BERBER WOMEN OF MOROCCO
EXHIBITION PRESS RELEASE

MARCH 21
JULY 20, 2014

Adornments from Souss region
Southwestern Morocco
© Musée berbère / photo Nicolas Mathéus

Fondation
PIERRE BERGÉ
YVES SAINT LAURENT
The Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent is proud to announce the opening of its 21st exhibition, *Berber Women of Morocco*. It is an occasion not only to share the richness of the Amazigh civilization, but also to honor Berber women, to whom the Amazigh culture owes its survival. The survival of a culture depends on the transmission of the language, but also on certain, essentially feminine, skills, such as weaving or, in the northern region of the Kingdom, pottery. The exhibition is an opportunity to display the diverse and extraordinary beauty of Berber adornments. This exhibition presents the most beautiful objects—carpets, cloaks, woven belts, necklaces of amber and coral, silver brooches—predominantly from the sumptuous collection of the Jardin Majorelle's Musée Berbère in Marrakech, from the collection of le musée du quai Branly, and from private collections.

Exhibition under the high patronage of His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco.

**Curator**: Björn Dahlström

**Set designer**: Christophe Martin

**Production**: Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent

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Almost immediately upon arrival in Morocco in 1966, transported by their love for Morocco, Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé began to collect Berber art. The marvelous collection they amassed accompanied them to their successive dwellings: first to Dar el-Hanch, the house in the medina of Marrakech which they purchased during their first trip, then in 1974 to Dar Es Saada, the villa neighboring the famous Majorelle Garden, founded by painter Jacques Majorelle, and finally to the Majorelle Garden itself in 1980, where the couple undertook the restoration of both the Garden and the artist’s studio nestled in its heart. In 1974, Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé discovered the garden, fallen into sad disrepair. They purchased it in 1980 and by the mid-1980s, with the assistance of American architect Bill Willis, they began planning a museum dedicated to Moroccan Islamic art and civilisation.

After Yves Saint Laurent’s death on June 1, 2008, visitors came to see the Majorelle Garden in increasing numbers. Pierre Bergé undertook the renovation of the Garden and entrusted the construction of a museum dedicated to the Moroccan civilisation and culture which he and Yves Saint Laurent so loved and to which Jacques Majorelle paid homage in his paintings, to architect and set designer, Christophe Martin. The Berber Museum was thus born and opened its doors in 2011 in Majorelle’s former studio.

The astounding breadth of Berber art, long dismissed as “rural” by Moroccan national museums, has at last been fittingly honored in an intimate space. Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé’s original collection of art has been enriched by more than six hundred objects which testify to a thriving Berber culture, from the Rif to the Sahara.
The majority of the objects at this exhibition come from the Museum. I have asked that the exhibition be consacrated to Berber women because most of the objects concern them. And also because of the vital role that Berber women play in the transmission of their cultural identity: the language, the skills, the education of the children.

Pierre Bergé

The Imazighen (singular of Amazigh), or Berbers, are the oldest inhabitants of North Africa. For nine thousand years, they have inhabited a vast territory stretching from the Atlantic coast of Morocco to the borders of the eastern Magreb and Egypt. Although waves of foreign conquerers – the Romans, the Arabs, the French and the Spanish – have shaped the diverse population of contemporary Morocco, the Amazigh have succeeding in keeping alive their unique culture, which, like the soil beneath their feet, is both African and Mediterranean.

Official recognition of the ancient Berber culture and its contributions to contemporary Morocco has been slow. However, in his speech on March 9, 2011, His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, evoked the “plurality of the Moroccan identity united and rich with the diversity of its branches, and at the heart of which is Amazigh, the heritage of all Moroccans.”

Ayt Bou Iknifen women, adorned for a wedding
Waklim, Tinghir palm grove, southeast of Morocco, 1950–52
© Claude Lefébure
Throughout history, Berber women have kept their tribe’s cultural heritage alive by preserving their language and traditions. This culture has been handed down primarily through the symbols found in traditional tattoos, henna, makeup, jewelry, basketry, and pottery in addition to tapestry, a craft practiced exclusively by Berber women.

The exhibition is divided into three spaces focusing on the following topics:

> **Portrait of the Berber Women of Morocco**: Text, maps, and projected images provide an introduction to the history, geography, society, and tribal heritage of Berber women, both past and present.

> **Skills and Craftsmanship**: The daily lives of Berber women revolve around their specific skills and prerogatives in a number of domains, including weaving, pottery, basketry, the production of argan oil, dance, festivals, and *moussem*s. These practices are illustrated through objects displaying the Berber women of Morocco’s distinct techniques.

> **Traditional Clothing and Adornment**: Multimedia presentations complement the jewelry, clothing, and objects on display. Vertical screens offer a detailed description of the various elements of traditional Berber dress (*handiras*, *haïks*, and belts) as well as the objects related to adornment.

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*Wedding or celebration necklace*
Amber, corals, amazonite, shells, and coins
Souss area
© Musée berbère / photo Nicolas Mathéus

*Art Seghrouchen adornments*
East of Middle Atlas
© Musée berbère / photo Nicolas Mathéus
EXHIBITION CATALOG

Berber women of Morocco
Artlys, 2014, 192 pages, price: 30 €

An invitation to travel into the heart of Morocco and Berber culture, this book presents the most beautiful objects—carpets, cloaks, woven belts, necklaces of amber and coral, silver brooches—predominantly from the sumptuous collection of the Jardin Majorelle’s Musée Berbère in Marrakech. Together with stunning archival photographs and Titouan Lamazou’s drawings, it is a tribute to the women who have never ceased transmitting the Berber culture’s singular identity.

Preface by Pierre Bergé
Texts by:
> Cynthia Becker, professor of History of Art and Architecture, Boston University, USA
> Christine Bouilloc, head of Musée Bargoin, Clermont-Ferrand, France
> Françoise Cousin, ethnologist, formerly in charge of textiles at the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris
> Björn Dahlström, curator of the Jardin Majorelle Musée Berbère, Marrakech
> Karine Huet, ethnologist
> Titouan Lamazou, traveling artist and writer
> Salima Naji, anthropologist and architect
> Brigitte Perkins, creator of embroidery and weaving workshops
> Fatima Sadqi, Associate researcher in linguistics and gender studies at Harvard University, professor at Université Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah, Fes, and member of the Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe

CONFERENCES

The Fondation organizes four conferences mediated by Monique Younès, open to the public:

Thursday, April 17 at 7 pm: Salima Naji, anthropologist and architect
Rites of passage: between rituals and prophylaxis, the continuity of certain rites

Tuesday, May 6 at 7 pm: Björn Dahlström, curator of the Musée Berbère
The Berber Museum of the Jardin Majorelle

Tuesday, June 3 at 7 pm: Titouan Lamazou, artist and navigator
Berber encounters

Thursday, June 26 at 7 pm: Sarah Assidon-Pinson,
Berber adornments - collection and identity

Please note that the conferences are held entirely in French.
Conference admission is included in the exhibition ticket price.
Reservations are mandatory: conferences@fondation-pb-ysl.net / +33 (0)1 44 31 64 00
The Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent, which opened in 2002, is the culmination of forty years of creativity. It retraces the world of fashion created by Yves Saint Laurent, fashion that reveals the inner workings of society. Using masculine codes, Yves Saint Laurent brought women a sense of security and daring while preserving their femininity. His clothes embody 20th century history. They have accompanied the emancipation of women in every domain, whether personal, social or political.

Today, the Foundation transforms these memories into projects, pursuing an adventure begun long ago.

The mission of the Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent, a state-recognized foundation since December 5, 2002, is to:

> Conserve 5,000 garments, 15,000 haute couture accessories and 50,000 sketches and other items that testify to Yves Saint Laurent’s genius;

> Organize exhibitions: fashion, painting, photography and drawing among others;

> Support artistic, cultural and educational projects.

In 2010, the Foundation inherited the Jardin Majorelle in Marrakech, originally saved by Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé in 1980. In the heart of the Jardin, which receives more than 600,000 visitors each year, the Berber Museum opened in 2011. It exhibits the Berber culture through a panorama of over 600 items.
EXHIBITIONS
AT THE FOUNDATION

When the Haute Couture house closed in 2002, renovation work enabled 200 m² of space to be converted for exhibitions. Since 2004, the premises have hosted two exhibitions per year, on themes including fashion, paintings, photography, decorative arts etc.

COMING SOON

Berber women of Morocco
March 21 - July 20, 2014

Hedi Slimane - Photographies
September 2014 – January 2015

PAST EXHIBITIONS

Hiroshi Sugimoto Accelerated Buddha, 2013
Sacred Art of Tibet – The Alain Bordier collection, 2013
Du côté de chez Jacques-Emile Blanche, Un salon à la Belle Époque, 2012
Kabuki - Japanese theater costumes, 2012
Gisèle Freund, L’Oeil frontière, Paris 1933-1940, 2011
Saint Laurent rive gauche, La révolution de la mode, 2011
David Hockney : Fleurs fraîches, Dessins sur iPhone et iPad, 2010
Vanité. Mort, que me veux-tu ?, 2010
Les derniers Maharajas, Costumes du Grand Durbar à l’Indépendance, 2010
Le costume populaire russe, 2009
Jean-Michel Frank, un décorateur dans le Paris des années 30, 2009
David Seidner Photographies, 2008
Une passion marocaine Caftans, Broderies, Bijoux, 2008
Yves Saint Laurent Théâtre, Cinéma, Music-hall, Ballet, 2007
Yves Saint Laurent Nan Kemper, une américaine à Paris, 2007
Yves Saint Laurent Voyages Extraordinaires, 2006
André Ostier Photographies, 2006
Yves Saint Laurent Smoking Forever, 2005
Robert Wilson Les Fables de La Fontaine, 2004
Yves Saint Laurent Dialogue avec l’art, 2004
The Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent was founded to introduce the work and life of Yves Saint Laurent to a broad general public in France and abroad. In addition to the shows organized at the exhibition space located at 5, avenue Marceau, numerous exhibitions are also organized outside of the Foundation.

The exhibition, Yves Saint Laurent Style, shown in 2008-2009 at the Musée des Beaux-arts in Montreal and at the de Young Museum in San Francisco, proceeded the Yves Saint Laurent Retrospective at the Petit Palais in Paris in 2010. It was subsequently shown at the MAPFRE Foundation in 2011 before travelling to the Denver Art Museum in 2012.

Other exhibitions, such as the Archives of the creation 1962-2002 or Yves Saint Laurent and Morocco, examine key themes in the work of Yves Saint Laurent.
Continuing its work promoting creation, the Fondation Pierre Bergé - Yves Saint Laurent supports French and international cultural events. It leads a coherent sponsorship policy by supporting on the long term several institutions.

TWO MAJOR ARTISTIC EVENTS

Le festival d’automne à Paris is dedicated to the contemporary art. The festival presents works of reference and encourages experimentation by commissioning works from artists. It has become one of the most important festivals in Europe.

Les Modules Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent du Palais de Tokyo offer upcoming artists living and working in France the opportunity to exhibit in the arts center.

THE FOUNDATION ALSO SUPPORTS

Amis de Jean Cocteau
The Jean Giono Prize
The Marguerite Duras Prize
IFM (French Fashion Institute)
ANDAM (National Association for the Development of the Fashion Arts)
The Fondation Pierre Bergé - Yves Saint Laurent, in partnership with the CULTIVAL AGENCY, arranges guided tours for the public of:

- the Reception Salons
- Yves Saint Laurent’s Studio
- and the current temporary exhibition

These guided visits are available in French, English or Spanish.

Reservation mandatory. Please contact +33 (0)8 25 05 44 05 (0.15€/mn) or contact@cultival.fr
For more information, please see www.cultival.fr

Yves Saint Laurent’s glasses on his desk © Luc Castel
EXHIBITION SPACE AND BOUTIQUE

3 rue Léonce Reynaud, Paris 16ème
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Open every day except Mondays from 11 am to 6 pm (last entry at 5.30 pm)
Closed when there is no temporary exhibition as well as on January 1, May 1, May 8, July 14, August 15 and December 25

Exhibition accessible to people with disabilities

Full price : 7€

Reduced price : 5€ for students, people under 25 and seniors upon presentation of a valid card

Free for ICOM-ICOMOS card holders, children under 10 and job-seekers upon presentation of a valid card less than 1 year old

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