

**Christian Mayeur: What are your current themes?**

**Frank Perrin:** At the moment, I'm working on revising the iconic subject of the American landscape and trying to reactivate it. It's a founding element in our contemporary mythology. The archetype of empty space. What is interesting there is that it's the true horizon of radical liberty. What interests me really is to dig into the contours of ambient mythologies. In this sense, the American landscape is truly THE founding landscape. There have never been other countries that constructed such an origin story. It's not a question of space (Russia or Australia have huge territories but did not do this in the same way). It came from the conquest of the West, from literature, from cinema.

**CM:** What's the link with your work in a broader sense?

**FP:** It's a supplementary development. These last fifteen years, I interrogated contemporary mythologies, in the landscape with the "joggers" series, in the street with "streets". I conduct an investigation on obsessions that could be the body, the voyeurism of fashion photographers. From a formal perspective, it's often treated at a wide angle, in panoramic vision. I always tried to capture this obsession in a wide landscape, to capture the fascinations of our time, *mise en scène* in large spaces. Why? Because here we find what Kant called the sublime, which exposes both the grandeur of the subject and the smallness of man in this frame. The jogger in the midst of this immense space calls back to the sublime and to vanities, the smallness of the human condition. The immensity of a subject and the vanity of he who is in this landscape. What interests me today is to try to find in this American landscape the sentiment of grandeur and of vanity.

**CM:** In choosing Las Vegas, New Mexico, you pass from urban metropolitans to a small Western town.

**FP:** In fact, no matter what the size, it's more of a question of the crossovers between the levels of reality, between the real and fiction. In Rome, I shot a ghost town of cinema sets at Cinecittà. With the "streets" series and its virtual alignments with luxury shopping facades, I set up the scene of a complete transformation of large metropolitans (Los Angeles, New York, Tokyo) in virtual cities. With Las Vegas, New Mexico, it's a conjunction, an intersection between a history and a mythology; that it has the quality of a pivotal town but is small in the heart of the Grand West interests me. It's fascinating in its crossroads and its back-and-forths: North-South, East-West. I don't see Las Vegas, New Mexico as much as a small town as a town at the intersection of many histories that come together, that weave together. It's a bit like a lever, an entry point to many connections.

**CM:** What does the cooperation with Mayeur Projects incite for you?

**FP:** What's interesting first of all is that Mayeur Projects proposes a true creation; it's not a transportation of exterior things, brought from elsewhere. It's an in situ production. There is a creative dimension that is essential. It's on the side of living art. It's not a veneered exhibition, but something that is born on site. For me, it's a true radical discovery.

It's a leap into the unknown, as it will be a work that I make in a place as I discover it. It's a new doubling, because I've never seen the space, but I've often dreamed of it. There is a double layer: create everything there, discover everything there. It will be a double discovering.

It's a true work, a true orientation of production on site that will give a specificity to Mayeur

Projects.

Mayeur Projects intrigues a lot of people. There is something very avant-garde. It's truly in the grand artistic tradition and in the vein of "making" and "on site". An almost utopic aspect. It makes one imagine, dream, there is something 200% artistic, radically innovative that we really don't find very much anymore. In places like the Villa Medici or Fukuyama, there isn't really a direction and in classic galleries, art centers, things are completely defined from the start. What is good with Mayeur Projects is that you have at once a residency and an exhibition. We're really on the side of art utopias. From project to project, chapters will unfold; there will be a real Ariadne's thread. In Mayeur Projects, there is the idea of a grand story, an open book that will be constituted of a rather unique story.