



## 1. Exhibition project

To mark this year's "Rencontres de l'illustration" event and its theme of women's visibility in illustration, the Tomi Ungerer Museum – International Illustration Centre is paying tribute to Catherine Meurisse.

The exhibition "Catherine Meurisse. A Place of One's Own," looks back on the career of this prolific, multifaceted artist active in the Press, young people's books and comic strips. She is the first illustratress to have been elected to the Academy of Fine Arts and this exhibition, with its title harking back to Virginia Woolf, comes as a chance to address the question of her place in a male-dominated environment, both in the field of illustration and the art world in general.

After following a programme in modern literature, Meurisse studied at the Estienne School of Applied Arts and then at the National School of Decorative Arts in Paris. In her books of illustrations as well as in her humorous drawings for the press, we find her predilection for the two essential sources of her inspiration, art and literature. A cursory glance is enough to reveal Caravaggio, Millais, Hokusai, Proust and even Stendhal, to name but a few. To plunge into Meurisse's references is also to realise how the artist has created her own voice; how the illustratress has shaped her identity, making a place for herself and bringing illustration into her haven.

But if the artist often cites painting or poetry in her works, she establishes no hierarchy between arts and letters, drawing equally from Delacroix's colour, Doré's line, Rabelais' pastiches, a Stravinsky symphony or Leonard Bernstein's rhythms. If we had to name one element she exalts, it would obviously be Nature. In her children's books and press cartoons she appears as a real protagonist – in animal form; or she spreads her horizons across double pages and completely swallows up the reader. In *The Young Woman and the Sea*, Meurisse precisely questions the place of humans in Nature, and she tells us how art makes it possible to capture the landscapes that are fading away.

Exhibition Curator: Morgane Magnin, conservation assistant at the Tomi Ungerer Museum - International Illustration Centre



## 2. Strasbourg Illustration Encounters

This exhibition is being presented as part of the seventh in the series of the “Strasbourg Illustration Encounters” from 16 March to 2 April, 2023.

Drawing, poster, satire, animation, comic strip, illustrated novel... from the blank page to the stage, from public space to cinematographic and digital space, illustration is everywhere. Recognized artists and young graduates find their place at the Strasbourg Illustration Forum, as do heritage and contemporary creation.

The theme chosen for this 2023 edition is "Women, Identities, Visibilities."

A programme designed by the city and Eurometropolis media libraries, the Museums of the City of Strasbourg, in particular the Tomi Ungerer Museum - International Illustration Centre, the 5th Place, the Haute École des Arts du Rhin | HEAR, and the National and University Library of Strasbourg.

For more than seven years, the Central Vapeur associative festival has also been fully committed to these Illustration Encounters.

More about the Strasbourg Illustration Encounters:

[www.strasbourgillustration.eu](http://www.strasbourgillustration.eu)



### 3. Catherine Meurisse

Catherine Meurisse was born in 1980. After a course in modern literature, she studied at the Ecole Supérieure Estienne and then at ENSAD in Paris.

Winner of a school press cartoon competition in 2001, she was first published in *Charlie Hebdo* and *Les Echos*. At the age of 25 she was offered a position by *Charlie* and worked there for twelve years as a cartoonist and reporter. Working alongside the greats, including Cabu, Wolinski, Charb, Luz, Riss, Tignous, Honoré, Jul, Willem, she has stamped her spontaneous style on many newspapers (*Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Les Echos*, *L'Obs*, *Télérama*, etc.) and at the same time has worked as an illustrator for young people, both in magazines (*Okapi*, *Astrapi*, etc.) and in publishing (Bayard, Gallimard, Nathan, etc.). She quickly became a comic book author in addition to her work as a caricaturist and illustrator.

In her albums, which regularly combine art and literature, there is no room for seriousness. After *My Men of Letters*, *Le Pont des Arts* and *Moderne Olympia*, which invite famous painters and writers to come down from their pedestals and join in the dance of the Muses and the Museums, *Know how to Live or Die*, the story of an integration course at Nadine de Rothschild's Academy of Good Manners, *Funny Women*, a series of portraits of actresses who have made humour their profession (Anemone, Yolande Moreau... with Julie Birmant as scriptwriter), 2016, she published *La Légèreté* (Lightness), the story of her return to life and memory after the attack on *Charlie Hebdo*, which she escaped. A quest for beauty is the driving force behind this book, which incited her to relearn how to write and draw. This album marked the end of her work as a caricaturist. She left the editorial staff of *Charlie Hebdo* and decided to move away from the immediacy of current events to devote herself permanently to the comic strip, which is conducive to a dream-like state. In her books, nature and culture are permeable; and as Marcel Proust the writer she calls her "life assistant" wrote, trees are "a vigorous tribe from which we have a great deal to learn". Following the burlesque *Scenes of Hormonal Life* published in 2018, *The Wide Open Spaces*, was an evocation of her country childhood mingling colourful memories and political awareness of the landscape damaged by intensive agriculture. In ihren Büchern widmet sie sich der Natur und der Kultur. Die Bäume sind, wie der von ihr verehrte Marcel Proust, der ihr bei der Rückkehr ins Leben eine große Stütze war, schreibt, eine „kräftige Sippe, von der wir so einiges lernen können“. In 2019, with *Delacroix*, an illustrated adaptation of the memoirs of painter's great friend Alexandre Dumas, she became eligible for the Academy of Fine Arts. Elected on 15 January, 2020, she brought comics to the Institut de France.

In 2021 she published *La Jeune Femme et la Mer*, an initiatory story questioning our ability to resonate with nature, and the following year signed the illustrations for the *Fables* of La Fontaine, as well as *Human, too Human*, a comic strip that humorously shakes up the codes of philosophical thought.

A major retrospective exhibition devoted to her work, *Catherine Meurisse, la vie en dessin* (Catherine Meurisse, Life in drawing) was held at the *Bibliothèque publique d'Information du Centre Pompidou* (The Public Information Library at the Pompidou centre), as well as at the *FIBD* in Angoulême and the *Cartoonmuseum* in Basel.

## Selective Bibliography

### Cartoons:

*Mes Hommes de lettres*, éd. Sarbacane  
*Le Pont des arts*, éd. Sarbacane  
*Moderne Olympia*, éd. Futuropolis-Musée d'Orsay  
*La Vie de palais*, avec Richard Malka, éd. Marabulles  
*Drôles de femmes*, avec Julie Birmant, éd. Dargaud  
*La Légèreté*, éd. Dargaud  
*Scènes de la vie hormonale*, éd. Dargaud  
*Les Grands espaces*, éd. Dargaud  
*Delacroix*, avec Alexandre Dumas, éd. Dargaud  
*La Jeune femme et la mer*, éd. Dargaud  
*Humaine, trop humaine*, éd. Dargaud

### Illustration:

*Ma Tata Thérèse*, avec Fabrice Nicolino, éd. Sarbacane  
*L'Esprit de la ruche, la vie secrète des abeilles*, avec Jean Meurisse, ed. Ouest France  
*Fables*, avec Jean de la Fontaine, éd. Rmn-GP



Catherine Meurisse © Nicolas Trouillard

## 4. Exhibition Visit

### Salle 5

#### A multi-faceted artist

Illustrator for children's literature, press cartoonist and comic book author, Catherine Meurisse is a multi-faceted artist. Her posters for cultural events and works and her drawings for the performing arts demonstrate that she thinks "out of the box". Although her style has evolved over the years, it always portrays her subjects faithfully. In her roughly sketched weekly press cartoons, for example, the line is incisive and rather spare, while in the drawings for *Zadig*, black outlines are thinned out in favour of colour. The artist uses her drawings to convey messages relating to current events, which she handles with humour and poetry.

### Salle 6

#### In the artistic world

For Catherine Meurisse, there is no hierarchy between the arts; she draws her inspiration in everything from paintings by Delacroix, prints by Hokusai and illustrations by Doré. In her drawings, she pays tribute to artists and declares her love for these arts that helped her to (re)build herself. She humorously brings them down from their pedestal and pokes fun at the art world. By creating a strong and unique identity, she has carved out her own place: first at *Charlie Hebdo*, where she was the first female cartoonist to join the team, and more recently at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, to which she was admitted in 2020. She is the first illustrator to win a place under the dome and with her, the 9th art finally gets a seat in this illustrious institution.

"After all, isn't the comic strip a kind of artistic bridge? A bridge that a collection of little love locks would not collapse, on the contrary. Painting feeds it, without suffocating it. Philosophy embraces it, without stifling it. Painting and literature commune, without discord. Poetry radiates it, without consuming it. Dancing joins it; Photography and cinema enrich it, and the comic strip can say "action!" or "cut!" whenever it likes, without fearing exorbitant filming costs. The theatre resembles it. "\*"

\*Excerpt from the speech given by the artist at her installation at the Académie des beaux-arts

### Salle 7

#### Between text and image

Illustration and literature are two sides of the same coin, often presented in opposition when in fact they complement each other. Catherine Meurisse's drawing is deepened by its contact with the text. In *Mes Hommes de Lettres* (My Literature Men), she puts French literature through the centuries into images; a way for her to be reminded of her first two years of study in the faculty of modern literature. By illustrating La Fontaine's *Fables*, she became part of a tradition, alongside Doré, Rabier and Grandville, to name but a few. She chose to represent the story, rather than the moral; under her pen, text and image intermingle and enrich each other.

## **Salle 8**

### **In the heart of nature**

Nature is the real protagonist in Catherine Meurisse's work, from press cartoons to comics and illustrations. Traversing real or imagined landscapes - from her native region to Japan - the artist invites the reader to take an inner journey to the outdoors. She immortalizes an environment doomed to disappear and weaves connections between humans and nature. Armed with pen, pencil or brush, she gives texture and movement to the fauna and flora, depicting the sensations created by the elements.

### **The animal theme**

Catherine Meurisse's world is populated by animals. Among them, the fox is a recurring character. This cunning and mischievous animal, the artist's totem, has always accompanied her, so much so that one was engraved on the hilt of her academic sword.

Animals also feature heavily in Tomi Ungerer's work and take many different forms. Visitors can discover some of the animals from his "menagerie" in the other rooms of the museum.

## 5.Cultural Events

### VISITES

#### À deux voix

Samedi 18 mars à 14h30

Durée : 1h / Tarif : entrée du musée

Rencontre avec Catherine Meurisse, illustratrice, autrice, académicienne et Morgane Magnin, assistante de conservation au Musée Tomi Ungerer et commissaire de l'exposition.

#### Découvrir l'exposition

Dimanches

26 mars, 9 et 16 avril, 7, 14 et 21 mai, 11 et 25 juin à 15h

Durée : 1h / Tarif : entrée du musée

#### Entdeckung der Ausstellung und der Sammlungen

Samstags 29. April, 27. Mai und

17.Juni um 15.00 Uhr

Dauer: 1 St./Preis: Eintritt Museum

Führung auf Deutsch.

#### Images de bandes dessinées, mais pas que...

Samedi 25 mars à 14h30

Durée : 1h / Tarif : entrée du musée

Cette visite est interprétée en LSF pour les personnes sourdes et malentendantes.

Sur réservation : [isabelle.bulle@strasbourg.eu](mailto:isabelle.bulle@strasbourg.eu)

### ATELIERS FAMILLES

#### Plutôt Corbeau ou Renard ?

Dimanche 19 mars de 14h30 à 17h en continu

Vendredi 28 avril de 14h30 à 17h en continu

Durée : libre / Tarif : entrée du musée

Des animaux réels et imaginaires peuplent les fables et les illustrations des albums. Invitez un animal à devenir votre compagnon le temps d'un atelier d'illustration.

#### Rendez-vous aux jardins

Dimanche 4 juin de 14h30 à 17h en continu

Durée : libre/ Tarif : gratuit

Catherine Meurisse a voyagé au Japon et est très inspirée par la représentation de la nature.

Envie de participer à un *Giatoku* végétal, le jardin du musée s'ouvre à vous pour y capturer arbres, plantes...



## **SPECTACLES ET +**

**Musées pour tous ?!**

**Dimanche 2 avril  
de 14h30 à 17h30**

**Durée : 3h / Tarif : gratuit**

**Les étudiants de l'Université de Strasbourg s'invitent dans le musée et vous proposent de découvrir les œuvres et les collections.**

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## **VISITES**

**À tous les étages, collection et exposition**

**Mercredis 19 et 26 avril à 15h**

**Durée : 1h / Tarif : entrée du musée**

**Envie de visiter le musée, de découvrir Tomi Ungerer et Catherine Meurisse pendant le temps des petites vacances, cette visite est faite pour vous.**

**La programmation estivale sera prochainement disponible sur le site des musées**

## 6.Visitor Information

### **Musée Tomi Ungerer – Centre International de l'illustration**

Villa Greiner / 2, avenue de la Marseillaise, Strasbourg

Opening times: weekdays – except Mondays – from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 6pm,  
Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 6pm

tel. +33 (0)3 68 98 50 00

**Groups:** more at [www.musees.strasbourg.eu/groupes-tarifs-reservations](http://www.musees.strasbourg.eu/groupes-tarifs-reservations)

**Museum entrance fee:** 7.50 € (reduced: 3.50 €)

#### **Admission free:**

- visitors under age 18
- Carte Culture card holders
- Atout Voir card holders
- Museums Pass Musées card holders
- Éduc'Pass card holders
- disabled visitors
- art history, archaeology and architecture students
- employment seekers
- social assistance beneficiaries
- badge-holding employees of Strasbourg Eurometropolis

#### **Admission free to all visitors:**

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month 1 day pass: € 12, reduced rate: € 7 (access to all Strasbourg museums and temporary exhibitions)

3 day pass: € 18, reduced rate: € 12 (access to all Strasbourg museums and temporary exhibitions)

**Museums-PASS-Musées: 1 year, 320 museums: more info at [www.museumspass.com](http://www.museumspass.com)**