

PRESS RELEASE

## American Puzzle

Jean-Christophe B chet

Opening / Book Sign : « American Puzzle »  
Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 from 6 to 9 pm

Show from Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> until April 5<sup>th</sup> 2012  
Wednesday to Saturday from 2 to 7 pm  
And by appointment

In the wake of the mastery of twentieth century photographers, how can a photographer today photograph the U.S.A? Jean-Christophe B chet chooses to answer this recurring question from a personal perspective—that of the inquisitive traveler.

Neither reporter nor photojournalist, he has opted for the professional profile of the visitor on foot who passes through places and follows his path checking out memories and putting his knowledge to the test of reality. He attempts to tell the story of a country that over time has become increasingly battered and bruised.

This show highlights B chet's photography—over thirty photographs-- a kind of photographic sampling of his seventeen trips to the States over the period ranging from 1996 to 2011. Most of the photographs are printed by Roland Dufau using the Cibachrome process.

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# Jean-Christophe B chet “American Puzzle”

« 1996, I go to the US for the first time. 15 years later, in 2011, I counted, I have been to the US 17 times. At first I naturally wanted to avoid the traditional, the clich , the been-said, the d j  vu.

In the field, two paths stood in front of me : seek the concept, the small series of objects, portraits or places that had not yet been captured. To show off and say : I was the first ! Or abandon these Olympiads of contemporary art, scoff forever at being « the first », and be happy with simply being yourself, which is already complex enough ... To do this there is no choice but to take on one’s legacy and to make it the basis for a contemporary point of view.

For a long time I thought I was visiting the heart of the « New World », but with the years I photographed an Old World, rattling and dented. Obviously the New World is elsewhere. Certainly in Asia. Yet America, this country-continent, is still fascinating and worrisome for a European. How to understand this adherence to the same values and signs : capitalism, the dollar, the flag, basketball hoops, Jesus, the cult of the automobile ? Yes, the *American Way of Life* is changing and adapting, but still exists.

Today, I do not know if I succeeded in avoiding this redundancy, I hope, but I know that no pleasure is vain if it is shared ... ».

Jean-Christophe B chet

Extracts from the book *American Puzzle*, published by Trans Photographic Press (2011)

## Jean-Christophe B chet

Born in 1964 in Marseille

Jean-Christophe B chet lives and works in Paris.

Jean-Christophe B chet seeks out and chooses the appropriate “instrument” for each of his photographic projects that can be in black and white or color, silver prints or digital, 35 mm or medium format.

Close to the tradition of “street photography”, be it American, French or Japanese, he likes to be in the thick of things, in reality, in a subjective document taken on the spot despite the current photographic trends towards staging an image (the art market as image rights or digital retouching).

Turning his back on photographic series limited to just that sequential order, he seeks rather to show a photographic moment. Book after book, B chet builds a subjective approach-- a vision of reality-- that dialogues with the very nature of the medium that he uses. The place of the individual in contemporary landscape, urban or natural, is at the center of his concerns.

Currently he is doing a study of his native city, Marseille and is developing at the same time an ongoing series on photography in the mountains.

His personal work has been shown in numerous exhibits and in the publication of eight monographs.

His work is represented by the Galleries “Photo4” (Paris) and “Les Douches La Galerie” (Paris).

### Monographies

2011 : American Puzzle ( ditions Trans Photographic Press)

2010 : Carnets # 3 : Discontinu ... ( ditions Trans Photographic Press)

2008 : Carnets # 2 : Climats ( ditions Trans Photographic Press)

2008 : Carnets # 1 : Noir Vertical ( ditions Trans Photographic Press)

2006 : Vues n 0, un manifeste photographique ( ditions Trans Photographic Press)

2005 : Tokyo Station ( ditions Trans Photographic Press)

2004 : Sax, Sex, 23h ( ditions Filigranes)

2002 : Electric' cit s ( ditions Marval)

### Catalogs and collective works

- Fra-For ( ditions Verlhac, 2011)

- France 14 ( ditions Trans Photographic Press, 2010)

- Est-ce ainsi que les hommes vivent ? Tome 1 et Tome 2 ( ditions Le Ch ne, 2005 & 2006)

- Libert s ( ditions Filigranes-Reporters sans Fronti res, 2002)

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## Exhibitions

### 2011

- « Périimètre », exposition Collective, Arsenal-Musée des Arts Contemporains, Sofia, Bulgarie, Novembre
- « La France vue par F14 », Corbeil-Essonnes, Commanderie St-Jean, Octobre-Novembre.
- « Ad Massalia (Vers Marseille) », exposition collective, Espace Eperluette, Cavaillon, Octobre
- « France Nord- un road-movie » Lille, 10ème festival Transphoto, (Mai-Juin)
- « Tokyo Station » Fodar, Pleven, Bulgarie (Avril-Mai)
- « Climats », Galerie Creapolis, Le Havre (Mars-Avril)
- « Discontinué... », Galerie Photo4, Paris 5ème (Mars)

### 2010

- « La France vue par F14 », Mois de la photo 2010, Paris, BNF François Mitterrand, Octobre-Novembre. Publication d'un catalogue
- « La France vue par F14 », Rencontres d'Arles 2010, Abbaye de Montmajour, juillet-septembre
- « Villes », Mois de la photo d'Auxerre (Avril-Mai)
- « Noir Vertical » Galerie Photo4, Paris (Mars-Avril)
- « Tokyo Nights », Galerie Negpos, Nimes
- Exposition collective avec la galerie Photo4 aux salons « Cutlog » et « Photo Off »

### 2009

- « Pol/A », exposition collective de Polaroids, galerie Nivet-Carzon, Paris

### 2008

- « Tokyo Station », Institut Français de Valence (Espagne),
- « Politiques Urbaines », à la Chambre d'architecture, Bruxelles, Belgique
- « Tokyo Station », à la Biennale Urbi & Orbi de Sedan, France

### 2007

- « Vues n°0 » et « Tokyo Station », 20ème semaine photo de Riedisheim (Mars)

### 2006

- « Tokyo Station », 40ème Salon Phocal, Allauch
- « Politiques urbaines », Rencontres d'Arles (dans le cadre des choix de Raymond Depardon)
- « Vues n°0 » Paris, Mois de la Photo 2006, la Chambre Claire (5 novembre- 31 décembre)

### 2005

- « Tokyo Station » à la Fnac Montparnasse, 15 juin-15 octobre (puis dans les Fnac de Lille, Bordeaux, Marseille, Reims...)
- « La collection photographique de la Fnac-Images entre histoire et poésie » Bordeaux (8 juillet-2 octobre), puis sur les Grilles du Jardin du Luxembourg (Paris, 1er octobre / 30 novembre)

### 2004

- Mois de la photo, Paris. Exposé à la Conciergerie dans le cadre des 50 ans de la FNAC

## 2003

« Electric'Cités », Espace Electra (Paris), 3-27 avril,

« Electric'Cités », exposition + audiovisuel au Festival Biarritz Terre d'Images, 1/11 mai

« 2...3 », Exposition collective, Camera Obscura, Paris 14ème, Mai-juin

« Electric'Cités », Vandoeuvre-Les-Nancy, Centre André Malraux, 10 juin-11 juillet

## 2001

« Tous Européens », Vandoeuvre-Les-Nancy, Centre André Malraux, 1er prix des Paysages Européens  
2001

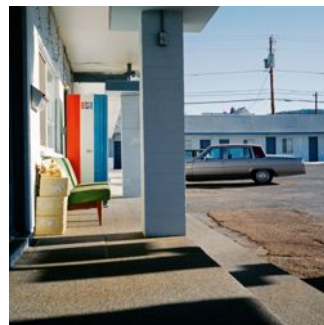
## 2000

« PSQF, Paris Sans Quitter ma Fenêtre », Mois de la Photo, exposition collective, galerie Caméra Obscura  
(Paris 14ème).

« American Puzzle », selection of photographs

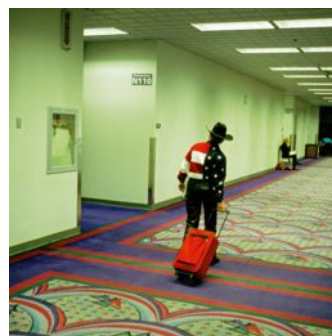
**Californie, 1999**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, limited edition, 5 copies
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminium back, about 30x30 inches, limited edition in 3 copies



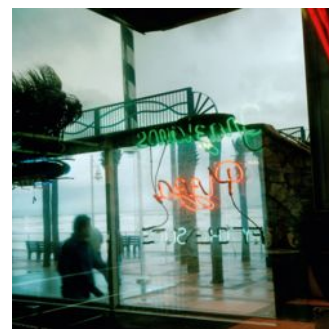
**Las Vegas, Nevada, 2004**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, limited edition , 5 copies.
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminum back, about 30x30 inches, limited edition in 3 copies



**Daytona Beach, Floride, 2002 #199**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, limited edition , 5 copies.
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminum back, about 30x30, limited edition in 3 copies



**Nevada, 2004**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, limited edition , 5 copies.
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminum back, about 30x30 inches, limited edition in 3 copies



**Las Vegas, 1999**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, Limited edition , 5 copies.
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminum back, about 23x35 inches, limited edition in 3 copies



### **Nouveau-Mexique, 2004**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, limited edition , 5 copies.
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminum back, about 30x30 inches, limited edition in 3 copies



### **Daytona Beach, Floride, 2002 #193**

- Ilfochrome-Cibachrome prints, 16x20 inches, limited edition , 5 copies.
- Lambda format prints on laminated paper on aluminum back, about 30x30 inches, limited edition in 3 copies

