



**MEP**

**STUDIO**



# **Johnny Pitts**

## **Black Bricolage**

10.04–24.05.2026

# The exhibition

**In the second part of the season, MEP Studio welcomes the British artist Johny Pitts.**

“When I first heard it, it encouraged me to think of myself as whole and unhyphenated: Afropean. Here was a space where blackness was taking part in shaping European identity at large. It suggested the possibility of living in and with more than one idea: Africa and Europe, or, by extension, the Global South and the West, without being mixed-this, half-that or black-other. That being black in Europe didn’t necessarily mean being an immigrant”.

— Johny Pitts, *Afropean*

**Curator**  
Clothilde Morette, MEP

**Production manager**  
Élisa Monteillet, MEP

Photographer and writer Johny Pitts has developed an independent practice for over twenty years, grounded in long-form research and human encounter. In the wake of the global financial crash, in the early 2010s, he embarked on a five-month journey across Europe, armed with several notebooks and a camera. This project grew from a necessity both intimate and political: to understand what it means to be Black in Europe, beyond clichés, identity assignments and dominant narratives. The discovery of the word Afropean came as a revelation, and served as a portal rather than a destination.

Raised in a multi-ethnic home in the working-class outskirts of Sheffield — a city devastated by the pressures of liberal economics — Pitts became aware of a world that had remained invisible to him, which refused to reject any of the cultures he identified with, but brought them together as a unified whole. It is from this founding tension that the *Afropean* project was born, and with it, the possibility of thinking of oneself within an open space where Black cultures participate fully in the shaping of European identities.

*Black Bricolage* brings together photographs, notebooks and documents that bear witness to Black experiences in Europe and beyond, between 2004 and 2024. From Paris to Brussels, Amsterdam, Berlin, Stockholm, Moscow, Lisbon, Rome, Marseille and Saint-Paul-de-Vence, to newer work that includes images made in Freetown, Salvador Bahia and the US deep South, Johny Pitts illuminates Afro-European and Afro-diaspora realities that are often made invisible or poorly represented. His approach refuses both nostalgia and stereotype, but rather favours the ordinary: informal conversations, cafés, community centres, daily commutes, living spaces. His work is built through proximity, listening and exchange, in the company of workers, activists, musicians, educators, students and researchers alike. Pitts’s hauntological gaze connects each city he visits to its colonial past, its history and its present. This is not a bird's-eye view, but a collection of fragments, patiently assembled through encounter.

In *Black Bricolage*, Pitts uses the MEP Studio space as an immersive scrapbook, where images, texts, archives and testimonies interweave through plays of reflection, blur and assemblage. Writing and photography function here as a single, unified gesture: each image opens a narrative, each note extends a gaze. The notebooks do not explain the images — they reveal the conditions of their emergence.

Cover image:  
Johny Pitts, *Tunmise*, 2021  
© Johny Pitts

**#johnypitts**  
**#mepstudio**



The exhibition invites active experience: to take the time to look, to read, to listen, to move through the space. It offers an atmosphere to inhabit, one in which the deeply multidimensional nature of Johnny Pitts' work and his broad approach to culture unfolds — where music, language, memory and everyday life converge.

*Black Bricolage* does not impose a single narrative: it opens a shared space, where the stories, cultures and futures of Black Europeans are made visible in all their complexity.

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A writer, filmmaker, photographer, and journalist, **Johnny Pitts** (lives and works in London) has developed a major body of work around Afropean identity, a concept describing the experience of being Black and European. From London to Lisbon, via Brussels and Berlin, he encounters Afro-descendant communities and brings back images of formal and documentary power.

The recipient of several distinctions, including the European Essay Prize and the EM Forster Award, he has presented solo exhibitions at The Photographers' Gallery in London in 2023 and at Foam in Amsterdam in 2020. His work is also part of the permanent collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

This exhibition is organised with the support of

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### MEP Studio supports emerging artists

In parallel with the Galleries' programming (levels +2 and +3), which features large-scale exhibitions by established artists every four months, MEP Studio (level +1) presents emerging artists in their first institutional solo shows, with two exhibitions per season.

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# Press images

Images are provided exclusively to the press, and only for purposes of publicity for the duration of the exhibition at the MEP. The party reproducing the images must not crop, edit, or add text to the images in any way.

[Download images here.](#)



Johny Pitts, *Rye Lane*, 2021  
© Johny Pitts



Johny Pitts, *Tunmise*, 2021  
© Johny Pitts



Johny Pitts, *Baker Street, London*, 2010  
© Johny Pitts



Johny Pitts, *A Portable Paradise, Clichy-sous-Bois*, 2010  
© Johny Pitts



Johny Pitts, *African Development, Finsbury Park*, 2010  
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**Director** : Julie Jones

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The MEP wishes to thank the MEP's Collectors Circle and the Society of Friends of the MEP for their continued support.

**#mepparis**

**@mep.paris**



# Useful information

## **MEP — Maison Européenne de la Photographie**

5/7 rue de Fourcy 75004 Paris

01 44 78 75 00 – mep-fr.org

Metro stops: Saint-Paul (Line 1) and Pont Marie (Line 7)

### **Opening hours**

Wednesday–Friday: 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

Thursday: 11 a.m.–10 p.m.

Saturday–Sunday: 10 a.m.–8 p.m.

(Exclusive access for members on Sunday mornings,  
10 a.m.–11 a.m.)

Monday–Tuesday: closed

### **Admission**

Full price: €13

Discounted admission: €8

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