

# VENUS

MANHATTAN LOS ANGELES



## Michel Houellebecq in non-seduction operation in New York

By Jules Varlot - 5 June 2017



Time goes by and Michel Houellebecq does not come. On Friday, 200 people were at the Cultural Services of the French Embassy to listen to the sulphurous French writer, poet and essayist talk about his photographic exhibition “French Bashing”, exhibited at the Venus Over Manhattan gallery until August 4th.

12:45, 45 minutes after the scheduled start of the conference, the chopper falls in front of a medusa audience: Michael Houellebecq will not finally come. “ He’s sick, “ says one, and decided to stay at his hotel. Happening calculated for some, caprice too much for the others, the rooms full to burst quickly empty.

Fortunately for the fans, the author had nevertheless found the strength to come that very evening, at the inauguration of his exhibition. Between some dedications and photos with the visitors, Michel Houellebecq wandered between the two rooms that make up the exhibition.

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Again, it's minimum service. Rather reluctant to talk to the press, the author split some comments gathered by AFP, notably when it is spoken to him about the possible defeat of the "French Bashing" with the arrival at the "Elysee of Emmanuel Macron, very appreciated by the New Yorkers: "do not worry, it will return," he answers.

Inspired by his first exhibition "Statez Vivant", presented at the Palais de Tokyo last summer, "French Bashing" describes two France, through photographs taken by the writer and immersive soundscapes. The first, in a dark and anxiogenic room, is devoted to peri-urban areas, sad and decadent. You hear the RER passing among the shadows of the visitors, just as ghostly as these service stations or HLM buildings immortalized by the author. The second room, in a white and aseptic light, is interested in kitsch France. The floor, covered with tablecloth memorabilized table mats bearing the effigy of French tourist sites, tends to show a country saturated with tour operators and advertisements of all kinds.

After spending a week in New York, Michel Houellebecq returned to France on Saturday. His exhibition "French Bashing" at Venus Over Manhattan will be presented until August 4th. So that's for promotion.



Preview of the exhibition "French Bashing" by Michel Houellebecq