



Denis Roche  
Atlantic Hotel, chambre 301, Les Sables-d'Olonne, 24 décembre 1984  
Tirage gélatino-argentique postérieur, réalisé en 2009 par Guillaume Geneste

© Estate Denis Roche  
Courtesy Les Douches la Galerie, Paris

## Denis Roche » Dans les plis du temps

Exhibition: 11 Sep – 25 Oct 2025

Wed 10 Sep 17:00

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Wed-Sat 14-20+

LES DOUCHES  
LA GALERIE  
FRANÇOISE MORIN



Denis Roche  
Villiers, 2 août 2000  
Pigment print  
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Courtesy Les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Les Douches la Galerie is pleased to present, for the first time, the photographic work of Denis Roche with the exhibition *Dans les plis du temps*, on view from September 12 to October 25, 2025. A photographer of circumstance and intimacy, Denis Roche left a lasting mark on his era, not only behind the camera or in front of the lens, but also through his prolific writings, which have remained influential for decades. This exhibition commemorates the tenth anniversary of his passing, on September 2, 2015. It also offers a rare opportunity to discover previously unseen prints, generously entrusted to us by Françoise Peyrot, to whom we extend our sincere thanks. In conjunction with the exhibition, a tribute book titled *Denis Roche, dans les plis du temps* is published in early September by Éditions du Seuil, in the Fiction & Cie series that Denis Roche himself founded and which is now edited by Bernard Comment.

« Il n'y a rien de plus silencieux qu'une photo, il n'y a aucun autre art qui puisse être aussi silencieux que cela. En voulant arrêter le temps, ne serait-ce qu'une fraction de seconde, la photo émet du silence. »<sup>1</sup>

Denis Roche



Denis Roche  
Autoportrait, Sainte-Cécile, Cologne, Allemagne,  
11 juin 1985  
Vintage gelatin silver print, printed by Yvon le Maréchal

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Courtesy Les Douches la Galerie, Paris

More than in any other artistic practice, every act in photography is a matter of choice. Over time, as Denis Roche revisited his contact sheets to select images or identify a place or date for a caption, he did so with hesitation and anxiety. He often said, "Every time, I feel like I'm stirring death." I heard him say those words myself. But more than that, I had the privilege of listening to him as he stood before the final prints I had submitted for the exhibition put together by Gilles Mora in November 2015 at the Pavillon Populaire in Montpellier.

We were at his home, La Fabrique. He was going through the prints one by one, from box to box, when after a long silence, Denis Roche said, in a moment suspended in time: "What's so remarkable about photography is everything that surrounds it."

That was just a few months before he passed away, on September 2, 2015, ten years ago now. Since then, that sentence has never left me. And it was with those words in mind that we selected the photographs for this exhibition at Les Douches la Galerie—prints chosen from the folds of time, drawn from the boxes where Denis Roche had stored them. These boxes, along with others containing his negatives, were entrusted to the Nicéphore Niépce Museum collections in 2022.

This selection of forty photographs was made under the watchful and caring eye of his wife, Françoise Peyrot, who more than anyone else understands what "everything that surrounds it" truly means. But let's not be deceived, after an artist's death, it is always a different story that begins to be written.

The more I look at Denis Roche's photographs, the more I find myself in direct confrontation with life—that life he knew how to relish intensely, describing his experiences of writing, photographing, or even editing as immense and profound joys. Looking at his work, for me, is much like looking at photographs by Bernard Plossu or Robert Frank: every single one gives me an irrepressible urge to live... and to photograph. To discover or rediscover Denis Roche's work is to step fully into life, to cautiously come to terms with death, to face the passage of time. And at the same time, through his writings, to reflect on what happens when the torrent sweeps the photographer into a single fragment of a second.

He knew more than anyone else about photography, and his greatest strength—as an intellectual, a writer, and a photographer—was to speak of it from the inside, offering a rare and essential counterpoint in the history of photography to theorists who may have been believers, but not practitioners.

To love Denis Roche's photography is to gaze at the beauty of a body until all sense of space is lost but also to pause before a landscape that imposes silence. It is, always, to face the loss of the moment which, immediately after being captured, already belongs to the past, on the condition that one lives, lives a life full of love and freedom. To appreciate the work of Denis Roche is to understand that it is at once formal and autobiographical, deeply intimate yet universal in its themes, where light is no more and no less than a metaphor for time—and time, a metaphor for light, as he so often liked to say.

Denis Roche's photography tells us, powerfully, "I was there." The "that-has-been" remains, by contrast, disarmingly banal.

Guillaume Geneste  
Curator  
Denis Roche's printer since 1991

<sup>1</sup> There is nothing more silent than a photograph. No other art form can be as silent as that. In its attempt to stop time, even for a fraction of a second, photography emits silence.



Denis Roche  
Hôtel San Rocco, chambre 131, Orta, Italie, 25 avril 1992  
Tirage gélatino-argentique d'époque, réalisé en 2015 par Guillaume Geneste

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Courtesy Les Douches la Galerie, Paris



Denis Roche  
Hotel Victoria, chambre 80, Taxco, Mexique, 19 juillet 1978  
Tirage numérique postérieur jet d'encre, réalisé en 2015 par Guillaume Geneste

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