

# MADE IN NICE

MEDIATION FORM



# PRESENTATION

Students will discover the artistic bubbling of Nice that appeared in the 1960s through the works in the permanent collection. This selection allows us to understand what the young local creation was like. The École de Nice, more a name than a defined aesthetic trend, is based on artists who worked on the territory nearly 60 years ago, independently of other movements to which some are linked, such as the New Realism, Supports-Surfaces, Fluxus or Group 70. These years testify to a real artistic emulation in the Nice region.



## Duration of the tour

- |                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| • Primary School        | 1H |
| • Middle School         | 1H |
| • High School / College | 1H |

## Objectives

- Define "the Nice school"
- Discover local artists
- Show the influence and artistic emulation of the Nice region
- Learn to read a work of art
- Familiarization with the vocabulary specific to art

## A STEPS OF THE VISIT

Based on this information, the teacher will have to make a choice of steps according to the level of the class and the availability of the artworks in the room. The stages can be adjusted at the convenience of the teachers. The arrival preparation form must be completed.

**Step 1:** A school ?

**Step 2:** Artistic gestures

**Step 3:** New Places

## B RELATED KNOWLEDGE

## STEP 1: A SCHOOL?

The mention "École de Nice" appeared for the first time in Combat magazine in 1960, under the pen of Claude Rivière. While critics agree, in order to recognize the reality and relevance of a phenomenon in Nice, many are sceptical about its coherence as a movement and a "school". This term is debated by the artists themselves, but reflects a wealth of practices, a succession of generations and a heterogeneity of media. Whatever its name, its contours and the list of its actors, there is indeed a phenomenon of artistic effervescence in Nice and more broadly on the French Riviera, from the 1950s to the 1970s. A phenomenon whose singularity and scale are unrivalled in Europe outside the major capitals. Yves Klein, Arman, Claude Pascal, by their quest for the absolute, open the way for several generations of artists who will work at the heart of (and in reaction to) the tranquility of the seaside city.

"On Thursday, October 27, 1960, the New Realists became aware of their collective uniqueness. New Realism = new perceptual approaches to reality". (1960) The group's founding statement, written by art critic Pierre Restany, is signed at Yves Klein's home in Paris. The common point bringing together the New Realists, a group initially made up of very diverse personalities, but united in the same refusal of the triumphant abstraction of the Ecole de Paris, is the awareness of a "modern nature": that of the factory and the city, of advertising and the mass media, of science and technology at a given moment in the consumer society.

### ◆ NICE

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Culturally, if Nice became a driving force of international artistic activity at the beginning of the 20th century, it was only after the war that the city became a place that generated artistic individualities and no longer just a setting chosen to complete its work there. At that time, the Côte d'Azur offered a striking contrast between what could be considered a laboratory of modernity and cultural and institutional isolation. While Klein remained the leading figure after his death in 1962, Ben became one of the main catalysts with his second-hand record store, a living art space, a real centre for the dissemination of ideas and current events in European and American creation. The different landscapes of the French Riviera, from the Mediterranean Sea to the mountains at a glance, make Nice a source of inspiration for artists. The popular image of the City of Nice is based mainly on the myth of the seaside resort, bringing tourists to discover the heritage and local customs through the artists of Nice.

## MARTIAL RAYSSE

**Martial RAYSSE**, born in Golfe-Juan in February 1936, became friends with Arman and Ben in 1955 in Nice. He then made his first assemblies with objects. In 1962, he used neon for the first time and then multiplied visual and trompe-l'oeil clichés, close to the tourist postcard, while focusing on the study of the female face. The colourful profusion of new mass-produced articles for supermarkets will fascinate Martial Raysse. He will use these new materials of modernity to show us an aseptic form: a "hygiene of vision".

*Nissa Bella*

1964

Report photographique sur feutrine marouflé sur contreplaqué acrylique et néon sur toile

180 x 120 x 15 cm

Achat en 1990

© Adagp, Paris

Crédit photographique : Ville de Nice



## A STEPS OF THE VISIT

This work represents the face, seen from the front of a young woman whose sustained gaze echoes another famous portrait: The Mona Lisa. We can consider that this painting follows the traditional rules of painting, whether in the choice of framing, installation and historical references. Nevertheless, the chromatic choices and the technique used are clearly contemporary through the use of fluorescent colours. The use of neon as a new material both for its colourful power and its luminosity becomes a pictorial material in the same way as acrylic or canvas.

"I discovered neon light. It is the living color, a color beyond color. Martial Raysse (1962)

## STEP 2: ARTISTIC GESTURES

### ❖ COMPRESSION

## CÉSAR

**CESAR**, born César Baldaccini in 1921 in Marseille, died in 1998 in Paris. At the end of the war, he made his first sculptures, not in marble or bronze, too expensive for him, but in scrap metal. From 1955 to 1965-66, Caesar created his first compressions of automobile parts: radiators, brass tubes, engines, etc., before attacking the bodies themselves. From 1960 to 1989, César compressed 23 cars, and was the first sculptor to use a machine tool, an industrial press as an artistic tool. He took over the famous "Dauphine" car, the emblem of the 1960s and 1970s.



**Dauphine**  
après 1959  
sur une idée de 1959, réalisation en 1970,  
sans doute pour le dixième anniversaire des Nouveaux Réalistes à Milan,  
en novembre 1970  
Compression plate de voiture de couleur rouge vermillon  
sur socle auto-portant; immatriculation 317 CE 91  
Tôle compressée  
410 x 190 x 60 cm  
Tirage : Pièce unique  
Collection MAMAC, Nice  
© SBJ / Adagp, Paris

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### ❖ ACCUMULATION

## ARMAN

**Arman**, born Armand Fernandez in Nice in November 1928, died in 2005 in New York. He studied at the Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs in Nice, then at the Ecole du Louvre in Paris. From 1958 Arman began to introduce the object into the pictorial field, with Les Allures (prints of objects covered with paint and projected on canvas). A collector at heart, he initiated the Accumulations period in 1959; then he created the Poubelles in which organic detritus or various utilitarian objects are piled up in plexiglass boxes. In 1961, he entered into a hand-to-hand combat with the object, breaking it and diverting it; he then carried out the Colères and then the Coupes, exerting his rage on household objects, then on musical instruments (representing classicism).



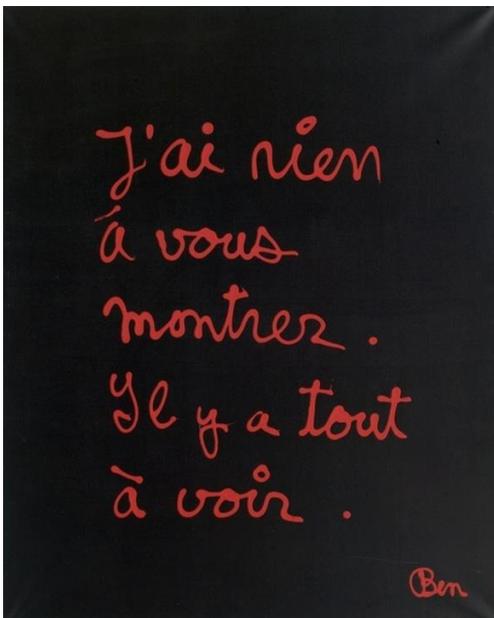
**Colère**  
1961  
Assemblage de morceaux de meuble Bois  
150 x 144 x 25 cm  
S.B.G. : Arman 61  
Achat à M. Charles Cordier en 1968  
Centre national des arts plastiques Dépôt au Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain de Nice depuis le 01/03/2002  
Collection MAMAC, Nice  
© Adagp, Paris  
Crédit photographique : Muriel Anssens/Ville de Nice

❖ PERFORMANCES

## BEN

**Benjamin VAUTIER**, known as BEN, born in 1935 in Naples, arrived in Nice in 1949. Since 1958, Ben's paintings have been writings in which he confides his ideas, maxims and considerations by signing them, thus developing a cult of "Ben says and signs All about Everything". From 1960 onwards, he began working on "street actions" focusing on seemingly ordinary and ordinary gestures, mixing art and life. Example: Howling (1955-1966); Untie knots (1962); Search people (1960-1962); Look at the sky (1963); Lie in the street (1963); Plant a nail (1964), Eat (1964), Smile (1964)...

Ben joined the Fluxus movement after meeting its founder, George Maciunas, at the Festival of Misfits in London in 1962. He invited Maciunas to Nice for the Festival Mondial Fluxus et Art Total in the summer of 1963, and then founded the Théâtre Total, which brought together many artistic languages (theatre, music, performances, cinema, etc.). The troupe, composed of Annie Vautier, Robert Bozzi, Robert Erébo, Dany Gobert and Pierre Pontani, organized for several years concerts, street plays and happenings opposed to conventional theatre during which the audience actively participated in the action. Fluxus then took an important place in Nice with the creation of festivals and the Théâtre de l'Art Total.



*J'ai rien à vous montrer. Il y a tout à voir.*

1979

Acrylique sur toile

162 x 130 cm

S.B.DR. : Ben S.R.H.G.

Achat en 1982

Collection MAMAC, Nice

Ancien numéro dans l'organisme : AC 1982.26

© Adagp, Paris

Based on new codes of representation and conceived in a spirit of diversion and invention, these events tend to abolish the boundaries between art and life; like La Table (Théâtre de l'Artistique, March 12, 1966) where Ben, Marcel Alocco, Robert Bozzi and their accomplices are seated on stage while the audience attends this confusing and unexpected theatrical buffet in the hall.

Since 1958, Ben's paintings have been writings in which he confides his ideas, maxims and considerations by signing them, thus developing a cult of "Ben says and signs All about Everything". From 1960 onwards, he worked on "actions" focusing on a priori ordinary and banal gestures, mixing art and life. Example: Howling (1955-1966); Untie knots (1962); Search people (1960-1962); Look at the sky (1963); Lie in the street (1963); Plant a nail (1964), Eat (1964), Smile (1964)...

❖ ANTHROPOMETRY

**YVES KLEIN**



**Anthropométrie (ANT 84)**

1960

Pigment pur et résine synthétique sur papier marouflé sur toile, 155 x 359

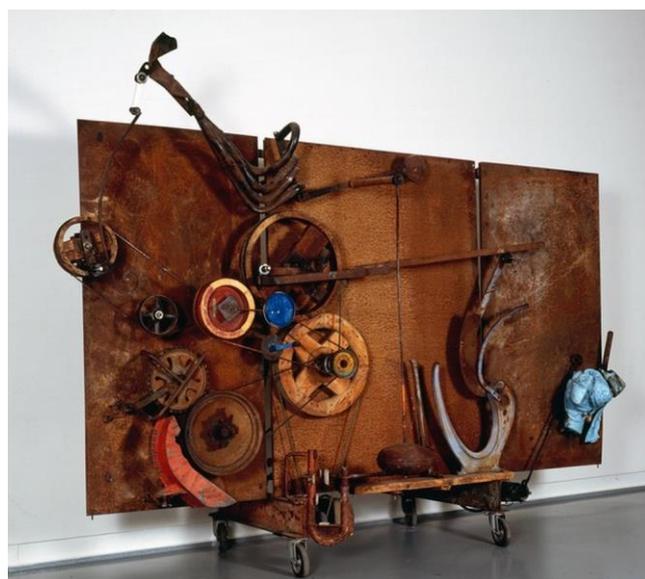
© Yves Klein / Adagp, Paris

**Yves KLEIN**, born in 1928 in Nice, died in Paris in 1962. From 1956 onwards, the exhibitions of Monochromes followed one another. During an exhibition, he presented the practical applications of the "blue era", after the development of a particular ultramarine blue, which he named I.K.B (International Klein Blue). The first Anthropometries (measurement and imprint of the human body) were carried out in public in Paris in March 1960, during a performance during which three nude female models covered in I.K.B paint lay down and move on the paper-covered floor. Under Klein's direction, accompanied by his orchestra, women's bodies became "living brushes". Klein also uses gold, fire, and sets up works that bring together a trilogy of blue, gold and pink colors.

❖ ASSEMBLAGE

**JEAN TINGUELY**

**Jean TINGUELY**, born in 1925 in Fribourg, died in 1991 in Berne (Switzerland). It was soon after his arrival in Paris in 1953 that he created his first meta-mechanical sculptures, combining kinetic art and assembly art. In the production of its machines, Tinguely combines movement, image and sound. Throughout the 1960s, he would manufacture ever more important and disconcerting machines. These sculptures are composite, made of various objects and materials, sometimes found in landfills or in nature. Example with Blue Relief, 1978, a machine whose internal mechanism is visible, producing only movement and sound, and not an industrial object as a productive machine should.



**Relief bleu**

Titre attribué : Hommage à Schmela

1978

Installation avec du mouvement, Acier, bois, peinture, moteur et matériaux divers

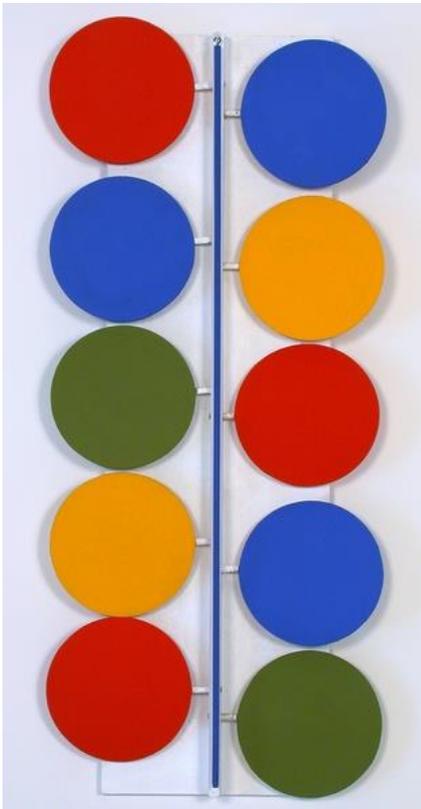
280 x 430 x 185 cm

Achat à la Galerie Daniel Templon avec l'aide du FRAM en 1989

Inv. : 989.5.1

© Adagp, Paris

## ALBERT CHUBAC



**Albert Chubac** was born in 1925 in Geneva (Switzerland) and died in 2008 in Tourrette-Levens. In his creations, shapes and colours come to life through materials as diverse as wood, cardboard, and a little later Plexiglas. He will preferably use wood for his sculptures and cardboard and string for his many relief collages, always keeping the predominance of his pure colours. He developed his edible sculptures in childish colours, which he found one day at a colour merchant in Nice.

*Sans titre*  
Bois peint  
98 x 45 x 7 cm  
Donation de l'artiste en 2004  
Inv. : 2004.1.24  
© Adagp, Paris

## FLUXUS

Fluxus is the name of a group created in 1962 whose members live all over the world, especially in Japan, the United States and Europe.

Officially, nothing connects them. Except for a certain way of conceiving the art and the influences they have suffered. These influences are: John Cage, Dada and Marcel Duchamp, Fluxus would not exist without them.

### FLUXUS IS:

- AN ATTITUDE TOWARDS ART
- FOR THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIMPORTANT
- THE DETAILS OF LIFE
- THE ONLY ARTISTIC MOVEMENT CAPABLE OF EATING ITS TAIL
- MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU THINK.
- LESS IMPORTANT THAN WHAT YOU THINK
- TO MISS A SHOW
- TO READ SOMEONE ELSE'S DIARY THROUGH A HOLE IN HIS OWN.
- TO FALL ASLEEP AND SNORE AT A STOCKHAUSEN CONCERT
- TO THROW 20 LITERS OF OIL AT THE "GISELE" SCENE
- VOSTELL WHEN HE EXPLAINS THE HISTORY OF ART
- GEORGE BRECHT WHEN HE AVOIDS ART HISTORY
- ALL POSSIBLE
- THE ART-OF-ATTITUDE
- ANTI-ART
- VICE-ART
- THE MAIL-ART
- THE CONCERTS

## STEP 3: NEW PLACES

### ❖ L'ARTISTIQUE

L'Artistique was founded in 1885. It is a circle, a club that brings together mainly local artists. The main objective of this place is to promote artists (painters, sculptors or writers) from Nice. In 1911, L'Artistique built a theatre located at 27 boulevard Dubouchage in Nice. Later, this place became one of the first museums in the city of Nice in which the Artist exhibited many times. In 1994, the Théâtre de l'Artistique closed, bought by the city to become the Théâtre de la Photographie.

### ❖ LABORATOIRE 32 / GALERIE BEN DOUTE DE TOUT, Ben's shop, 1958-1973

In 1958, Ben opened a bookshop at 32 rue Tondutti de l'Escarène in Nice, a kind of "catch-all" store that quickly became a meeting place for many artists and a real living object of his production. It will be the first place where Martial Raysse will exhibit his works. Example with a photographic document from the record store.

*Laboratoire 32/galerie Ben doute de tout,*  
magasin de Ben, 1958-1973  
32, rue Tondutti-de-l'Escarène  
Courtesy de l'artiste, Nice



work since the late 1950s has been one and the same manifesto, and it does not matter whether he chooses to affirm it through writing, gesture, behaviour or speech. Each painting, each action constitutes an element juxtaposed to the other, which continues to be read throughout the compositions assembled on the picture rails or on the walls over the years. Ben's entire work questions the ego, and the relationship between art and life. We then speak of Total Art. Example with La cambra, 1990-1999. This three-dimensional work, installation and various objects is made for the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art.



*Cambra de Ben*  
1990 – 1999  
Titre attribué : Le Musée de Ben  
Œuvre en trois dimensions, Installation  
Objets divers  
350 x 500 x 350 cm  
Photos Muriel Anssens/Ville de Nice  
© Adagp, Paris

Ben created a "Festival Fluxus mondial et Art Total" in Nice in 1963. He invites other artists of the movement to this festival that brings together all the arts. So there was music, concerts, theatre, performances. Many events (performances) have been created in the city of Nice. The passers-by and the people of Nice had become the public of this art. The Fluxus aims to eliminate the boundaries of art and life. Ben used to say "everything is art". A few years later, he organized the festival "Non-art; anti-Art, Truth is Art", where other artistic actions and gestures took place in Nice. The Fluxus movement is very important in Nice thanks in particular to Ben's actions, but also because it is a global movement. Fluxus is not only a visual art. It includes music, theatre and in particular the creation of the "Total Theatre". There have been various performances such as: "Personne" where no one will be able to come to the performance but once the curtain falls, the artists join the audience in the hall of the theatre, or "La table" where artists have a meal on stage in front of an audience.

## ❖ FESTIVAL OF NEW REALISM IN NICE

On July 13, 1961, the artists of the New Realism inaugurated a Festival on this theme in Nice. An exhibition of the group takes place at the Muratore gallery where Martial Raysse presents his first installation on the theme of holidays by the sea. 13 and 14, at Roseland Abbey, the artists create a series of works of art: Tinguely puts in water a mobile fountain, Niki de Saint-Phalle pulls with a rifle, Arman makes a wrath and fixes on a wooden panel the pieces of the table and the chair he just broke at the precise place where they fell. Rotella gives a phonetic poetry recital and Hains cuts out and distributes the parts of a Entremet de la Palissade géant.

## ❖ LA CEDILLE QUI SOURIT

The American **George Brecht**, a pioneer of conceptual art, and the Frenchman **Robert Filliou**, a genius of the ordinary, decided to settle in Villefranche-sur-Mer, near Nice, to open a non-boutique and bookstore, an "International Centre for Permanent Creation" under the sign of humour: The Smiling Cedilla. From October 1965 to March 1968, jewellery, multiples, editions and original works were exhibited there without hierarchy. The activities of La Cédille qui Sourit sometimes take place in the premises at 12, rue de May, "always closed, opening only at the request of visitors", but more often in the streets and bars of the old town; Robert Filliou sums them up as follows: "We played games, invented and disinvented objects, corresponded with the humble and powerful, drank and talked with neighbours 1." Announcer of the critical forms of presence in the world that cross part of the Western cultural movements around May 1968, La Cédille qui Sourit is an attempt to bring art and life together in a small village on the Côte d'Azur, whose history haunts international contemporary artistic creation.



*Intérieur de La Cédille qui Sourit, vu vers le mur ouest,  
1966*

Photo Jacques Strauch, novembre 1966  
Nice, musée d'Art moderne et d'Art contemporain

❖ KEY WORDS

**MARCEL DUCHAMP:** (1887-1968) Painter, visual artist, French literary man then naturalized American, Marcel Duchamp exerted a major influence on various currents of contemporary art. Author of the Ready-made, he questions our vision of the exhibition space, the status of the work of art, and will also be a curator and art dealer

**PERFORMANCE/HAPPENING:** The emergence of art-performance was at the end of the 1950s. Allan Kaprow launched his first happenings by claiming to be no longer an "action painter", but now an "action artist", dedicated to participating directly in the world. It is in the field of visual arts that we must locate the focus from which art performance emerges, with Jackson Pollock's action-painting in particular, where the active presence of the artist's entire person is solicited. The art of performance also involves interdisciplinary crossovers (for example with composers John Cage, La Monte Young...). A renewal occurs in this willingness to leave the workshops, to renounce the medium, material, technical and symbolic frameworks, for an engagement of the artist in his very person, and his body directly.

**READY-MADE:** Term first used by Marcel Duchamp in January 1916 to designate everyday objects that he selects, diverts and elevates to the rank of works of art through various manipulations.

**NOUVEAU REALISM:** "On Thursday, October 27, 1960, the New Realists became aware of their collective uniqueness. New Realism = new perceptual approaches to reality". The group's founding statement, written by art critic Pierre Restany, at Yves Klein's home in Paris, gathered the signatures of : Arman, François Dufrêne, Raymond Hains, Yves Klein, Martial Raysse, Pierre Restany, Daniel Spoerri, Jean Tinguely, Jacques Mahé de la Villeglé; César and Mimmo Rotella, guests, were absent; Niki de Saint Phalle, Christo and Gérard Deschamps joined the group, respectively in 1961 and 1962. This collective gesture of artists, all Europeans, in which Arman, Klein and Raysse formed the Nice component, only noted a situation that had existed for nearly ten years, most of these artists having already created a decisive part of their work. The common point bringing together the New Realists, a group initially made up of very diverse personalities, but united in the same refusal of the triumphant abstraction of the Ecole de Paris, is the awareness of a "modern nature": that of the factory and the city, of advertising and the mass media, of science and technology at a given moment in the consumer society. A gesture of appropriation of everyday reality, proposing a re-reading of Duchamp's ready-made, the Nouveaux Réalistes engage the object in a new adventure and give it a second "artistic baptism", exploiting quantitative language, the aggressiveness of reality and the poetic charge of the materials found. The group's collective action was brief, from 1960 to 1963-64. In July 1961, the First Festival of New Realism was held in Nice on the principle of action-shows and exhibitions of works.

**AVANT-GARDE:** Group, innovative movement in the intellectual, technical, artistic field, etc.

**MANIFESTO:** A theoretical presentation by which writers and artists launch a new movement.

❖ WORKS IDEAS

- ➔ The consumer society and the 30 glorious ones
- ➔ The art of performance
- ➔ Territorial art, reticular art
- ➔ Reading a work of art

## EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

*A propos de Nice : 1947-1977 : exposition, Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain à Nice, du 23 juin au 22 octobre 2017*, Somogy éditions d'art ; MAMAC, Nice, 2017

BRUN Michèle (Dir.), *Guide du Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art contemporain*, Nice, 2008

BRUN Michèle, DECREUX Anne, GOETZMANN Isabelle, PEGLION Jacqueline, PERLEIN Gilbert, *Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice*, édition Régie autonome des comptoirs de vente de la ville de Nice, 2008

BEN, *À propos de Nice*, MNAM - Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1977

## PRESS ARTICLES

Bauwens, Malika. Nice, cas d'école. « Guide des 100 expos de l'été ». *Beaux-Arts Magazine*, juillet 2017.

B.R. L'Ecole de Nice. *L'œil Magazine*, juillet 2017

Céna, Olivier. Ecole de Nice. *Télérama*, 21 juin 2017

Lisarelli, Diane. Nice, école buissonnière. *Grazia*, 23 juin 2017

Interview n°95817. *News Tank Culture*, 15 juin 2017

## SITOGRAPHY

Les « 5 expos à ne pas rater cette semaine » sur le site *des Inrockuptibles* :

<http://www.lesinrocks.com/2017/06/24/arts/les-5-expos-ne-pas-rater-cette-semaine-14-11958994/>

Le reportage *Télématin* : <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5rqwkm>

La chronique de Diane Shenouda sur *Europe 1* (Matinale de samedi 24 juin) : <http://www.europe1.fr/emissions/culture-sorties-co/mc-solaar-je-suis-une-antiquite-du-rap-3370655> (début à la minute 10:45)

<http://www.mamac-nice.org>