



#103, Massiges, Marne - Meuse-Argonne offensive

BATIGNOLLES IN DC
presents

MNEMOSIS

by Philippe Bréson

endorsed by the French and
American Centennial Commissions



THE UNITED STATES
WORLD WAR ONE
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

BATIGNOLLES IN DC
FRENCH CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE US

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Philippe Bréson – photographer



Silver gelatin photography and old process

Parisian, Philippe Bréson is born in 1960.

He has been passionate about photography since he was 10 years old.

After a long career as a photojournalist, Philippe teaches and lectures photography in Art schools in Paris.

His photography strangely stirs the viewer in a vintage aesthetic. It is a moment where imagination and reality are set up.

His singular and impaired landscapes are more an experience than a place, arousing our closed emotions.

“The beautiful panoramas and the fantastic views do not move me. I prefer the paths which lead nowhere apart from my own history.” P.B.

Philippe has dedicated his work to the battlefields of the Great War since 2011.

Depicting the battlefields



#096 - Esnes en Argonne – Meuse - Meuse-Argonne offensive

Mnemosis entitles Philippe Brésou's unflinching series depicting today's World War I battlefields where everything is calm now. The woods are silent. The ground rests, finishing the slow digestion of the iron.

Mnemosis is the goddess of memory's name in Greek mythology.

Mnemosis is a collection of more than 200 photographs now. Each is a series of 5 prints.

More than 60 photographs are dedicated to the U.S. army battles. This document presents some of them.

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An intimate artistry



#103 Massiges, Marne – Meuse-Argonne offensive

Photographs like *Massiges* pronounce Philippe Bréson's artistry.

In the image, a lone tree sits three quarters into the background.

Between us and the sapling, a scarred grassland textures the foreground.

The fissures and gashes carved from the landscape are wounds from artillery barrages launched a century ago. Grass carpets steep banks, covering a landscape contorted in an immutable frozen violence. The topography of the landscape has been changed permanently by war.

The young tree grows indifferent, regarding the secrets melting into the ground with an adolescent's hubris.

Portfolio – Battle of Cantigny

On May 28, 1918, the 28th Infantry Regiment of the US First Division attacked a German-held French village called Cantigny. The Battle of Cantigny was America's first significant offensive during World War I.



#241 – Cantigny village – Somme – Battle of Cantigny



#245 – Cantigny – Somme – Battle of Cantigny

Portfolio - Battle of Belleau wood

June 1918 - The Battle of Belleau wood has become the key component of the lore of the U.S. Marine Corps.



#213 Bois de Belleau, Aisne - Bois Belleau's battle



#200 Bois de Belleau, Aisne - Bois Belleau's battle

Portfolio - Battle of Belleau wood

Major E. Shearer submitted a report simply stating, "*Woods now U.S. Marine Corps entirely,*" ending one of the bloodiest and most ferocious battles U.S. forces would fight in the war.



#211 On the Belleau wood's hill, close to Givry, Aisne - Bois Belleau's battle



#200 Boursesches, Aisne - Bois Belleau's battle

Portfolio – Battle of Aisne

Winter 1917, American troops settled in Chaudun on the Chemin des Dames.
May 1918, General John J Pershing, provided precious reinforcement to the French army.



#131 - Le Chemin des Dames – Battle of Aisne



#222 - Le Chemin des Dames – Battle of Aisne

Portfolio – Battle of Aisne

The front line of the Allies with the American troops in July 1918.
125 000 acres of wood were destroyed during the war.



#217 – Between Noroy sur Ourcq and Troesmes,
in the background Retz wood – Battle of Aisne



#218 – Between Noroy sur Ourcq and Troesmes,
in the background Retz wood – Battle of Aisne

Portfolio – Battle of Hamel



#154 – Hamel – Nord – Battle of Hamel

July 4, 1918, the battle of Hamel was a successful attack launched by several American units and the Australian Corps against German positions.

Portfolio – Ypres-Lys Campaign



#175 – Kimmel – Belgique (Flandres) – Battle of Lys

1918, from August 19 to November 11, about 108,000 Americans participated in the Ypres-Lys Campaign in Belgium.

The numerous ponds, former bomb craters, cover the fields now, testifying of an intense mine warfare.

Portfolio – Meuse-Argonne offensive

The Meuse-Argonne offensive was a major part of the final Allied offensive. Fight lasted from September 26, 1918 until the Armistice of 11 November 1918.



#096 - Esnes en Argonne – Meuse - Meuse-Argonne offensive



#098 - Laval sur Tourbe- Marne – Meuse-Argonne offensive

Portfolio – Meuse-Argonne offensive

The Meuse-Argonne offensive was the largest and the bloodiest operation of the war for the American Expeditionary Forces.



#097 - Esnes en Argonne – Meuse – Meuse-Argonne offensive



#100 – Wargemoulin-Hurlus – Marne – Meuse-Argonne offensive

Portfolio – Meuse-Argonne offensive

In this last fight, the A.E.F paid the price of 26,277 killed and 95,786 wounded U.S. soldiers.



#103 - Massiges- Marne – Meuse-Argonne offensive



#107 – Forêt d'Argonne – Meuse – Meuse-Argonne offensive

Portfolio – Meuse-Argonne offensive

Romagne-sous-Montfaucon's landscape, 100 years after the most murderous battle of all the United States history.



Romagne-sous-Montfaucon- Meuse- Meuse-Argonne offensive



Romagne-sous-Montfaucon- Meuse – Meuse-Argonne offensive

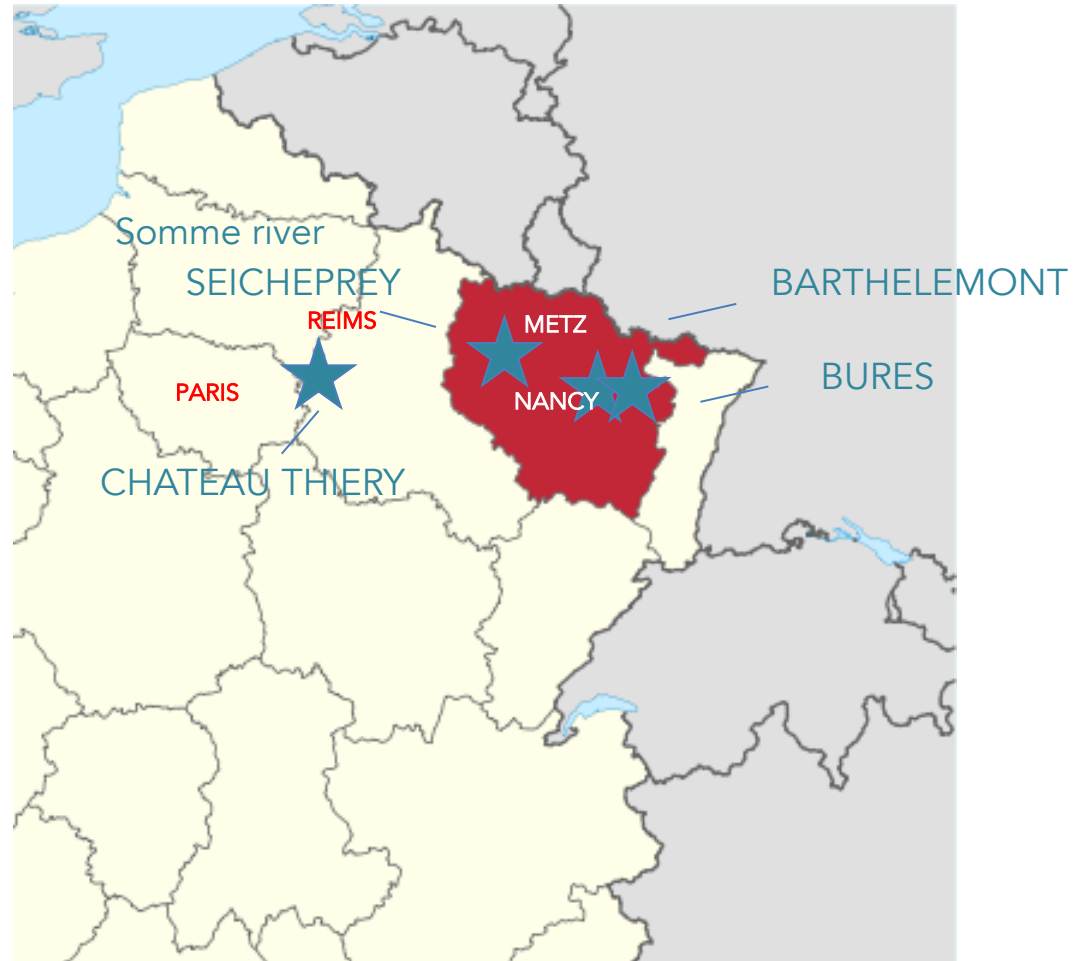
Other photographs to come

Mnemosis gathers now more than 60 photographs related to the U.S. battlefields.

Philippe Bréson keeps on enriching his photographs' collection.

Seicheprey, Barthélemon, Bures, Somme river area are his next destinations.

He will come back to Chateau-Thierry as well.



Press review

In **Beaux arts Magazine Hors-série : La mémoire traversée, Paysage et visages de la Grande Guerre.**

November 2014

from Gabriel Bauret and Laurent Loiseau

about Mnemosis

Philippe Bréson has chosen to intervene directly on the negative of a place about which he lengthily gathered materiel.

As if photographing a landscape was a deconstruction work.

In his memory's rewriting, Jacques Derrida's thought is not far: "At the beginning was the ruin".



Other information

A blog

Philippe Bréson feeds a blog on Mnemosis. Visit it here:

<http://the-mnemosis.tumblr.com>

A video

To see how Philippe works, watch this video:

<https://vimeo.com/20958051>

A first exhibition

Mnemosis was exhibited for the first time in December 2015.

In Artist's Proof Gallery in Washington DC.

In the exhibition "Through the lens: a vision of Post-war Europe".

For more information about the exhibition, visit

<http://www.aproof.net/through-the-lens-visions-of-post-war-europe/>



About Batignolles in DC

Sophie Caporossi is a French woman who has lived in the United States since 2012. She created Batignolles in DC when she settled down in Washington, DC.

Batignolles in DC promotes French contemporary art to knowledgeable collectors as well as to a broader American audience.

Batignolles in DC permanently looks for public or private venues to organize exhibitions.

for more information:

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