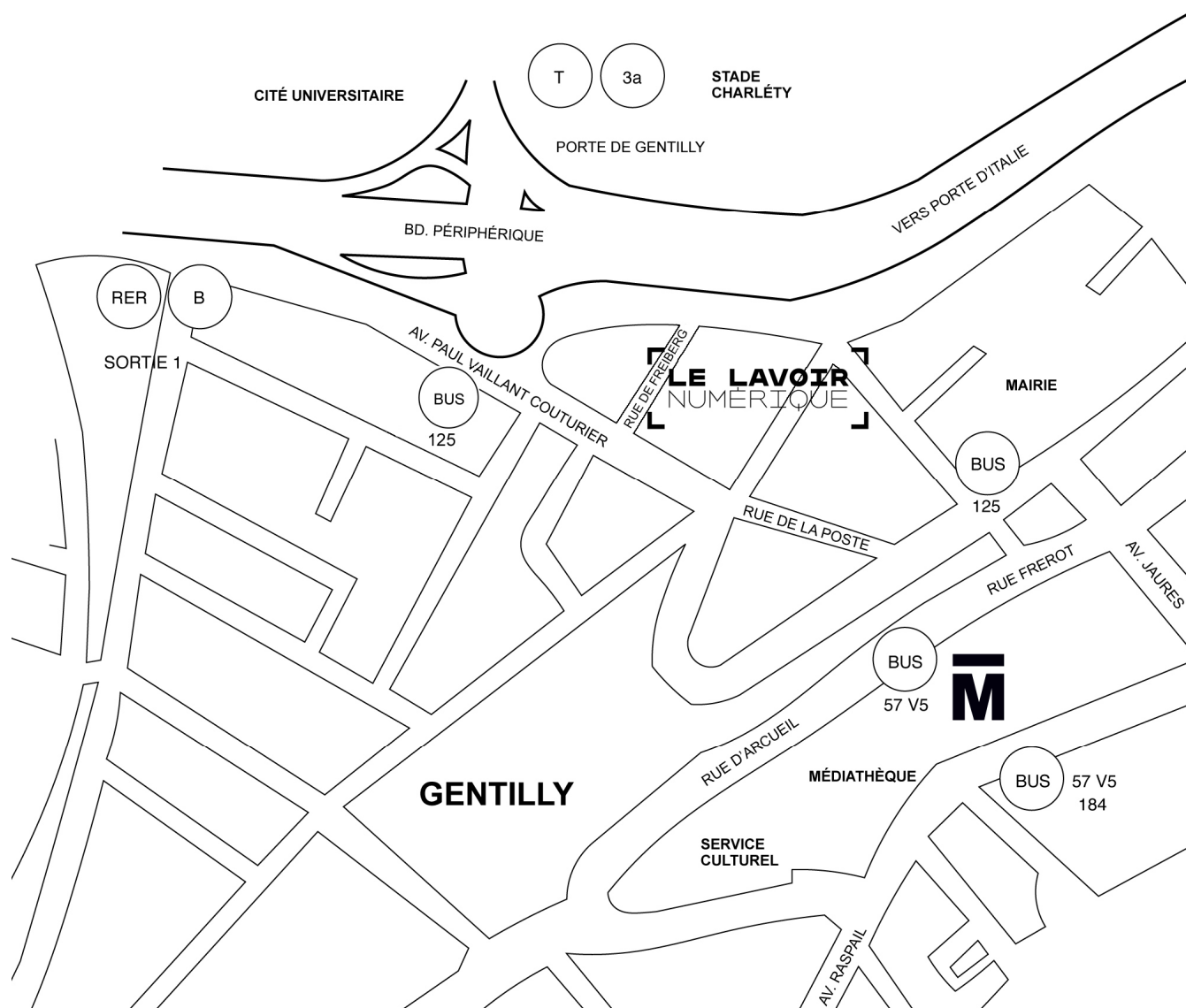
Cinema / Rencontres du Lavoir

lavoirnumerique.fr

Access

RER B Gentilly (20 min. depuis Châtelet)
BUS 57 Division Leclerc – Médiathèque (10 min. depuis Place d'Italie)
BUS 125 Gautherot - Carrefour Mazagran
T3a Stade Charléty
Vélib n°13027 - n°42504

ON SOCIAL NETWORKS    



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