

# MATIÈRES

## IMMERSIVE EXHIBITION

27 JANUARY TO 18 FEBRUARY  
GALERIES BARTOUX  
5 AVENUE MATIGNON, PARIS 8E



From 27 January to 18 February 2023, Galeries Bartoux presents the first solo exhibition devoted to the sculptor Bruno Catalano.

An artistic journey coupled with an interactive and sensory experience, "MATIÈRES" looks back on 30 years of sculpture. This retrospective reveals the artist's creative process behind the scenes through a faithful reconstruction of his studio and a selection of previously unseen works.

Immerse yourself in an immersive experience thanks to an innovative projection technique created on the gallery's floors and walls in collaboration with EBB. Global.

« MATIÈRES » is a visual and sound opera inviting the public to explore the world of the sculptor and the models of his flagship series: the "Voyageurs". This educational journey is conceived as an interactive stroll accompanying the visitors in a discovery of the different inspirations, techniques and materials used by the artist over the years.

Through the reconstitution of Bruno Catalano's studio, his unpublished preparatory studies, as well as a set of sculptures staged in a panoramic animation, « MATIÈRES » transports visitors into the different areas and subjects that surround his Work. It evokes the history of the men and women who served as models, as well as the multiple stages in their portrayal in clay, plaster, wax and bronze. All these stages become, in the sculptor's hand, materials to mould, to shape, to evoke and to move...

Born in Morocco in 1960, he became familiar with bronze techniques in the 1990s before developing, in the early 2000s, these silhouettes of characters walking with a bag in hands, split down the middle in a dynamic sculptural gesture that tears the material apart. These figures, frozen in a journey without destination, have remained at the heart of Bruno Catalano's creative passion until today.

Having worked closely together for more than 10 years, it is only natural that Galeries Bartoux offered their three-storey show room in the heart of Avenue Matignon for this unique immersive artistic experience.

# EXHIBITION TOUR

The exhibition "MATIÈRES" offers visitors a immersive sensory experience at the heart of Bruno Catalano's work, highlighting the artist's world, his creative process, the materials and the making of his works. The exhibition will take the form of a narrative journey in three chapters, one on each of the different levels of the gallery. Each floor will present a stage in Bruno Catalano's creative process and the life of his works.

## Chapter 1: The genesis of travellers (basement)

The basement is conceived as an intimate immersion into the heart of the artist's work in the form of a luminous, visual and sound experience. In the main room, in the half-light, several compositions of plaster figures are presented. Further on, the artist's studio is reconstructed. Bathed in subdued light, the original clay models take pride of place in the centre of the room. In a third room, a crowd of men represent a choir. As visitors pass by, motion sensors placed around the scenes will trigger lighting and musical notes. By their movements, the visitors will be the conductors and composers of this operatic creation



BRUNO CATALANO'S STUDIO



THE SCAN ROOM

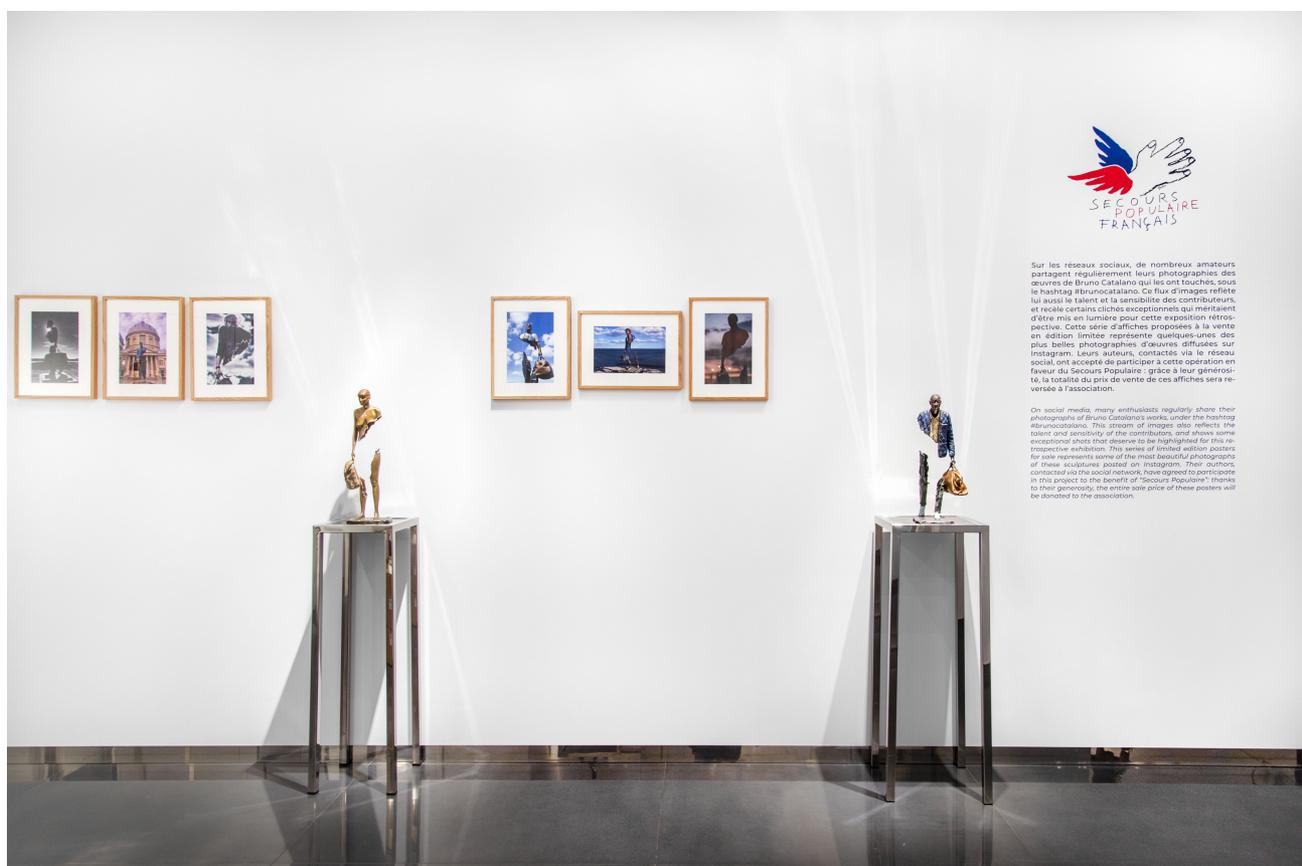


THE PLASTER ROOM

# EXHIBITION TOUR

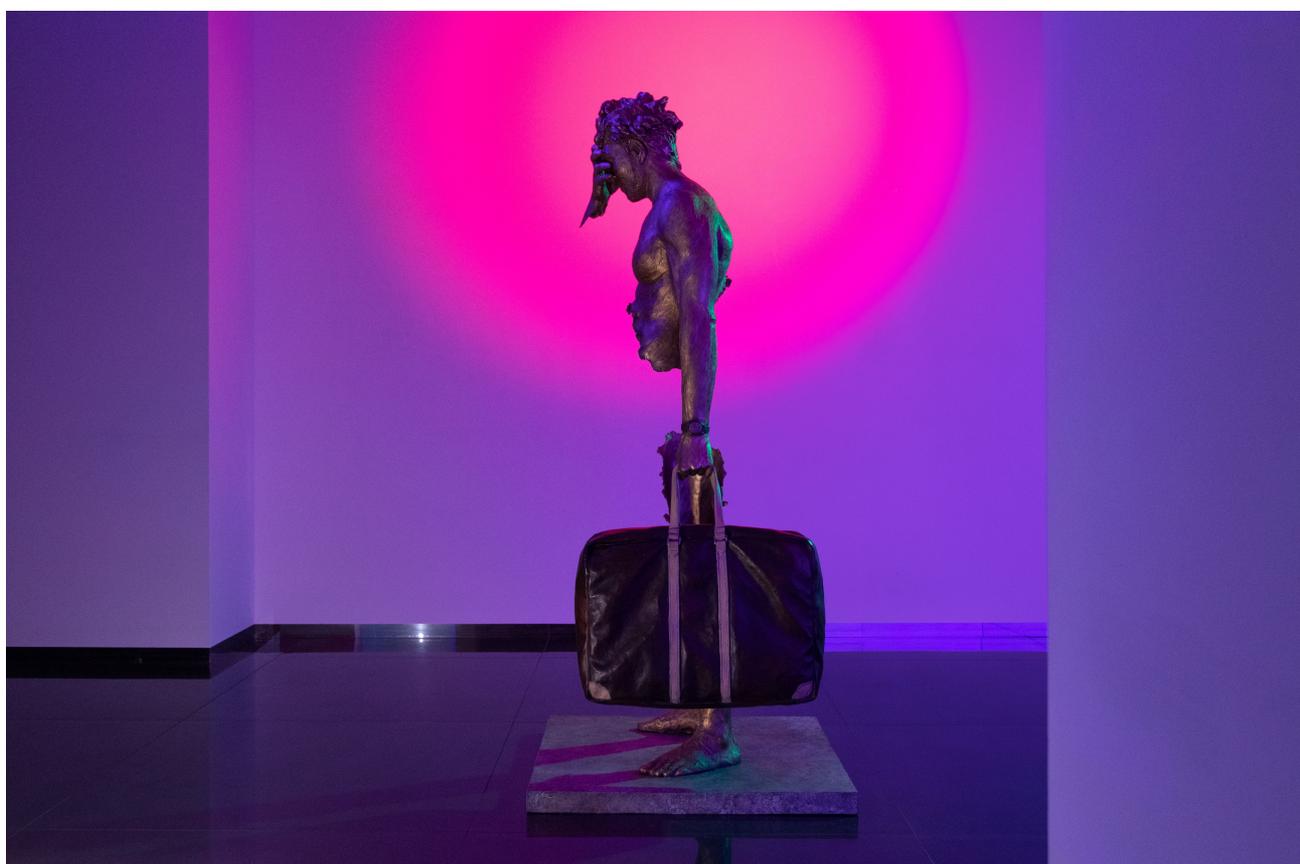
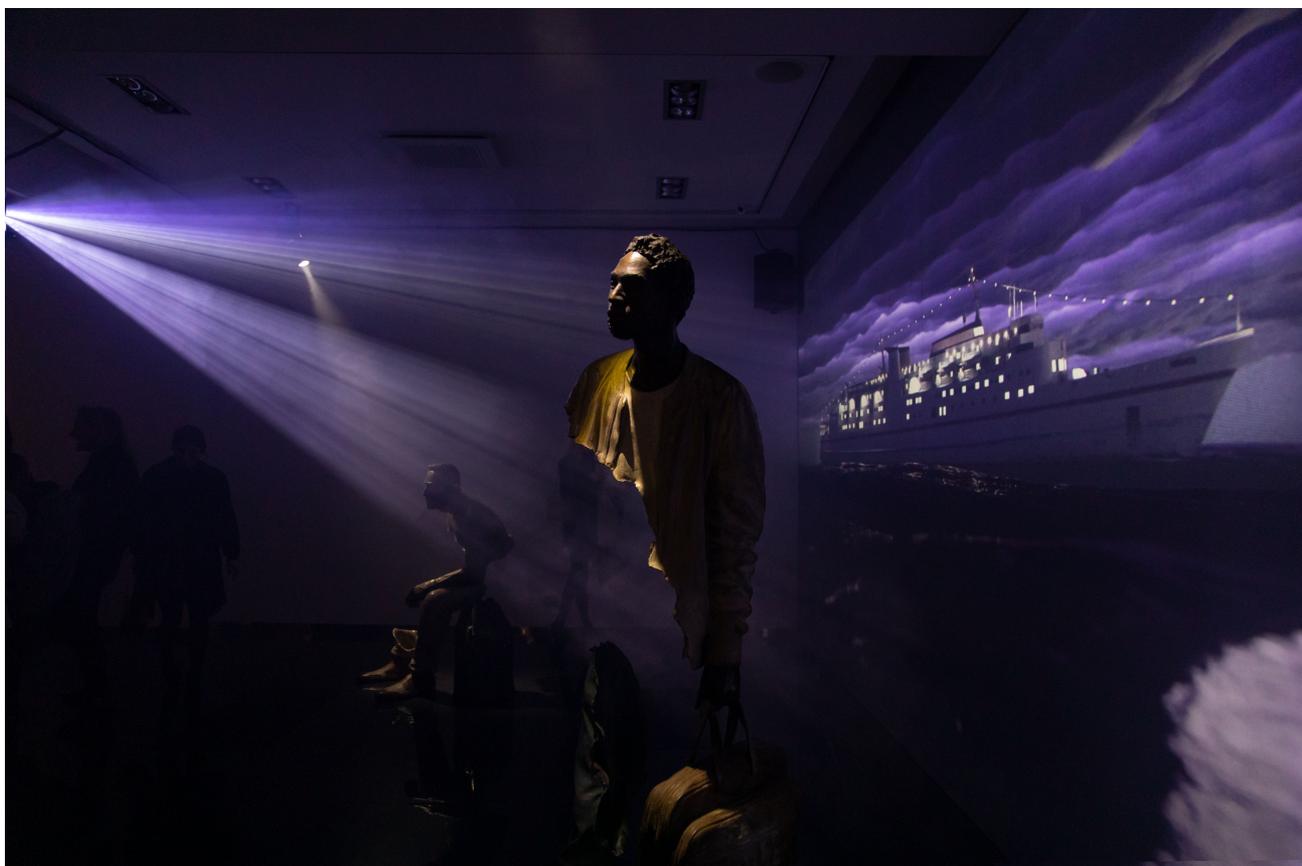
## Chapter 2: The Material (ground floor)

The second stage of the tour presents a group of sculptures from the emblematic 'Travellers' series. A book, a catalogue and a children's colouring book based on Bruno Catalano's work will be available for visitors. The exhibition also features a selection of photographs of the sculptor's works from around the world and shared on social networks. Printed in a limited edition of 15 copies, these images will be sold to visitors to the exhibition. All profits will be donated to 'Secours populaire français'.



### Chapter 3: The life of travellers (1st floor)

On the first floor, visitors move among the travellers, immersed in their world, from an industrial port in the mist of early morning, to dusk, in broad daylight, in the middle of the sea, in the middle of a city, ... At the foot of the stairs, a large screen broadcasting panoramic landscapes in which the sculptures evolve welcomes the visitors. Beams of light, synchronised lighting, plays of light, mirrors and mysterious fog: the sculptures become actors in a shadow theatre. Like a landing stage, a few benches facing the panorama will allow visitors to admire the whole scene. The landscapes are constantly being constructed and deconstructed, recalling the play of fullness and emptiness that constitutes the sculptures: the emptiness that the traveller seeks to fill during his journeys, the fullness of human encounters and shared emotions. The landscapes live and breathe, offering freedom of interpretation to each viewer.





# ABOUT BRUNO CATALANO'S WORK



During his career Bruno Catalano has found art to be the expression of technique and material through which he experiences the human condition. His 'Travellers' series, which has become emblematic over the course of a few short years, illustrates all the intensity that is at play here. In the great diversity of models that the artist has represented, he was drawn to an attitude, to a few details that concealed an intense humanity. From these he created bronze figures. They represent men, women and children who move forward, baggage in hand, driven by determinations that the public is left free to imagine.

In the end, it doesn't matter where they come from or where they go. Bruno Catalano's sculpture freezes time around these individual and anonymous trajectories, leaving room for introspection. And the silhouettes open wide, physically split, torn like paper down the middle. The bust floats above the legs as if by a miracle. Only the loaded suitcase makes the link between the thinking head and the walking feet. The sculptor's gesture echoes universal emotions by suggesting that absence, lack, separation are constituent elements in any individual's identity. And it doesn't take long to realise that Bruno Catalano's works are traversed, if not innervated, by the landscapes that host them.



His works are not merely figurative portrayals but also have a depth and meaning behind them. They speak to the feelings of each individual and manage to awaken a hidden emotions, buried within us. Bruno Catalano tells how life itself shapes faces and bodies, and how human interaction; gatherings, movements, experiences, end up building and animating cities. His sculptures are, of course, forms of wax and bronze, but they are also the expression of an art that is universally appealing, an art that makes each figure a monument to intimate humanity. Bruno Catalano sees heroes where ordinary men and women stand.



# ABOUT BRUNO CATALANO

Artist of 'travellers', Bruno Catalano makes a stopover from face to face for the duration of a sculpture, seeking to capture in each of his models the singular baggage that he carries with him. The series that has become emblematic and that he continues to work on today began in 1995 as the resolution of a personal story and the new beginning of an artistic adventure.

When he was born in Morocco in 1960, he was already the product of various journeys. His family, of French-Italian origin, had Jewish ancestors who had been expelled from Spain in the 15th century and taken refuge in Sicily before settling in North Africa. He was ten years old when they left the country to settle in Marseille. Then, trained by his father as an electrician, he began his professional life at the age of twenty by working on boats for a shipping company, then joined the SNOM. At this point he is still far from his artistic pursuits, but this experience will remain a determining factor in the construction of his sensitivity. It was with friends that he first discovered the craft of leather masks, then he devoted himself to clay from 1991.



Determined to master this material, he enrolled in a modelling and drawing workshop, and completed his self-taught training by reading. Step by step, Bruno Catalano set up his own workshop, acquired his own kiln, and finally made sculpture his main activity. It gained official recognition when, in 2001, the town hall of the 5th arrondissement of Marseille entrusted him with the execution of a bust of Yves Montand to decorate the square dedicated to him. He thus inaugurated a production of public works of art that would become the core of his work.



During all this time, Bruno Catalano has never stopped trying to perfect his representations, to seek ever greater accuracy and truth in the expression of his figures. However, his practice took a new turn when, in 2004, a formal invention invited itself into his studio. A simple accident in the casting of metal opened a breach in the body of the sculpture and in the artist's habits. He decided to seize this accident and made this tear in the material a central element in the production that followed. From the figurines of his beginnings, he began to produce increasingly monumental figures, reaching several metres in height, always in bronze and sometimes enhanced with colour. Today, he continues to be a sculptor in the full sense of the word, i.e. in touch with the physical matter that makes up his works as much as with the impalpable material that shapes human existence.



## MATIÈRES

PRESS CONTACT

The exhibition will run from 27 January to 18 February  
Every day from 10.30 am to 8 pm  
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### EXHIBITION VISUALS



[brunocesarcatalano](https://www.instagram.com/brunocesarcatalano) – [lesgaleriesbartoux](https://www.instagram.com/lesgaleriesbartoux)