

# L'ŒIL DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE

**Photo Elysée : Deborah Turbeville : Photocollage**



Photo Elysée recently paid tribute to Deborah Turbeville, an American photographer recognised in the 1970s for her fashion photographs. But Turbeville is much more than that; it is a work on photography and its materiality. In collaboration with the MUUS collection, Photo Elysée allows us to discover a true female artist. It's challenging to classify Deborah Turbeville's (1932-2013) work because her oeuvre is rich in research and diverse use of photography. Through the "Photocollage" exhibition, Photo Elysée reveals the artistic dimension of Deborah Turbeville's work, extracting it somewhat from the box of "fashion photographer." It is true that

this is how she is mostly known in the industry. It was in 1975 that she became known with the series of New York baths, which she did for Vogue magazine, then art-directed by Alexander Liberman. But during these photo sessions with models in unusual places or grandiose settings, Deborah Turbeville photographed the backstage, these women dressing and undressing, bodies in motion, scenes isolated indeliberate blur with the desire to tell a story. After completing assignments for magazines such as Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Nova, and Vogue Italia, she worked on "her photos" in her studio, cut them, annotated them, scratched them, and stuck them together. These collages are not sketches but

The Eye of Photography / 26 avril 2024  
*Photo Elysée : Deborah Turbeville : Photocollage / by Marie Pellicier*

GALERIE CHRISTOPHE GAILLARD  
[www.galeriegaillard.com](http://www.galeriegaillard.com)

reveal an artistic intent and aesthetic research, where the notions of cinematic sequence and the physicality of photography are very present. Discovering her archives, Photo Elysée director and exhibition curator Nathalie Herschdorfer had no idea of the artistic extent of Deborah Turbeville's work. Over more than forty years as a fashion photographer, she created numerous works, all in black and white. Deborah Turbeville also carefully worked on the processing of her negatives, layering them and closely studying the effect of material on photography. Nathalie Herschdorfer adds: "While screens have accustomed us to very sharp images, vibrant colors, Turbeville creates with a fascinating sense of craftsmanship. She cuts, tears her prints, sticks them with tape, and pins them on kraft paper. Her art is

fabulous; the physical aspect of the exhibited objects goes far beyond photography as we know it." While attending evening classes with Richard Avedon, he advised Deborah Turbeville to follow her own voice. Always feeling somewhat "off the mark" in the glamorous and superficial fashion world, she found her way in the plurality offered by the practice of photography. With this retrospective, Photo Elysée once again presents an exhibition where space is used as a time for reflection, and photography is approached as a physical experience, a joy in the age of the all-digital.