

Depuis toujours,
mais encore plus
depuis ma maladie,
j'ai tellement regardé,
j'ai tellement pris
des images en moi,
que une fois mort
il suffira de
placer des bagues
dans mon crâne
et diriger mes orbites
vers un mur blanc
pour qu'un cinéma
apparaisse!

For as long as I can remember, and even more since my illness, I have looked so much, taken so many images into myself, that once I am dead, all it will take is to place candles inside my skull and turn my eye sockets towards a white wall for a cinema to appear!

Making rooms for ghosts

Penser la peur

20 PHOTOGRAPHS, 2022 TO 2026

“They are rooms of my own, places I can return to. They preserve the memory of that family core, old and renewed through love and friendship, to which I remain attached.”

JEAN-MARIE REYNIER, SANTA MARGHERITA, 2024

We are already the snail, we are already the house.

I am firmly convinced that in life we do nothing but run away from home. Build a home and run away from it. Leave home, find a home, search for a home, in no particular order. Perhaps the best thing in life is to become a snail, or to understand that we are already the snail, already the house. The house moves with us. It carries its images, its dead, its gestures, its rooms and the names we continue to speak.

To be sea, to be beach. To run from the beach and find the rock. The rock becomes a fish, the fish becomes a skull. The skull has accompanied me since childhood. It contains fear, vanity, the body and memory. I look at it as a house, a dark chamber, a camera, our Byzantium. Snail skull, house skull, darkroom skull. A cavity where light, gazes and time come to settle. A photograph opens this cavity and gives it a room.

Since 2021, Penser la peur has gathered thousands of images and has been built through subchapters. People, houses, gardens, hospital rooms, lakes, beaches, trees, beds, abandoned objects, figures seen from behind, blurred faces, waterlines and skulls occupy the rooms of a memory palace. Images return, change places, call other images. They open passages between the living, the absent and places. Each photograph shifts the architecture of the palace, enlarges a room, seals a door, brings a memory back into another chamber.

A photograph holds an instant. The emotional experience that passes through it continues to fade. I work within that distance. I photograph to build small rooms for what disappears, to make rooms for ghosts, to shelter apparitions. These images preserve the memory of the family core, old and renewed through love and friendship. They keep the places where we were together and allow me to return. Inside this house, I place gratitude where it belongs. Thank you to the places, the gestures, the words, the images, the names and faces, the friends, the suffering they carry, the children, the parents, the family, the women who taught me, the men who taught me, everything except aesthetics. Thank you to love. Thank you.























“A primordial camera obscura.”

01

“Since 2021, Reynier has made thousands of photographs. [...] Over the last five years, photography has become for him an instrument for reorienting his artistic path and the means to undertake a journey backwards along his existential trajectory.”

02

“The original print is slipped into the sand of that same beach, where the artist returned in 2025 with the precise intention of creating a composition capable of establishing a direct link between his childhood and the present, a mise en abyme that marks Reynier’s passage from the subject to the author of the photograph, intertwining his gaze with those of his father Jean and his mother Cosetta.”

03

“Penser la peur arises from the desire to move beyond the meditation on transience contained in the vanitas tradition. Through this series, the artist questions the nature of the photographic gesture. A photograph captures an instant. The emotional experience that passed through it remains destined to disappear.”

04

“From this perspective, the skull relinquishes its role as memento mori to become the anthropic equivalent of a camera, a primordial camera obscura. [...] Jean-Marie Reynier seems intent on capturing as many images as possible before they settle at the bottom of his eye sockets.”



















20 photographs

01 Les Fascistes, Penser la peur, 2022

02 Penser la peur, 2023

03 Penser la peur, 2024

04 Penser la peur, 2026

05 Contra Ornamenta, 2025

06 Santa Margherita, 2024

07 Santa Margherita, 2025

08 Torino, 2025

09 Camargue, 1983-2025

10 Tokyo, 2025

11 Penser la peur, 2024

12 Penser la peur, 2026

13 Pays d'Enhaut, 2026

14 Pays d'Enhaut, 2026

15 Léman, 2026

16 Penser la peur (Un dimanche), 2023

17 Penser la peur (Enguerrande), 2024

18 Penser la peur, CHUV, 2024

19 Nature morte avec crâne et pichet

20 Penser la peur (Enguerrande), 2024

Jean-Marie Reynier

Born in Lugano on 27 August 1983, Jean-Marie Reynier lives and works in Perroy, Switzerland. An artist, curator and publisher, he studied at the CSIA in Lugano, the Atelier de Taille Douce in Saint-Prex and HEAD Genève, in the CCC programme. His work has been shown since 1997 in independent spaces, galleries, museums and institutions in Switzerland and abroad. His works are held in several private and public collections.

Since 2021, photography has occupied the centre of his practice. *Penser la peur* brings together thousands of images arranged in subchapters around memory, bonds, daily life, illness, disappearance and death. Jean-Marie Reynier has been artistic and executive director of Fondation Bugnon since 2025. He is also artistic director of Ananké, as well as a publisher and art critic.

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Scappato di casa

Views of the latest exhibition

Scappato di casa

Casa Pessina, Musei di Mendrisio

Ligornetto

31 May to 5 July 2026

Curated by Francesca Bernasconi

Publication accompanying the exhibition

Scappato di casa

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Installation view of *Scappato di casa*, Casa Pessina, 2026



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