ALMINE RECH

The Three Faces of Heliogabalus Contemporaine de Nîmes - Contemporary Art Triennial

Apr 5 — Jun 23, 2024 | Musée de la Romanité, Nîmes, France

The Contemporaine de Nîmes is a new contemporary art trien-nial initiated by the city of Nîmes. Every three years starting from 2024 onwards, a selection of today's art is presented across the city, revolving around a main theme. Public spaces, monuments, heritage sites, museums, cultural venues and every-day places are thus invested by established and emerging artists from the French and international scene, from all disciplines and generations. Each edition of the Contemporaine is an invitation to discover and explore contemporary creation and Nîmes in a different way, within the framework of a program that is equally ambitious, generous and accessible.

The inaugural edition of the Contemporaine de Nîmes, presented from April 5 to June 23, 2024, is entitled "Une nouvelle jeunesse" [A New Youth] and focuses on today's youth, its concerns and relationships with preceding generations, through the concepts of heritage and transmission. Artistic direction was entrusted to the duo Anna Labouze & Keimis Henni.

VALENTIN NOUJAÏM & ALI CHERRI - LES TROIS VISAGES D'HÉLIOGABALE

With students from High school Philippe Lamour specializing in cinema

Fascinated by the little-known Roman emperor Heliogabalus, artist and filmmaker Valentin Noujaïm made him the protagonist of his latest video project, "Les Trois visages d'Héliogabale", filmed at the Temple of Diana in Nîmes. Working in collaboration with the artist Ali Cherri, who created the three masks featured in the film and displayed as a mirror image of the video overhanging the Roman Street pit at the Musée de la Romanité, Valentin Noujaïm pays tribute to and reconsiders the controversial figure of this teenage emperor, who reigned from 218 to 222 AD and was subjected to a *damnatio memorae*, a deletion from the historical archives. By reinterpreting the codes of ancient theater, the work – which was produced with the participation of high school students specializing in cinema – examines the anarchist legacy of Heliogabalus. This collaborative installation reflects the shared interest of both artists in archaeology, temporal juxtapositions, and contemporary reinterpretations of past forms. Together, they invite us to cross a bridge to witness a fragment of imagined history.