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Mohamed Bourouissa, Photograph from *Nous Sommes "Halles"* series

The final photograph I am going to describe today is called *Nous Sommes "Halles"*. This translates as *We are "Halles"*. It was taken between 2002 and 2003.

It measures 100cm in width by 150cm in height ... which is around the size of the top of a big dining table ... one that fits about 8 people around it.

It's a colour photograph. This one, unlike the last two - is not framed, instead .. the top and the bottom ends of the photograph are each held in a metal pole ... with the top suspended from the ceiling with two thin metal wires at each end. The pole at the bottom of the image acts as a weight to hold the image straight.

The background of this photograph shows a busy street in Les Halles, a central district of Paris. The pedestrianised street stretches off into the distance ... lined with tall buildings, each with a retail unit, or eatery at street level.

The side of the street on our left as we face the photograph has numerous brightly coloured shopfronts all along it. The first, which is visible on the middle line of the photograph, is a dark blue fronted building, with two silver mopeds parked outside it. Beyond that... along the street ... multiple shop or bar awnings cover what is below them ... two post-box red awnings, followed by a silver one ... and a black one.

On our right side of the street there is a sign for a cinema, a theatre ... Theatre St Denis ... and Hall's Beer Tavern.

After researching the 'Hall's Beer Tavern' sign on our right side of the photograph ... at the very front of the composition ... I find that this street is Rue Saint-Denis. It is interesting putting the bar's name into google maps and using the street view tool to look at exactly where this photograph was taken. The view of the street in the photograph makes it appear a great deal wider than it appears on the google maps image.

The buildings above the shopfronts tower above the street. They look residential, with flower boxes attached to most windows, and plants leering out into the street - especially on the right side. The buildings are all painted in pale cream or white, with their trademark Parisian tall thin windows. In the distance, at the right side of the street, two steeples from the church Église Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles de Paris reach high into the sky.

The sky is a bright summer's blue sky ... with one cloud appearing just above the steeples of the church.

The street is busy ... with many people walking up and down it. It is difficult to make out any details of these people as they are in the distance. The one background figure that can be made out, walks away from the photographer. She is in the middle of the street, on the left side of the photograph. Her long, straight brown hair is highlighted with streaks of blonde, and it hangs down around her shoulders. She wears a sand-coloured trench coat ... belted at the waist. On her left shoulder she carries a large rusty orange-coloured leather bag... which juts out from her left hip as she walks ... heavy with whatever she is carrying. Her trench coat is knee length, and she wears cropped black trousers, with white ... very flat shoes.

A woman stands at the foreground of the image ... looking directly into the lens of the photographer. She fills most of the right side of the composition ... particularly at the bottom of the frame. The photograph shows three quarters of her body, from mid-thigh to the top of her head.

Her white skin is pink in tone ... whitened by the brightness of the sun shining down on her ... particularly on her face. She has light brown hair with tightly

ringleted blonde extensions woven into it. The honey-coloured extensions spiral downwards to rest on her chest... her shoulders ... and presumably her back.

The brightness of the sun has cast a dramatic shadow over her eyes ... making them, and her sockets seem incredibly dark. It is difficult to make out her facial expression because of this. Her face is resting ... she looks quite serious and confident as she stares into the lens. Her mouth is closed in a straight line.

She wears a black t-shirt, with the word 'DEZED' emblazoned across the chest. The font is an extravagant cursive. The letters are outlined in a pale grey, with a white outline and inner. I think that Dezed is the name of a record label in Paris. The t-shirt is tight to her heavysset body, with a roll of stomach visible underneath the t-shirt between her chest and the tops of her dark trousers.

Her right hand is tucked into the pocket of her trousers, with her pink-y coloured forearm visible between the end of the sleeve and the fabric of the pocket.

Her left arm is bent, and held at her waist level. She has lots of things tucked between the left side of her body and her arm ... at least two plastic shopping bags. One silver with black writing, and the other ... closest to her hand ... white with blue writing. Hanging over these bags is what looks like a black leather jacket. Held between her index and middle left fingers is the butt of an almost finished cigarette.

This photo is from the series of portraits called 'Nous Sommes "Halles"', shot in collaboration by Bourouissa and Anoushkaashoot. Inspired by the book 'Back in the Days' by African-American, fashion, fine art, and documentary photographer, Jamel Shabazz. The collaborating photographers decided to make a project in Les Halles ... Bourouissa says: "a place where all the trains meet and where people go to buy clothes, meet girls, hang out with friends. It was a very important place for our generation."