

The Taste of images

From 28 October 2026 to 12 April 2027
Mucem J4, Level 2 (1200m²)

Chief Curator Jérémy Koering, Professor at the University of Fribourg
Associate curator Raphaël Bories, head curator of the Beliefs and Religions department at Mucem
Exhibition design Atelier Jodar
Graphic design Zaina Agency



Love Cake, c. 1970, Serbia, Europe. Mucem, Marseille, on loan from MNHN, Paris. © Mucem / Marianne Kuhn

Eating an image – what a strange idea! And yet we have never ceased to feast on them, from the earliest antiquity to the present day, particularly in Europe and the Mediterranean. So how can we explain such an attitude towards them? Why incorporate an image, take it into oneself, at the risk of destroying it, rather than observing it quietly from a distance? What functions can be attributed to these actions, to this very particular experience of images? What does such behaviour reveal about ourselves and our societies?

The exhibition 'The Taste of images' will address these questions by demonstrating that the ingestion of a figurative object makes it possible to harbour within the night of one's body that which has the power to heal, protect and transform us, but also to offer us the means to learn, to resist, to play, to dream, and to participate in the life of dedicated communities. This exhibition will juxtapose the practice with the diversity of imaginaries (religious, philosophical, literary, artistic, political) that underpin it, in a journey ranging from the metaphorical embodiment to the actual ingestion of images.

Paintings, wood or stone sculptures, engravings, prints, photographs, fiction and ethnographic films, communion wafers, waffles, figurative cakes and breads, sculpted foods, molds, amulets... 435 works punctuate the exhibition, 250 of which come from the Mucem's collections; many are usually kept in the cold-storage areas of the museum's reserves.

The exhibition is organized with the special participation of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, which is lending 42 works.

Among the artists exhibited Léa Beloussovitch, Hélène Bellenger, Yasmina Benabderrahmane, Nicolas Boulard, Jean-Baptiste Bourgois, Vincenzo Campi, Alonso Cano, David Cronenberg, Honoré Daumier, Albrecht Dürer, Gali Eytan, William Hogarth, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Michel Journiac, Micha Laury, Erik Nussbicker, Dennis Oppenheim, Meret Oppenheim, Jacopo Pontormo, Jean Renoir, Irène Schwartz, Marie Sochor...

Lending institutions Les Abattoirs, Musée – Frac Occitanie Toulouse; musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon; Bibliothèque centrale, Florence; Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris; musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris; Danish Film Institute; Frac Île-de-France; Frac Normandie Rouen; Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine – MECA; Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence; INA Méditerranée, Marseille; Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Paris; musée du Louvre, Paris; musée d'Orsay, Paris; Petit Palais – musée des Beaux-Arts, Paris; musée national du Prado, Madrid; musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Paris; Walker Art Center Archives, Minneapolis.

In addition to these public institutions, there are loans from the Dennis Oppenheim Estate, New York, as well as loans from private collections.

Many artists have also lent their works for the exhibition: Hélène Bellenger, Léa Beloussovitch, Yasmina Benabderrahmane, Nicolas Boulard, Jean-Baptiste Bourgois, Micha Laury, Erik Nussbicker, Irène Schwartz, Marie Sochor...

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