

## HENRY DE MONFREID

### África

Michel Soskine is pleased to present the second exhibition of **Henry de Monfreid** (1879-1974).

Born in France, son of a bohemian painter, George-Daniel de Monfreid, he frequented artists such as Amaillol, Gauguin and Matisse.

**Adventurer, writer and photographer**, he was also a spy who published a large number of books, including "Secrets of the Red Sea", published in Spain by Bassarai.



Henry de Monfreid. *Maneuvering aboard the Moustérieh*, 1930

At the age of thirty, Henry went for the first time to **Africa** (Abyssinia, on the Red Sea), becoming "officially" a coffee trader and arriving in Ethiopia where, enraptured by the colonial life, he joined the natives and learned their language.

In practice, he smuggled **weapons, hashish and pearls** and was imprisoned several times.

Exhibited for the **second time in Spain**, the exhibition will include 25 black and white photos colored and printed in 1978 using the Fresson process.

Amazed by all his discoveries, de Monfreid portrays a multitude of harsh and terrible scenes of executions, arms or slave trade. As well as pearl fishermen, natives, smugglers, landscapes, coasts or camps, street scenes in most of his reports: Ethiopia, Yemen, Red Sea, Djibouti...

All this is not only a portrait of pain in a very specific **historical moment** but a unique **journalistic document**.

His passion for photography in the 30s and with the arrival of the 24x36 format, becomes even more evident when he acquires a Leica, revolutionary for its manageability and quality of its lens and with which he will make most of his reports.

De Monfreid died at the age of 95, leaving a great legacy as a result of the use of his freedom.



Henry de Monfreid. *Chancalla makes the milk come*, 1930

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## **HENRY DE MONFREID. Africa**

From December 15, 2022 to February 11, 2023

**Opening: Thursday, December 15**

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