

MEDIA RELEASE

World-first exhibition in Morwell provides stunning insight into René Magritte



René Magritte: The Revealing Image, Photos and Films is a world-first exhibition which provides stunning insight into the life, work and thinking of René Magritte, one of the world's most important 20th Century artists.

The exhibition, to be held at Latrobe Regional Galley in Morwell, Victoria, Australia from 19 August to 19 November 2017, features 130 original photographs by and of Magritte, his family, friends and fellow artists. It also includes eight self-made films which give a behind-the-scenes view of Magritte's world.

This exhibition, staged in collaboration with the Magritte Foundation Belgium, **René Magritte: The Revealing Image, Photos and Films**, marks the 50th anniversary of the Belgian Surrealist's death. After its world-premiere in Morwell, **René Magritte: The Revealing Image, Photos and Films** will travel to Hong Kong, North and South America, and back to Europe.



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Latrobe Regional Gallery director Dr Mark Themann said *René Magritte: The Revealing Image, Photos and Films* was an opportunity to experience an amazing assembly of intimate and insightful photographs and films, many of which have never been exhibited previously.

“Magritte had a unique creative ability to enchant. He used the ordinary and the everyday to evoke the mysterious and to question our perceptions of reality,” Dr Themann said.

“He is an iconic artist, whose influence on fellow artists, designers, film directors and visual culture continues to this day.

“It’s a magnificent opportunity to present this major international exhibition in our newly-renovated Latrobe Regional Gallery in Morwell. We’re looking forward to welcoming visitors from the local region, around Australia, and the world.”

Exhibition Chief Curator Xavier Canonne said the discovery of the photographs and films of René Magritte in the mid-1970s, 10 years after the painter’s death, and their subsequent appraisal and study, had given us an even greater appreciation of Magritte as an artist.

“There are a lot of connections between Magritte’s photos and films, and his famous paintings,” Mr Canonne said.

“Magritte was deeply interested by the possibilities of the image. The photos and films were used as models or documents for his paintings, and as experimental fields for his research, in order to find something more – to extend the possibilities of his universe.

“Through this exhibition we gain a greater sense and understanding of who Magritte was, how this informed his work, and why his art is so important.”

Latrobe City Council mayor, Councillor Kellie O’Callaghan said the Magritte exhibition was a wonderful opportunity to welcome the community into the redeveloped Gallery, and bring new people to the region.



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“Art and culture are an important contributor to the livability of a region,” Cr O’Callaghan said.

“Our redeveloped Gallery now gives us the ability to host more world-class exhibitions, such as Magritte.

“This will also have a positive impact on the community, and for the economic development of our region.”

In conjunction with the opening of *René Magritte: The Revealing Image, Photos and Films* a book on the exhibition by Mr Canonne has been published by Ludion, distributed globally by Thames & Hudson.

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Available for interview:

Dr Mark Themann, Director, Latrobe Regional Gallery

Cr Kellie O'Callaghan, Mayor, Latrobe City Council

Xavier Cannone, Chief Curator, author of *Rene Magritte: The Revealing Image* and Director Museum for Photography Charleroi, Belgium

Peter Ruyffelaere, Publisher, Ludion Publishers and Rene Magritte Exhibition Production Manager

Images available on request

Major Publication:

René Magritte The Revealing Image – Photos and Films by Xavier Canonne is a 263-page publication published by Ludion, distributed globally by Thames & Hudson. Review copies available upon request.

Ticketing:

Tickets from \$10 - \$18, available online or at the LRG door

<https://latroberegionalgallery.com/rene-magritte-exhibition>

Group bookings welcome. For bookings of 10 or more people, please book by phoning LRG.

Latrobe Regional Gallery

138 Commercial Road, Morwell

T: +61 3 5128 5700

Extended Opening Hours

Monday to Thursday 10am-5pm Friday 10am-7pm

Saturday and Sunday 10am-5pm



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BACKGROUND: RENÉ MAGRITTE

René Magritte (1898–1967) is closely linked to the surrealist movement, which was founded in Paris by French writer André Breton in 1924. Surrealism was shaped by emerging theories of perception, including Sigmund Freud's theories (though Magritte always denied any Freudian interpretations of his work), such as the psychoanalytic concept of the uncanny — a sense of disquietude provoked by particular objects and situations. The movement's primary aim was to resolve the contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality — a super-reality — and to revolutionise human existence by freeing people from what the surrealists saw as false rationality and restrictive social customs.

Initially influenced by Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico, Magritte was one of the founders of Belgian Surrealism in 1926. His work from this period frequently places objects in unusual contexts or with unusual words or phrases, thus giving them new and surprising meanings. In 1929, Magritte moved to Paris in order to collaborate with Breton's group. However, the idiosyncratic Magritte grew tired of their rigidity.

In 1933, he broke from them by stating that the primary aim of his work from that point on would be to reveal the hidden and often personal affinities between objects, rather than juxtaposing unrelated objects. Nevertheless, he would remain associated with surrealism in general throughout his career.

Magritte's philosophical approach to images and language interested many post-war artists. In 1954, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg saw a ground-breaking exhibition of Magritte's word-and-image paintings at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York, and later acquired examples of these works. Magritte's interests also foreshadowed other post-war artistic pursuits: a generation before the artists involved in pop art began working with images from popular culture, Magritte himself turned to this source. And before his death in 1967, Magritte even lived to see the impact of his own works on advertisements, popular culture, and television [internationally].

From: <http://www.lacma.org/magritte-index> (Los Angeles Museum of Art)



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BACKGROUND: LATROBE REGIONAL GALLERY

Established in 1971, LRG is one of the largest public galleries in eastern Victoria, Australia, presenting exhibitions and curated projects across contemporary art and design, experimental and interdisciplinary practices, curated collections of note, works by regional artists and national touring exhibitions.

Current renovations of the seven gallery spaces has elevated LRG to international museum standards, with archival storage facilities, hosting significant collections such as the Allan Aldous Collection (Asian Art), a substantial collection of handcrafted glass objects and perfume bottles, and a range of modernist, impressionist and recent post-war art.

LRG has ambitious plans for presenting a diversity of exhibitions from exhibitions of high quality art historical merit with intellectual heft alongside more populist art exhibitions. LRG is also the custodian and manager of collections of regional and national significance hosting more than 1400 works of art across all media and historical periods.

BACKGROUND: CHIEF CURATOR, XAVIER CANONNE

Director, Musée de la Photographie, Charleroi, Belgium

www.museephoto.be

Curator, *René Magritte: The Revealing Image, Photos and Films*

Xavier Canonne studied Art History at the University Libre of Brussels and received his Doctorate in Art History and Archaeology from the Sorbonne University in Paris with a doctoral thesis dedicated to Surrealism in Belgium.

Mr Canonne has been the director of the Musée de la Photographie since March 2000. Prior to this, he was the director of the collection of the Province of the Hainaut (modern and contemporary art) from 1987 to 2000. He has curated many exhibitions and has edited and written various books and studies. He was the curator of the exhibitions *Intimate Man Ray* (2003), *Scenes of Atget* (2004), *Lee Miller a Life* (2005), and the exhibition *Surrealism in Belgium* in the Fine Arts Museum in Mons-BAM (March-April 2007). He is the



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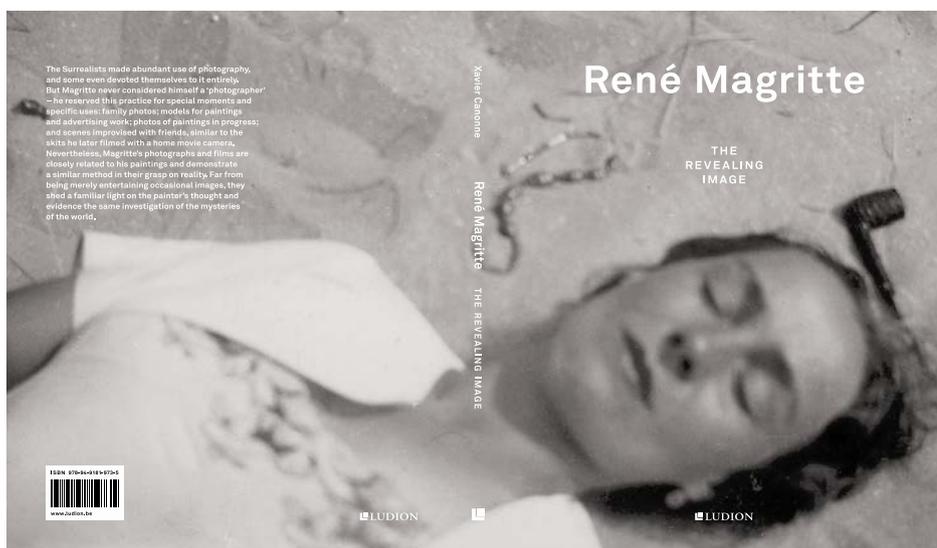
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publisher of the review "Marées de la Nuit". He is the author of "Looking at the U.S. – 1957-1986, Fred Baldwin and Wendy Watriss", published by Schilt Publisher, Amsterdam, 2009; also the book "Requiem pour un homme seul, Le Samouraï de Jean-Pierre Melville", 2010.

MAJOR PUBLICATION

René Magritte: The Revealing Image by Xavier Canonne, published by Ludion and distributed globally by Thames & Hudson, is 263 pages. RRP: \$65 available at Latrobe Regional Gallery
Review copies and images available upon request.



Introduction from the book

“The discovery of the photographs and films of René Magritte in the mid-1970s, more than 10 years after the painter’s death, and their subsequent appraisal and study have given us a look into a family album that reveals an intimate side of Magritte, independent of the biographical documents unearthed from his archives and those of people he was close to. This discovery has also led to an investigation of Magritte’s relationship with these ‘other images’, for which he served as creator, director and model, and of his relationship with the mediums of photography and cinema, to which, in his experience as a painter, he assigned a role of both recreation and creation.” Xavier Canonne