

International
Center of
Photography

Entrance
84 Ludlow Street
New York, New York
10002

Mailing
79 Essex Street
New York, New York
10002

Contact
icp.org
212.857.0000



The International Center of Photography Presents *Latitudes: Nuits Balnéaires* and François-Xavier Gbré

The International Center of Photography | 84 Ludlow Street, New York
On View January 29, 2026–May 4, 2026 | Public Opening January 29, 5–8PM



Left: François-Xavier Gbré, *Agnéby, Agboville*, from the series *Radio Ballast*, 2024 © François-Xavier Gbré, ADAGP, Paris, 2025
Right: Nuits Balnéaires, *Le Messager 8*, from the series *Eboro*, 2025 © Nuits Balnéaires

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is excited to present *Latitudes: Nuits Balnéaires and François-Xavier Gbré*, an exhibition showcasing new projects created by the artists as part of the *Latitudes* program developed by the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, in partnership with the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson and ICP. Curated by David Company, Creative Director at ICP, the exhibition brings together Gbré's project *Radio Ballast* with Nuits Balnéaires' project *Eboro*, each using different methods of image-making and historical inquiry to reflect on the multifaceted nature of contemporary Côte d'Ivoire. By highlighting the innovative photographic process of each artist, *Latitudes: Nuits Balnéaires and François-Xavier Gbré* exemplifies ICP's commitment to supporting international and cross-cultural collaboration.



Nuits Balnéaires' project *Eboro* exists in an imaginary space, one that weaves together past with present while slipping across borders to neighboring territories. The conceptual and thematic beginning of the project is the artist's uncle, Noel X Ebony, a journalist, poet and playwright who died in unresolved circumstances in Senegal. Ebony's concern with the culture and politics of African independence permeates the installation, pulling viewers into the past while asking them to imagine what shape the future could take—or whether it might be here already, its fragments waiting to be pieced together.

Set against the geographical backdrop of the Gulf of Guinea, Nuits Balnéaires stages images that explore the relationship between the experience of his ancestors in exile and his own perspective on travel and migration. A series of short, color-coded photographic chapters—some intimate, others sumptuously cinematic—are accompanied by a two-channel video projection, the elements combining to evoke an Ivorian imagination in flux. Eboro, a word meaning boundary or border, contains a mix of references, from movies, literature and poetry, to contemporary style and fashion, suggesting a life shaped as much by the communities of online culture as by the older forms of national identity.

For nearly fifteen years, François-Xavier Gbré has photographed the imprints of human activity on the landscape and architecture of the African continent, seeking to uncover the lingering traces—hidden and visible alike—of how history has unfolded across the land. In 2023, he set out to follow the railway that runs from north to south through Côte d'Ivoire, a line that was built during the French colonial era to extract the country's natural resources and transport them to the port of Abidjan, then on to the metropole. Gbré's photographs, firmly rooted in the landscape and political history of Côte d'Ivoire, carry multiple, overlapping temporal layers, from the colonial period to the post-Independence years through to recent events and the contemporary moment. In following the railway through the landscape, his photographs reveal the many ways it continues to echo throughout the built environment.

The title of Gbré's project, *Radio Ballast*, refers first to the transmission of information across vast distances, while 'ballast' is also the bed of crushed rock on which the rails lie. In railway jargon, the term can also refer to rumor, vague and unfounded news, mixed and often contradictory narratives, all reflecting the way that history and its telling are so often uncertain and shifting.



Inaugurated in 2024, *Latitudes* broadens the scope of Immersion, the former French-American photography commission launched in 2014 as a residency between France and the United States. The new program takes its name from a geographical concept, affirming its ambition to shed light on artists from scenes that are still underrepresented on the international stage. Côte d'Ivoire is the first country to be honored in the two-year cycle inaugurated in 2024. Each project will be accompanied by a photobook in English and French editions, co-published by Atelier EXB and the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès. *Radio Ballast* was first shown at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson and, following the exhibition at ICP, Eboro will travel there as well.

"Côte d'Ivoire has an incredibly dynamic cross-generational photographic scene," said Company. "Nuits Balnéaires and François-Xavier Gbré exemplify its range, from conceptual documentary work to hybrid blends of fact, remembrance and fiction. ICP is committed to supporting and presenting innovative work from across the globe and the *Latitudes* program allows us to do this."

About Nuits Balnéaires

Multidisciplinary artist and poet Nuits Balnéaires was born and raised in Abidjan, into a family with Akan Agni-Bona and Malinké origins. With intimate connections to both peoples' traditions, culture and spirituality, his work creates a parallel space-time beyond the constraints of geography, while embracing the universality of oceans as the connective tissue between worlds.

Nuits Balnéaires cultivates powerful ties with the energy of the Gulf of Guinea and its landscapes, hence the omnipresence of water in his photographic practice, films and poetry. Haunted by the duality of life and death and the possibility of communication between these states, his works convey a euphoric sense of tranquillity that feels both classical and contemporary.

In 2019, Nuits Balnéaires settled in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, to develop his artistic practice, drawing on his years as a fashion and conceptual photographer. He secured a one-year bursary in visual journalism with the World Press Photo Foundation and was among the winners of a 2020 call for projects from the Goethe-Institut and the Prince Claus Fund, which supports cultural and artistic responses to environmental change. Nuits Balnéaires' work has been exhibited



at Art X Lagos, Paris' 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, FNB Art Johannesburg and in numerous exhibitions across Côte d'Ivoire, Canada, the United States, the UK, France, the Netherlands and Australia.

About François-Xavier Gbré

François-Xavier Gbré (b.1978, Lille) lives and works between Abidjan and La Rochelle. His work explores the impact of climate and geography on the language of architecture, as a testament to collective memory and social change. From the vestiges of colonialism to landscapes redefined by current events. Gbré explores territories and revisits history. In continuous dialogue with his surroundings, he employs a variety of scales and display formats—from small, meticulous installations conceived as in-depth investigations of specific territories, to the use of architectural settings as sounding-boards for his photographic works and an exploration of their physical connection to the viewer or the public space. Represented by the Cécile Fakhoury Gallery, his works have entered the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Tate Modern, London, UK, the Walther Collection, Neu-Ulm, Germany / New York, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, France.

About *Latitudes*

Established in 2024 by the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, the Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation and the International Center of Photography (ICP), the *Latitudes* program supports international photographic creation by assisting in the making and dissemination of new work. Each year, a laureate selected by the three partner institutions is awarded a grant to produce an original photographic series. This body of work is then exhibited in Paris at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, in New York at ICP and in the laureate's home country. To further extend its reach, a dedicated publication is co-published with the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès. By supporting artists from regions underrepresented on the international stage, *Latitudes* invites us to broaden our perspectives and explore new photographic horizons. In 2024, François-Xavier Gbré became the laureate of the inaugural edition of the program, dedicated to Côte d'Ivoire. In 2025 Nuits Balnéaires was announced as the second laureate.

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About The International Center of Photography

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Cornell Capa founded ICP in 1974 to champion "concerned photography"—socially and politically minded images that can educate and change the world. Through exhibitions, education programs, community outreach, and public programs, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the power of the image. Since its inception, ICP has presented more than 700 exhibitions, provided thousands of classes, and hosted a wide variety of public programs. ICP launched its new integrated center at 84 Ludlow Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side in January 2020. ICP pays respect to the original stewards of this land, the Lenape people, and other Indigenous communities. Visit icp.org to learn more about the museum and its programs

Press Contacts

Hannah Gottlieb-Graham

Alma Communications

Hannah@almacommunications.co

Asher Selle

ICP Press Office

Press@icp.org