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Bleus Visages by Julien Boudet

Text: Jean-Louis Cianni

Julien Boudet returned to his hometown for a reportage on a seaport stopover. This place of birth, its inhabitants and his own gaze come together in the singular form of *Bleus Visages*. The title is as enigmatic as the city and its inhabitants, as though seeking to grasp something ineffable, explore something unfamiliar. His choice of black and white only adds to the ambiguity, arousing further curiosity.

Bleus Visages tells the tale of a community and describes its scenery, sea and sky swimming together in the background. The port, with its bridges, wharfs and piers; departures and arrivals; embarkation and terminal; sailing off and anchoring. Sea and sky flow over every last thing and every single day, covering the least worry or moment of glee in a great blue

magma. It will go unseen. Or rather, the frame will lose its dominant colour, allowing it to emerge more strongly, gain presence against a backdrop of absence.

Bleus Visages also recounts the characters who come to perform their lives on the Sète stage. The sea and sky, their blueness, flow in and over faces. It shapes faces, tracing wrinkles, highlighting shadows under eyes, freezing expressions. Sea all around, sea tattooed on skin in indelible ink. And beyond the physical features that it stamps on islander bodies and their internal fabric, something more appears. Each face, each body illustrates a one-way journey, an exile – an uprooting and an anticipation. The blue of a face speaks not only of geography, but of history, and of individual stories.

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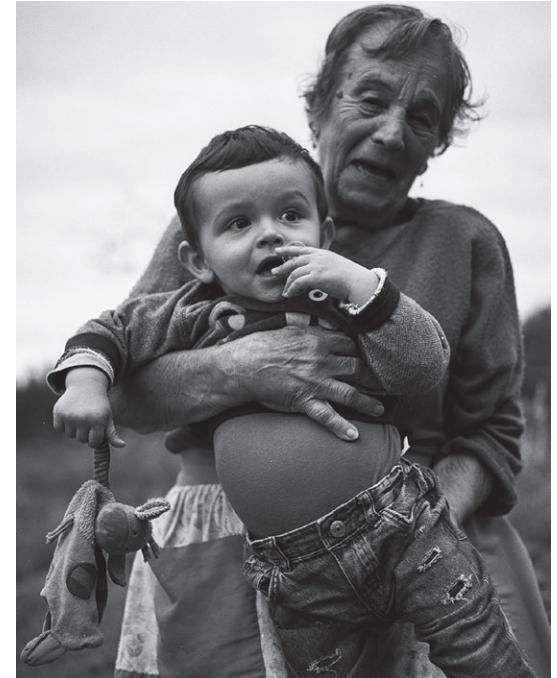
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PARIS - Librairie OFR.

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Book signing 2pm - 7pm

20 rue Dupetit-Thouars 75003 Paris



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Bleus Visages

Julien Boudet

Odéis, la fille de mon médecin de famille.
Odéis, my family doctor's daughter.

2



Demi Portion, l'artiste.
Demi Portion, the artist.

4



L'ancien combattant pour la France.
The war veteran.

6





Photographier ce qu'on n'oublie pas

Photographing what we don't forget

C'est un port du sud de la France, presqu'une île, un site solaire entre continent et Méditerranée : Sète. Colline ? Baleine ? Même l'étymologie du lieu reste incertaine et flottante. Ses habitants ont leurs racines ailleurs, sur les hautes terres, en Italie, en Espagne, en Algérie, au Maroc. Ils forment un petit peuple fier et légèrement nostalgique. On dit qu'ils ont quelque chose de spécial. Ce sont des insulaires, des excentriques. Ils connaissent les vents et les tempêtes. Les blessures des voyages et des origines perdues.

Julien Boudet revient dans sa ville natale, le temps d'un reportage-escale. Ce lieu de naissance, ces habitants, et son propre regard, il les agglomère dans une expression unique : *Bleus Visages*. Une appellation aussi énigmatique que la ville et ses habitants, comme s'il s'agissait avec elle de saisir quelque chose d'ineffable, d'explorer une étrangeté. Et pour ajouter au trouble, pour renforcer l'étonnement ses photographies sont en noir et blanc.

Bleus Visages raconte une communauté et décrit son décor. La mer et le ciel confondus en fond de scène. Le port avec ses ponts, ses quais, ses jetées. Départs et arrivées. Embarquement et terminal. Arrachement et escales. La mer et le ciel, coulent ici toute chose et chaque jour; le moindre souci comme la minute de bonheur, dans un grand magma bleu. On ne le verra pas. Ou plutôt le cadre perdra sa couleur dominante, pour mieux la faire naître, la rendre présente sur fond d'absence.

Sète. It's a port town in the south of France, an almost-island, a solarscape between continent and Mediterranean. Hill? Whale? The very etymology of the place is uncertain, up in the air. The roots of its inhabitants lie elsewhere, in the uplands of Italy, Spain, Algeria and Morocco. They are a small, proud and slightly nostalgic people. It is said that there is something special about them. They are islanders, eccentrics – versed in winds and storms, travel scars and lost origins.

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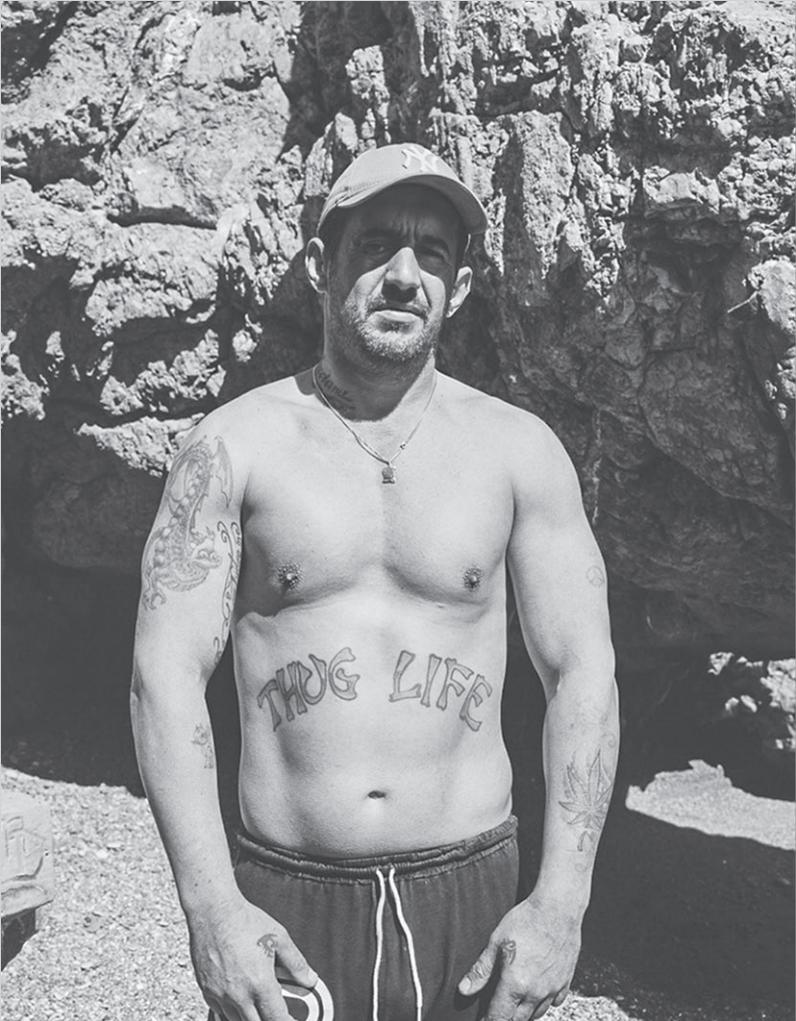
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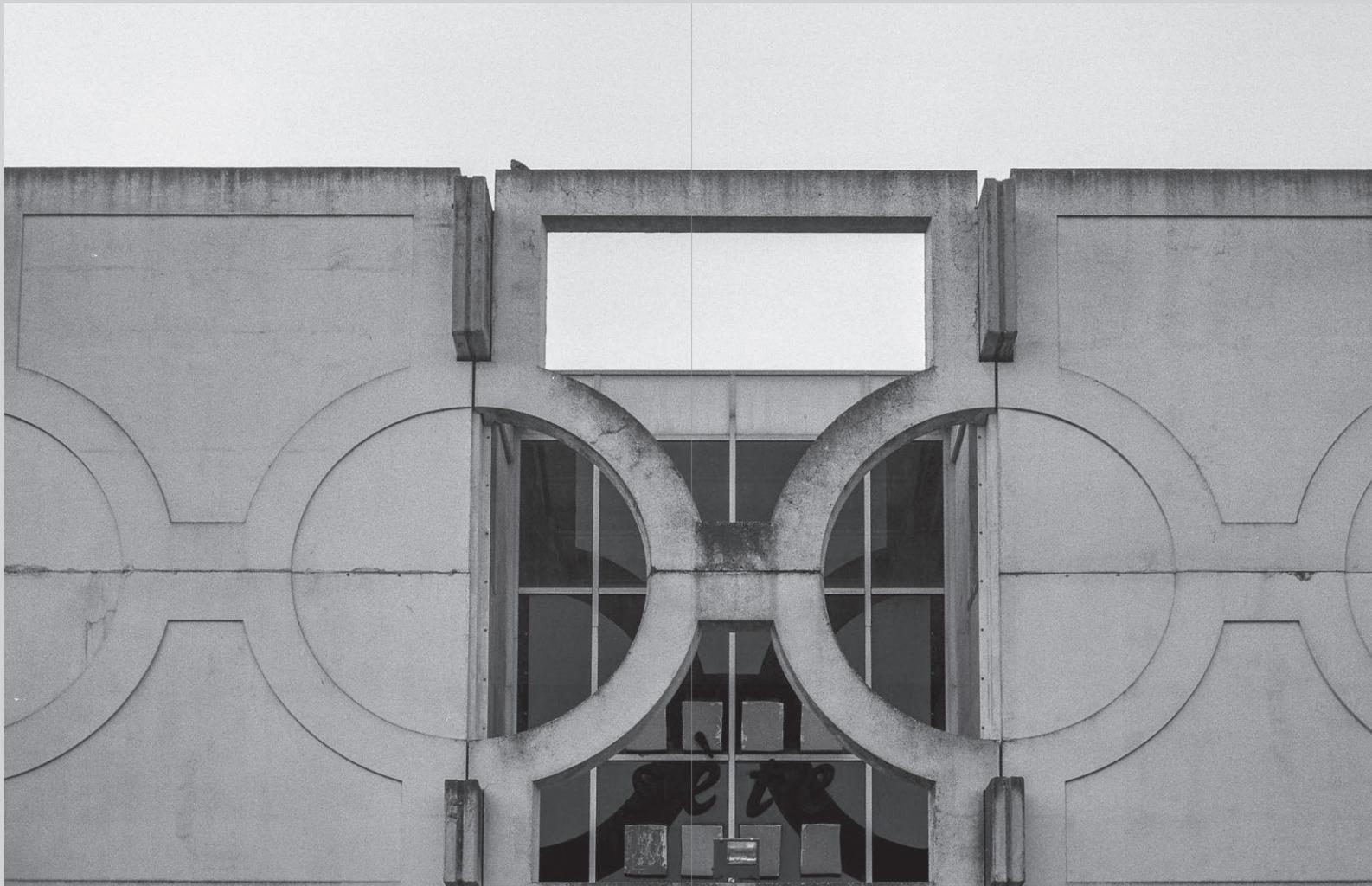
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L'animateur, basketteur, danseur, DJ et papa, Toufik.
The host, basketball player, dancer, DJ and dad, Toufik.



"Thug life" made in Sète.





Gaétan, le jeune pêcheur/agent de sécurité.
Gaétan, the young fisherman/security agent.

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