

Aqua Mater: Sebastião Salgado blends water and art

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From 1 April to 22 September 2022, visitors to the Défense in Paris, France, can experience an exhibition that is an ode to the beauty and the fragility of freshwater and those who depend upon it. Franco-Brazilian artist Sebastião Salgado has chosen citations from literature to accompany his stunning black and white photos. He cites the French writer Bernard Clavel, for instance, who wrote, "Homme, n'oublie jamais qu'un fleuve est une vie !" (Never forget that a river is a life). Sebastião Salgado's photos take the visitor on a breathtaking and often moving world tour of water. The scenes depicted range from a glacier in Patagonia to women fishing for shrimp in Indonesia and zebras drinking from a watering hole in Namibia.

The exhibition has been organized by the Fonds de Dotation Contemplation, a French NGO, with partners that include UNESCO. "The organizers of the exhibition approached us because UNESCO was responsible for this year's celebration of World Water Day, on 22 March, the theme of which is groundwater", explains UNESCO programme specialist Alice Aureli. An exhibition panel provided by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme explains why groundwater is so important. To reinforce its ecological message, the exhibition is housed in a temporary pavilion made of bamboo that has been designed by Colombian architect Simón Vélez. The exhibition may be visited from 10 am to 7 pm from Tuesday to Sunday until 22 September.

Aqua Mater

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