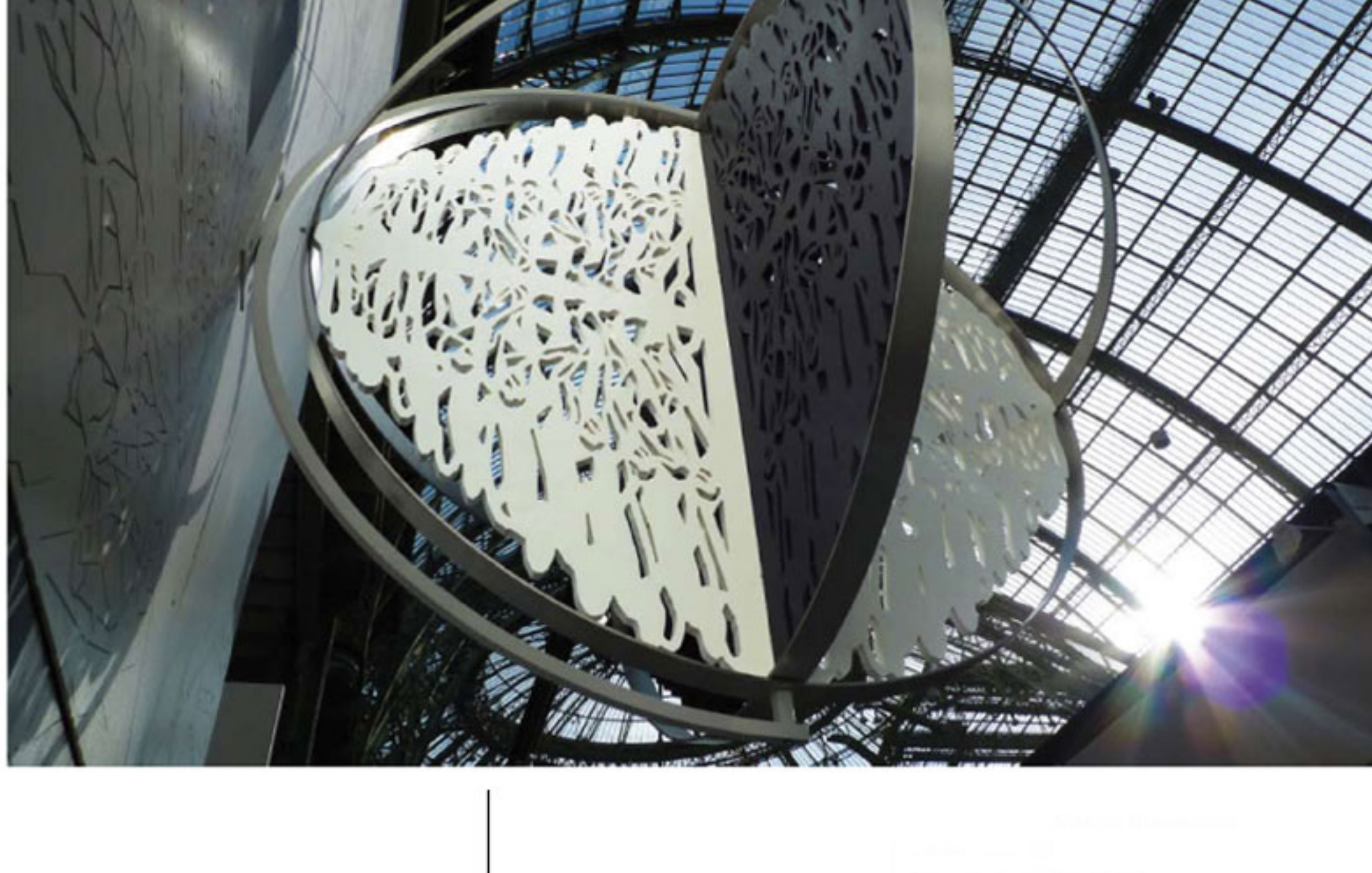


JEAN-CLAUDE MEYNARD

BABEL, THE GEOMETRY OF ENIGMAS VILLA TAMARIS 11 SEPTEMBRE - 17 OCTOBRE 2010



COMMUNIQUE

DU 18 MAI 2010

BABEL, THE GEOMETRY OF ENIGMAS FROM HYPER-REALISM TO FRACTAL

For 35 years, Jean-Claude Meynard, one of the signers of the Fractal Manifesto in 1997, has been exploring the complexity of reality and mankind's place within this complexity.

From 11 September to 17 October 2010, Jean-Claude Meynard is presenting the Babel exhibition at the Villa Tamaris, the Geometry of Enigmas, gathering one hundred works created since the 1970s, ranging from hyper-realism to fractal.

Hyper-realist paintings and fractal works mingle in over 1,000 m², inviting the viewer to a unique pictorial experience, a veritable voyage to the core of creation throughout 35 years of artistic research.

By thus grouping very distinct fractal works, the artist has refreshed a remarkable phenomenon: works echo each other visually, in mutually-pollinating pictorial resonances, and hybridize to the point of making new works.

This is the first time for such a gathering, reflecting and echoing of works – these recombinations will last for the duration of the show.

As Robert Bonaccorsi, the director of the Villa Tamaris Art Centre points out, "It's true that the exhibition at the Villa Tamaris was the origin for this confrontation, where an interrogation in the form of enigmas is posed at the outset: how can an artist

propose figurative representation, where apparently everything is faithful, then move to a form of geometrical abstraction through an extremely diverse history? (...) In fact, Jean-Claude Meynard's approach from the very beginning intimates reality in its complexity. Representation is constantly challenged. This approach I find engrossing."

Jean-Claude Meynard's exhibition is based on Babel, the icon of complexity, and it explores the concept of the Geometry of Enigmas through painting hybrids, at once strangers and twins, where one can see the permanence of gesture, theme and the artist's wanderings. This wonderment is existential and pictorial: what are the odds for survival for mankind in the complexity of the world? And the odds of survival for the subject in painting?

A set of monumental works will also be shown in the gardens of Villa Tamaris. A book from Editions Fragments International and a film directed by Gilles Bastianelli about this exhibition will commemorate this one-off pictorial experience.

Jean-Claude Meynard has shown his works all over the world and most recently the Babel works in Italy, Turkey, China and France. His works are part of many public and private collections in Europe.



Hybrid 2, 2010
Minotore 1974 et Babel, 2007



Hybrid, 2010
The Boat 1975 and Waves, 2004



World, 2010
Cut metal, 2m50 in diameter



Villa Tamaris Art Centre, la Seyne-sur-mer

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

JEAN-CLAUDE MEYNARD OR THE EXPLORATION OF THE COMPLEXITY OF REALITY

Born in 1951, for more than 35 years Jean-Claude Meynard has accomplished a major work centred around the exploration of reality's complexity.

vanishing of the anthropomorphic silhouette, the body is still present but only its geometry is drawn.

From hyper-realism to fractal geometry and digital art, his work is organized into four periods: Hyper-realism (1974-76), The Geometry of Enigmas (1976-1980), The Geography of Bodies (1980-1992) and Man's Fractal Dimension (1992-2010).

After 1990, Meynard proposed a new dimension of man, abandoning Euclidian perspective for the fractal principles of expansion, saturation, interlacings and infinite networks. He used fractal geometry to represent the human within the complexity of reality.

In the early 1970s, Meynard met the complexity of reality with his most thorough figurative style: Hyper-realism. His paintings of urban scenes are teeming with visual elements. This geometry of excess enabled him to reveal a consumer society where everything is an image all the way to the human being himself.

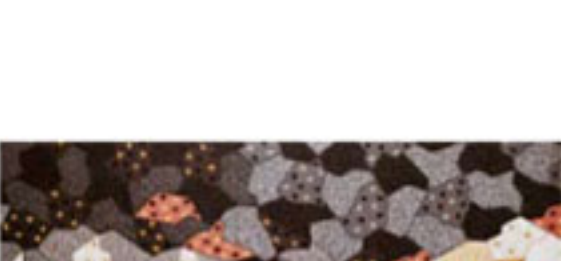
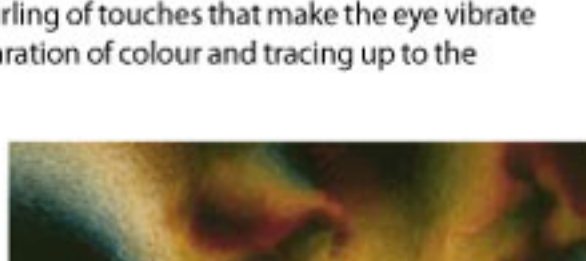
He made his first fractal exhibitions at the beginning of the 90s and in 1994 founded the Fractal Group with Agosti and Ginzburg. In 2005 the City of Evreux held a double exhibition of his works. On this occasion a monograph was published by Editions Fragments International.

At the end of the 70s, Meynard explored the figure of mankind facing his own identity: diffraction, blurring, fractures; reality became a phantasm and identity was enigmatic. In this Geometry of Enigmas, he crafted his painting in a reflective mode with shadows and dopplegängers.

In 2006, Meynard took on an icon of complexity, the Babel myth. He re-appropriated the myth by transforming the Tower into a fractal image of human silhouettes, whose infinitely-repeated graphic constituted a type of writing. People becoming infinite phrases, and where the Babel of the Orient appears disunited and separated by languages, Meynard shows them as a chain of humanity belonging to the same writing script.

Between 1980 and 1990, Meynard left narration behind to explore the sole human presence which became more and more incorporeal: A Geography of Bodies.

One after another fugacious apparitions, the unfurling of touches that make the eye vibrate vertiginously, doubling through the pictorial separation of colour and tracing up to the



EXHIBITION

TO THE CORE OF CREATION AND THE NEW HYBRID LANGUAGE

Babel, the Geometry of Enigmas, is a major step in the travelling exhibition of Jean-Claude Meynard's works based on the Babel myth.

The artist uses many combinations to present the works of the exhibition: series of reflections, mirror effects, doublings, transparencies, perspectives, juxtapositions and fade-outs.

By re-interpreting the allegory of Babel, Meynard has created an infinite architecture of mankind, thus inventing the script of a common writing, accessible to all, the world over. After China (Shenzhen), Italy (Sermione), Turkey (Istanbul) and France (Strasbourg and Paris), the multiform works of Babel continue their journey and set up for a month in the Villa Tamaris Art Centre.

Meynard's journey has always been that of a seeker of forms. Today, with his hybrids, he is exploring the very form of his work. By the combinations he has devised, he is transplanting, associating, re-iterating and recomposing his own paintings as if they contained other possibilities.

This exhibition is a crucial moment in Jean-Claude Meynard's work, since for the first time, 35 years of creation are put on display in one spot.

By using his work as a raw material and field experiment, Meynard is opening the scope for unlimited creation, in this special relationship, this duo he has established with his work. He has created a mirror effect. Painter and works, who is looking at whom?

The exhibition's staging cannot be summed up as a mere juxtaposition of works with varying scales and time periods, but it is a show of new and complex visual associations open to the viewer's imagination.

Hybrid the Question, 2010
Left: Circus, 1975, Acrylic on canvas, 130 x 97 cm,
Right: Excess (detail), 2004, Digital impression on Plexiglas, 97 x 97 cm

If Jean-Claude Meynard's pictorial universe, from hyper-realism to fractal, is characterized by the variety of their manufacture, from their juxtaposition comes an incredible resonance. Distinct and from far-flung periods, the pieces can cross-fertilize themselves, if only fleetingly, and can hybridize to the point of making new works.

Absolutely it's even the artist's basic approach. The Fractal Room will let the visitor get to the very heart of the project, the illusion articulating with the required distancing to confront the viewer, to implement a heightened sensitivity of the eye.

Meynard's hybrids are a challenge to the canons of art which suppose there should be a date, a title, a definition, a genre, an influence and a history. Meynard upsets this diktat of knowledge and time.

Jean-Claude Meynard is re-interpreting the Babel myth, not to revisit it but to make it contemporary. Babel, the

Time ceases to be linear and becomes spirals, zigzags and overlaps. By hybridizing his works, Meynard is performing a change in optics and scale, and the new work he updates revolves within a totally imaginary frame.

« The Fractal Room will let the visitor get to the very heart of the project, the illusion articulating with the required distancing to confront the viewer, to implement a heightened sensitivity of the eye. »

INTERVIEW

ROBERT BONACCORSI DIRECTOR OF THE VILLA TAMARIS

What brought Jean-Claude Meynard's work to your attention?

This exhibition is the first by the artist to echo hyper-realist works with fractal ones. Should we see any resemblance, or continuity, or a hybrid creation or an unlikely but necessary dialogue?

Series of reflections which create effects, whole rooms completely done over into fractal works – does being surrounded by these works favour their apprehension?

Oriental myth that the artist is re-appropriating, after many other myths, is a way of deciphering reality. It's Babel as the infinite architecture of mankind, a chain of humanity belonging to the same writing script. There are silhouettes and architectures from a "world village" which are irreducibly complex.

Reality, virtuality or in-between, Jean-Claude Meynard's works toy with perception and question the viewer. What did they provoke within you?

It's true that the Villa Tamaris exhibition is the impetus for this face-off. Interrogation in the form of enigmas is the watchword from the outset: how does an artist proposing figurative representation, where ostensibly everything is faithful to reality, move to a form of geometrical abstraction throughout such an extremely varied work? The exhibition's underlying idea is then to find a common thread, while not masking breaks and contradictions.

Jean-Claude Meynard is preparing a monumental work for the Babel series. Entitled "World", it will be shown for the first time at the Villa Tamaris. What do you think about the Babel theme in our times?

With this exhibition you're offering visitors a walk through space and time in a body of contemporary work. What reactions are you expecting?

Villa Tamaris gears its programmes towards the renewal and varieties of painting since the 1960s. We've worked a lot on the image, narration – and figuration on and about narrative figuration, with Jeune Peinture and Nouvelle Figuration. These themes may seem remote from Jean-Claude Meynard's work. In fact, from the outset, his methods have been contending with reality in its complexity. Figurative representation is constantly challenged. I'm highly interested in this novel approach.

The turning point is crucial: the awareness of hybridization, networks and ramifications, all this needs to be reckoned with.

Jean-Claude Meynard is re-interpreting the Babel myth, not to revisit it but to make it contemporary. Babel, the

INTERVIEW

JEAN-CLAUDE MEYNARD

You've been working for nearly 35 years on the complexity of reality and man's place in this complexity. What is the highlight of this research?

virtuosity, didn't quite get the meaning of my paintings. They had an impression of perfect reality whereas my point was that everything was fake. To avoid this misunderstanding, this "wrong seeing", I did "The Geometry of Enigmas" with a blunter manufacture to instill in the viewer a doubt about reality, to make him go beyond the visible and be more like me, an explorer.

works from the 70s stand beside fractal works from the 90s and later. What effect do you want to create?

Icarli from 1995 and Mashrabiya from 2005. Are you creating a new iconography?

Questioning, always the same thing: what is reality? What do you see? What don't you see? What's being transformed? What is appearing? Disappearing? Being born? Mutating? Is there a law for reality? Are there stable and observable parameters? Are there possible figurations? Figuring something is to block it in time. In the time I'm answering your questions, reality has changed shape, so which shape is the real one? When to stop? And mankind is also unstable. How is he situated in the kinesis of reality?

An explorer and seeker of forms?

In one of your hybrids (shown p.8) you juxtapose The Stairway from 1975,

It almost comes across as a fractal creation in that it attempts to make interplays with replicas and unseen, random correspondences.

Your work is divided into four major periods: Hyper-realism, the Geometry of Enigmas, the Geography of Bodies and the Fractal Dimension of Mankind. How did you get from one to the other?

Yes, a seeker of forms. Then I doubled the image, I worked with paint touches, I spiralled and fragmented it till it was a puzzle and a riddle. The viewer had to put the figure back together – viewing became seeking – from there up to my current Babels, I've used fractal geometry to propose a utopia for rebuilding the human figure and its infinite possibilities. You can get the impression of a big gap between hyper and fractal, but it's the same topic, the same urge despite appearances: to fracture what is visible.

At the Villa Tamaris, hyper-realist

The exhibition at the Villa Tamaris comes with a book and a film. Why?

When I was 20, hyper-realism was a technical challenge and my first confrontation with reality. I wanted to represent the society I lived in, a consumer society becoming a show-biz society. In the painting called La Barrière (shown on p.4) I painted the bar tender sharing the same reality level as the coffee machine, with the same reflections and shininess, the same brassiness: man in his environment in the same show. And I realized that people, attracted by the technical

appearances: to fracture what is visible.

At the Villa Tamaris, hyper-realist

It almost comes across as a fractal creation in that it attempts to make interplays with replicas and unseen, random correspondences.

VISUAL ITEMS

FOR PUBLICATION COURTESY OF JEAN-CLAUDE MEYNARD

(All the visual items from the folder are available for publication.)



Exit, 1978
Acrylic on canvas, 97 x 130 cm



Meta Scale, 2004
Digital Impression under Plexiglas, 250 x 250 cm



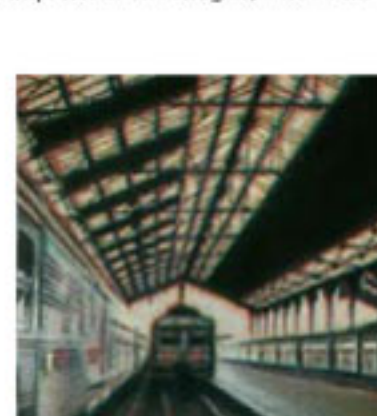
Hybrid Icon, 2010
Left: The Stairway, 1975 - Acrylic on canvas, 97 x 130 cm
Center: Icarli, 1995 - Installed in the Abbey of Roncevaux, Angers
Right: Mashrabiya, 2005 - Digital Impression on Plexiglas, 64 x 64 cm



Scribble III, 1993
Acrylic and collage on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



Babel, 2009
Silk-screen print, 75 x 56 cm



Gamm, 1975
Acrylic on canvas, 81 x 114 cm



Maison fractale, 2004
Digital Impression under Plexiglas, 240 x 240 cm

PUBLICATION

MEYNARD

BABEL LA GÉOMÉTRIE DES ÉNIGMES

Éditions Fragments International

Cet ouvrage est édité à l'occasion de l'exposition de Jean-Claude Meynard, à la Villa Tamaris Centre d'Art, La Seyne-sur-Mer, du 11 septembre au 17 octobre 2010.

Avec l'aide du Conseil Général du Var

TOULON PROVENCE MÉDITERRANÉE
COMUNAUTÉ D'AGGLOMÉRATION



INFORMATIONS

VILLA TAMARIS CENTRE D'ART 11 SEPTEMBER - 17 OCTOBER 2010

Exhibition
Babel, The Geometry of Enigmas
From hyper-realism to fractal
100 works by Jean-Claude Meynard

Management & curator
Robert Bonaccorsi

Contact Presse
Villa Tamaris
Mireille Rousseaud
04 94 06 84 00
mrousseau@tpmed.org
jean-claude.meynard@noos.fr

Main dates
Friday 10 September from 6-9 pm:
Vernissage opening in the presence of the artist
Saturday 11 September from 2 pm:
exhibition open to the public

Co-ordination, artwork management & useful information
Monira Younid et Mireille Rousseaud

Book
Babel, la Géométrie des Enigmes
Edition Fragments International
Text by Robert Bonaccorsi
128 pages, 23 x 30 cm, 30 euros.

Exhibition site:
Villa Tamaris Art Centre
Regional Municipality of
Toulon Provence Méditerranée
Avenue de la Grande Maison
83500 La Seyne-sur-mer
Tél. 04 94 06 84 00
www.villatamaris.fr

Film
A film has been made on the occasion of the exhibition in collaboration with the artist's collectors

Opening hour
Open every day from 2-6:30 pm except
Mondays and holidays.
Free admittance
Guided visits by appointment

About Jean-Claude Meynard
www.jeanclaudemeynard.com
fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Claude_Meynard
Book: Meynard, édition Fragments 2004
Films: Meynard Fractal by Jennifer Lund
(2005) and Meynard Babel by Gilles Bastianelli
(2009).

Access
By bus: from La Seyne Centre,
line 83
Par boat: from the port of Toulon,
line 18M

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