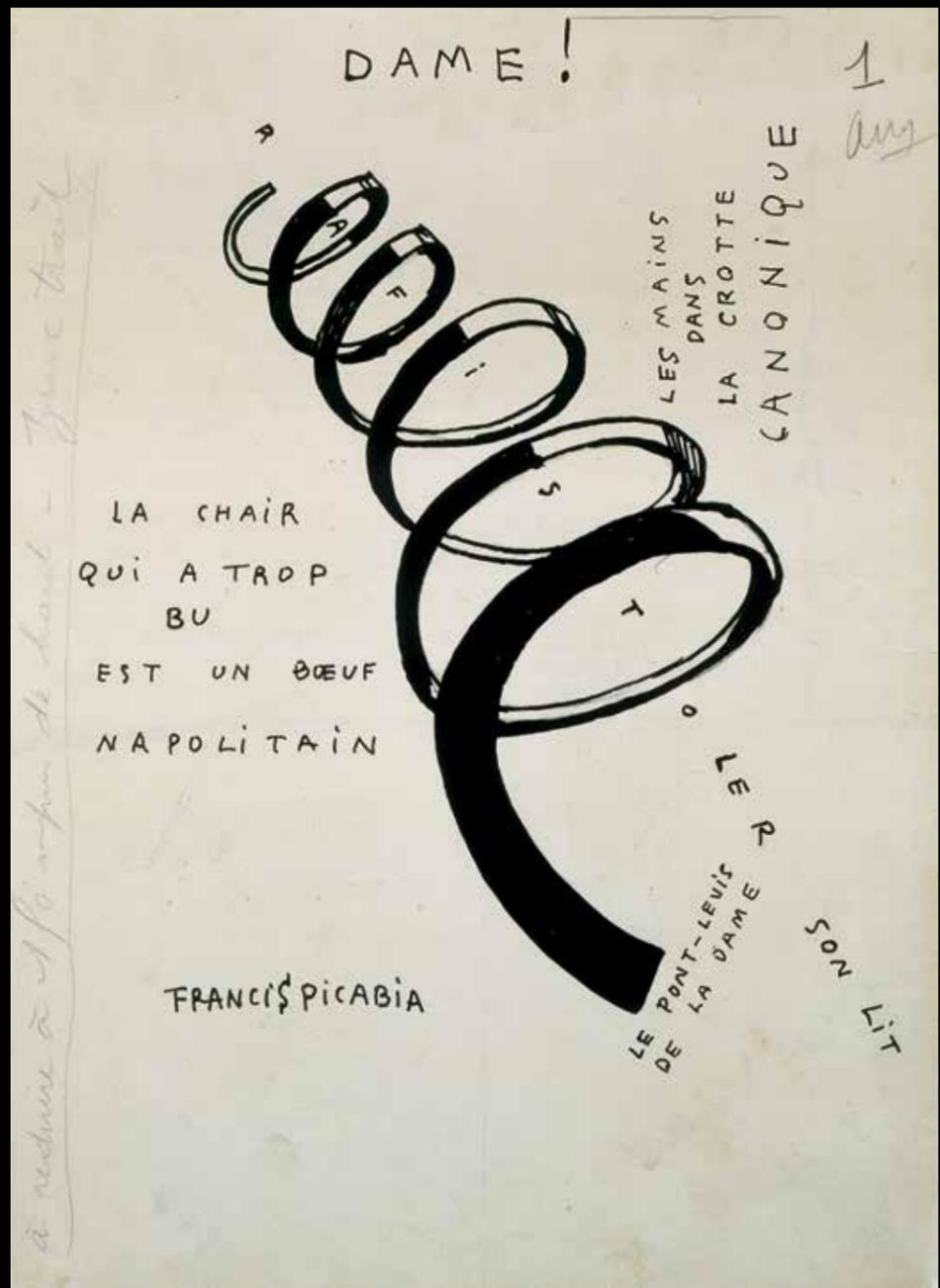


THE MIND OF THE ARTIST

FROM SKETCHES TO FINISHED DRAWINGS
AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN



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RONNY VAN DE VELDE

PREFACE

— Jan Ceuleers

With the Renaissance, drawing emphatically developed as the basis of all art and at the same time as an individual means of expression. The unique sketchbook replaces the medieval model book, the new art liberates itself from codified visual language. Gradually drawings are no longer considered as mere aids but as fully-fledged art works. They are valued as witnesses to moments of discovery that the viewer can re-experience. Drawings are direct expressions of creative genius; they are the handwriting that reveals the artist's true nature. The great appreciation for drawings as the visual result of the 'first idea' leads in the Romantic era to a preference for the fragment containing the visible genesis of the art work, unencumbered by its completed state. Over time, the importance attached to drawings only increases. 'What we love in drawings is the initial trace, the original stroke, the spontaneous movement and a certain outburst that, in the 17th century, was called the "fire".' (André Chastel) Drawing has a near mythical or magical status, it connects us to the prehistoric cave dwellers, like language, it distinguishes us from other living beings and, like language, it is the ubiquitous human mark. Drawing is essentially future-oriented. As long as art has been made, drawing has remained the most effective means to define new visions, to experiment with new formulations.

Drawing is an act, a complex act where mind and eye and hand meet. It is a dynamic event, one to which Klee alludes in his *Pedagogical Sketchbook* (1925): 'An active line on a walk, moving freely, without a goal. A walk for a walk's sake. The mobility agent is a point, shifting its position forward.' The fact that in drawings the original gesture is physically more present than in the 'final' art work, explains their great power of attraction. Putting all speculation as to the 'inner vision' or the 'diagram of the artist's mind' to one side, these are the visible signs of the hand's intention, evoking empathy or not. By the very act of drawing, the hand appropriates the world and initiates a process wherein drawing and draughtsman generate each other. The artist extends himself into the world and becomes part of that world. Drawing is also a way of thinking, the drawing a form of knowledge, a reshaping of reality that stimulates the viewer to think along, to know along, to experience reality differently. Where the completed painting or sculpture rebounds our gaze and brings it to a halt, the drawing stirs us to a near physical re-experience because it contains more traces of the creative process - traces that are often deliberately left visible. And because it shows us the artist often finding something he wasn't looking for. What attracts us so much is the animation and vitality of the drawing hand that we discern there, from the bigger-than-life-size underdrawings for ancient frescoes to a snapshot by a contemporary. Our pleasure is intimately bound to the manner by which the artist re-draws reality at his pleasure, and with the feeling of freedom that springs forth in a drawing that goes right to the heart of the matter without a single extraneous line. – For Hegel, a contemporary of the Romantic age, passion

is what unites the artist's active imagination with technical execution. The passionate artist is completely filled with his subject, totally absorbed by it and does not rest until he has given it artistic form. Hegel's particular appreciation for drawing is hardly surprising: '(...) drawings are of especially utter importance, in the sense that one perceives the wonder of how the whole mind immediately passes into the skill of the hand, that so fluently, unsought for, produces an instantaneous representation of what is present in the artist's mind.'

This ensemble of drawings offers a privileged look at all stages of the creative process, from the first, rapid sketch to the fully elaborated drawing that stands on its own. This ensemble illustrates how in the twentieth century the border between drawing and painting blurs, while at the same time the debate about line or color as being the dominant component has lost its sense. And also how, beginning with the collage, borders blur between the drawing and other art forms, between high and low, and it also shows just how inventive artists must be to establish a position within the context of the culture industry. The line of the modern drawing runs from decorative to hard, from graphic to utterly inventive, and as a means of expression seems closer bound to artists' greater self-awareness than to the vagaries of changing styles.

Modern and contemporary drawings offer - just like old master drawings - the best succinct summary of an artist's intentions and talent. Aside from styles, they also contextualize opposing conceptions regarding the meaning of art itself. The vital, heroic, relentless line of Picasso that continually renews reality, reminds us of its changeability and the possibilities of the free subject. The drawing's metamorphic power, the act that always evokes new images, in Picasso's hands itself becomes a major theme. His grip does not slacken. Right to the end his hand encompasses the whole of art history together with his own artistic development in new surefire lines. Opposite of these near-mythical signs that can measure themselves against reality, stands the dandy and iconoclast Duchamp who draws a line under the Great Tradition. His pseudo-technical drawings for the sexy *Large Glass* break with the so-esteemed expressive character of the drawing. With his readymades, he takes another step forward. Here the artistic gesture limits itself to the choice of an everyday object that by grace of the artist's signature is elevated to work of art, in the way one might sign a notary act or patent application. Duchamp operates on the level of meta-art; with extremely limited means he makes his 'inner vision' visible. In the same way that an old master drawing mainly has to do with the power of the drawing, the chessboard reveals Duchamp's notion of the artist as player in a strategic game. In this sense, the ensemble presented here also sketches the armed truce between major currents in modern and contemporary art.

J.J. GRANDVILLE

(1803-1847)

Sketch sheet, c.1829/1830

Ink and pencil on paper, double-sided,
282 x 180 mm
Autograph titles for a few scenes

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Nancy

This sketch sheet demonstrates why Grandville is an artist who knew how to draw his times in a manner that was absolutely unique, by virtue of his choice of subjects and with a style that efficiently combines realism and caricature. All is present here. The theatre as a source of inspiration – from the gestures and voices of the romantic drama to the popular *grand spectacle* that injects all manner of tricks and media and the anthropomorphic animals or zoomorphic humans that Grandville so masterfully sets down and for which he is so famous. Like in the scene in the artist's studio with a journeyman painter who takes himself so seriously and reflects on which character trait to emphasize in the slumping bourgeois figure, to the model that itself vacillates between an aggressive snout and the self-satisfied head of a bulldog. Or the two horse-traders, forerunners of seedy garage owners talking about how they'll patch up some worn out nag to sell as near-new. The then recent fashion for bathing, complete with nervous novices and hearty habitués who smoke a cigar while doing the backstroke. The medical quacks who, together with Death, conclude that the chosen degree of bloodletting had perhaps been somewhat excessive. From the one scene to the next it becomes clear that the great contrast between appearance and reality is the caricaturist's main theme. At any moment of daily life, it seems apparent that deceit is society's cornerstone. Grandville's large illustrated books are classics, owing in part to the effective and efficient 'interpretations' of his drawings by talented engravers, but compared to the original drawings the final printed versions seem stilted, they miss the liveliness of the pen that races to catch up to his imaginative finds. In the context of a magazine or a book, Grandville's images seem to be pure products of the imagination, while the original drawings – like this sketch sheet – reveal much more in the way of observation. Compared with the simplified engraving, the original drawing contains many complex, ambiguous elements, and a realistic tendency that is averse to moralizing.



HENRI DE BRAEKELEER

(1840-1888)

Woman at the Curtain or *Interior in the* *Gildenkamerstraat, 1874*

Pencil and watercolor on paper,
224 x 170 mm
Signed *Henri De Braekeleer* bottom right

PROVENANCE

Galerie Campo, Antwerp
Private collection, Antwerp

LITERATURE

Mark-Edo Tralbaut, in: *Antwerpen*, April 1970,
p.45, ill. 225

Mark-Edo Tralbaut, 'De Braekeleeriana', in:
Antwerpen, 1972, no. 216

Henri De Braekeleer 1840-1888, Antwerp: Koninklijk
Museum voor Schone Kunsten, 1989, p. 133,
a variant version illustrated

This is a preliminary study or composition-sketch for one of De Braekeleer's most famous paintings. The works from the period 1869-1876 when he was under exclusive contract to Brussels collector/dealer Gustave Coûteaux, mark the highpoint of his oeuvre. They are characterized by a meticulous rendering of 'ideal' interiors that oftentimes, via an open window, offer views onto 'ideal' architecture from the past. The staging and the muted tones amplify the feeling of time standing still. But there is more in De Braekeleer's work than nostalgia. Beyond the motif that no doubt appealed to certain collectors as counterweight to the new, business-based arrangement of the city, De Braekeleer is already striding towards the modern, autonomous painting. Central to this are forms and colors – the painterly effect. The luxurious accessories seem mainly triggers for pictorial solutions. The woman with introverted gaze, who holds the curtain open to give us a peek at the side façade of the city hall and the cathedral tower, is just as functional as a caryatid. The term 'modern gothic' is sometimes applied to De Braekeleer. That paradox well-captures how the painter transforms his modern will to observe (and have us see) by means of provincial, unworldly locations. But he himself undermines the illusion. This is no dwelling with authentic appointments and furnishings, but an artist's studio with stage scenery. The large window is a fiction too. The painter has eliminated the stone cross dividing the real window, in order to be able to create 'harmony' between inside and out. This preliminary study makes clear that De Braekeleer constructs his own reality, and so goes beyond simple realism.



HENRI DE BRAEKELEER

(1840-1888)

Portrait of Marie-Thérèse De Braekeleer-Leys, mother of the artist, before 1874

Wash, pencil and watercolor on paper,
172 x 156 mm
Signed *Henri De Braekeleer* bottom right

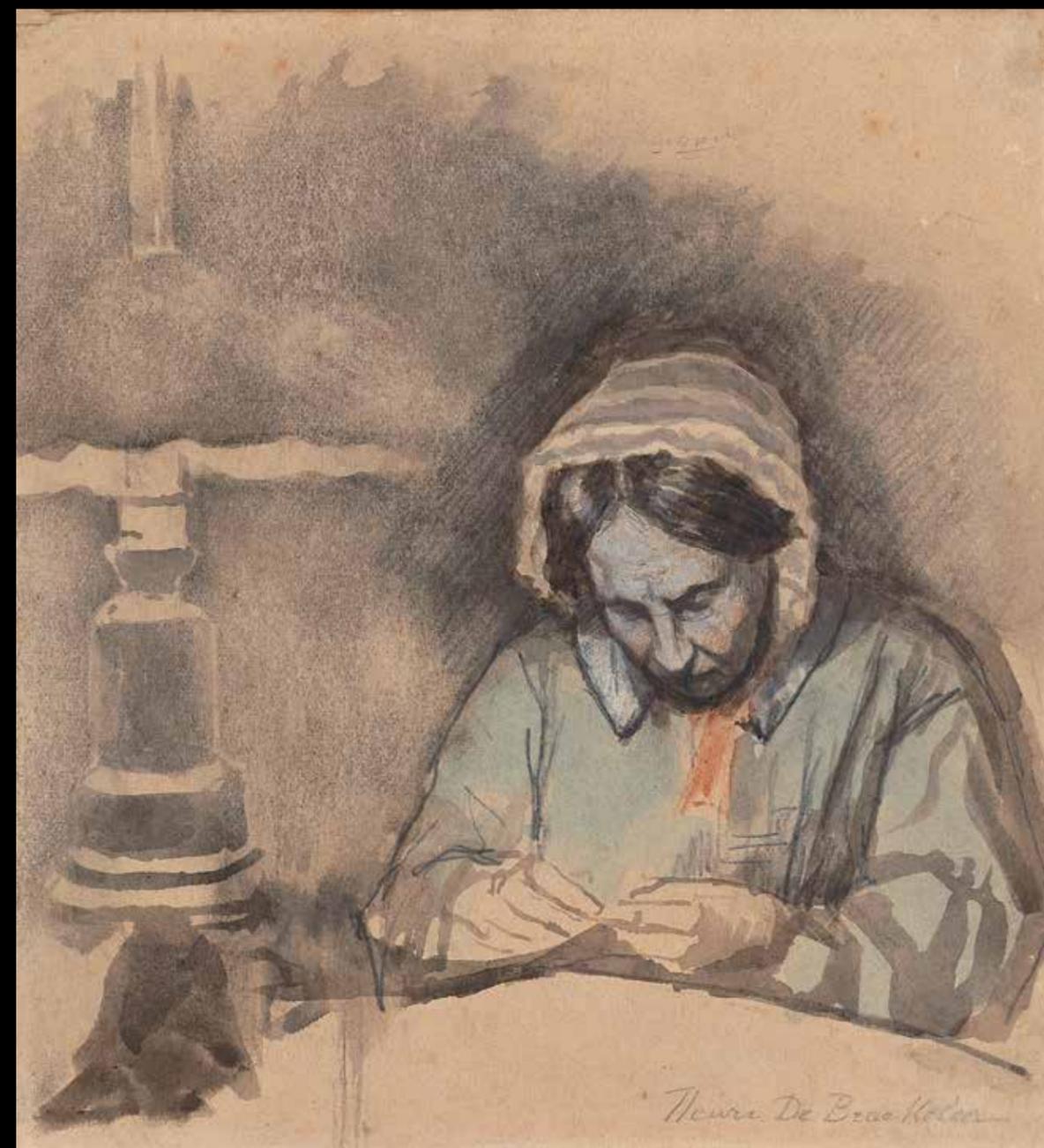
PROVENANCE

P. Rigaux, Antwerp
Private collection, Antwerp

LITERATURE

Mark-Edo Tralbaut, 'De Braekeleeriana', in:
Antwerpen, 1972, no. 218; another (sketchy)
portrait ill. p.226
Henri De Braekeleer 1840-1888, Antwerp: Koninklijk
Museum voor Schone Kunsten, 1989, p. 210
colour ill.

Henri De Braekeleer is born into and raised inside a family of professional artists. He is the son of Ferdinand De Braekeleer and grandson of Henri Leys, both successful painters. In 1864, Henri paints a portrait of his mother in oils where she looks straight at the viewer. With a look that betrays a strong will and strictness. And while Henri will spend his entire life in the family home, there is little information concerning the mother-son relationship. This masterly watercolor was presumably made later. Here the same woman makes a more demure, gentler impression. Her mission is still mainly domestic, but the pressure seems abated. For the painter, the watercolor is more than a portrait, it is a study of light and dark, from the lamp towards the room's darker places, from the circle of light to the pleats in her dress, to the furrows in her face. The motif has become incidental, the personal connection has dissolved into the background.



HENRI DE BRAEKELEER

(1840-1888)

Country estate of M. Coûteaux at Etterbeek (Brussels), 1871

Pencil and watercolour on paper, 215 x 265 mm
Dated and signed *H..B.* bottom right.
Titled and dated in upper margin

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Antwerp

Henri De Braekeleer painted few landscapes, but he did make many landscape drawings. The interiors for which he is famous are beyond time and place. Their windows do offer a view onto the city, but then re-painted to stage-set, to an extension of the interior. Not a bustling city but an imaginary one where all movement has ceased and all sound is mute, Anvers-la-morte soaked in antique colors. The contrast with his landscape drawings could not be more pronounced, like in this swift, agitated sketch of a place on the city's edge. The wind chases the clouds, trees rustle, people move, while raising their voices to be heard against nature's noisy backdrop. De Braekeleer must have understood that nature does not allow itself to be staged as with his nostalgic interiors in an imaginary city. The landscape is still no dramatic projection like with Van Gogh, but the execution of line does betray an empathy with nature's vital force. The elusive movement results in rapid, winding lines that direct themselves towards the air and the light. Where his paintings exude a sense of tranquility and control, here there reigns a sense of submission to the elements, and an unexpected playfulness as well. This drawing illustrates the gap between these two media in De Braekeleer's oeuvre. In the painting for which this is the preparatory drawing, the clouds and the trees, the woman on the left and the gardener on the right are at standstill; nature has become an accompanying décor, not competing with the imposing villa on the right. The static composition of the painting is probably due to the painter's wish to please Monsieur Coûteaux, his longstanding patron.



FÉLICIEN ROPS

(1833-1898)

Léda, n.d.

Watercolor, colored pencil and pencil on paper,
246 x 210 mm
Signed and titled *Félicien Rops/Léda* lower right

PROVENANCE

Maurice Pereire, France
Jacques Odry, Belgium
Carlo De Poortere, Belgium

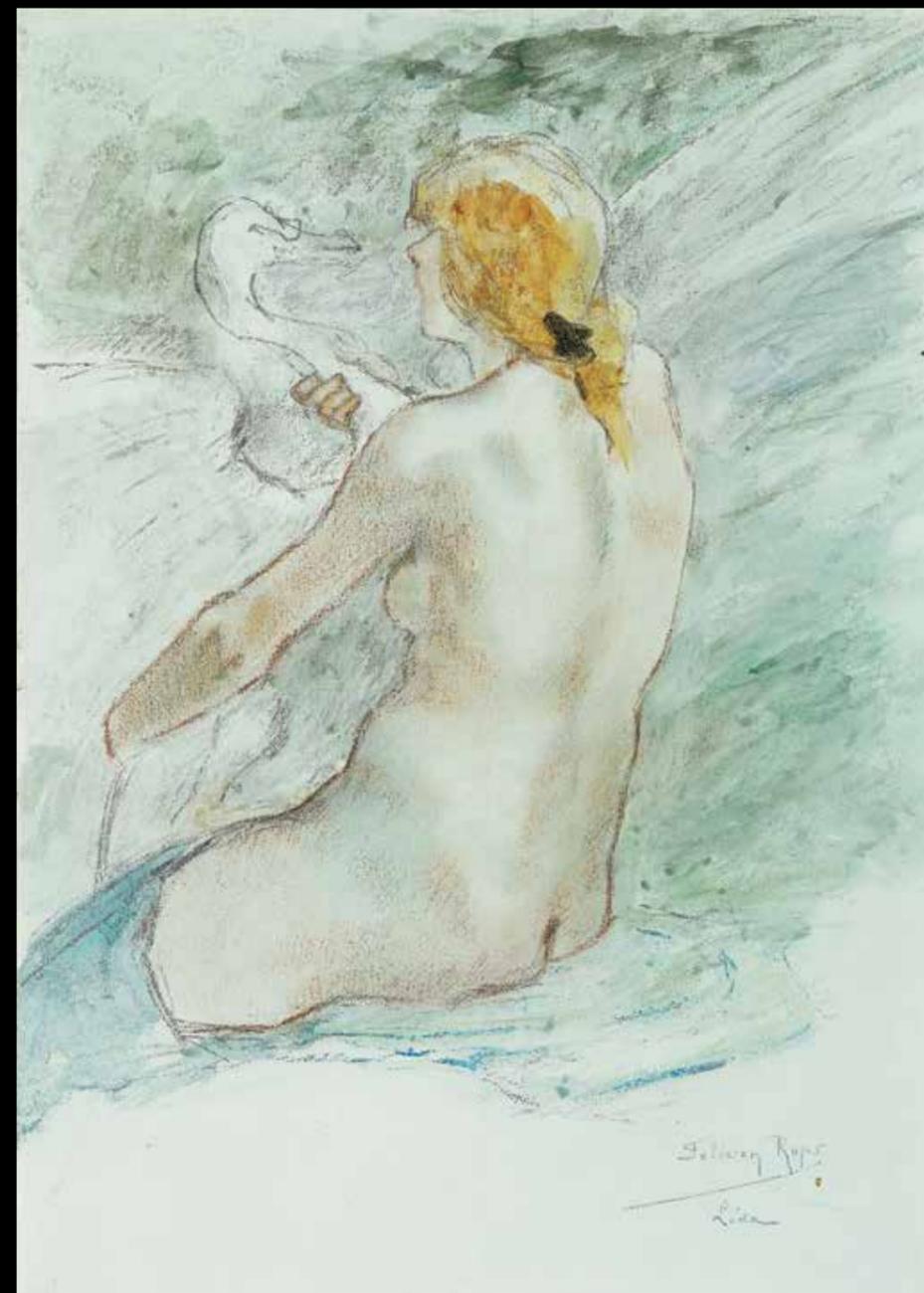
EXHIBITED

Namur, Maison de la culture de la province de
Namur, *Félicien Rops. Rops suis, aultre ne veulx estre*,
1998, no.179, ill. p.176
Barcelona, Espai Cultural Caja Madrid, *Félicien
Rops 1833-1898*, 2004
Brussels, Bozar, *La Belgique Visionnaire België*, 2005

LITERATURE

Pierre Mac-Orlan & Jean Dubray, *Félicien Rops*,
Paris/Leipzig: Seheur, 1930, ill. p.146

Rops doesn't give a damn for conventions, especially not artistic ones. When he draws from the well of classical themes it is seldom or never just to make a tame rehash. Zeus in the guise of a swan who seduces or rapes Leda in the Greek myth, is not the dominant player in Rops's version. The man is no longer a god who gets his way; the red-haired wench is a modern woman who herself takes the initiative and grips his neck with professional firmness. Censorship had still obliged the Old Masters to treat the myth of Leda and the swan with a veil of suggestion but, in the market of erotica to which Rops aimed, a more explicit interpretation was called for. Now that the myth has lost its function, Rops puts his own slant on the story. Where Zeus begets children with Leda, whereby the beak of the swan takes on the role of godly penis, Rops suggests a necessarily infertile fellatio. In a more fully elaborated version of this drawing, the swan's beak has a mask of the male member with testicles, and there is no doubt about the woman's intentions with this swan-man. The lusty god who was held elevated above mortal norms, here becomes a will-less plaything, something Rops illustrates literally in his famous *Femme au pantin*. Rops 'perverts' not only the myth, but also the classic Leda-scenes found in art history. His Leda is no aristocratic beauty, she is of modern flesh and blood, with only black silk stockings to set off her nakedness to even more advantage, with bright red hair that catches the eye from a block away. And she probably has other assets as well that set her apart from her colleagues, like a bold and compelling look that we might well surmise and a half-open mouth promising a hot encounter. The colors could be that of a boudoir, from the flesh-color satin seats and wallpaper, but the cloudy-painted background against which both figures nearly dissolve, refers more to Nature. So here we perhaps do have a more Ovidian connection, with the transformation occurring in a setting where the most miraculous may happen as a matter of course.



FÉLICIEN ROPS

(1833-1898)

Parodie humaine (Human parody), 1881

Pencil and charcoal on paper, 250 x 155 mm
Signed F Rops lower left

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Paris
Librairie Jean-Claude Vrain, Paris

Death hiding behind the seductive mask is no symbol of woman's 'wickedness'. Rops views prostitution as a particular form of social relationship in a world where everything is up for sale. All elements emphasize the gaping chasm between the two figures, a chasm that is temporarily bridged by way of a sexual-financial transaction. There is hardly a greater contrast than that between a proper middle-class gent who finds himself in the designated neighborhood looking for paid-for satisfaction and the women who burn their candles on both ends. Here, Rops is not running ahead of symbolism, but reaching for an important motif of critical naturalism. Death lurking behind the mask forecasts an end in a little back room where like on work-street it's always night, while the client (with his smooth sanctimonious look) will end his days in a spacious apartment on an avenue full of light and air. The mask stands for the obligatory presentation of the merchandise, with a flashy format that's vulgar enough for customers wanting to demean themselves, and fits with his caricatural exaggeration in the series 'Cent légers croquis sans prétention ...' wherein Rops wanted to show 'l'époque et la modernité' authentically and in full, with much attention paid to prostitution. The album of ten *dizaines* and just as many anecdotal scenes where Rops mocks the stupidity, hypocrisy and frivolousness of his contemporaries terminates unexpectedly with the morbid conclusion of *Parodie humaine*. That whole parade of loose morals seems but semblance and, to demonstrate the true nature of the modern human enterprise, Rops reaches for the biting caricature that he had used in his initial steps onto the art scene. The customer is in no way a 'victim'; he has approved the goods and calmly follows to the place where things conclude. The rigid shading of the door cutouts and the cold light lend the street the functional appearance of a prison, not of a shopping arcade. In the end, it comes down to a grubby trade. The exaggeratedly elongated figures shall remain separated from each other just like the classes to which they belong, the sloping line of the narrow pavement does not suffice to consummate the non-commercial part of the deal. Our potential sympathy goes out towards the woman, as she looks back with a tinge of disdain to check if her client is indeed following.



FÉLICIEN ROPS

(1833-1898)

Sketch sheet with *Satan créant les monstres*, n.d.

Charcoal and pencil on paper, double-sided,
285 x 405 mm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Amsterdam, Netherlands

EXHIBITED

Madrid, Fundacion Carlos de Amberes, *Félicien Rops*,
Un simbolista transgresor 1833-1898, 2002, no.99

LITERATURE

Eugène Rouir, *Félicien Rops Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre grave et lithographié*, Brussels : Claude Van Loock, 1992, vol. III, no.715 (heliogravure), ill.

Félicien Rops was a successful professional artist who knew how to satisfy the demand for strong images. He is often identified with fashionable themes that he was well able to turn his hand to, without the 'users' always aware of the presence of a double-bottom. His *grand guignol* images hit just the right note with a blasé, decadent public that had an interest in Satanism and Black Masses. This sketch sheet illustrates Rops's ambiguous stance with regard to marginal cultural fashions. The devil at above-left with his red member spurting hellish seed over the world to sprout new monsters, is surrounded by penises in mainly cheerful guises. Here Rops pulls out all the stops. Chiefly with the anthropomorphic or zoomorphic penis that often popped up in the satiric-erotic output of his era: a figure reduced to the male member sets out to climb a giant woman; many animals, a swan, a turtle, a snail, a spying bird of prey on a rock (elsewhere termed self-mockingly by Rops as *Vultur eropsticus*) and all with penis-heads, mainly in erection. These hybrid beings have nothing of the satanic or dramatic, they are all equal before the law of lust. Even at rest they are in movement, thinking of just one thing, to the next satisfaction of their urges. Their stance is that of an athlete at the starting blocks. Tumult as from a busy boulevard or a grandiose orgy seems to whirl like a vicious circle around the devil who sows his damnation over a pointless world.



JAMES ENSOR

(1860-1949)

The Artist Willy Finch in His Studio, c. 1880 (on verso: *Fishermen*)

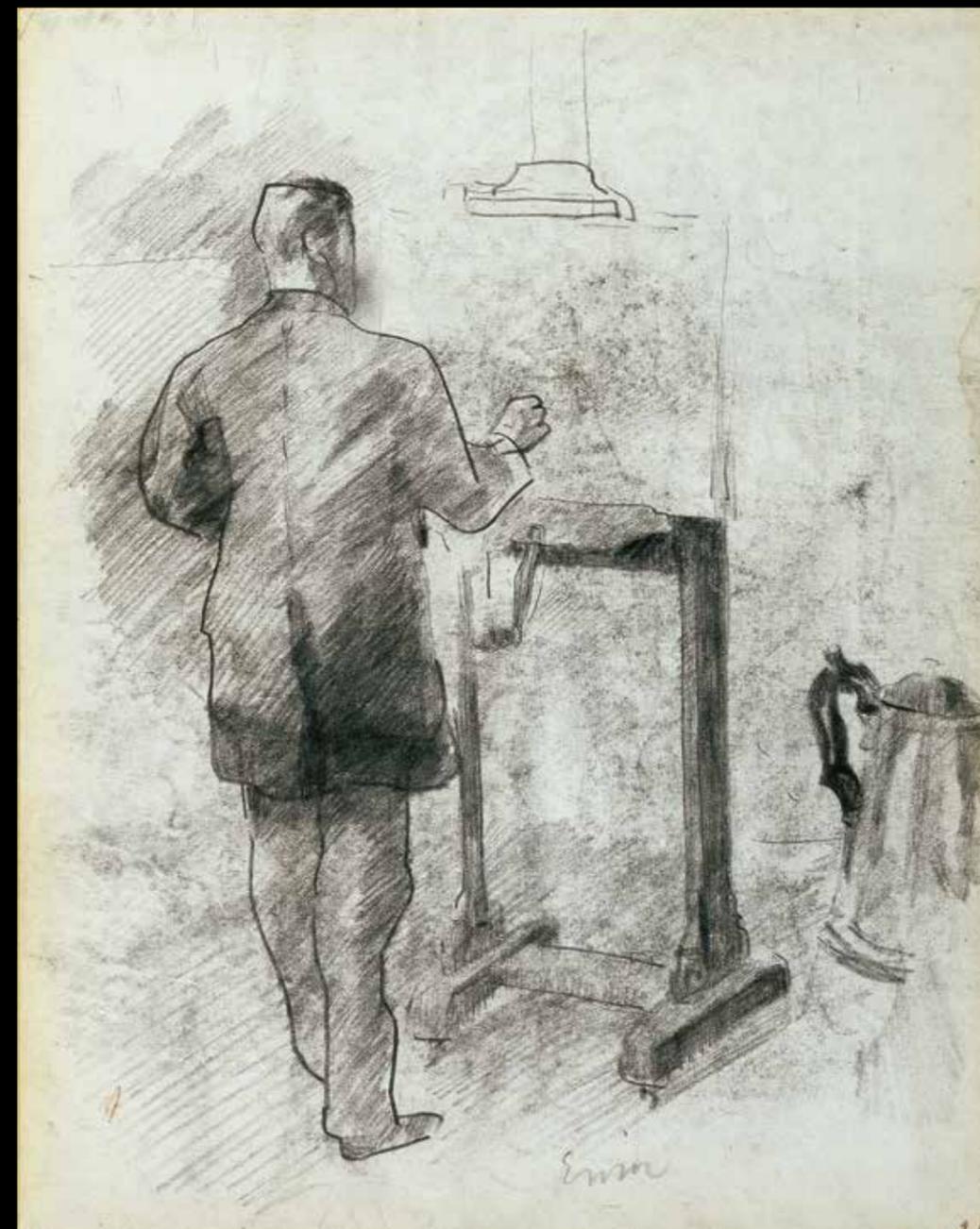
Pencil and black chalk on paper, double-sided,
215 x 170 mm

Signed lower right: *Ensor*; on verso, signed lower
center: *Ensor*

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Antwerp

A great friendship binds Willy Finch (1854-1930) and Ensor in their youth. Kindred spirits with ambitions that far surpass Ostend's provincial atmosphere. They study together at the Academy in Brussels and, between 1880 and 1882, Ensor makes several portraits of his friend. Finch was also model for the male figure in *La musique russe* of 1881. – Here Ensor perhaps mirrors himself in the portrait of the dignified, self-assured painter before his easel. No décor or attributes of bohemian life, but rather the artist as analyst of reality. Nonetheless, in this accurate slice of life - note or preliminary study for a painting - appears all the doubts about the appearance of things that will be determinative for Ensor's later work. The everyday coffeepot with the detailed handle in bamboo attracts our attention (by its size and elaboration) as much as the figure does. As with other realistic interiors from this period, Ensor seems to be testing the disturbing power of objects. A power that he would soon play out to the full in his grandiose unmasking of the world.



JAMES ENSOR

(1860-1949)

Letters to Théo Hannon, 1882

Four sheets with drawings and autograph text, pencil on paper, each sheet 225 x 175 mm
Two sheets signed and dated *Octobre 1882*, co-signed by Ensor's sister Mitche and Ensor's friend, the painter Willy Finch

EXHIBITED

Brussels, Galerie Georges Giroux, *Hommage à James Ensor*, 1945, no.150 bis
Basel, Kunsthalle, *James Ensor*, 1963

In 1879, Ensor begins his studies at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. Of more significance than the formal lessons there (that clash with his temperament), are the friendships he forges with fellow students like Dario de Regoyos, Willy Finch, and above all the future painter-writer Théo Hannon who – via Hannon's sister Mariette and her husband Ernest Rousseau – introduces Ensor to the cultural elite based around the freethinking University of Brussels. Through the Rousseau family he meets avant-garde artists and writers, encounters that will further stimulate his aversion for artistic conventions. In 1880 he returns to the family home in Ostend, but spends most of his time entrenched in his attic-studio. He keeps in touch with his friends in Brussels, and they also come to Ostend to visit. In this letter he strongly contrasts the clearly joyous hours with the darker temper in his daily environment. His companions board the train back to 'the land of manneken pis' (i.e. Brussels) while Ensor sits at the family-table and 'a sad dinner with 4 somber snouts'. Ensor proceeds effortlessly from accurate observation to caricature. The central portrait of his father refers to the painting from 1881, but what here is drawn black-in-black, is expressed in the painting with sensitive touches; here the father has an absent stare while there he sits reading attentively by incidental window-light. Between other family members at table, Ensor stands out as brightly as a Don Quixote who takes no pleasure in that quiet misfortune. On another sheet, Ensor picks up on memories of an 'adventurous' outing of the party, in the environs of Ostend and through the dunes, including 'the embankment affair'. And he seizes the occasion to set down a number of self-portraits. The clownish exaggerations of these portraits – the enormous, diagonally outstretched leg, the beanpole with his walking-stick – refer as do the play-on-words to student humor, but they also have a function in the composition and as well illustrate how Ensor feels like a unique outsider, aware of his abilities, and how he sought his own language to represent that position. – The two sketch sheets, composed around a vertical and diagonal partition, again pick-up on the contrast between inner and outer worlds. The figures on the street go about their usual, realistic ways, unconscious of the menace that lurks just beneath the surface of things. But before long, Ensor will unfurl his devils and masks.





JAMES ENSOR

(1860-1949)

Double composition, 1881

Pencil and charcoal on paper, 222 x 170 mm
Signed and dated middle right: *Ensor 1881*

PROVENANCE

Galerie Philippe Seghers, Ostend
Private collection

Study of figures with carriage, 1882

Charcoal and pencil on paper, 210 x 260 mm
Signed in the middle *Ensor*

Study of his sister with figures, 1882

Charcoal on paper, double-sided, 215 x 165 mm.
Signed and dated on verso

Ensor leaves the art academy in 1880, and through drawing sets out to find his own artistic language. His virtuosity is soon apparent, as is how this medium is so well-suited to his hand. And how he takes forerunners like Rembrandt or the leading current of realism of his own times, handling material in his own idiosyncratic way. He exercises his hand while at the same time storing up a visual stock. Quickly sketched silhouettes and detailed profiles as a matter of course find their right place on sheets from the early 1880s. The near-elegant compositions of fragments at different scale, usually positioned around an elaborated drawing, are about handling light and dark. They are also about motifs, both public and private. Ensor would not have to travel in order to envision the modern world. On the beach and on the street, and from his attic-studio, he sees and draws Ostend like a microcosm with all social classes and their attributes and attitudes - how they stand and stroll - always on the move. At home, family life revolves around the table of the sitting/dining room, the impassive family members and the furniture that together evoke an atmosphere of unexpressed frustrations and ambitions. There is no simple, symbolically-loaded contrast between the light of the outside world and the somber, stifling atmosphere at home, but oftentimes there is just a suggestion of transition. A sketch of women's hands is covered by an exterior scene with carriage and figures; a portrait of his sister, with a penetrating, near-despairing look, is surrounded by figures hurrying from one spot to another; or he associates his sister, now in profile, with the domestic still-life that exudes enormous gravity. Ensor will on more than one occasion express what's going on, like in 1932: 'I don't have children, but light is my daughter, light one and indivisible, light bread of the painter, light soft part of the loaf of the painter, light queen of our senses, light, light, illuminate us!' Drawings of his early period already manifest a great degree of self-awareness, along with a sense of his artistic potential. The modern artist is an artist who intervenes, who is not satisfied with reality. In these drawings, too, Ensor already introduces theatre as metaphor for social intercourse. The actors and their attributes are still under control, but they already presage the masks. Their realistic one-acters anticipate the 'carnival of the modern' (Sue Canning) where Ensor will place the world and all its faults on clear display.





Centaur and chimera (There were struggles and vain victories), 1883

Charcoal and pencil, 275 x 210 mm
Signed lower left

PROVENANCE

Claude Roger-Marx, Paris
Sale Munich, Villa Stuck
S. Frumkin Gallery, New York
E. Lecomte, Paris

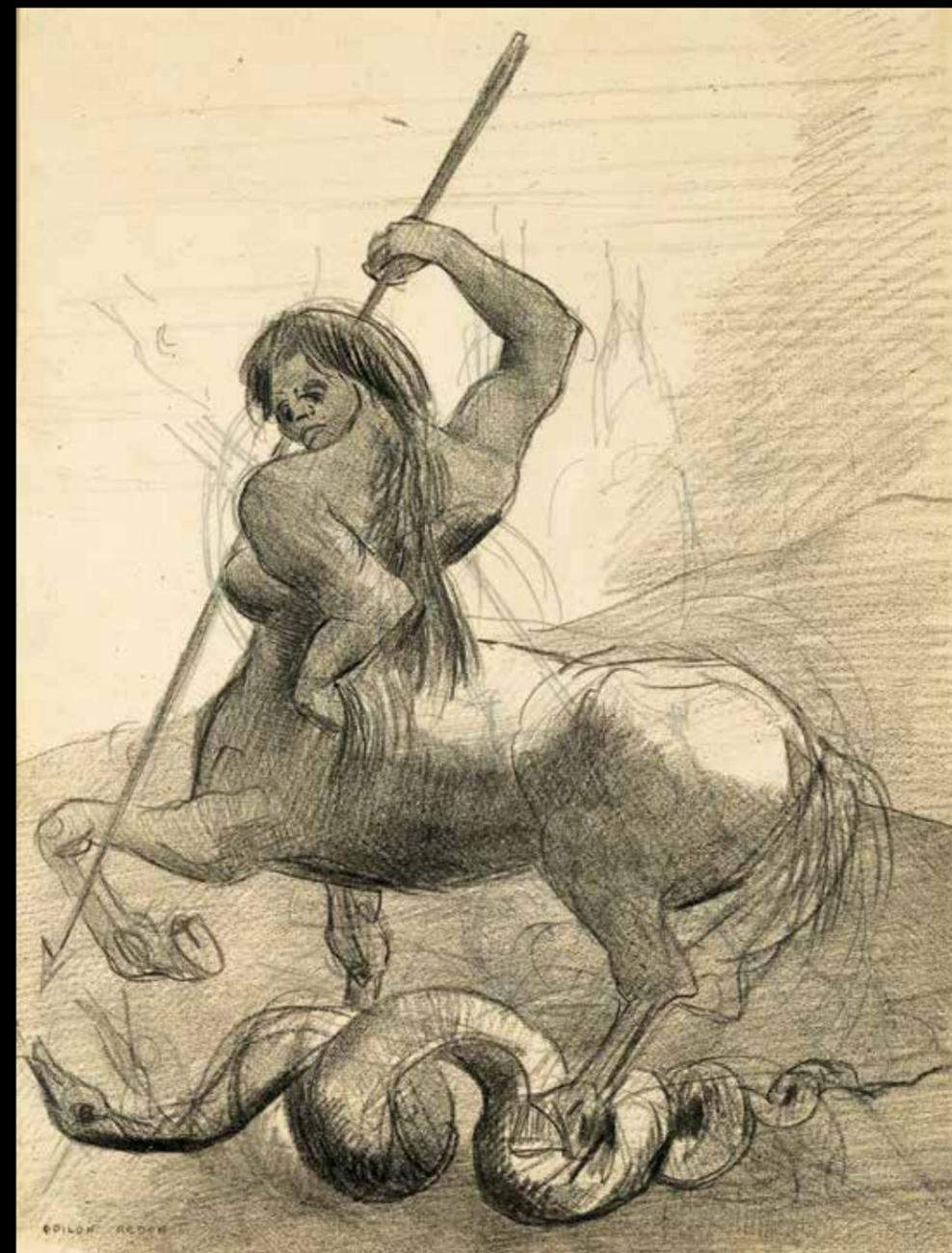
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Madrid, Fundacion Cultural Mapfre Vida, *Los XX : El nacimiento de la pintura moderna en Belgica*, 2001

LITERATURE

F. Charles, *Odilon Redon*, Paris, 1929, plate LXI
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Los XX : El nacimiento de la pintura moderna en Belgica, Madrid, Fundacion Cultural Mapfre Vida, 2001, ill p. 433
André Mellerio, *Odilon Redon : The Graphic Work Catalogue Raisonné*, San Francisco, 2001 (reprint), plate VI of 'Les Origines', ill. p.115

Redon's evolution with respect to his work's form and content, as seen in the intriguing charcoal drawings from the 1880s, is not so unusual for someone who, during a discussion concerning a historical painting, in 1868, had already noted that «we are in the presence of a lost right to fantasy, to the free interpretation of history». For the «intimate union of fantasy and reality», which Redon sees as the purpose of art, even a moderately academic style is totally useless. The drawing here is a study for one of the plates of the album *Les Origines* that appears in 1883, and has as legend: «There were struggles and vain victories». The brute of a female centaur that has a serpent pinned to the ground with a hoof in anticipation of the mortal blow, is not presented as heroic figure. The conflict seems to be playing out between beings of the same lower order, determined to keep each other from rising above earthly limitations. In *Les Origines*, despite the echoes of Darwin's views, Redon gives a mythical version of human evolution, of life that awakens out of eternal night and bursts forth on earth, as plant, as polyp and as fantastical being (Pegasus with broken wings), until «man appeared; questioning the earth from which he emerged and which attracts him, he made his way toward somber brightness». Old-fashioned, banal realism cannot chant this epic event; the «somber brightness» here receives a fitting treatment from Redon. Aside from the doubt about physical beauty, progress and morality that speaks from this subconscious moment of history, present too is the counterweight of the artistic imagination, pointing the way toward a higher existence



HENRI EVENEPOEL

(1872-1899)

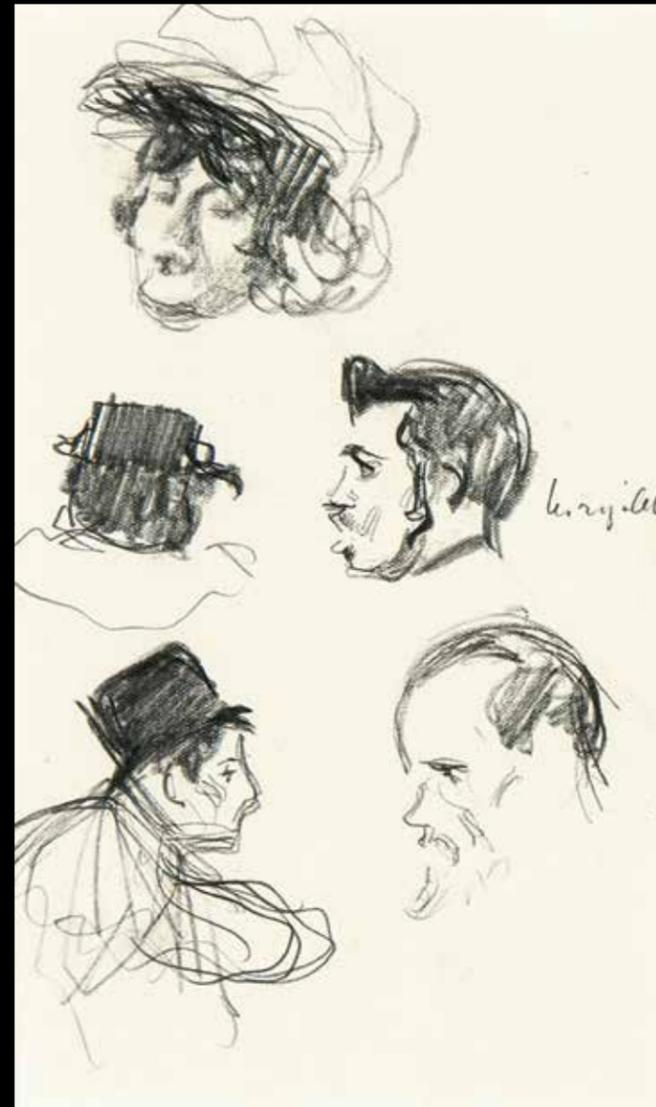
Sketch sheet, c. 1892

Pencil on paper, two sheets, each 195 x 125mm

PROVENANCE

Henri Evenepoel Estate sale, Antwerp,
Galerie Campo, 1968, no.75

Henri Evenepoel sets out for Paris in 1892. During his first years there he criss-crosses the city and notes every strong impression in his sketchbook as he would later, from 1897, record with a camera. His sketches retain the immediate and direct character of these impressions: a winsome glance or a brutal stare, a happy or pensive expression, all those unguarded moments, more spontaneous and volatile than in the finished paintings where the oils seem to bring them to a standstill. The sketch captures the typical, unique trait, while the painting evokes more well thought-out illusion. Evenepoel is a 'peintre de la vie moderne', the inviting or dismissive looks that struck him are inextricably linked with the incessant social traffic on the boulevards and terraces, in the cafés and theatres. The heads of the sketch sheets constitute no community. They are snapshots of an ever-changing mass where most of its members have no contact with one another. They seem like actors on a stage, playing the inhabitants of a metropolis. For them, and for the *flaneur* Evenepoel, modern life is a spectacle without beginning or end. In Evenepoel's sketch sheets you feel the pleasure of discovery, the excitement entrained by the hunt for motif. His drawings are more 'realistic' than the paintings that obtained him a place between Les Nabis and the post-impressionists. Here the subject sits so close to the skin that it acquires caricatural traits as with Toulouse Lautrec, to whom he indeed has affinities. These heads... you can almost here them speaking, the majority loud and busy, and when they keep silent you can here them thinking of their next reply. The only thing to do is look at them along with the enthusiastic, empathic artist who at age 27 died so early that he remains forever young.



HENRI EVENEPOEL

(1872-1899)

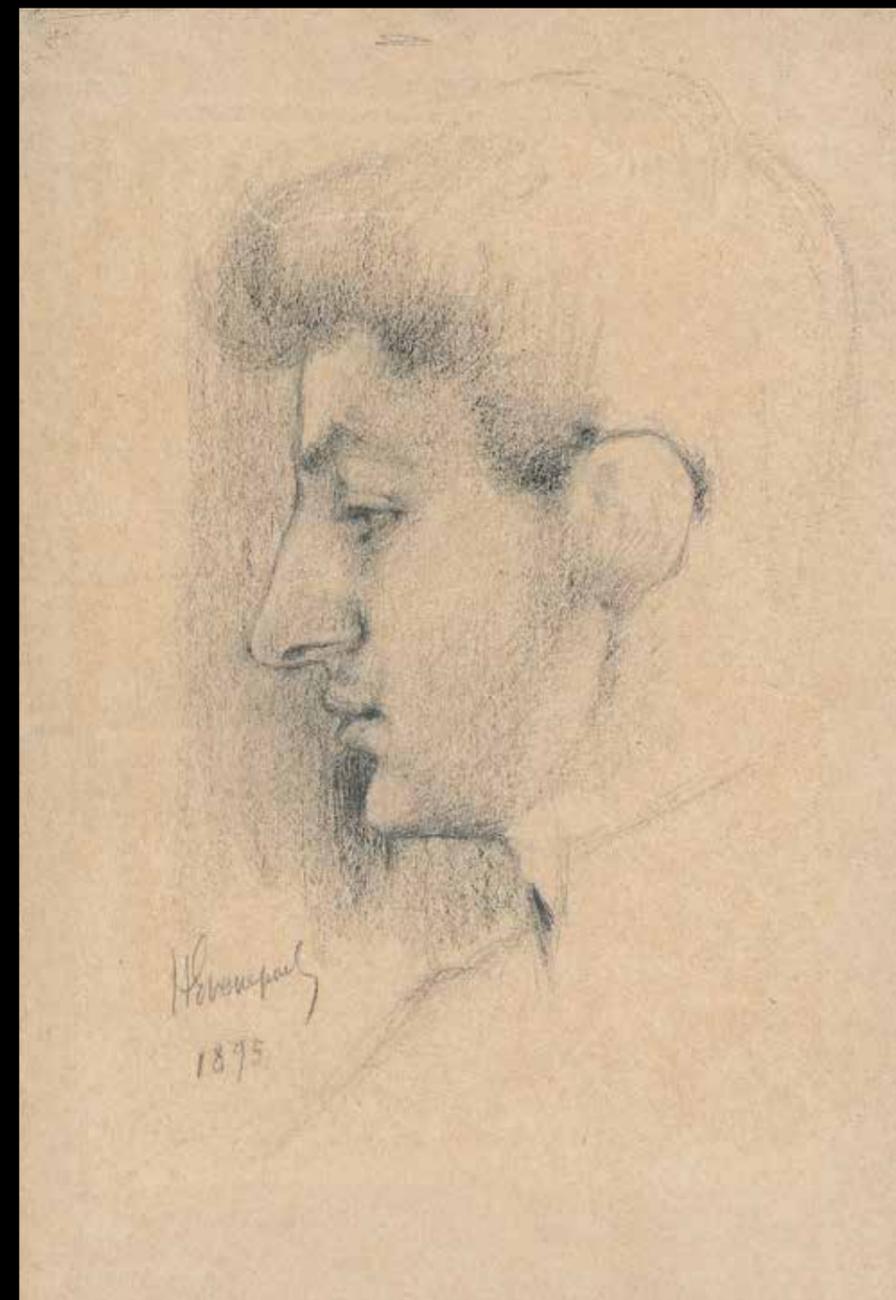
Selfportrait, 1895

Pencil on paper mounted on card, 200 x 140 mm
Signed and dated lower left *H. Evenepoel 1895*

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Brussels

In May-June 1894, Evenepoel starts a self-portrait in oils, *Portrait of the artist with an easel*. But he is not satisfied with the result, covers the head with white and sets it aside. In 1895 he takes up the painting again and finishes it. This drawing undoubtedly belongs to an intermediate stage. The look in the drawing is more demure, less sharply observant than in the definitive painting. The drawing testifies to great self-knowledge and also to the young painter's rapid evolution in his last years. In Paris, where he resides starting in 1892, he progressively gains in self-confidence and takes on the world outside. His new pictorial convictions –shored up by Manet and Degas, among others – come chiefly to fruition in his portraits, striking in their powerful directness and openness. In a letter to his father dated 19 January 1894, Evenepoel comments on what it is that he finds essential: 'Also, doing portraits would make my happiness: I would portray the sitters as they really are, of course, because I'd consider it impossible, and against nature, to embellish any face! I feel real pleasure to build a profile and nervously hug it: this is what you feel to hear emerge from a tangled theme of orchestration, to hear it clearly shouted out.'



HENRY VAN DE VELDE

(1863-1957)

Sketch for *Two men seen from behind*, 1891

Black chalk on grey paper, double-sided,
240 x 295 mm
On verso fragment of a similar sketch

PROVENANCE

Thyl van de Velde, the artist's son, Brussels

LITERATURE

A.M. Hammacher, *Henry van de Velde*, Antwerp:
Mercatorfonds, 1967, cat. (by Erika Billeter) no.89

Shortly after the beginning of his career as painter, Henry Van de Velde frees himself from the themes and working-methods of realism, the then reigning current. For a period of four years starting in 1885, he settles in the Campine village of Wechelderzande to work from nature there. Under Millet's influence, the figure of the farmer becomes an important motif in his work. In 1887, Seurat's *Dimanche à la Grande Jatte* reveals to him a totally new means of expression, one allowing him to analyze color and to construct with color. His new work is characterized by a flatter effect. When in 1890 he sees the work of Van Gogh at the salon of Les XX, he radically changes his visual language. His execution of line becomes more expressive and supplants the 'impassive' divisionist approach. In his drawings of farming life, lines and forms coalesce into a decorative whole that connects with the symbiosis between mankind and nature as the artist experiences it. Like here: by virtue of the vertical shading, both figures stand like trees, in harmony with their environment, sturdy and matter-of-course as though they've grown out of the same earth. The strong, empathic rhythm evokes a simple, authentic unity that sharply contrasts with the brutal industrial development that fragments and mechanizes all living processes.



HENRY VAN DE VELDE

(1863-1957)

Woman sewing, 1891

Black chalk on grey paper, 235 x 310 mm

PROVENANCE

Thyl Van de Velde, the artist's son, Brussels
Private collection, Ghent

EXHIBITED

Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone
Kunsten, *Henry Van de Velde*, 1988, n° 39 ill.
Otterlo, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller,
Henry Van de Velde, 1988, n° 39 ill.

LITERATURE

A.M. Hammacher, *Henry van de Velde*, Antwerp:
Mercatorfonds, 1967, cat. (by Erika Billeter) no.91

This drawing fits within the series of portraits that Van de Velde made while living with his sister Jeanne and her family in Villa Vogelenzang in the Antwerp Campine region. The influence of Van Gogh first comes emphatically to the fore in this series. Like in other portraits, his sister is all devotion. She is absorbed in activities that are just as tranquil and matter-of-course as the world of nature that comes in through her window. The flowing lines form an intimate cocoon that is nonetheless in harmony with the surroundings. From the hairstyle to the walls and furnishings, movement is no more than a gentle vibration. The line that combines figure and surroundings with one another does not aim for realistic representation or evocation of atmosphere. For Van de Velde it is not the motif that is of primary importance, but rather the visual language that he has discovered and further develops. The formal 'truth' becomes a compelling presence; the parts are subordinate to the whole. The chair-back has as counterweight the small frame at upper-right. It is not clear if it enframes an artwork or a mirror, but it reminds us that here it is the artist who plays the only leading-role.



HENRY VAN DE VELDE

(1863-1957)

Dunes with church tower, 1892

Black chalk and pastel on paper, double-sided,
237 x 310 mm
On verso landscape with dunes

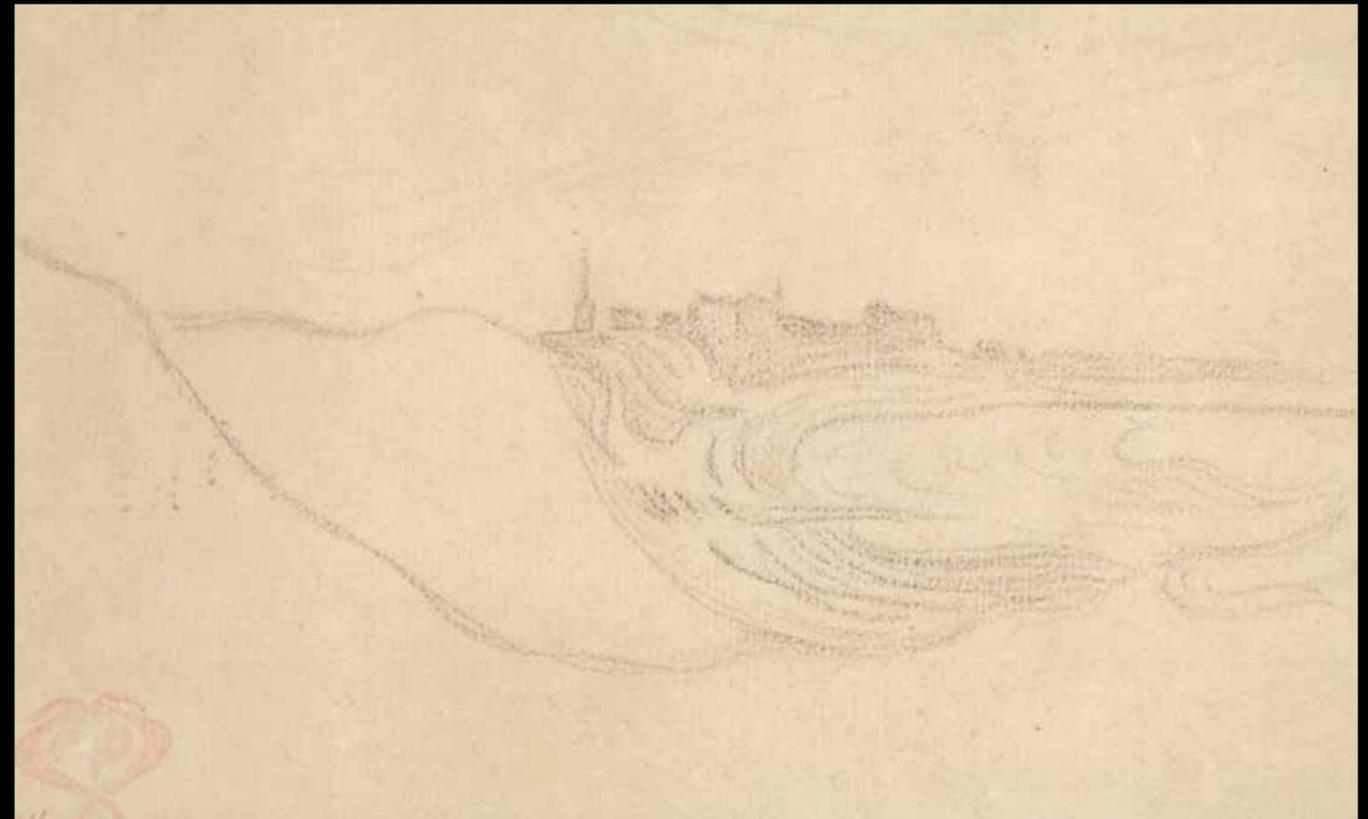
PROVENANCE

Thyl Van de Velde, the artist's son, Brussels

LITERATURE

A.M. Hammacher, *Henry van de Velde*, Antwerp:
Mercatorfonds, 1967, cat. (by Erika Billeter)
no.113

In 1891 Van de Velde begins a series of drawings of dunes on the North Sea coast, in Blankenberge and Knokke. As with the countryside around Wechelderzande, now the zone where land and sea meet is mirror of Van de Velde's beliefs and ambitions. And his sometimes complicated relationships with women, as well. In some portraits, his line undulates over the female subject like over the sea. And, note likewise, the houses beyond with their jutting church towers – all symbol laden. Much more than in his drawings of country life, here he simplifies until arriving at the essence. For Van de Velde, line is a 'transferred gesture' that is not only proper to living beings; landscapes, too, are gestures of nature. Against a near pantheistic background, the recording of these gestures becomes a spiritual activity that transcends the artistic. The movement that seems to well from out of the sea – source of all life – does not halt when reaching land. It becomes a force that binds everything together. Like a sort of medium, the artist pursues this movement by allowing the image to devolve into an ornamental form through which the entire human environment might be designed. In his memoirs, Van de Velde records the following about this period: 'The box of pastels and the block of sheets of Ingres paper under my arm, I'd run along the beach at Knokke to capture the linear arabesques left behind on the beach by the ebbing tide; that's to say, since I noticed the ephemeral ornaments, abstract, capricious and refined, that the wind abandons in the sand and dunes.' The dynamic line of the landscape drawings is harbinger of the abstract vital line in Jugendstil and art nouveau. It also represents Van de Velde's grandiose ambition to abolish the modern separation between people and things through his work both as designer and pedagogue.



LÉON FRÉDÉRIC

(1856-1940)

Peasant girl, 1887

Pastel on paper, 400 x 270 mm

Signed and dated *L. Frédéric 1887* lower right

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Antwerp

Léon Frédéric is a virtuoso painter who in the 1880s shifts his focus to naturalism and social involvement. He becomes a member of the Brussels-based association *L'Essor*, a group of young artists who want to paint contemporary social reality instead of using imaginary, often literary themes as their artistic starting point. His great interest in the Italian renaissance and for the Flemish primitives explains the more stringent character of the style he uses to paint poor folk and farmers 'true-to-life', especially after 1883 when he regularly resides in a small village in the Ardennes. For the presentation, as well, Frédéric finds inspiration in the past. He makes triptychs, like *Les âges du paysan* (1885-1887), where the religious motif is replaced by large-scale portraits of rural life that as to clarity leave nothing to be desired. But however realistic the result – as in this portrait of a farm girl, perhaps a study for a larger work – it nonetheless is a staged reality, with unaccidental elegant lines and harmonious, luminous colors. The realistic art work is a construction, not a representation. The peasant girl is there for the eloquent effect she provides. With extreme precision, the craftsman translates her eventual discontented lot into a state of graceful resignation. In the end, perhaps Frédéric had an 'idealistic' approach to his art, and in this he is akin to the great masters of the past whom he so admired. It also then comes as no surprise that, starting in 1890, he paints allegorical works that fall under the heading of symbolism.



HEINRICH VOGELER

(1872-1942)

Seated female nude, c. 1894/1895

Charcoal and pencil on grey paper,
mounted on cardboard, 643 x 360 mm
Signed with monogram 'H.V.' (upper right corner)

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Westphalia

LITERATURE

J.L. Sponzel, *Heinrich Vogeler-Worpswede,*
Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration, Bd IV, Darmstadt,
1899, p. 330 (ill.)

The authenticity of this work has been
confirmed by Rena Noltenius, Bremen and
Wolfgang Werner, Bremen

After three years at the art academy in Düsseldorf, Heinrich Vogeler moves to Worpswede, a village that would also play host to other artists like Paula Modersohn-Bekker and writers including Rainer Maria Rilke. The influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and his fascination for Botticelli that were to be so defining for his symbolic work around the year 1900, are here not yet present. The presentation is that of a very realistic woman, resting upon a sturdy wooden chair with a sheepskin on the seat. Softness of body and fleece fills the image and contrasts with the chair's rigid frame. The dark hair attracts our attention towards her pensive gaze, testifying not to fatigue but just the quiet force of her own convictions. This woman is not to be reduced to a decorative element. She muses, thinks of other places, other experiences. She could – just like that! – get up and disappear from sight.



GEORGES LEMMEN

(1865-1916)

The Seamstress, 1900

Charcoal and pencil on paper, 254 x 348 mm
Signed and dated lower left, and stamped with the artist's estate stamp lower right.
This drawing is related to the painting with the same title, in the collection of the Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels

PROVENANCE

Georges Lemmen estate, Brussels
Frederick Baker, Chicago

At the end of 1888 Georges Lemmen becomes a member of *Les XX*, a Brussels-based association of avant-garde artists that organizes exhibitions that also include work from like-minded foreign colleagues like Van Gogh, Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec, Gauguin, Pissarro and Seurat. As the case with Theo Van Rysselberghe and Henry van de Velde, Lemmen also becomes strongly influenced by neo-impressionism. Not only in his paintings, but also in his drawings which often have his immediate surroundings as subject, particularly women in interior settings. From 1895 on, his working method becomes freer and more spontaneous, something attributable to influence of Les Nabis (mainly Vuillard). In his earlier drawings, as well, he is not just a mere votary of Seurat. With Lemmen, the contrasts between light and dark are 'softer and more distributed around the whole of the composition' (Roger Cardon, *Georges Lemmen 1865-1916*). In this portrait of his wife, the last traces of Seurat's influence disappear. Here Lemmen does not aim for two-dimensional effect, the figure is separated from back- and foreground, the light flows naturally. The artist has discovered a less 'scientific' approach, one that better fits with his intimist universe, his familial micro-cosmos. It comes as no surprise that he also took up this motif in painting and in lithograph. It mirrors his personality: 'his meditative, quiet and discrete nature; his particular attention to the secret life of the people and things around him and for the essential and enduring qualities that they hide deep within; (...) his overriding need to ultimately keep his work removed from his own anxieties and torments'. (Roger Cardon) It has been said of Bonnard and Vuillard, that in their works 'the world seems to hold its breath'. In the portraits of George Lemmen, too, one finds that rare moment imagined with great talent.



GEORGES LEMMEN

(1865-1916)

Fruit-picking, 1904

Ink and watercolor on paper, 287 x 230 mm
Signed with the artist's monogram and dated *1er
Septembre 1904* bottom right

PROVENANCE

Private collection

This is probably a preliminary study for a large-format painting from 1905, where a child is added to the ladder's right, and the boy holding his apron open to receive the fruit is at far left. There is also another preliminary study or copy known, in oils, which comes over (as does this first study) as much more spontaneous than the definitive painting. Lemmen, after a neo-impressionist phase, had applied his great talent and devotion to the decorative arts, especially typography and graphic design, accomplishing important innovations until his integrity had come to clash with hard economic reality. When, after 1900, he returns to painting, he brings along his decorative ambition and talent. One could call this preliminary study 'typographical'. The garden wall here is not as in the final version a many-colored tapestry; the geometrical rows of brick constitute a sort of grid against which the apple tree and the figures emerge as floral motifs. While the painting nearly transforms the garden into a fin-de-siècle interior, the study here is full of late-summer sun. In the watercolor what is of prime importance for Lemmens is to make the joy of life's simple things tangible and close. In the painting this has become but a memory, evoked with some difficulty.



Study for a portrait – Nel at the table, c. 1912

India ink on paper, 380 x 480 mm

Autograph authentication signed by Nel Wouters bottom right, on verso *Vierge Folle* stamp.

This drawing is recorded in the Rik Wouters archives and will be included in the catalogue raisonné which is being prepared by Olivier Bertrand.

From around 1910, Rik Wouters breaks away from Ensor's influence. In search of his own pictorial language, he starts painting in bright touches of color in the manner of Fauvism. Cézanne's work, which he knows from reproductions, stimulates him to experiment with a more considered composition of forms based on planes and volumes. At the end of 1911 he signs a 10-year contract with the Giroux Gallery in Brussels, with the gallery receiving a monopoly on his output. Now that the worst of his financial worries are behind him, the painter commences an extremely productive period. In 1912 he makes 55 paintings, of which 31 with a female figure, in most cases his wife Nel. In his near-stenographic painting style he remains close to the 'sketchy', direct character of the drawing. To achieve a result that looks as spontaneous and authentic as a sketch, Wouters develops an unconventional, 'transparent' technique in oils that allows no room for error. He can confidently set to work because each painting had been preceded by a series of rapid sketches that wholly familiarized him with the motif. In these drawings his 'script' is possibly even more intense and nervous. – The sitting woman is no monumental presence; she is like a center-of-energy around which light and surroundings take their place. The drawing reveals how Wouters experiments with dynamic compositions. He rearranges the motif by the top-down perspective, introduces intense rhythm by the diagonal axis, parallel to the right angle of the transversely placed tabletop. In contrast to the serene calm that Cézanne strives for and achieves with his well-considered composition, Wouters' main intention is to suggest the unique and elusive character of the moment before it disappears to make way for the next experience.



Nel at the window, 1915

Ink on paper, 560 x 675 mm
Signed, dated and inscribed *Rik Wouters/
Amsterdam 1915* lower left

PROVENANCE

Mrs. Lassalle-Wittmann, Brussels

LITERATURE

Olivier Bertrand, Stefaan Hautekeete, *Rik Wouters: kroniek van een leven*, Antwerp: 1994, no. 120, ill. p. 171

In his 'wartime works', Rik Wouters' palette darkens. At the same time his figures are laid-down more powerfully, often more schematically, with less decorative elements in the background – something that works to the composition's benefit. By way of this purified style the evoked moment conveys even more empathy than previously, the impulsive evocation of impermanence has an even stronger emotional impact. In this drawing it just seems paradoxical that it is the interior that is in motion, and not the world outside. The upwards movement that ripples from the pleats of the dress and the pose of the sitting woman to the chair backs and the billowing curtains, are compensated for by the straight horizontals and verticals of the canal with its boats and houses on the bank opposite. This vital keynote enthusiastically translates the way that the painter experiences a particular moment in his immediate environment. Reality is there to be painted, but this is also his intimate reality. His wife and model Nel is often the hub and focal center, but in contrast to earlier works the decorative elements are shifted outside, the outside world has become background. In the later works it becomes clear that Wouters – in his feverish, sketchy working method – is a forerunner of Flemish expressionism. But however spontaneous his approach, the painter nonetheless also took the reception of his work into account. During preparations for an exhibition of his watercolors, drawings and etchings in the Rijksprentenkabinet in Amsterdam, on 19 September 1915 he writes to his gallerist Georges Giroux: '(...) it's very important to have only pen drawings, washes, tinted washes, charcoals, thus in principle in black and white (...) because black and white are very highly regarded here, the opposite of (the case in) Belgium.' No doubt more was going on, and Wouters was also conscious of the very expressive, more 'modern' impact of his black-and-white drawings.



OTTO GUTFREUND

(1889-1927)

The artist and model posing for Morning Toilette, 1911

Pen and India ink on paper, 235 x 145 mm
With the atelier stamp numbered 477 on the reverse

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist
Acquired by Eric Estorick (Grosvenor Gallery, London) in the 1960s

In 1909, art student Otto Gutfreund discovers the work of Antoine Bourdelle at an exhibition in Prague. Under this stimulus, he travels to Paris and for a year follows lessons with the famous sculptor. Gutfreund's new, expressionist visual language shows a cubist influence from 1912 on, and the principles of analytic cubism quickly gain the upper hand. The aim is no longer for a harmony of continuous 'general' forms but rather a subjective intervention that dissolves the motif through sharp contrasts. Now it is about creating an independent, sculptural space out of discontinuous movements. The sculpture suggestively conducts the viewer's gaze, the gaze that can again reassemble the broken up, rearranged masses. Gutfreund's cubist drawings are autonomous works as well as being project-designs for sculptures, as with *Morning Toilette* (1911) and *Cubist Bust* (1914). In contrast to the 'heaviness' of the final sculptures – that indeed have the advantage of revealing all facets to the enveloping gaze – the drawings are remarkably light. In a few planes and lines the figures are decomposed and displayed to the viewer as recomposable. The expressive fragments of some drawings are no longer present in the completed sculpture. Gutfreund was very much aware of the complex nature of the creative process. In 1913, for example, he notes that the new sculpture has a 'tendency to contain an abundance in a single point, to enrich a single view from elements of other views, to condense an entire abundance into each view. This leads to new formal possibilities, new conditions and new questions. The solution to these questions is the task of a strong individuality; they will not be solved theoretically, but intuitively, in agreement with other sensibilities. The answer will emerge from the given preconditions of the age and its views.'



OTTO GUTFREUND

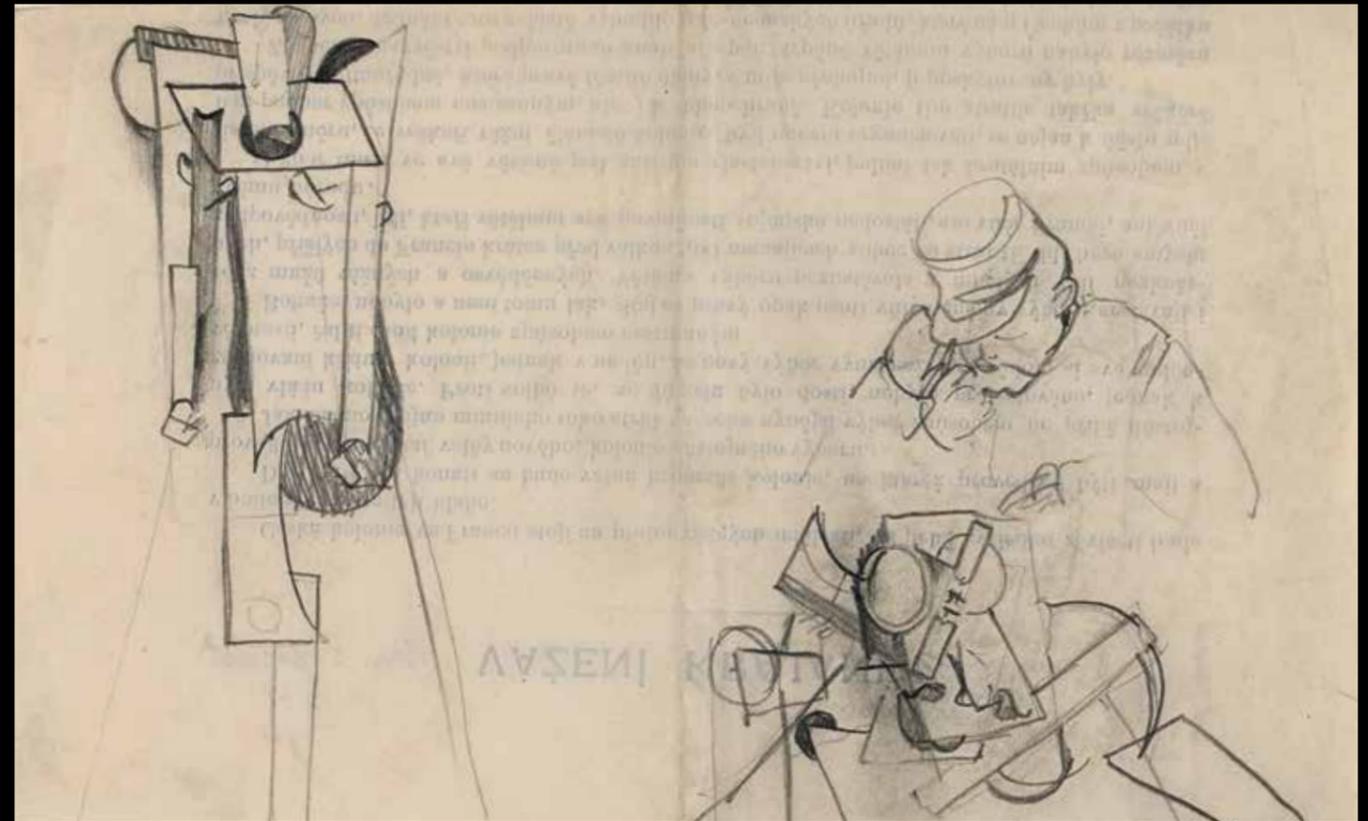
(1889-1927)

Cubist soldier and soldier, c. 1914

Pencil on paper, 136 x 216 mm
With the atelier stamp numbered 114 on the
reverse

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist
Acquired by Eric Estorick (Grosvenor Gallery,
London) in the 1960s



OTTO GUTFREUND

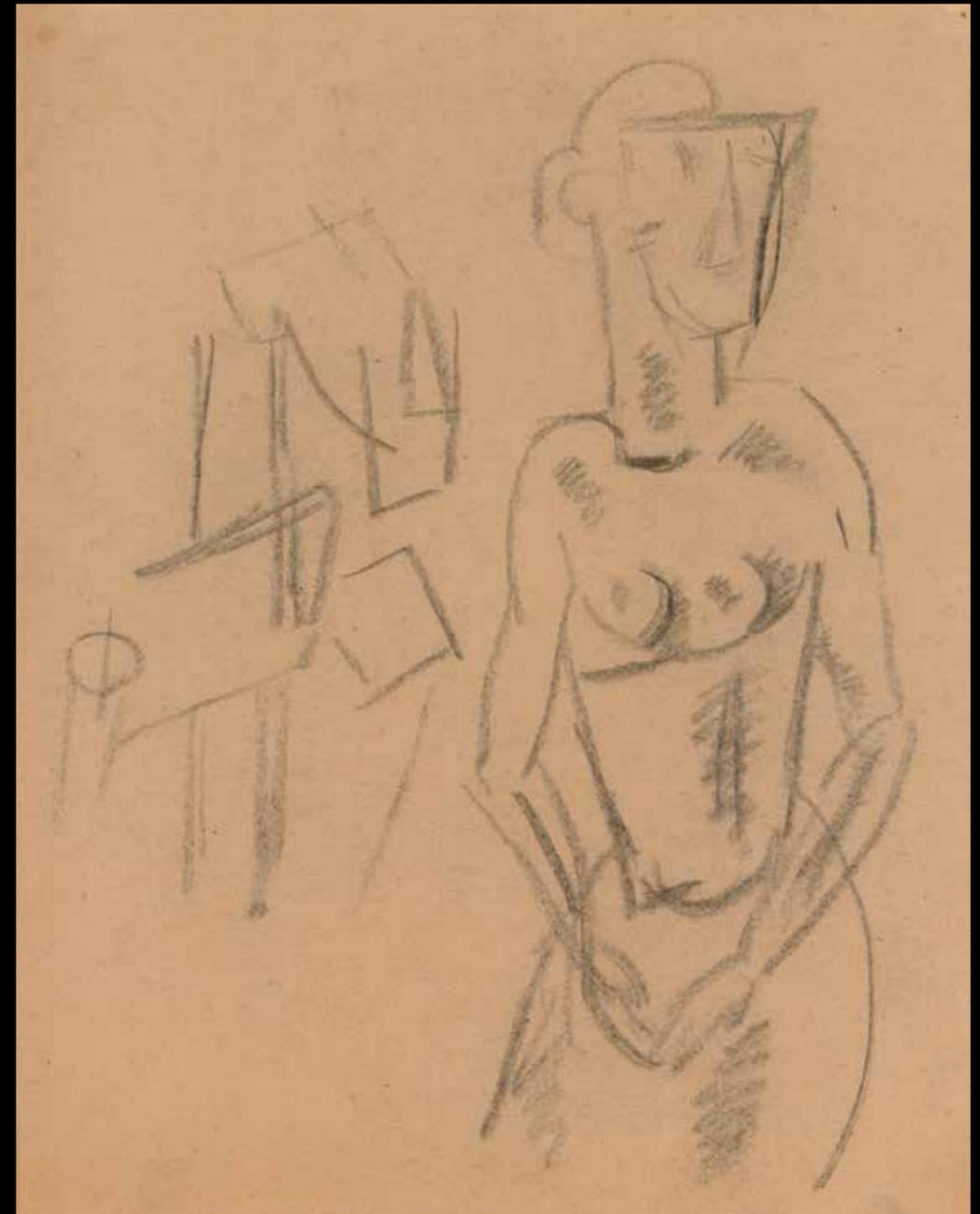
(1889-1927)

Cubist still life and female figure, c. 1914

Pencil on paper, 277 x 227 mm
With the atelier stamp numbered 20 on the reverse

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist
Acquired by Eric Estorick (Grosvenor Gallery, London) in the 1960s



OTTO GUTFREUND

(1889-1927)

Cubist bust, c. 1914

Pencil on paper, 285 x 222 mm
With the atelier stamp numbered 40 on the reverse
A hand-written draft of a letter to Alfred Flechtheim on the reverse

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist
Acquired by Eric Estorick (Grosvenor Gallery, London) in the 1960s



KARL SCHMIDT-ROTTLUFF

(1884-1976)

Crouching female nude, c. 1910/1911

Chalk on brown paper, 330 x 430 mm
Signed S. Rottluff upper left

PROVENANCE

Private collection

The authenticity and dating of this work has been confirmed by Prof. Hermann Gerlinger, Würzburg.

In 1903 Schmidt-Rottluff, Heckel and Kirchner established the artists group *Die Brücke* in Dresden, which together with *Der blaue Reiter* laid the foundation for expressionism. In the program that Kirchner drafted and set in woodcut, their ambition is clear: 'Everyone who with directness and authenticity conveys that which drives them to create belongs to us.' Under the influence of the fauves and Van Gogh, these young painters – who had all studied architecture – strove for large, simple forms that they summarized in planes. The sculptures from Africa and the South Seas that Kirchner had come across in Dresden's ethnographic museum in 1904, had a decisive influence. The far-reaching stylization often comes close to simple cubism and also harks back to practices from the applied arts. Schmidt-Rottluff works stricter than his friends, with monumental results evocative of rough sculptures. He makes honest images of both nudes, without narrative or lyrical ulterior motives. The model is not in a typical studio-pose. Indeed, the nude-in-motion – in a real or imagined landscape – was a leitmotif of *Die Brücke* artists from the very outset. The break with the elegant but static figure leads to freer expression. The line only preserves the essence of the bodies, transforms them into intense signs. The aim is to create tangible nearby symbols.



ERICH HECKEL

(1883-1970)

Sleeper (Schlafende), 1922

Reed pen on paper, 630 x 500 mm

Signed and dated *Erich Heckel 22* lower left and titled *Schlafende* lower right

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Spain

In 1903 Schmidt-Rottluff, Heckel and Kirchner establishes the artists group Die Brücke in Dresden, which together with Der blaue Reiter laid the foundation for expressionism. In the program that Kirchner drafts and sets in woodcut, their ambition is clear: 'Everyone who with directness and authenticity conveys that which drives them to create belongs to us.' Under the influence of the fauves and Van Gogh, these young painters – who had all studied architecture – strive for large, simple forms that they compose in planes. The sculptures from Africa and the South Seas that Kirchner had come across at the ethnographic museum in Dresden in 1904, has a decisive influence. The far-reaching stylization often comes close to simple cubism and also harks back to practices from the applied arts. – While his friends remain fascinated with Van Gogh, Heckel returns to a more realistic approach. And it is not only in his landscapes that his planes accrue more atmosphere. In his nudes and intimate scenes, as well, he tends more to idyll than do his friends. In this drawing the tendency is more pronounced than in the heyday of expressionism. The diagonals and sharp angles are less emphatic than in the early work; peace instead of dynamics. The décor and the protagonists are more elaborated, less schematically confrontational or monumental. Space becomes reduced to the two dimensions of the page, but without destroying the motif. The chief aim remains the subjective, poetic evocation of a tender moment. After four years of war, the penchant for melancholy is not exactly surprising or exceptional.



LUDWIG MEIDNER

(1884-1966)

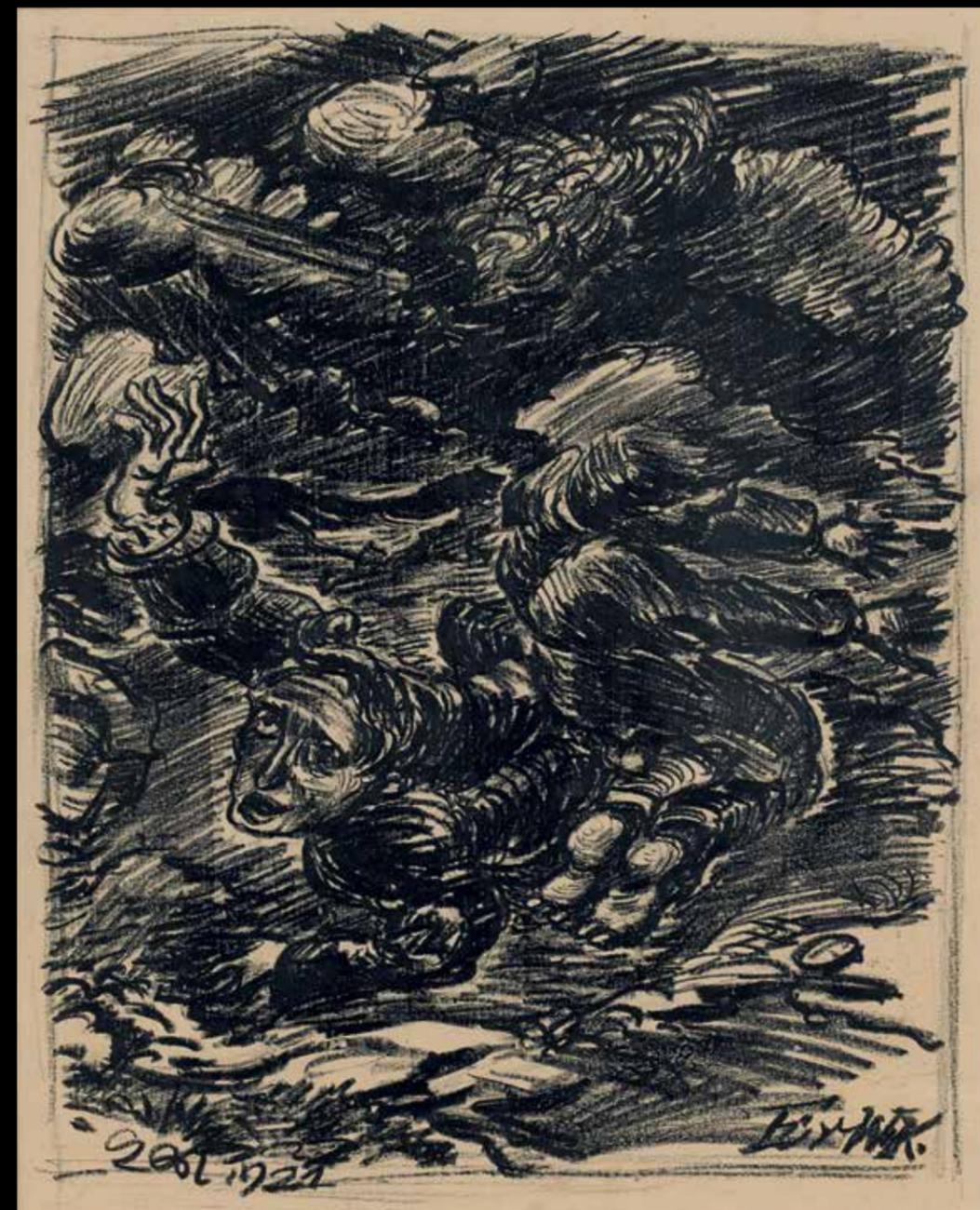
Two ecstatics in an apocalyptic landscape, 1921

Black chalk on Chamois velin with watermark
Progress, 660 x 510 mm.
Signed with the artist's monogram and dated
LM 1921, and inscribed *Für W.K.* (to the piano
player Walter Kämpfer)

PROVENANCE

Galerie Elke und Werner Zimmer, Düsseldorf
Private collection, Hessen

The work of Ludwig Meidner stands under the sign of the Apocalypse. In the background play his Jewish origins and his interest in Christendom. More important still is his critical stance against war and total alienation, seen by him as modern capitalism's principal products. From 1911 Meidner is part of the Berlin avant-garde, and actively involved with literary and artistic expressionism. With like-minded artists, in 1912 he founds the group *Die Pathetiker*, referring to the vitalist notion of 'pathos' as developed by Nietzsche in his writings. He makes fierce portraits and many landscapes – urban or rural, usually during or after a large-scale catastrophe. He paints social crises and conflicts like volcanic eruptions, in an expressionist visual language that is influenced by futurism and contains echoes of the baroque. After the November 1918 Revolution he enlists in the artists-groups *Arbeitsrat für Kunst* and the *Novembergruppe*. It seems not too far-fetched to see a memory of the revolution's defeat in this picture of calamity, as well as a foreboding of the Fascist nightmare to come. Even with the courage of despair, the figures can no longer escape the menace encroaching from all sides.



Self portrait, 1916

Pencil on postcard, 142 x 91mm
Signed upper right and dated: *DIX 16*
On the reverse autograph letter signed of 23
March 1916, addressed to Lily Schultz

PROVENANCE

Lily Schultz, Starnberg
Private collection

Will be included in the forthcoming catalogue
raisonné of the drawings and watercolours
being prepared by Dr. Ulrike Lorenz.

Originally Dix works in a 'veristic' style, after examples from the Northern Renaissance. He shifts in a direction of expressionism, while also being influenced by Van Gogh and the futurists. In 1914 he volunteers for military service and sees action at the front throughout the war. He sketches many war scenes, alternating between a realistic and a cubo-futuristic style. Dix will often hark back to his experiences in the trenches, in various works up to the 1930s. Here we especially point to the monumental painting *The Trench* (1921-23), bulging with deformed and mutilated corpses, and as well *Der Krieg* (1924), a suite of fifty apocalyptic etchings. About this, Dix writes: 'War is something so animal-like: hunger, lice, slime, these crazy sounds ... War was something horrible, but nonetheless something powerful ... Under no circumstances could I miss it! It is necessary to see people in this unchained condition in order to know something about man.' – Here Dix draws himself as an attentive, slightly suspicious spectator. The shading in back- and foregrounds makes clear that any calm is just sham; the cabal of the next attack can unleash at any moment and then the trench again turns into a living hell. If sketching is rightly associated with the elusiveness of the moment, then war seen from the front – where life is at its most tenuous – is a most suitable context for it.



GEORGE GROSZ

(1893-1959)

Tato & May, 1926

Watercolor and pen and India ink on paper
507 x 365 mm.

Signed Grosz lower right; numbered, titled and dated N° 16/Tato & May/ 28 Juni 1926 lower left, with George Grosz estate stamp on the reverse

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist
Galerie Nierendorf, Berlin
The Neo Art Centre, London
Forum Gallery, New York
La Boetie Inc., New York
James Kirkman, London
Private collection

LITERATURE

Frankfurter Illustrierte Zeitung, 28 June 1926, ill.

EXHIBITED

New York, DC Moore Gallery, *Selected European Works on Paper*, 1996

The summary style whereby Grosz first sets down dynamic figures – often caught at different moments of their movement – does not just illustrate the tempo of the metropolis. This style slices through the backcloth of the world stage like a razor, from top to bottom, and lays bare ‘backstage and wings’ in all their horror. And the caricature only gets tougher. For those who still see officers or bankers as human, he draws them as the pigs they are. Grosz adds fuel to the fire of social warfare. – The fascination that Grosz had as a child for the circus never completely left him. During a longer stay in Paris he visited the Cirque Medrano and the Cirque Fratellini (among others), and presumably saw both jugglers and drew them at work there. Grosz was not the only avant-garde artist to appreciate the circus as an authentic amusement, embedded in a ‘physical’ tradition. – His friend Carl Einstein writes in 1926 (!) how the circus inspired Grosz in a moral sense: ‘In the circus a remnant of handicraft purity was still alive, there the acrobats still tried to free themselves of the laws of gravitation in an honest way, with a hundred percent risk of getting killed. That was more serious, more skillful than all that whining idealism. A vague or incomplete performance had death as a paycheck. From these artists Grosz learned to see through today’s great swindle in a puritanical way. Many of his drawings charm precisely by dint of this ethical clairvoyance.’ In around 1926 Grosz comes under the influence of constructivism, of Carrà and de Chirico, and starts making effective images in another way. The human figure becomes a collective type, a geometric standard-model. What matters for Grosz, however, is not a ‘modern classicism’ but a social-critical toolkit to take-on an enemy that occupies nearly the whole terrain. – The jugglers Tato and May certainly made a hit with Grosz with their machine-like movements, and that’s why they get center-stage and a sort of dreamy look – hand servants of childlike illusion, far removed from the social horror.



FRANS MASEREEL

(1889-1972)

Carriage, 1919

Ink on paper, laid down by the artist on cardboard, 360 x 350 mm
Signed and dated FM 19; signed and titled on verso

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Ghent

Frans Masereel is the most important Belgian graphic artist of his generation. He travels widely, settles in Paris in 1911 and then emigrates to Switzerland during the First World War. His cosmopolitan leitmotif and socially critical stance are at home within the circle of revolutionaries and pacifists of which he is part. He makes effective images, in the form of pointed ink drawings or, more expressively, in black-and-white woodcuts. His graphic novels start appearing in 1917, and attain great international success. He will be much in demand throughout the 1920s as a book illustrator. Often under the pressure of deadlines for his magazine work, Masereel develops a crisp black-and-white style with powerful images surrounded by a few functional details of décor and accessories. His execution of line will become even sharper and more schematic, but his unique style is already essentially present here. The hand pulling the woman in the carriage suffices to recognize the insolent bourgeois who after work scours the street looking for some extramarital pleasure. And if her social position imposes this employ, the woman adopts no submissive attitude, and steps into the carriage with self-assurance. Masereel is not drawing any moralizing critique of prostitution, he shows it as an aspect of class-based society.



FRANS MASEREEL

(1889-1972)

Untitled, drawing for first illustration of *Fairfax*, 1922

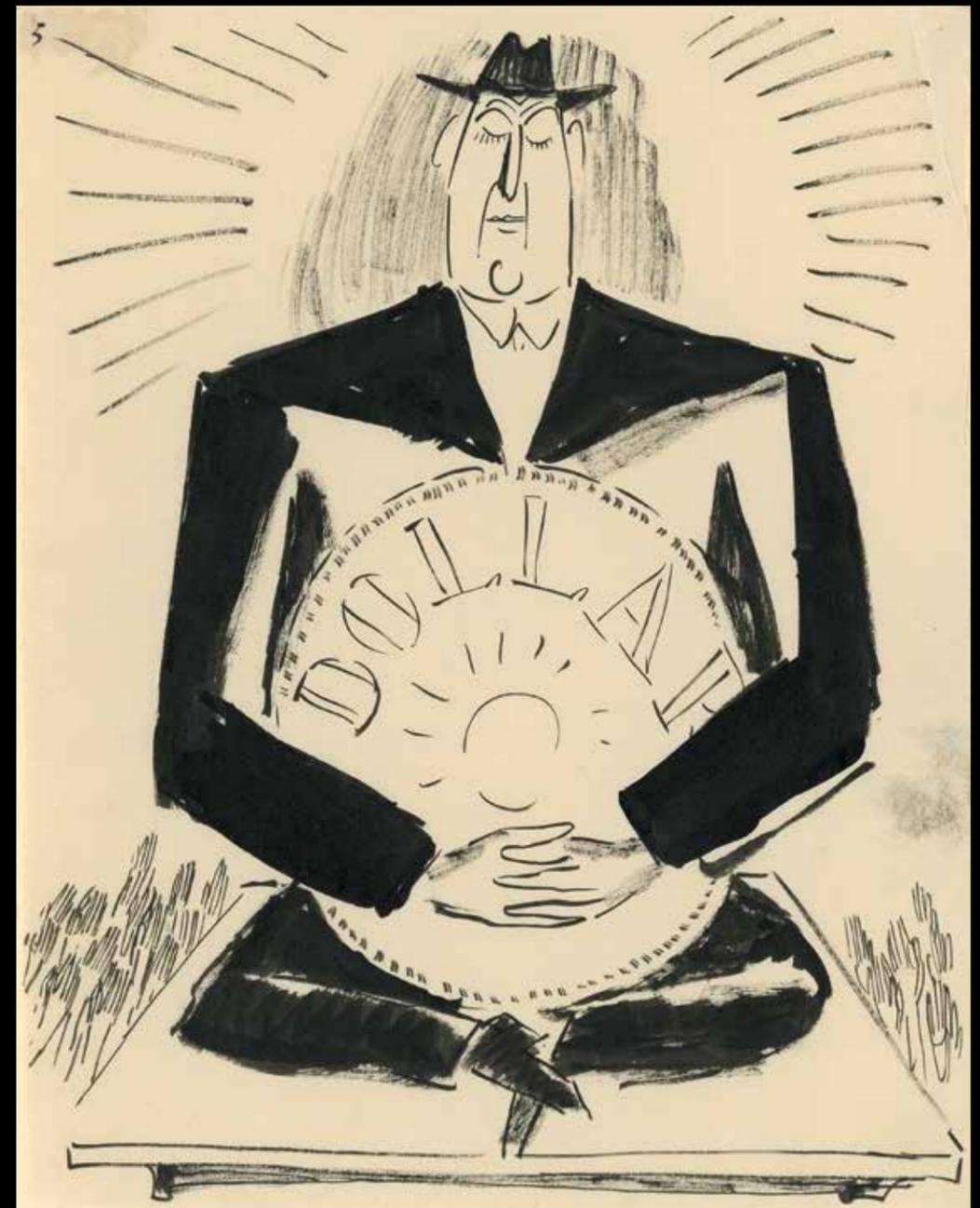
Ink on tracing paper, 270 x 215 mm
Signed *Frans Masereel* lower right

Together with: Sternheim, Carl., *Fairfax*. Berlin: Galerie Flechtheim, 1922. – 1 of 10 numbered copies (this being no.4) of the de-luxe edition on laid paper with an original signed drawing by Masereel and ten signed original lithographs. Blue original morocco with gilt lettering, gilt fillet borders on both boards, gilt-tooled signet of the Galerie Flechtheim on rear board and gilt edges.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Germany

Frans Masereel is the most important Belgian graphic artist of his generation. He travels widely, settles in Paris in 1911 and then emigrates to Switzerland during the First World War. His cosmopolitan leitmotif and socially critical stance are at home within the circle of revolutionaries and pacifists of which he is part. He makes effective images, in the form of pointed ink drawings or, more expressively, in black-and-white woodcuts. His graphic novels start appearing in 1917, and attain great international success. He is much in demand throughout the 1920s as book illustrator. The satire *Fairfax* by Carl Sternheim (1878-1942) tells the tale of a bored American arms manufacturer who, along with his daughter, sets out on a European tour. They land in the middle of turbulent social and political situations, with grotesque consequences, as when this exemplary capitalist gets involved with a communist uprising. – Sternheim himself was all praise for Masereel's caricatural illustrations for *Fairfax*, as here in the review *Der Querschnitt*: 'I'm glad that Masereel decided to illustrate *Fairfax*. Whereas the book wasn't going to earn eternal praise by its own qualities, it is thanks to Masereel's images that it will have a future life. Get a good look at each of the images, but especially the one with the fat mare pissing all over the president, with everybody watching (...) I can assure you that as a German I have suffered a lot lately and went through hard times, but Masereel's great images for *Fairfax* have persuaded me again of the fact that sometimes life can be really nice.'



PAUL KLEE

(1879-1940)

Masks (Masken), 1922

Pen and brown ink on paper laid down on artist's mount

Image: 159 x 250 mm

Signed KLEE upper left, dated 1922 8/12; dated and titled 1922/77 Masken on the artist's mount

PROVENANCE

Lily Klee, Bern (1940-1946)

Klee-Gesellschaft, Bern (1946-1950)

Galerie Rosengart, Lucerne (1950)

Carl Genzell, Sweden

EXHIBITED

Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *Carl Gemzells*

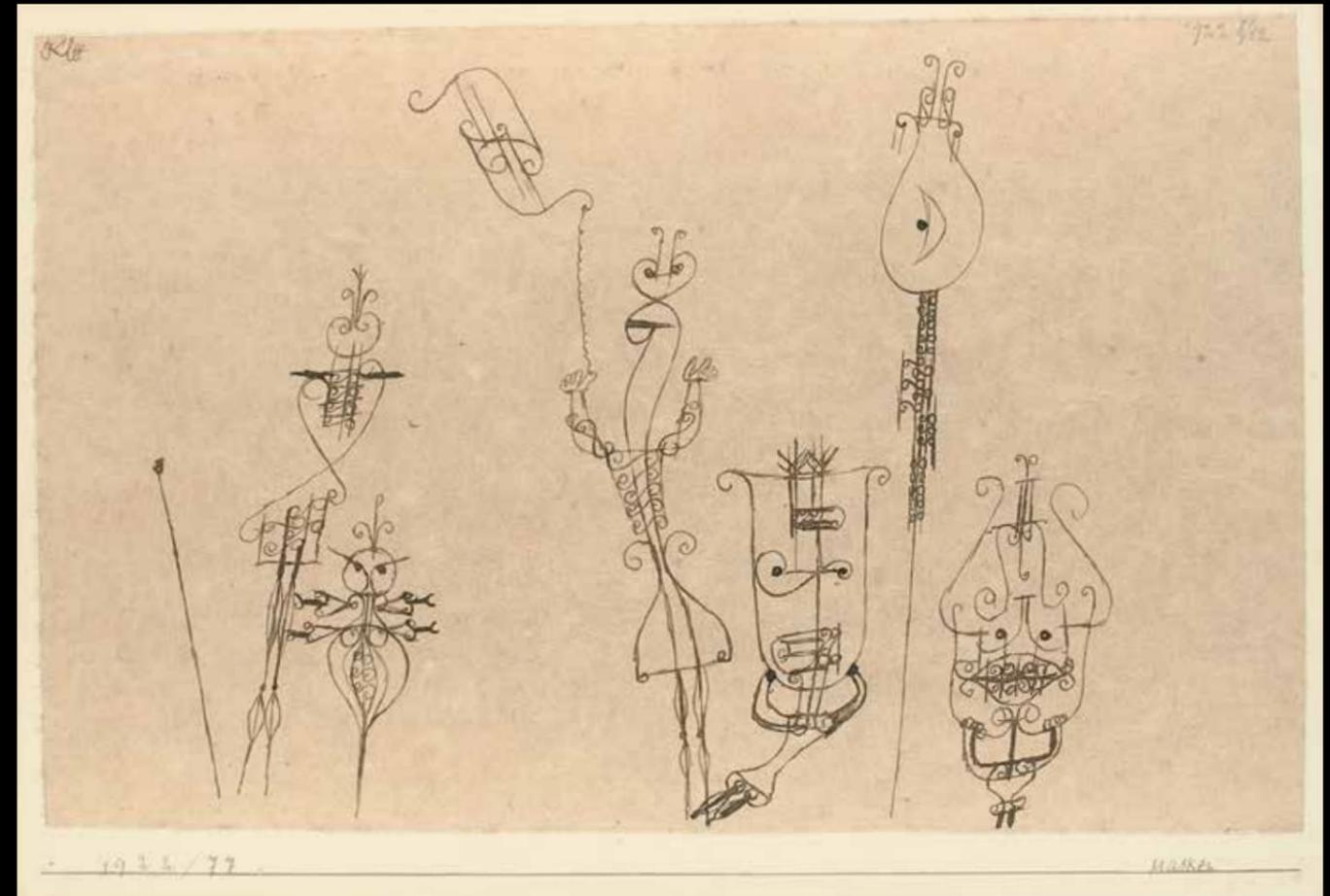
Samling, 1996, p. 28 (illustrated p.29)

LITERATURE

Will Grohmann, *Paul Klee. Handzeichnungen 1921-1930*. Postdam & Berlin, 1934, no. 11

The Paul Klee Foundation (ed.), *Paul Klee, Catalogue raisonné, Vol. III, 1919-1932*, Bern, 1999, no. 2901, p. 411, illustrated

As with many of Klee's works, upon first view this drawing looks like a return to childhood years, and leaves us with an innocent and unaffected impression. Looking closer, we see refinement in the way he handles motifs and techniques in order to evoke a childlike lack of inhibition, while at the same time primarily using these for systematic artistic experimentation. The complexity of Klee's work is irreducible because he had discovered a well – the imagination – from which he could always draw for continuing innovation. (This is also why his influence was so far-reaching, particularly on American post-war art). While so-many artists had to rely upon repetition, on a trademark, Klee stands out by being able to create (and with the simplest of means) not only images but entire worlds. The influence of Kubin and Ensor (masks!) and the artist's particular 'processing' of cubism, result in a virtuoso rendering of line. Klee never lapses into simplistic symbolism but entices us in a magical way through his high degree of empathy with beings and things. He is an inventor. His receptivity for the non-rational, the non-calculated, goes beyond description, beyond impressionism and symbolism, back to romanticism. – Just like children love dolls and puppets, Klee often puts puppet-people at center stage, figures that stand for play and caprice, imaginary beings not subservient to the laws of nature, that do not lapse into repetition, that do avert death. Klee's humor is not caricatural; it emerges out of the contrast between daydream and normal perception. His attempts to delve into unexplored visual levels of consciousness – including his use of 'primitive' visual language – are linked to a pursuit of freedom that stretches beyond artistic innovation. Really new images compete with existing ones, demonstrating reality's mutability. 'With Klee, form is a springboard for change. Each form is only preliminary, a prelude to the unforeseen.' (Carl Einstein)



WASSILY KANDINSKY

(1866-1944)

Drawing for *Etching II*, 1916

Pen and India ink on paper, 248 x 190 mm
Signed with the monogram and dated 16 lower
left

PROVENANCE

Gummesons Konsthandel, Stockholm
Dr. Sven Junghagen, Sweden (acquired from the
above in 1936)
Private collection, Sweden

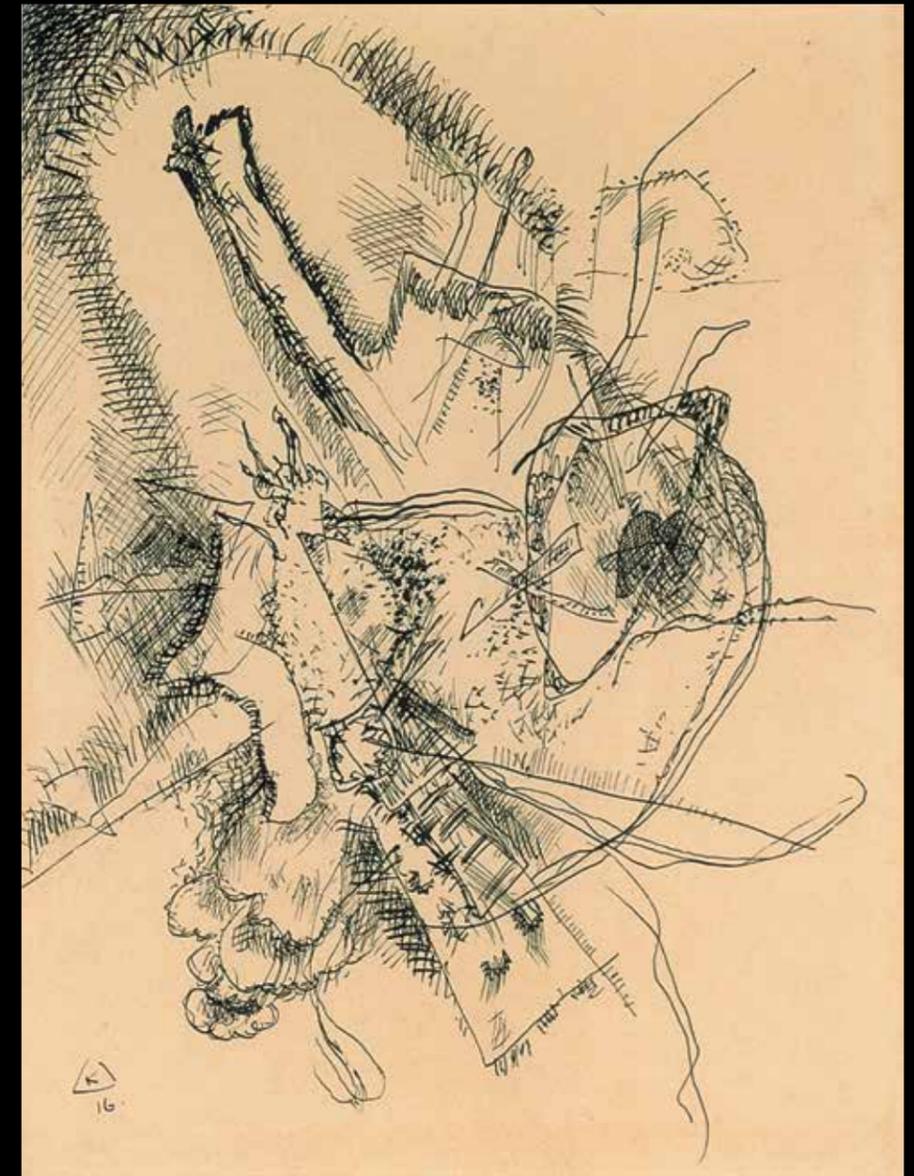
EXHIBITED

Stockholm, Gummesons Konsthandel, *Kandinsky:
Oljemålningar och Grafik*, 1916
Stockholm, Nationalmuseum: *Paris 1932- 10
Nationer, 24 Konstnärer*, 1932, no. 85

LITERATURE

V. Endicott Barnett: *Kandinsky Drawings, Catalogue
Raisonné*, Individual Drawings, vol. I. London:
Philip Wilson, 2006. no. 387 (illustrated p. 196)

As early as 1916 Kandinsky was already making art not determined by a casual motif but rather out of essential internal processes. In the abstract work the center of gravity is shifted inwards, the object fragments, is merely pretext. The dramatic, near-explosive image is result of the artist's sheer subjectivity, uninhibited by outward appearances. The dynamic is immediately bound up with the tensions of an inner gaze, one that ascetically has turned away from reality and which near-compulsively expresses itself in new images. Here still lyrical, and improvising – prior to his work coming under the influence of Malevitch and the constructivists and taking on a more severe, geometrical character. For Kandinsky, art was the result of a sort of mind expansion. The artist creates spiritualized images that are related to absolute music, music that has no 'subject' per se; it is non-representational. These compositions, 'extracted' from reality, may be filled-in by the viewer with his own associations which perhaps do not wholly coincide with those of the artist.



JULES SCHMALZIGAUG

(1882-1917)

38 >

Figure sketches, 1916-1917

16 drawings mounted in one frame, pen and ink on paper, each 90 x 60 mm
Each drawing signed with estate of the artist stamp

Jules Schmalzigaug departs Paris in 1912 for Venice, and he remains there up to the outbreak of WWI. He meets young, avant-garde colleagues who take the revolutionary futurists as their example. The young artist frees himself from the influence of the Nabis and the fauves, and enthusiastically embraces the new, utterly dynamic style that is in its ascent. He becomes the only Belgian futurist painter to make a significant contribution to the movement. In 1914 he takes part in the first large international exhibition of futurism, at Rome's Galleria Sprovieri. With the outbreak of war, Schmalzigaug returns to his native Antwerp, and shortly thereafter moves to The Hague in neutral Holland. And as for the great plans and promises of the avant-garde milieu that he had empathized with and worked for in Italy, he now had to pursue this vision on his own. Schmalzigaug does this in part through noting down his precepts on color and light under the title *La Panchromie*. As a painter he continues his quest, and in his last works attempts to break free from futurist formulations. He brings more volume and constructed forms to his work; now the dynamic is created through a cubist fragmentation of space around a powerful center. As in the futurist work, the figure is still driven by the enveloping 'ambience', but the rhythm of the lines of energy that bind the internal forces of things and beings, looks calmer. Where in his paintings he attempts to achieve a global effect by glittering sections, half-tones and white fragments, in his drawings the artist's focus is on the relationship between fields of shadow and light, on contrasts and similarities.



GEORGES VANTONGERLOO

(1886-1965)

Untitled (flat bottom boat), 1915

Pencil and wash on paper, two sheets, one
double-sided, each 355 x 262 mm
All three signed and dated *G.Vantongerloo 1915*
bottom right

At the outbreak of World War I, Georges Vantongerloo is already known as a sculptor of talent. He primarily makes realistic portraits and exhibits in salons. Reviews of his work praise his true-to-life vision. In October 1914 he flees to The Netherlands. Here he rapidly returns to work and takes part in exhibitions with other exiled Belgians, also comes into contact with new artistic movements. In The Hague he meets the Belgian futurist Jules Schmalzigaug; he now begins to paint, mainly figure-studies whose elaboration leans toward Fauvism. These paintings, with their small floating color-planes against a monochrome background, already point the way towards the abstractive approach that he will employ from 1917. These three sketches of a boat could be preparatory drawings for a sculpture, illustrating how for the sculptor Vantongerloo, as well, the subject serves mainly as a starting point for experimentation. The form-studies show how Vantongerloo distances himself from his earlier academic style; representation is no longer the aim. By choosing a boat as motif – never at standstill, the wind playing in the sails – he clearly marks his will to express movement, just as around the same time he also aspires to resolve the static mass of realistic sculpture. The evolution towards autonomous forms, here still intuitive shall soon speedily culminate in a radically constructive approach.





S. Vantongerloo 1915



S. Vantongerloo 1915

GEORGES VANTONGERLOO

(1886-1965)

Study for *Construction dans la sphère (ocno 2)*, 1917/1918

Pencil on paper, 297 x 200 mm

PROVENANCE

Max Bill, Switzerland
Angela Thomas-Bill, Switzerland

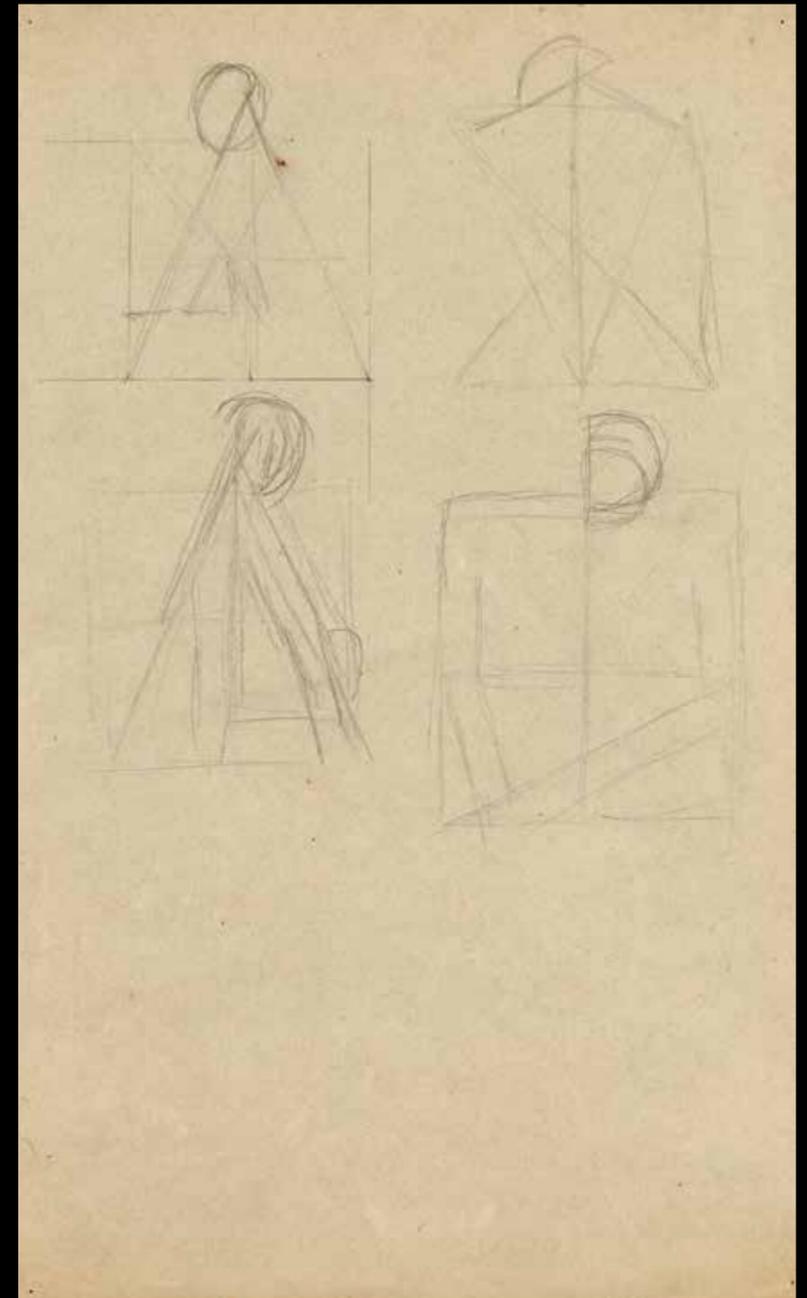
EXHIBITED

Antwerp, Galerie Ronny Van de Velde, *Georges Vantongerloo*, 1997

LITERATURE

Angela Thomas, *Denkbilder, Materialien zur Entwicklung von Georges Vantongerloo*. Düsseldorf: Edition Marzona, 1987, p. 79 ill.
Jan Ceuleers, *Georges Vantongerloo*, Antwerp: Ronny Van de Velde, 1997, p.197 ill.

Despite certain stirrings in the early work, Vantongerloo's transition to abstraction in 1917-1918 is no gradual process; it has more the nature of a conversion. This transition is paired with a sudden and profound change on many levels. The supplier of salon art becomes an avant-gardist, from a narrow artistic vision he rapidly adopts a comprehensive philosophical-religious frame of reference. Abstraction frees him from the dead end he was stuck in; his doubt transforms into great assuredness. At the beginning of what will turn out to be a new artistic career, his encounters with like-minded artists of De Stijl will play a great role. Vantongerloo shares their utopian aspirations for a complete ethical and aesthetic renewal, and publishes in their review. The great energy released through his radical turnabout attests to his ultra-quick development into a pioneer of modern sculpture. – This drawing is a preparatory sketch for *Construction dans la sphère (ocno 5)*, a sculpture described in a sphere. The sketch illustrates the very earliest stage; the four abstracted side-views do indeed show a grid of triangles and squares being outlined, but not yet the inscribed and circumscribed circles. However summary it may be, the drawing demonstrates how Vantongerloo works out a geometric scheme before sculpting, so that it may fit in the ideal world of geometric forms. In his quest for a universal art based on mathematical laws, De Stijl's sole sculptor helps forge the foundation of modernism. He is one of the few Belgian artists to rightly merit an important place in the history of modern art.



JOZEF PEETERS

(1895-1960)

Versailles, 1921

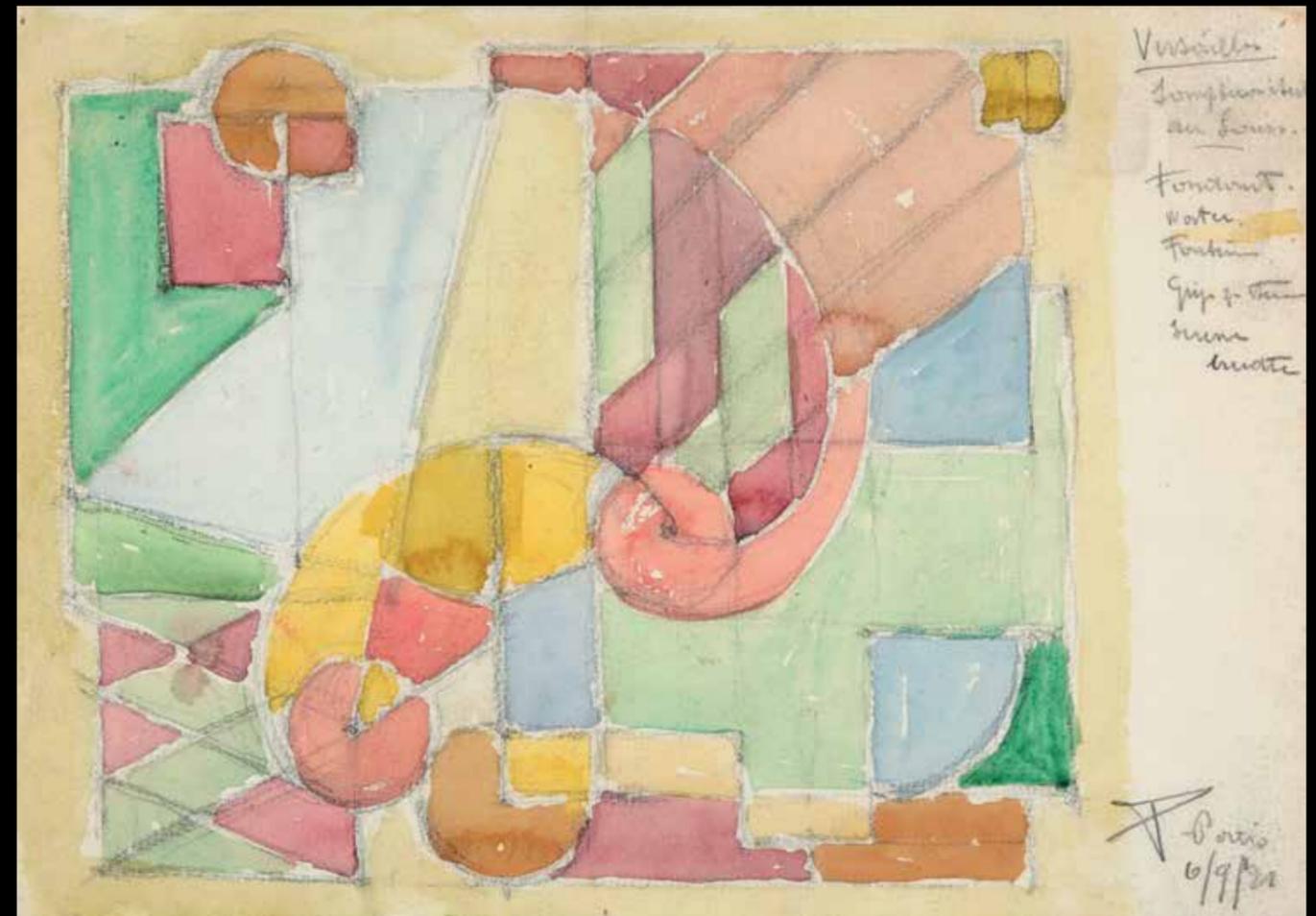
Watercolor and pencil on paper, 165 x 236 mm
Signed with the monogram and dated P. Paris
6/9/21

Annotated: 'Versailles somptuositeit ... Fondant
Water Fontainen Grijs ... serene breedte'

LITERATURE

Jozef Peeters 1895-1960. Antwerpen: Internationaal
Cultureel Centrum, 1978. Cat. nr. 202

Jozef Peeters is not only one of Belgium's most prominent modernist artists; during the pioneer years he is also an indefatigable champion for 'the new art'. He organizes congresses, publishes the reviews *Het Overzicht* and *De Driehoek*, and is very active in the European network of constructivists then taking shape. He spends the summer of 1921 in Paris, and meets like-minded artists like Mondriaan, Marthe Donas, Gleizes, Léger and Archipenko. *Versailles* belongs to a series of drawings that he brings back from this Parisian sojourn. Under the influence of De Stijl and Kandinsky, starting in 1918 Peeters evolves towards a form of 'pure abstraction'. In 1920 he shows his first geometric-abstract paintings. During his stay in Paris he comes to understand the difference of his approach to that of other abstract artists. About Mondriaan, he is critical: '(...) when we consider the whole work and always come across the same imaging principle, based on the horizontal and the vertical, this manner of approach becomes a system; we, on the other hand, opt for the use of any geometric-constructive principle.' In December 1921 Peeters publishes the programmatic text *Gemeenschapskunst*. This 'community art' differs from all -isms because it springs from the 'self' of the free artist, 'a self that owes its existence to the community.' This watercolor illustrates how Peeters departs from reality to arrive at a two-dimensional composition. Aside from vertical and horizontal lines, he uses circle and triangle to divide the sheet into planes that he colors-in with a varied palette. The handwritten comments next to the watercolor, like 'sumptuousness' and 'serene breadth' reveal the nuanced background of his work, and at the same time explain its power of attraction.



FELIX DE BOECK

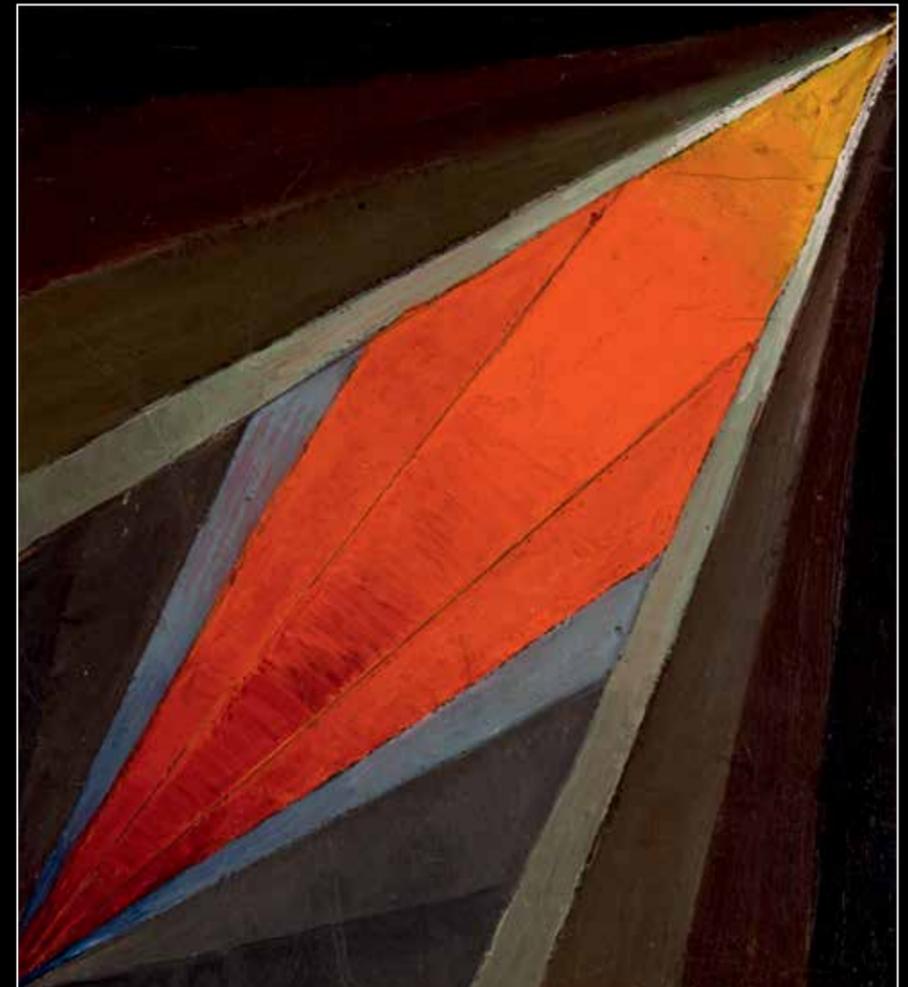
(1898-1995)

Vertigo (Duizelingen — Le vertige), 1920

Oil on panel, 200 x 185 mm
Signed *Felix*
On verso *Dans*, oil on panel

To be included in the forthcoming catalogue
raisonné of the paintings of Felix De Boeck

Felix De Boeck is a figure apart in Belgian abstract art. Religion and a near cosmic closeness to nature play a great role in this painter's life and work. By virtue of his more intuitive approach, he sets himself off from the city-based fraction of the avant-garde who often think of their work as demonstrations of theoretical propositions. De Boeck lives in rural isolation, but he does have contact with other artists who consider his evolution as both example and incentive. Originally influenced by fauvism, De Boeck develops towards a dynamic expressionism and then towards a resolutely abstract visual language. With pure colors and clean execution of line, he creates compositions with dissonances that break through the harmony, evoke tension and movement. *Vertigo* is a preliminary study for a large-format work. It belongs to a series of works where the artist uses diagonals to create space and perspective. The brightly colored accents of other paintings are here flattened-out to a large central plane, burning like a many-sided sun.



HANS RICHTER

(1888-1976)

Street (Strasse), 1914

Ink and gouache on paper, 295 x 200 mm
Signed and dated 14

PROVENANCE

Studio of the artist, Connecticut, U.S.A, inv.no.855
Sale Artcurial, Paris, *Hommage à Hans Richter*,
2008, no.7

EXHIBITED

Berlin, Akademie der Künste; Zürich, Kunsthaus;
München, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus,
Hans Richter, 1982, p. 34
New York, Salander-O'Reilly Galleries

The early work of Hans Richter is influenced by expressionism and cubism, as is clearly apparent in the open-closed perspective of *Strasse*. He frequents the circles around the Berlin review *Die Aktion*, founded by Franz Pfemfert. *Die Aktion* was a champion of the political and artistic avant-garde, and in 1914 the journal sides against the war. After his first exhibition in Munich, Richter crosses the border into Switzerland and as had been agreed two years previous, on September 15, 1916, at three in the afternoon at Café de la Terrasse in Zurich, he meets his friends Ferdinand Hardekopf and Albert Ehrenstein, poets who had also fled from Germany and the war. He quickly becomes a member of the group that had launched dada only shortly before. His first works in exile are marked by flowing forms, as though in response to the horrors of war he wished to summon up an atmosphere of innocence. In *Africa*, the more-or-less abstract elements – woman's head, fauna and flora – make for a near-idyllic moment. Furthermore, Richter comes under the influence of dada's iconoclastic tendencies. He makes biting anti-war drawings for the exile-periodicals and becomes the chronicler of the refugee avant-garde in Switzerland. *Studie (Levin)* is probably a portrait of the German author Eugen Lewin-Dorsch. It is more than a portrait of someone who offers vivid commentary upon his reading; it captures the atmosphere where plans to unhinge the world were forged around café tables. With his *Dada Köpfe*, Richter makes anti-portraits while at the same time experimenting with simple contrasts between white and black planes, between full and empty sections. He starts working more freely, away from cubism, in the direction of abstraction and more-and-more focused on rhythm. The abstract films that he makes at the beginning of the 1920s – driven in part by the aim giving visual expression to counterpoint – seem like a logical extension to this final phase of his pictorial work.



HANS RICHTER

(1888-1976)

Africa, 1916

Charcoal on paper, laid down on canvas,
410 x 315 mm
Signed with the artist's monogram and dated 16
in pencil

PROVENANCE

Studio Hans Richter, Locarno, inv. no. 616
Sale Artcurial, Paris, *Hommage à Hans Richter*,
2008, no.27

LITERATURE

Hans Richter—Dada Zeichnungen 1918. Rome:
Galleria Il Segno in collaboration with the
Deutsche Bibliothek Rome, Goethe Institute,
1969, no.2



HANS RICHTER

(1888-1976)

45

Study for portrait of Lewin-Dorsch (Studie Levin), 1916

Blue ink on paper with letterhead of Hôtel de
l'Épée, Zürich, 265 x 215 mm

Signed with the artist's monogram and dated 16,
titled *Studie Levin*

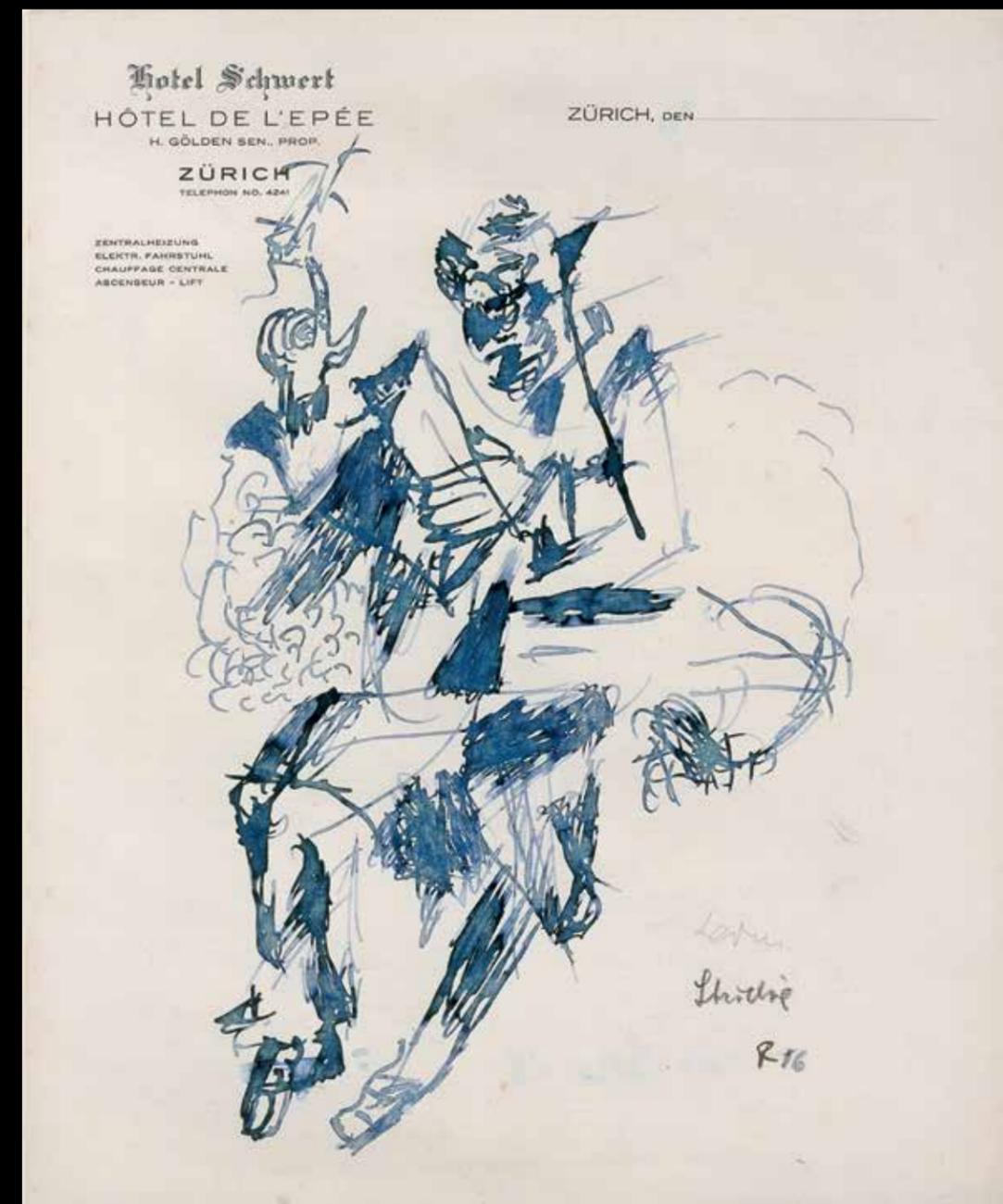
PROVENANCE

Studio of the artist, Connecticut, U.S.A, inv.
no.860

Sale Artcurial, Paris, *Hommage à Hans Richter*,
2008, no.12

EXHIBITED

New York, Salander-O'Reilly Galleries



HANS RICHTER

(1888-1976)

Dada head or Orator (*Dada Kopf or Redner*), 1918

Linocut with gouache on paper, 240 x 175 mm
Signed with the artist's monogram, titled and
dated 18

PROVENANCE

Studio Hans Richter, Locarno, inv. no. 618
Sale Artcurial, Paris, *Hommage à Hans Richter*,
2008, no.18

EXHIBITED

Berlin, Akademie der Künste; Zürich, Kunsthaus;
München, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus,
Hans Richter, 1982, Hans Richter, p. 92
Frankfurt am Main, Deutsches Filmmuseum,
Hans Richter, Malerei und Film, 1989, no. 43, ill. p.66
Valencia & Iowa, Hans Richter Retrospective,
1998

LITERATURE

Hans Richter, Opera Grafica dal 1902 al 1969. Pollenza-
Macerata: La Nuova Foglia, 1976 p. 276 ill.



TRISTAN TZARA

(1896-1963)

Composition of automatic drawings, c. 1920

About fifty drawings forming a composition, blue and brown pen and ink on supple pink cardboard, double sided, 318 x 238 mm.

PROVENANCE

Collection Belfond, France

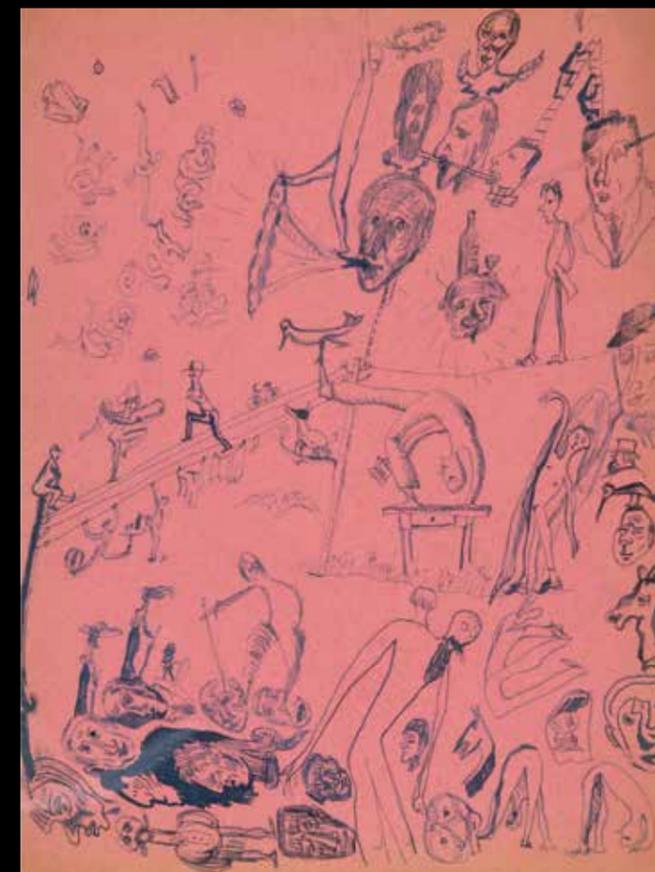
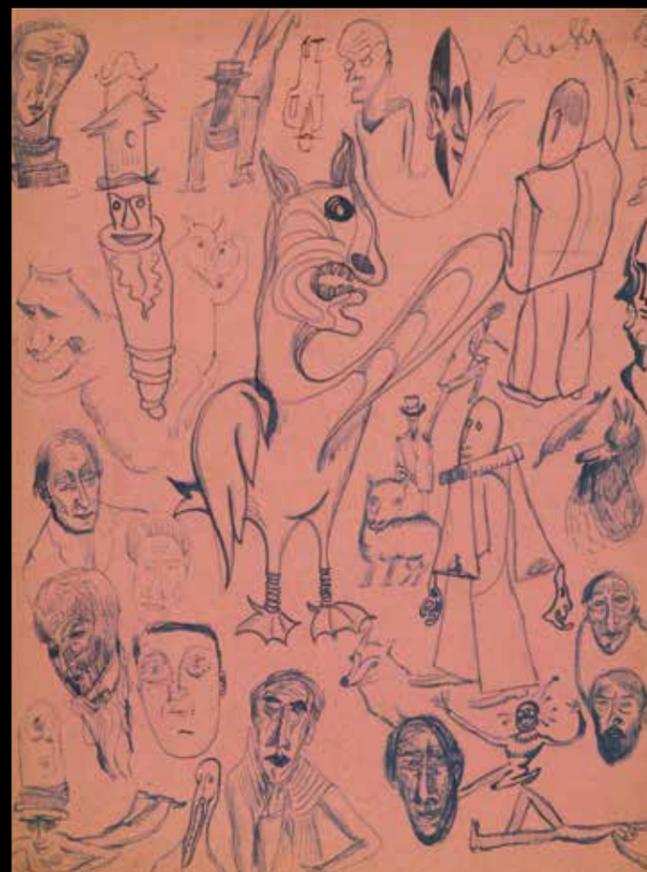
EXHIBITED

Caen, IMEC ; Lisbon, Museu Berardo ; Ixelles (Brussels), Musée communal, *L'un pour l'autre, Les Ecrivains dessinent*, 2009, no. 46 ill.

LITERATURE

Dessins d'écrivains, Paris, Éditions du Chêne, 2003, p.46 (drawing from recto) and p. 87 (drawing from verso) ill.

From the very start of the movement in 1916, Tristan Tzara is one of dada's central figures. He launches manifestos that defend the group's iconoclastic standpoints, writes poems that thoroughly undermine all conventions of verse, organizes exhibitions and forges worldwide contacts with kindred spirits. In 1920 this professional troublemaker and editor-in-chief of the review *Dada* moves to Paris and, together with André Breton & friends, organizes exhibitions that are just barely literary-artistic and give rise to much scandal. As the fire of dada in Paris extinguishes, there is a parting of the ways for Tzara and Breton. At the end of the 1920s, a few years after the start of surrealism as an organized movement, there is again talk of reconciliation. As a poet, too, Tzara appropriates certain surrealist procedures, the intentional nonsense that pillories the routine of all recognized literature disappears from his work. – The drawings, or better accumulations of drawings, anticipate *écriture automatique* and the *cadavre exquis* of the surrealists by their nervous, uncontrolled execution of line and unexpected associations. The fascination of the dadaists for images from non-European cultures certainly provides the wooden looks for many of these actors, seemingly imprisoned in as many dramas and comedies. Here, one inevitably thinks of the masks made by Marcel Janco for dadaist soirées in Zurich. Like these masks, Tzara's pathetic heads clearly reflect the absurdity and madness of the world around him. As with his *Dada Manifesto of 1918*: 'Sentimentality: at the sight of a group of men quarreling and bored, they invented the calendar and the medicament wisdom.' No doubt unintentionally, this senseless crowd is reminiscent of Ensor's carnival.



TRISTAN TZARA

(1896-1963)

Composition of automatic drawings, c. 1920

About sixty drawings forming a composition, blue and brown pen and ink on supple pink cardboard, double sided, 318 x 238 mm.

PROVENANCE

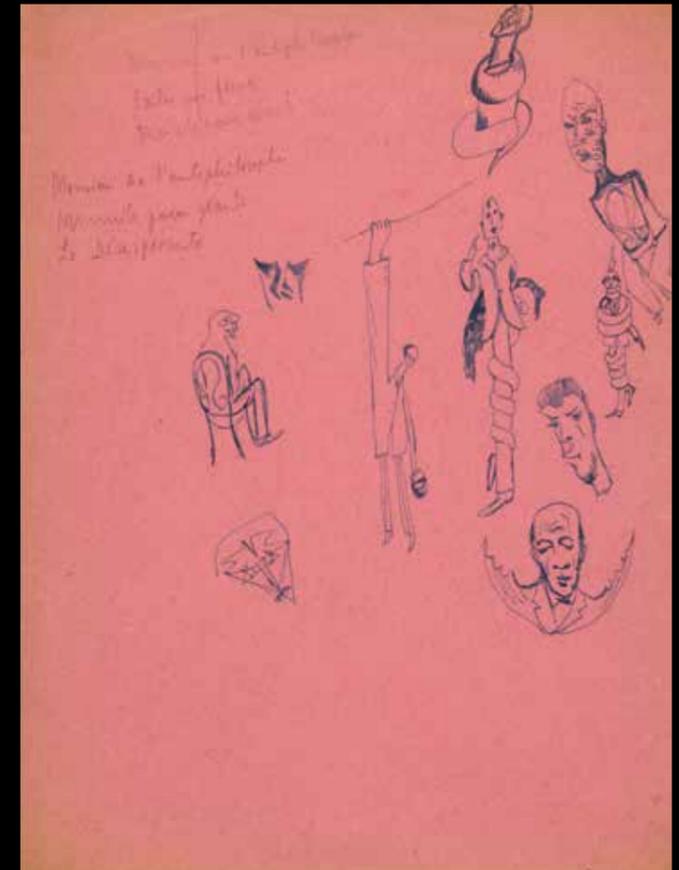
Collection Belfond, France

EXHIBITED

Caen, IMEC ; Lisbon, Museu Berardo ; Ixelles (Brussels), Musée communal, *L'un pour l'autre, Les Ecrivains dessinent*, 2009, no. 46 ill. (drawing from verso)

LITERATURE

Serge Fauchereau, *Peintures et dessins d'écrivains*, Paris: Belfond, 1991, p. 154 ill. (drawing from verso)
Dessins d'écrivains, Paris, Éditions du Chêne, 2003, p.86 (drawing from recto)



HANNAH HÖCH

(1889-1978)

Abstract composition with buttons, 1918

Pencil, ink, watercolor, collage and buttons on paper, 314 x 196 mm
Signed and dated *H.Höch 18/H*

This work is recorded in the archives of Madame Eva Maria Rössner, niece of the artist

With certificate by Dr Ralf Burmeister (Berlinische Galerie, Künstler-Archive)

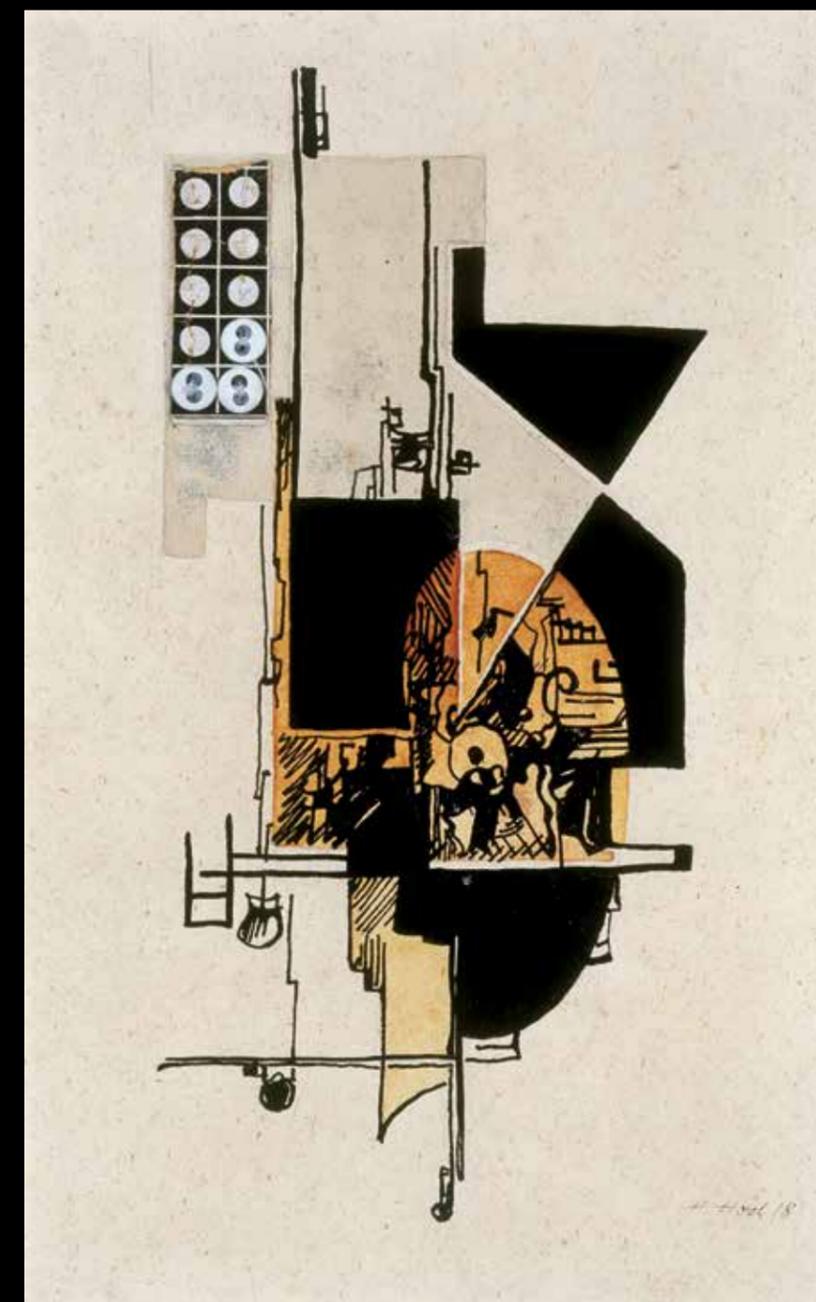
PROVENANCE

Sylvio Perlstein (acquired from the artist)
Galerie Zlotowski, Paris

EXHIBITED

London, Tate Modern, *Constructing a New World: Van Doesburg and the International Avant-Garde*, 2010, ill. p.251

Hannah Höch goes to Berlin in 1912 to study at the Arts and Crafts College and, starting in 1916, makes her grotesque dada-dolls. Through her friendship with Raoul Hausmann, she comes into contact with the Berlin group of the dadaist movement. In her first collages – of which this is one of the few known examples – she combines constructivist elements with a quite particular feeling for materials, not within a theoretical framework as with Hausmann but just directly, with references to her immediate surroundings – like the buttons here, still arranged on their holder. 'Many collages of Hannah Höch literally sprang from the depths of her sewing kit and the snippets of her cutting table at Ullstein. She detoured the materials, sometimes maliciously/ironically, sometimes playfully/cheerfully. Buttons were not uncommon materials, on pattern cards with their rhythmic linear arrangement; lace and tulle were ironic quotes of bourgeois girl dowry-dreams.' (Hanne Bergius) From the 1920s, Hannah Höch became 'grandmaster' in the art of collage.



FRANCIS PICABIA

(1879-1953)

Drawing for Germaine (Dessin pour Germaine), 1918

Pen, ink and wash on paper, 219 x 175 mm

Signed, dated and inscribed top right corner:

Dessin pour Germaine/Gstaad 23 Mars 1918/ F Picabia.

With certificate by the Comité Picabia, confirming that this drawing will be included in the forthcoming catalogue raisonné.

PROVENANCE

Germaine Everling

Maurice Bazy, Paris

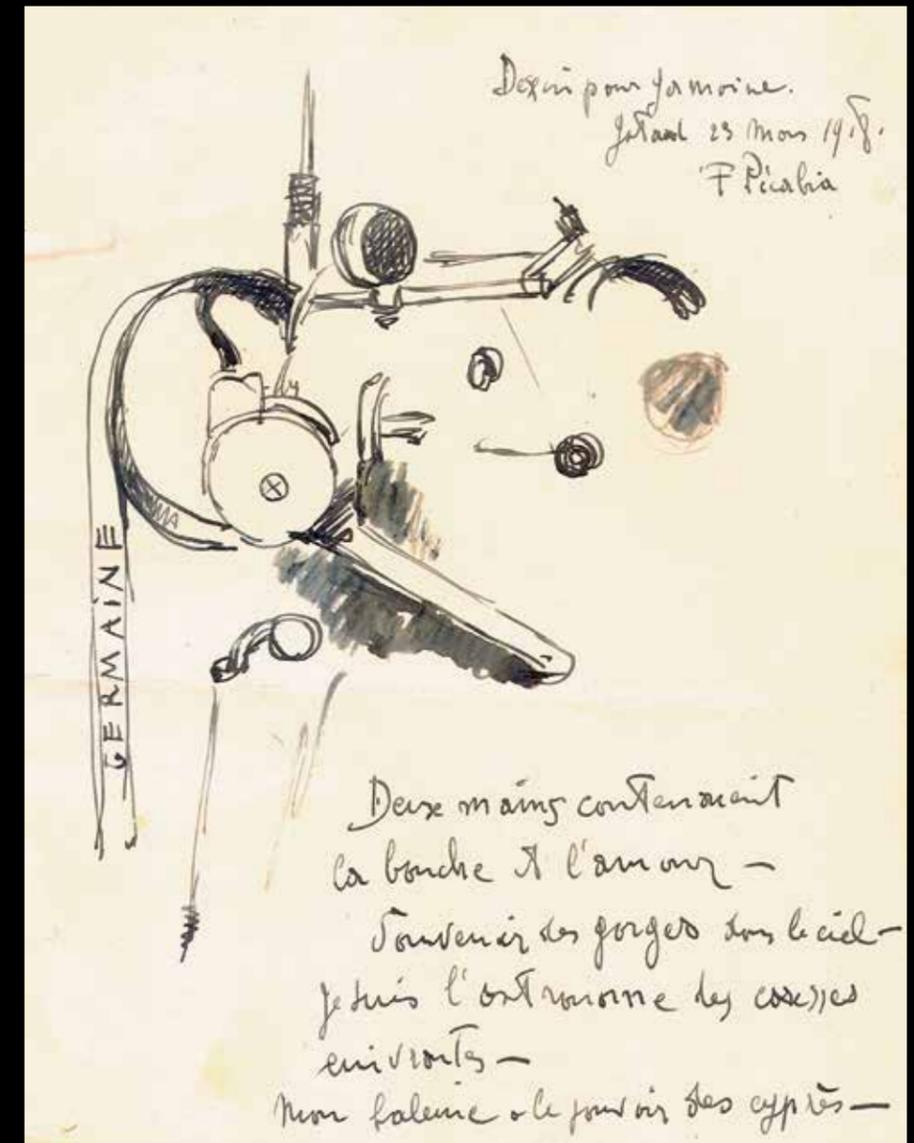
Private collection, Paris

EXHIBITED

London, Tate Gallery; Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Montjuic, 2008, *Duchamp - Picabia - Man Ray*, no. 232, ill. p. 182

Paris, Palais de Tokyo, *Coco Chanel*, 2013

The drawing with poem is dedicated to Germaine Everling, the woman with whom Picabia begins a relationship in 1917. The following year she accompanies him to Switzerland where Picabia spends much of his time at health spas, in part to recover from a period of excess. He barely paints, but is very productive as poet. This unpublished poem connects to *Poèmes et dessins de la fille née sans mère*, the bundle he completes on April 5th in Gstaad. The watercolor of the motor is closely related to the eighteen mechanical line-drawings that illustrate the poems. Instead of the very untechnical words or phrases that name the component parts of the imaginary machines, here only the name of Germaine is mentioned on the presumably crucial transmission belt. With its free manner of execution, the drawing makes a more lyrical impression than earlier works where Picabia pastiches technical drawings by way of provocation. But the painter/poet does not leave hold of the metaphor that accompanies his mechanical works from the very outset. Like his friend Duchamp, he suggests clear and less clear parallels between machines and people, between production processes and sexual intercourse. For both Picabia and Duchamp, the translation into image of this fascination for movement, machines and eroticism is paired with much irony, in contrast to the futurists' deadly seriousness. As in the poem *Changement de vitesse* from the bundle cited above, where Picabia alludes to his main theme: 'Je suis le collaborateur de l'usine/Qui alésait les cylindres du bonheur' (I am the employee of the factory/who reamed the cylinders of happiness)



FRANCIS PICABIA

(1879-1953)

Dame ! 1920

Indian ink and pencil on paper, 265 x 190 mm.
Signed and dated Francis Picabia lower left

Cover-illustration for *Dada 7* (Dadaphone), Paris,
March 1920

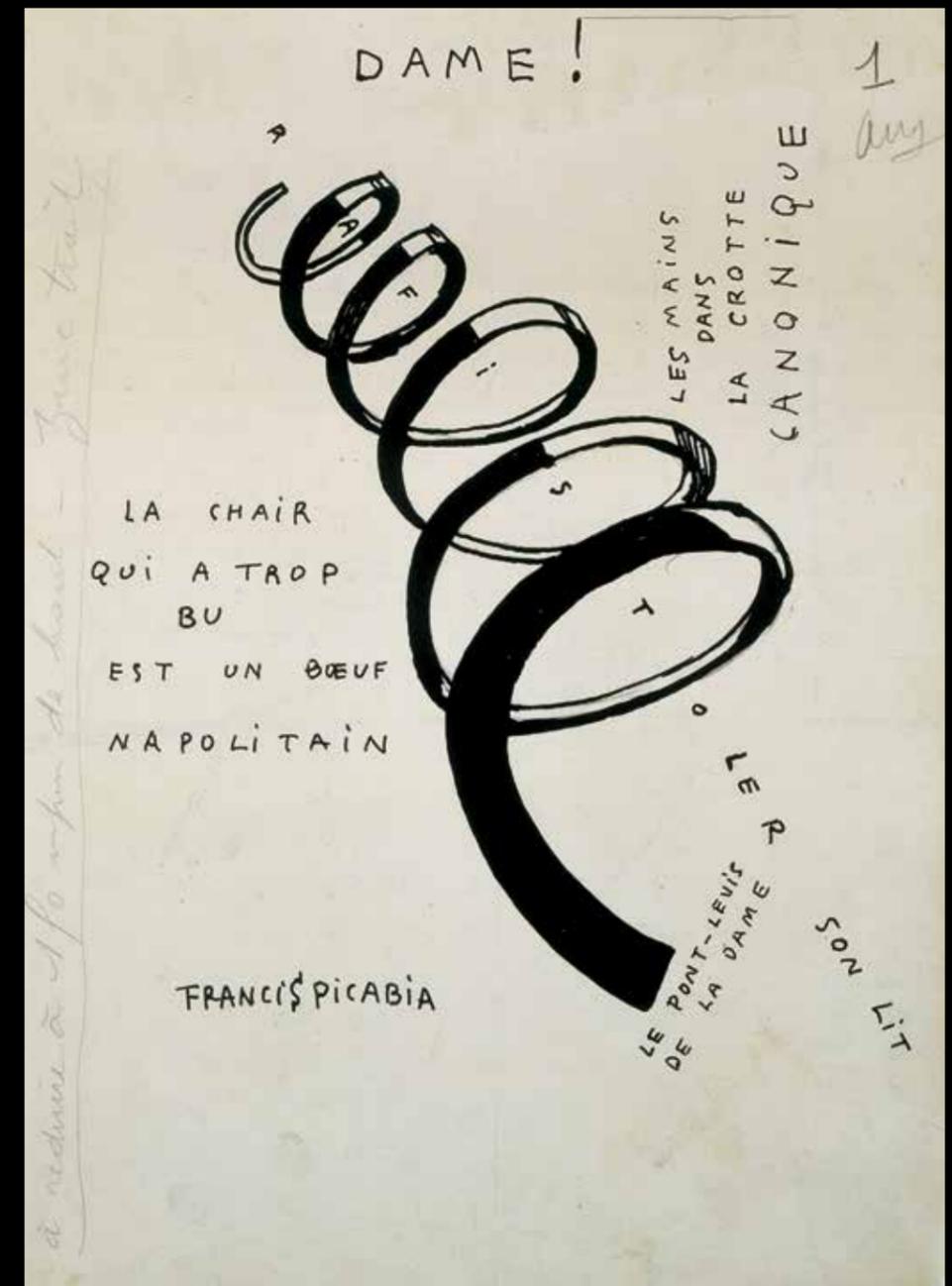
Certificate # 3017 from the Comité Picabia

LITERATURE

Dada Zürich-Paris 1916-1922, Paris : Jean-Michel
Place, 1981, p. 36, illustrated

Maria Lluisa Borrás, *Picabia*, Paris : Albin Michel,
1985, p. 358, illustrated

Francis Picabia glistens like a fish in Lake Dada. After several successful years in the aftermath of impressionism, he emerges as one of the most provocative actors on the avant-garde scene, and one of the most cosmopolitan. In 1913 he brings abstract art to New York, and three years later he exhibits his first 'mechanical' paintings there. In 1917 he starts his dada-related review 391 in Barcelona, publishes volumes of poetry, meets Tristan Tzara in Zurich, and in 1920 is a dada pacesetter in Paris. When it comes to brutality, he vies with the epic poet-boxer Arthur Cravan. His paintings with machine parts settle scores with all classical motifs and his anti-poems make a mockery of literature's staid rules. The combination of gross statements and un-artistic images, as with this drawing, aspire to provoke scandal. Picabia is no prudent innovator but an inimitable player who doesn't stick to the unwritten rules of the art scene, not even to those of its 'progressive' fraction. For him it is not about career or securing a place in the pantheon. It is about his own pleasure. While so much art - avant-garde art as well - has become either souvenir or document, Picabia's images still always celebrate the moment that cannot return. In the same issue of *Dada*, with cover by him, Picabia publishes the *Manifeste Cannibale Dada* whose final lines provide a ringing climax to dada in Paris. '(Dada) is nothing, nothing, nothing. It's like your hopes: nothing. Like your heavens: nothing. Like your idols: nothing. Like your politicians: nothing. Like your heroes: nothing. Like your artists: nothing. Like your religions: nothing. Whistle, scream, punch me in the face and then, and then? I'll tell you again that you're all a bunch of suckers. In three months me and my friends will sell you our paintings for a few francs.' *Dada 7* represents both the apogee and the swansong of dada in Paris. In May 1921 the one-man-movement Picabia takes his leave of the dadaist group. He sees their moral and political principles as too serious, and so he continues - in word and image - on his own wanton way.



MARCEL DUCHAMP

(1887-1968)

Study for LA MARIÉE MISE À NU PAR SES CÉLIBATAIRES, MÊME – le Grand verre, 1913

Pencil on tracing paper, 116 x 310 mm
Signed Marcel Duchamp and dated 1913 lower
right; inscribed and signed *Pour Beatrice
Cunningham en souvenir d'un enfer à Philadelphie,
Marcel Duchamp, N.Y. 1956* on the left edge

The authenticity of this work has been
confirmed by Jacqueline Matisse Monnier and
the Association Duchamp.

PROVENANCE

Beatrice Cunningham, New York (a gift from the
artist in 1956)
Private collection, London

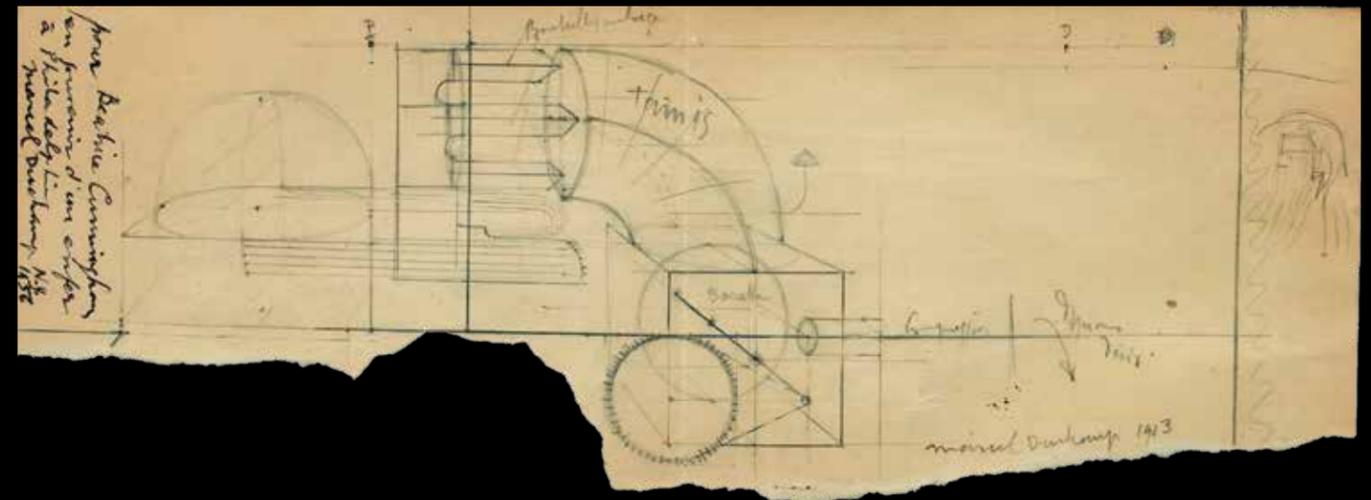
LITERATURE

Jennifer Mundy, 'An Unpublished Drawing by
Duchamp: Hell in Philadelphia', in *Tate Papers*,
no. 10, October 2008, illustrated fig. 4

For *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)* (1915-1923), probably his most famous work, Marcel Duchamp took many notes and made many drawings. What he himself published of these preparations – *The Box of 1914*, *The Green Box* (1934) and *The White Box* (1967) – together with what appeared posthumously, has served to reinforce the riddle of this work rather than to solve it. The innumerable exegeses of laymen and specialists have provided for a never-ending stream of hypotheses with only the occasional trickle of insight. The day is no longer far off when we'll build a machine that will read everything that's ever been written about and will still come to be written about the *Large Glass*, and interpret it anew and anew, but of course without ever drawing any definitive conclusions. A machine with pipes and cogs and valves, and transmission belts, etc., etc. in the spirit of Duchamp, and not with some software or other that would deliver results just as boring as those games where chess computers play against Grand Masters.

In her detailed article about this unpublished preliminary study, Jennifer Mundy writes: 'The drawing depicts an element in the lower panel of *The Large Glass*. It is not claimed that the revelation of this drawing substantially changes understanding of the *Large Glass*, but it appears to be a 'missing link' between some already published notes and deepens our understanding of this central element in the lower panel of the *Large Glass*.' The note concerns the idea of a 'desire dynamo', an element not ultimately retained by Duchamp for *The Large Glass*. Jennifer Mundy suggests the reasonable link between Duchamp's strategic distribution of his preliminary studies and his relationships with – beautiful and intelligent – women: 'Duchamp both cared fanatically about his notes for the *Large Glass*, as shown in his painstaking reproduction of them in facsimile form, and was happy for some to remain unknown in folders among his papers or even, as with the Cunningham drawing, to be potentially lost from sight for many years, possibly forever. In this latter case, it was the act of giving a token of friendship or of admiration to a particularly beautiful and intelligent woman that mattered.'

Perhaps it would serve to rediscover more of Duchamp's sources of inspiration. Perhaps the not-always scientifically responsible construction of *The Large Glass* can be explained by the whimsical, ironic and pragmatic approach by which Duchamp recycled much technological visual material – and sometimes deliberately omitted certain components and connections in order to achieve a less 'realistic' effect. Perhaps *The Large Glass* is foremost the result of an unfinished game, with the element of play serving for more continuity in Duchamp's career than has heretofore been recognized. And perhaps the *Large Glass* is just the most personal work of a grand dandy, who was of the opinion that a 'desire dynamo' would unveil (too much of) his carefully cultivated mystery.



Mrs. Jennifer Mundy's highly recommendable article, 'An Unpublished Drawing by Duchamp: Hell in Philadelphia', in *Tate Papers*, no.10, October 1, 2008, is available online <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/unpublished-drawing-duchamp-hell-philadelphia>

MARCEL DUCHAMP

(1887-1968)

Homage to Caïssa (Hommage à Caïssa), 1966

Readymade, wood chessboard, 480 x 480 mm

On lower edge: titled *Hommage à Caïssa* on the left, signed and dated Marcel Duchamp 1966 and numbered 2/30 on the right. Inscribed on left edge *Pour Maria amicalement Marcel*.

One of an edition of 30 signed and numbered chessboards issued and sold for the benefit of the Marcel Duchamp Fund of the American Chess Foundation at the group exhibition *Hommage à Caïssa*, Cordier & Ekstrom, New York, February 8-26, 1966

With certificate no. 66.632 EO 1 from the Association Marcel Duchamp

PROVENANCE

Maria Alvarez (gift from the artist)
Private collection, Paris

LITERATURE

Arturo Schwarz. *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*. New York: Delano Greenidge, 2000. cat. no. 632, ill. p.864

The fact that Marcel Duchamp, in 1923, ostentatiously announces his retirement from art to pursue a professional interest in chess, is often taken for an (anti)artistic gesture. Perhaps this decision is less puzzling if we remember that Duchamp considered all his activities – art included – as a strategic game. The game of chess – whose iconography is present, overtly or veiled, throughout his oeuvre – is its most well-known manifestation. ‘A strategy game or strategic game is a game in which the players’ uncoerced, and often autonomous decision-making skills have a high significance in determining the outcome.’ In strategic games the element of chance plays only a minor role at best. And if Duchamp, in his life and work, allows chance to enter the ‘game’, then it is in a well-defined and controlled manner. He does not set out with a plan to acquire a particular position within the history of art, but he does know how to establish and maintain a position of advantage over adversaries through the successive exploitation of known or emergent possibilities. Seeing that he does not possess the same artistic means as Matisse or Picasso, for example, he opts for making the very nature of the artwork itself a piece in his game. Playing against Duchamp means inevitable defeat for any artist, because this game is one where Duchamp sets the rules. – Caïssa is a mythical Thracian dryad portrayed as the goddess of chess. She originated in the poem *Scacchia ludus: or, the game of chess* (1527) by Marcus Hieronymus Vida, which describes a chess game between Apollo and Mercury, opening thus: ‘Of armies on the chequer’d field array’d,/And guiltless war in pleasing form display’d;’ – *Hommage à Caïssa* is Duchamp’s contribution to the group exhibition of the same name held at New York’s Cordier & Ekstrom Gallery, from 8 to 26 February 1966. Proceeds went to the Marcel Duchamp Fund of the American Chess Foundation.



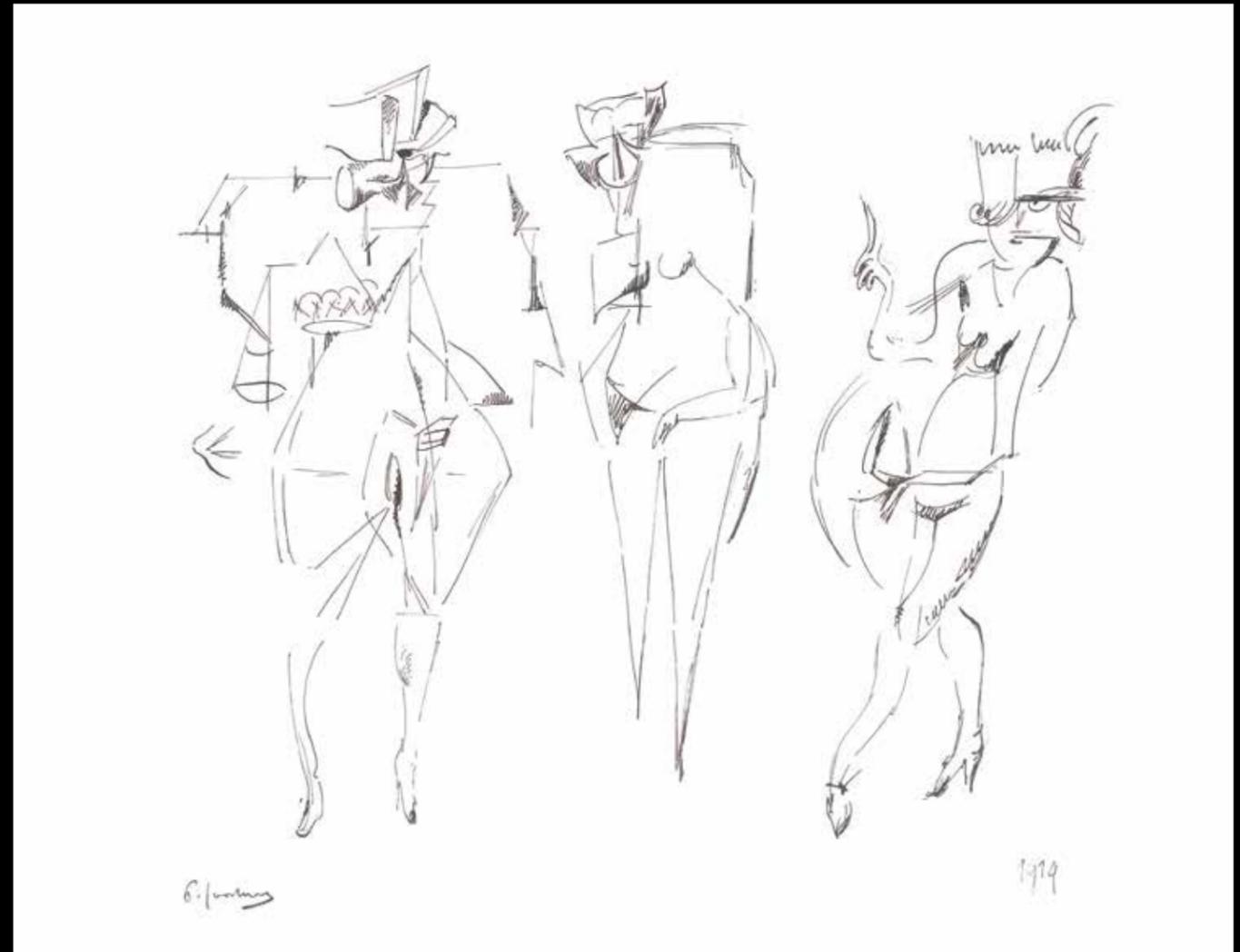
Fashions (Modes), 1919

India ink and pencil on paper, 305 x 375 mm
Signed P. Joostens bottom left and dated 1919
bottom right

PROVENANCE

Jos Heinz, Antwerp

Paul Joostens is an important figure in Antwerp avant-garde circles around poet and critic Paul van Ostaïen. Starting in 1916, futurist and cubist elements appear in his paintings and drawings. *Modes* is the modern and fashionable version of the Greek myth of The Three Graces, a subject that has long served as pretext for painting or sculpting perfect female nudes. Joostens appears to go along with the notion that this mythological trio was one and the same woman, for he draws the same woman in three different and extremely modern outfits. Perhaps his own complex relationship with women plays a role here, and the formal variation from left to right could be read as the transition from mechanical-dominant to frivolous-compliant. It is also an exercise in style from an upcoming modernist who cannot wholly leave caricature behind. Joostens is attracted by the new relaxation in the moral climate, the liberated young women who dance and drink and smoke, who do everything that used to be only the province of the somewhat 'lower orders', who want to be so active in all things that Chanel was inspired to design sports clothes to fit the bill... but at the same time, Joostens regrets that classical beauty has fallen by the wayside and dons himself in an aristocratic haughty cloak, as though he alone was subject to the conflict between life and art.



PAUL JOOSTENS

(1889-1960)

Baptism for a dancer (*Baptême pour danseuse*), 1937

Collage, 295 x 215 mm

Titled bottom left, dated 1937 and signed with estate stamp PJ bottom right

PROVENANCE

Jos Heinz, Antwerp

When in 1927 Joostens comes out with his neo-gothic work, this looks in line with the *retour à l'ordre* whereby many European artists – among other reasons because they are on the lookout for a larger public – renounce the avant-garde. But with Joostens nothing is as simple as it seems. Besides his pseudo-religious work, starting in 1925 he makes collages that betray a great interest for film. While his dadaist collages often refer to the method of artists like Kurt Schwitters, the new works relate more to photomontage. And perhaps they are more personal too, in the sense that the anything-goes attitude of dada is now completely fused with his personal obsessions and his aversion to anything that he felt as a threat to his own universe. – The dancer's graceful pose receives heavy-handed comment in the form of geometric color-planes – her head and torso are gone! The pleats of her tutu are now more akin to the fluting of the stage-pillars framing her, her front leg now looks like a constructive element as well. By the title, does Joostens mean that after her baptism the dancer can be freed from the abstract space in which she's imprisoned, or is it just all voodoo, iconoclastic revenge on the image of the unattainable woman?



*Baptême
pour danseuse.*



PAUL JOOSTENS

(1889-1960)

Astonishment (*L'Etonnement*), 1952

Charcoal and pencil on paper, 420 x 300 mm
Signed and dated *Paul Joostens 52* bottom right

PROVENANCE

Leo Dohmen, Antwerp

Here it seems the narcissistic artist has developed his most personal images, a symbol that makes the truth of his passions collide with the hypocritical lies of the civilized world. All comes together in the hybrid woman, containing elements of the 'Poeseloes' (Antwerp-dialect for the Lolita type), of the stars and starlets whose pure frivolity was epitomized in Hollywood melodramas, of the Madonnas by Memling... and the imaginary woman would only really start to live in a décor of pseudo-gothic, like in a tourist brochure on Bruges. There is hardly a greater contrast imaginable than between the sophisticated architecture of the Late Middle Ages that functioned as symbol for a unified society and the modern mechanistic chaos wherein the artist can, at best, survive as a hermit. For Joostens, art is not an academic question. The fact that he represents his obsessive preference for young girls ('That animal puppet with the eyes of a doll and the lips of a woman') in a religious costume film is not the mere whim of an eccentric artist, it is out-and-out sacrilege. Compared to most post-war youths, the former dadaist was an authentic artist who was able to give form to his feelings of bitter disappointment. In a text from 1953, on 'respectability', he writes: '(...) For me art was not a game, not an amusement, but a method of self-analysis beyond Systems and Slogans. This does not stop my Poeseloes from being an Emissary and Spokesperson of shocking morality and devilish audacity.'



CARLO CARRÀ

(1881-1966)

Interior with manikin bust (Interno con busto di manichino), 1917

Pen and ink and wash on paper, 135 x 105 mm
Signed C. Carrà lower right and dated 1917 lower left

Photo-certificate from Professor Massimo Carrà

PROVENANCE

Giovanni Salmatoris, Milan

EXHIBITED

Cherasco, Palazzo Salmatoris, *Carlo Carrà, la natura come sogno*, 2008

LITERATURE

Carlo Carrà, la natura come sogno, Città di Cherasco, 2008, p.78 ill.

Carlo Carrà was one of the founders of futurist painting. His *Funeral of the Anarchist Galli* (1911) is one of the most successful works from that movement's early phase. From 1915, however, Carrà distances himself from futurism. With the early Renaissance as guide, his compositions become less dynamic but clearer and more powerful, his figures more human. In 1917 he gets his military call-up, and meets Giorgio de Chirico in the army. Their artistic collaboration signifies the start of *pittura metafisica*. There are indeed similarities between the work of both artists, especially at an iconographic level, but with Carrà there is no trace of de Chirico's irony – like with the latter's combining of images from antiquity with artichokes and bananas. Carrà's concern is for an underlying order. His mannequins are more directly present, they are characterized by a simple monumentality that reminds one of Giotto. Further, in the way that Carrà omits anything not essential for the pictorial effect, we see the influence of the Florentine master who on the threshold of the Renaissance gave Western art a different turn. In work subsequent to his *pittura metafisica*, Carrà totally renounces modernity. He strives to create a new primitive-classical style, and then becomes an important representative of the Italian "return to order".



*Manikin bust in room
(Busto di manichino nella
stanza), 1917*

Pen and ink on paper, 135 x 105 mm
Signed C. Carrà and dated 1917 lower right

Photo-certificate from Professor Massimo Carrà

PROVENANCE

Giovanni Salmatoris, Milan

EXHIBITED

Cherasco, Palazzo Salmatoris, *Carlo Carrà,
la natura come sogno*, 2008

LITERATURE

Carlo Carrà, la natura come sogno, Città di
Cherasco, 2008, p.79 ill.



GINO SEVERINI

(1883-1966)

Pierrot as musician, 1924

Pencil on paper, 367 x 263 mm

Signed and dated *G. Severini 1924* below right and with dedication of the artist's wife Jeanne Fort *Alla signora Marisa Farnetani con amicizia sincera J. Severini* below right

Romana Brunori Severini has authenticated this drawing

This drawing is a study for the painting *Pierrot Musicien* in the Boymans-van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam (D.Fonti, *Gino Severini, catalogo ragionato*, Milan, 1988, no. 414)

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist, Cortona
Farnetani collection, Arezzo
Private collection

Severini evolves away from realism during his first sojourn to Paris in 1906. He turns to neo-impressionist examples, but then with a richer palette. He is fascinated by their 'scientific' approach and constructs his works around brighter spaces and measured perspectives. Under the influence of Cézanne and the first cubists he takes a new turn. Color creates contrasts as constructive elements, fragmented light underscores the rhythm. In 1910 he co-signs the futurist painters' first manifesto, but the speed and dynamism in his works refer not to machines (as Marinetti and Boccioni desired), but to the joy of life he experienced in Paris. No brutal industrial aesthetic but large-scale, elegant moments of nightlife. In 1915 Severini cuts his ties with the group and becomes a confirmed cubist. The following year he is the first artist to demonstrate a "return to order". He exhibits a fully realistic painting, *Motherhood*, composed according to the rules of classical perspective. In 1921 Severini publishes *Dal cubismo al classicismo*. He argues for a return to the classic *métier*, for an art that is figurative but also based on strict, mathematical formulae. The frescos that he paints in 1922 - commissioned by the Sitwell family for their castle near Florence - fit within his 'aesthetics of compass and number' and, just as the paintings from the 1920s, are inhabited by figures from the *commedia dell'arte*. Like in this drawing where the rigid forms of socle, hat and guitar along with the sculptural folds of the costume, result in a classical, tranquil image.



Blue dancer, 1952

Gouache on paper, 265 x 208 mm

Signed G. Severini below left and with dedication of the painter's wife Jeanne Fort *Exposée à La Chaux de Fond et à San Paulo et à Milano en 1963/ all'amico Nelio Farnetani nel ricordo di Gino, Jeanne Severini* bottom center

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist, Cortona
Farnetani collection, Arezzo
Private collection

EXHIBITED

Sao Paulo, Museo de Arte Moderna, *Artistes italiens dans la collection du Musée d'Art Moderne*, 1952, no. 11
Milano, Galleria Blu, *Gino Severini*, 1963, no. 14

LITERATURE

P. Pacini, *Gino Severini*, Florence, 1977, no. 51 ill.
D. Fonti, *Gino Severini, catalogo ragionato*, Milan, 1988, no. 903A, p. 548 ill.

During the inter-war period, Severini makes many murals and mosaics for public buildings. He is committed to a new relationship between architecture and visual arts. He also regularly designs sets and costumes for the theatre. After 1945 he returns to a neo-cubist visual language. The new figurative images combine stylization with image-fragmentation. *Blue Dancer* is reminiscent of the theatrical paintings of his futurist period, both in the motif and in the attempt to evoke movement with color, form and line. It is probably a design for one of the large decorative commissions he carried out in the 1950s.



RENÉ MAGRITTE

(1898-1967)

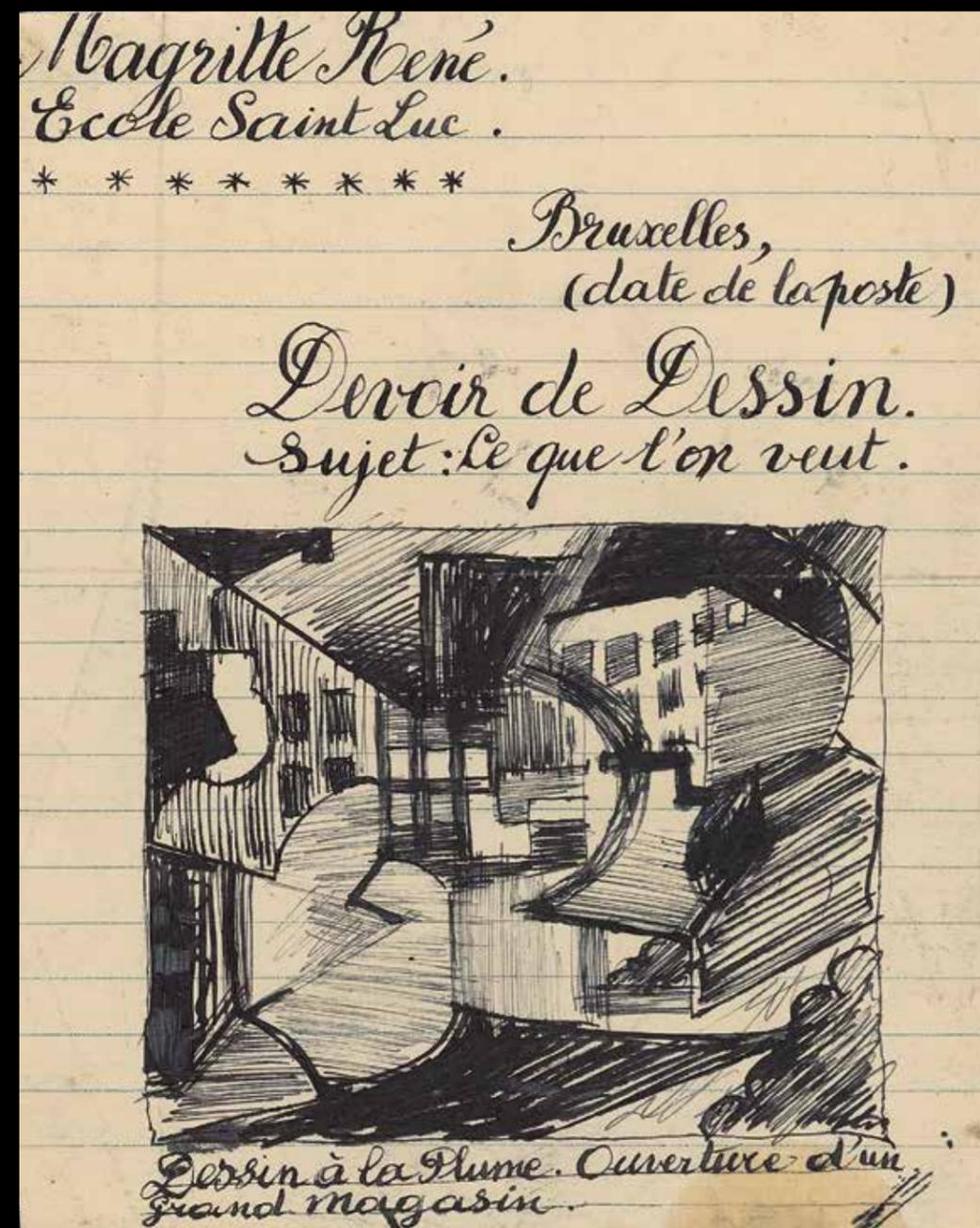
Drawing assignment (*Devoir de dessin*), n.d. (late 1919, early 1920)

India ink on sheet of school notebook, 190 x 155 mm (sheet size), 95 x 115 mm (drawing size)

PROVENANCE

Estate of Pierre-Louis Flouquet
Private collection

The letter that René Magritte sends to his friend, the painter Pierre-Louis Flouquet (1900-1967), has at least two layers to it. In imitation of school days 'penmanship', the irony is clearly heralded. Magritte and Flouquet met at the Brussels Fine-Arts Academy (where Magritte entered in 1916), but neither of the two ever attended the Catholic Saint Luc art school which, for that matter, was more conservative than the Academy. 'Devoir de dessin: ce que l'on veut' (implying a command to do whatever you want) alludes to the aversion to academic training that the two young artists shared. Free choice of subject or approach was anathema to the school's program. - The drawing itself functions on a different level, as a signal of wanting to properly rid themselves of the tame, realistic approach to art that their Academy training imposed. In 1919 both artists rapidly and radically turned their back on the dominant bourgeois styles, and set off down the abstract route. In this cubo-futurist cityscape, using alternating, broken perspectives, Magritte attempts to evoke the modern city's dynamic and multi-faceted space. At a joint exhibition in the progressive Centre d'Art in Brussels in January 1920, Magritte and Flouquet present paintings and poster designs of modernist tenor. Perhaps the drawing's title refers to the commercial commissions they hoped to land as artists just starting out.



RENÉ MAGRITTE

(1898-1967)

Studies for *The Beyond* (*L'Au-delà*), c. 1938

Pencil on paper, 270 x 179 mm
Signed *Magritte* (lower left), annotated *Soleil 5*
(upper right) and *Le soleil brille pour tous* (lower
centre)

PROVENANCE

Galerie Isy Brachot, Brussels
Private collection

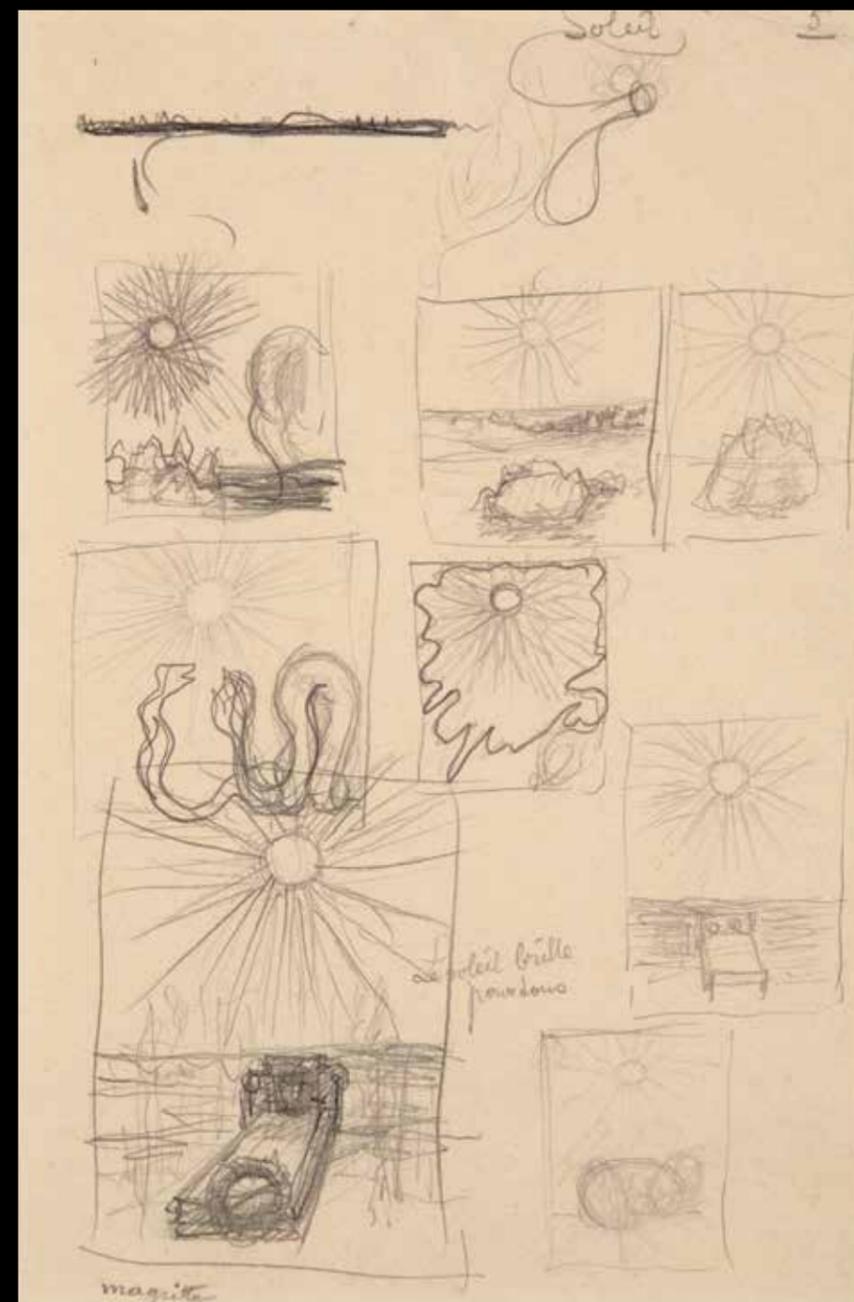
EXHIBITED

Paris, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Les dessins de l'atelier
Magritte*, October-December 1988
New York, The Pace Gallery, *René Magritte:
Paintings, Drawings, Sculpture*, May-June 1990
Brussels, Galerie Isy Brachot, *René Magritte et la
pensée*, January-February 1993

LITERATURE

David Sylvester & Sarah Whitfield, *René Magritte
Catalogue Raisonné Vol. II : Oil Paintings and Objects
1931-1948*, Antwerp: Menil Foundation/Fonds
Mercator, 1993, # 459, ill. p.265, fig.b

Beginning in 1933, Magritte uses a different method for making images. Instead of variations on an idea, he now starts to systematically look for the 'solution' to the 'problem' that is posed by a particular type of object. He wants to discover the characteristics that are inextricably linked to the object, characteristics so strange that they deliver a shocking image when revealed. He writes about this in 1937: 'There exists a secret affinity between certain images; the affinity also exists between objects represented by these images.' Using the image of an egg (instead of a bird) in the birdcage, he explains how he experiments until he finds a new image, an image 'which will withstand examination through its definitive, accurate character.' In 1938 he states: '(...) my investigation took the form of trying to find the solution of a problem with three points of reference: the object, the something linked to it in the obscurity of my consciousness and the light into which this something had to be brought.' This sketch sheet offers a privileged insight into Magritte's way of thinking. He approaches the problem of the sun via the sun-landscape. From a sun that illuminates an amorphous cutout piece of sky, via the anecdotal couple in bed under the sun, the painter finds the definitive answer with a tombstone in an empty, sun-drenched plane. The slab is not yet as stark, as 'typical', as in the painting for which this is a preliminary study. The painting's title, *L'Au-delà* (*The Beyond*) is more philosophical, less 'informal' than *Le Soleil brille pour tous*. Magritte also explains why he associates the sun with death. 'Taking the sun as the starting point of our origin, we cannot for the time being envisage any more distant conclusion to this journey than death. This is a present certainty, and as the title of the picture, the expression 'The Beyond' recovers an emotional content.'



RENÉ MAGRITTE

(1898-1967)

Untitled (study for *Vertigo* — *Le Vertige*), 1943

Red pencil on paper, 145 x 195 mm.
Signed lower right

PROVENANCE

Private collection

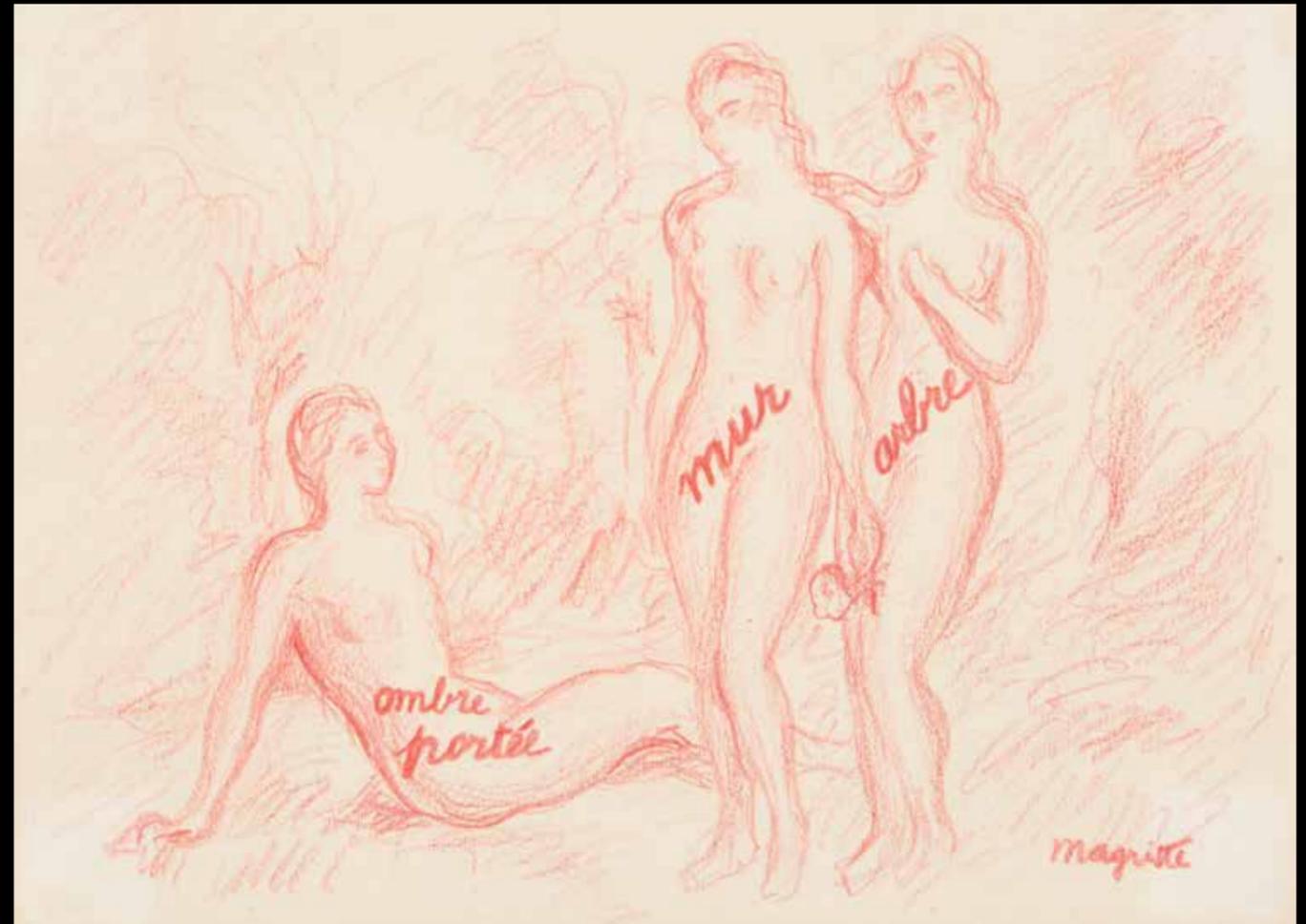
EXHIBITED

Antwerp, Ronny Van de Velde, *René Magritte Peintures et gouaches (période vache)*, 1994
Ostend, Museum voor Schone Kunsten, *Ensor tot Delvaux*, 1996-97
Paris, Musée Maillol, Paris, 2006, *Magritte tout en papier*, illustrated
Rotterdam, Museum Boymans – Van Beuningen, 2006, *Magritte op papier*, illustrated

LITERATURE

Marcel Mariën, *René Magritte*. Bruxelles: Les Auteurs Associés, 1943, no.5 ill. in color
David Sylvester & Sarah Whitfield, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné Vol. II : Oil Paintings and Objects 1931-1948*, Antwerp: Menil Foundation/Fonds Mercator, 1993, ill. p.318, fig.b

Between 1943 and 1947 Magritte makes quasi-impressionist paintings which, according to David Sylvester, belong to his most shocking works. Magritte detourns the style of the old Renoir, but in fact mainly makes use of the *image* of impressionism, at that time already established as the exemplary bourgeois style. In a letter to Marcel Mariën from 15 August 1946, he writes: 'To believe that one cannot detourn this impressionist technique, is to show a sterile respect for the idea of masterpieces, (to believe) that the painters of 1900 alone were capable of making them. It is to believe that this technique was the exclusive property of these painters, while we, we only know of things that can or cannot be used.' Just like his contemporary Bertolt Brecht, Magritte was conscious of the central role that *détournement* of the cultural patrimony could play in modern anti-propaganda. Artists like Magritte do not imitate one or another ideal, but base their interventions on critical re-workings of successful images from the past that have already been subsumed within popular visual culture. Magritte recruits – here as well – everything that he finds handy. He uses red pencil to pastiche the rosy main tone of the late Renoir. (Renoir liked to draw with blood-red chalk). And like Renoir, he harks back to an ancient theme, but then with the requisite dose of irony. Of the Three Graces there is one that is already too fatigued after centuries of holding an erect pose as a sculpture or on paintings; she laid herself down on the ground... And to definitively disappoint the viewer in search of 'beauty', the classical nudes are appointed with large handwritten labels. – *Les Mots et les images*, Magritte's famous tekst on method from 1929, begins with: 'An object doesn't hold so firmly to its name that we cannot come up with another that better suits it.' That the painter applies this here to mythical beauties, reminds us of the remark by Irène Hamoir that for Magritte human beings act like things and things are infused with life. Moreover, this is the only occasion where he inscribes alternative definitions in human bodies. – The woman on the right returns in *Le Vertige* (1943), a painting in pseudo-Renoir style, but now she is alone and painted more frontally. With half-opened eyes she discovers 'arbre' in proper penmanship written upon her belly, and gets giddy at the thought.



JACQUES WERGIFOSSE

(1928-2006)

Fear of Void (*La Peur du vide*), 1945

Gouache on paper, 170 x 125 mm
Titled bottom left, signed upper right

Crime (Le Crime), 1945

Gouache on paper, 170 x 125 mm
Titled bottom left, signed bottom right

PROVENANCE

Michel Lhomme; Liege

EXIBITED

Brussels, Galerie des Editions de la Boétie,
Surréalisme, 15 December 1945-15 January 1946,
cat. no. 162

In 1944, when Jacques Wergifosse is 16, he comes in contact with the Brussels group of surrealists and strikes up a friendship with René Magritte. Wergifosse contributes drawings – including the two here – to the first post-war surrealist exhibition at Galerie des Editions La Boétie in Brussels in December 1945, an exhibition that caused considerable controversy. Wergifosse is also a poet, and the following year Magritte illustrates and publishes his first collection, *Sanglante*, with a hundred two-line poems. (For instance: 'Battled weary/ desires wander' or 'The crystal of her mouth/my hand in her heaven'). In 1946, as well, a poem by Wergifosse appears in the special Belgian issue of the American surrealist review *View*. He also contributes to the pamphlet *Le Surréalisme en plein soleil* that Magritte launches, pens introductions to exhibition catalogues and fully supports the painter during the latter's rowdy 'période vache'. When Magritte, from the end of the Forties, starts carrying himself as a 'real' painter, distance grows between the two friends, though Wergifosse does indeed still figure in one of Magritte's 'home movies' of 1957. He keeps on writing, and starts publishing again in the 1970s.



JEAN COCTEAU

(1889-1963)

Boxing, n.d.

Collage and pen and ink on paper, 345 x 240 mm
Signed *Jean Cocteau* lower right

PROVENANCE

Michael Parkin Fine Art Ltd, London
John Pringle

EXHIBITED

London, Michael Parkin Fine Art Ltd,
Jean Cocteau and the Boeuf sur le Toit, 1983, no. 42

The Comité Jean Cocteau has confirmed the
authenticity of this work

Jean Cocteau is an artist of many, many sides, always on the move – from poetry to theatre to visual arts to film, with a host of hybrids along the way. The ease with which moves from the one medium to the other procured him the reputation as dilettante *par excellence*. His always recognizable elegant demeanor naturally allied him to the world of fashion, as well. He rubs shoulders with several great *couturiers* who, with just the right cocktail of old and new, capture the spirit of the times and help determine it through what, by definition, are short-lived and superficial forms. Cocteau's 'hip' work work often more effectively represents modernity's transience than does the art consecrated in the visual canon. – During the Twenties, boxing had grown from an aristocratic sport into a popular entertainment, one also enjoyed in better- and artistic circles. Not as an element of iconoclastic fury as with the boxer-poet Arthur Cravan, but rather as an exotic counterbalance to mainstream culture, like jazz and Josephine Baker. – There is something strange going on in this work. The two figures in the boxing ring are having a go at each other, but without eyeing one another as real boxers do. The figure in the background, next to a drawn theatre curtain, is too far away to be the referee. The heads of this trio are caricaturally enlarged, but then elegantly so. – Perhaps the explanation must be sought in Cocteau's work itself. Here boxing serves as metaphor for deep-seated human conflict. The suggested boxing ring is a carpet in an apartment, theatrical battlefield from *Les Enfants terribles* (1929). In this famous Cocteau novel, a brother and sister play out a perverse game of attraction and repulsion that cuts to the core, using each other's loves as pawns along the way while we, as spectators, are unable to intervene and arrest the inevitably fatal outcome.



SALVADOR DALÍ

(1904-1989)

Study for *Shoe-hat*, 1937

Pen and ink on paper, two sheets, 175 x 125 mm and 195 x 125 mm

Sheets with letterhead of Hotel Sacher, Vienna

On verso of one sheet, autograph signed note:

'Je certifie que ce dessin provenant de ma collection est de Salvador Dali/Georges Hugnet.'

PROVENANCE

Georges Hugnet, Paris

Daniel Filipacchi (Sale Christie's, Paris,

21.10.2005, lot 83)

The relationship between art and fashion is not a one-way street. At first sight, fashion designers borrow motifs from the new art for fabrics, color combinations and innovative cuts, but the artists – mainly the successful ones – also apparently learned much from this applied art. For in modern art, too, it is important to make an impact and upgrade familiar patterns. Dalí does not just work for *couturiers* – like this hat-design for the flamboyant Elsa Schiaparelli – he also consistently presents himself as a fashion-conscious figure. Not as a dandy, who disdains the general public, but rather as an eccentric sales-manager and a living application of his own artistic attitudes that are in-step with the world of advertising. On another level than that of the fashion-designers, his famous originality is mainly based in recycling the visual culture of all ages and from high to low. – In the imaginary travelogue *La Découverte australe par un homme volant* (1781) from Restif de la Bretonne, the good folk of Mégapatagons apparently live in an ideal society, but they do everything contrariwise, like wearing their shoes on their heads like hats. This passage is also illustrated with an etching in the original edition. Knowing the surrealists' fondness for 'pioneers' like Restif, it is hardly surprising the Frenchman's work counted as one of Dalí's sources of inspiration.



SALVADOR DALÍ

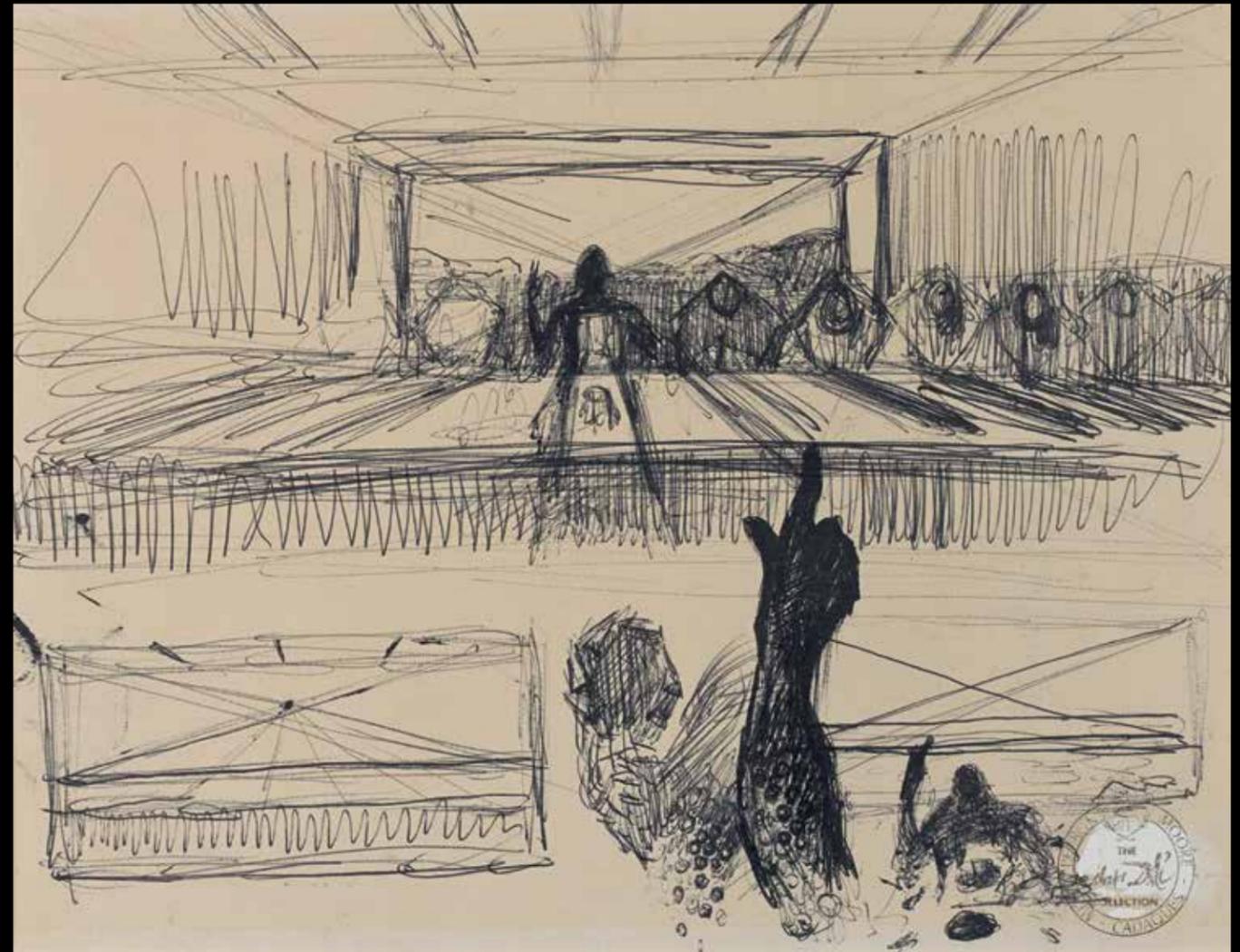
(1904-1989)

Study for *The Sacrament of the Last Supper*, 1955

Ball-point on paper, 430 x 278 mm (full sheet),
215 x 278 mm (folded)

Robert and Nicholas Descharnes have confirmed
the authenticity of this work.

The oeuvre of Salvador Dalí is one of the great recycling operations of the 20th century. He is an astute judge of just how far he can go with his eccentric reworkings of ancient motifs without too much offending his audience. After being expelled from the surrealist group, he shifts to a neo-mannerist style with the requisite exaggerations. He also hopes to cause an uproar by vociferously espousing conservative opinions in contrast to the generally 'progressive' climate in the cultural milieu. As a defender of the 'true', the 'great' Art, in the abstract years of the 1950s Dalí often reverts to religious themes. In 1952 he holds forth on a 'fabulous renaissance of modern painting, which in reaction to today's materialism will be, still once again, figurative and representative of a new religious cosmogony.' While religion in Europe is clearly on the back foot, in American public life its role is still significant. So it is no surprise that collector and banker Chester Dale, in 1952, commissions *The Sacrament of the Last Supper* and donates it to the National Gallery of Art in Washington. There was indeed comment about the partially transparent, androgenous Christ – some see a resemblance to Gala – and also about his dogged use of the number twelve (the twelve apostles, the dodecahedron in the background), but in the end the work is accepted as a worthy update of da Vinci. Even today Dalí's blend of religion and physics, which he termed 'nuclear mysticism' and emphatically incorporates in his composition here, is taken seriously in some circles.



VICTOR BRAUNER

(1903-1966)

Gleaming roots (*Racines éblouissantes*), 1933

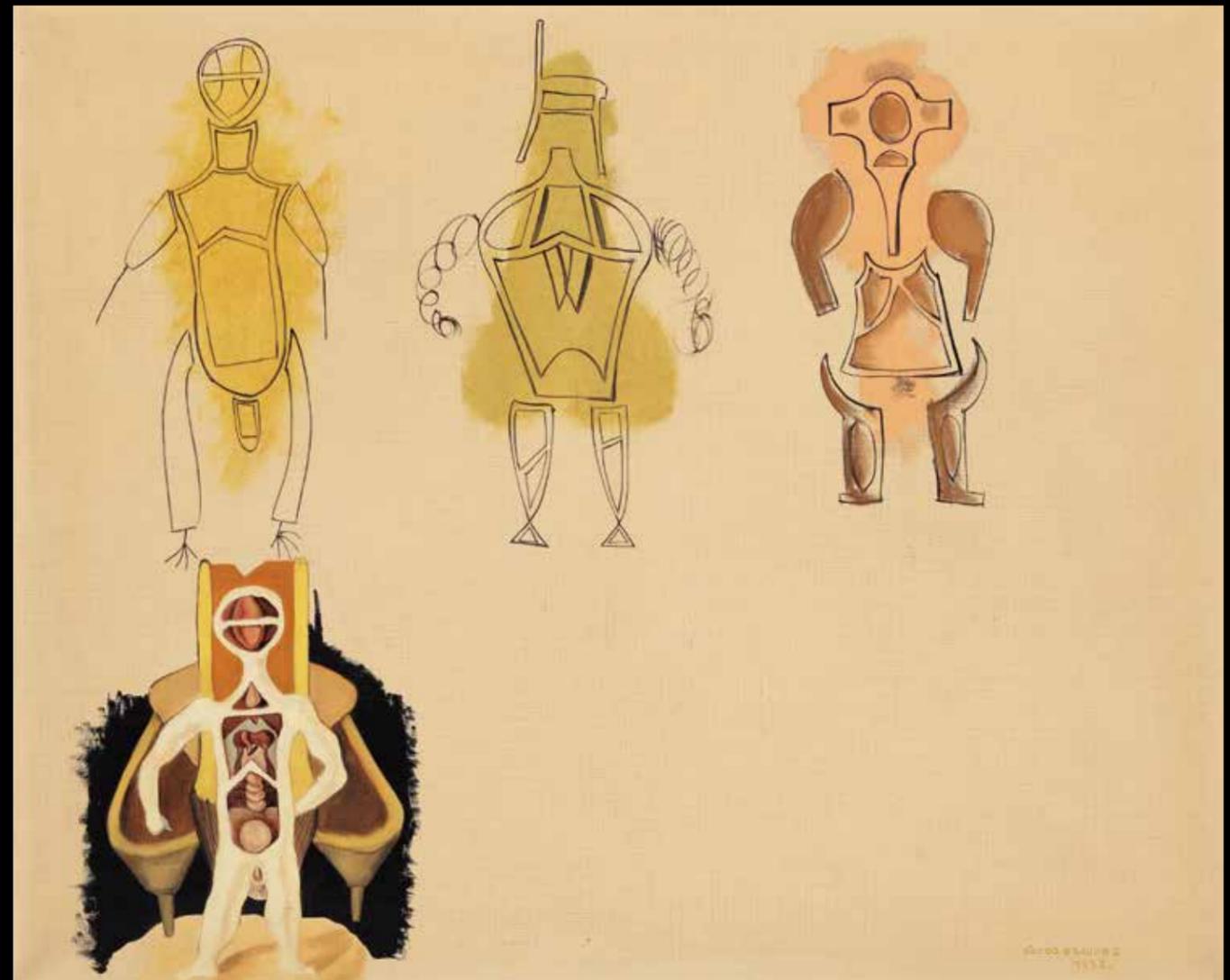
Oil on canvas, 605 x 725 mm
Signed and dated *Victor Brauner /1933* lower right,
titled on the stretcher

PROVENANCE

E.L.T. Mesens, Belgium
Private collection, Belgium

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by Samy Kinge, author of the forthcoming catalogue raisonné of Victor Brauner

Victor Brauner is an active member of the surrealist group from 1933, the year of this work's creation. When, in 1934, he has his first one-man show at the Galerie Pierre in Paris, André Breton writes in the catalogue: 'Brauner's remarkably free painting permits us to assist, as perhaps with no other, in this singular combat (of the sexual instinct and the death instinct).' The way in which he here makes a personage evolve into a bionic being presages the series *Anatomie du désir* of 1935-1936, drawings of women's bodies with strange prostheses in a style harking back to encyclopedic illustrations. And it also presages other works, as well, where he paints the evolution of the archetype of the modern tyrant, with echoes of Kafka and Ubu. Brauner detourns the didacticism of natural history to denounce the growing lunacy of a society heading for a global catastrophe. His images demonstrably show how terror so deeply and physically does its work. People do not just simply change into robots or cannon fodder. Brauner likely drew inspiration from *Bizzarrie*, a series of engravings by Tuscan artist Bracelli from 1624 that were very much in fashion up to the 20th century. These are robot-like fantasy figures built up from geometric forms. What earlier on and subsequently would be considered as a game or curiosity, in Brauner's time took on a radically different character. 'From (out of) a lyrical geometry of form comes a geometry of fear.' (Gustave René Hocke) Brauner's images have lost none of their power in an age when 'machine-men' are no longer a delusion but an everyday reality, where the 'hollow men' are still very much in charge.



OSCAR DOMINGUEZ

(1906-1958)

The small girl and the bird *(La petite fille et l'oiseau),* 1944

Collage, brush and pen and ink on paper,
269 x 365 mm.

Signed *Dominguez* lower right; signed *Dominguez*
on the reverse

PROVENANCE

Studio of the artist
Galerie Les Yeux Fertiles, Paris
Galerie Thessa Herold, Paris

EXHIBITED

Paris, Galerie Les Yeux Fertiles, *Collages*
surréalistes, 2003
Marseille, Musée Cantini, *Le part du jeu et du rêve*,
Oscar Dominguez et le surréalisme, 2005, ill. p.155

Oscar Dominguez is the most restless seeker amongst the surrealist painters. In the perspective of 'automatic writing' and other experiments where the surrealists tried to mine the subconscious and generate creative freedom, in 1935 Dominguez develops the technique of 'decalcomania without a subject' to bring forth forms of the most unexpected and endlessly interpretable variety. (One voluntarily applies ink or paint to a sheet of smooth paper, presses another sheet onto it and then separates the two.) André Breton welcomed decalcomania as a method available to everyone 'to open at will his window upon the most beautiful landscapes in the world and elsewhere'. On the basis of his 'discovery', Dominguez extends this further towards composing a pictorial automatism. Working as fast and as uncontrollably as possible, he applies brushstrokes in different colors to the support. The results evoke imaginary places that transport us back to dreams, to childhood, to the magic of fairytales and myths, or point us towards a world where everything would reflect our desires. The collage-elements do not constitute a counterbalance to the gestural total-image. Like guides they lead the viewer towards a possible universe that in this case begins with a violent dawn that has not yet driven off all traces of a stormy night. For Dominguez the dilemma of 'figurative or abstract' is not on his artistic compass.



HENRY MOORE

(1898-1986)

Nine ideas for sculpture, 1937

Colored crayon, pen and ink on paper,
260 x 205 mm
Signed and dated *Moore 1937* lower right

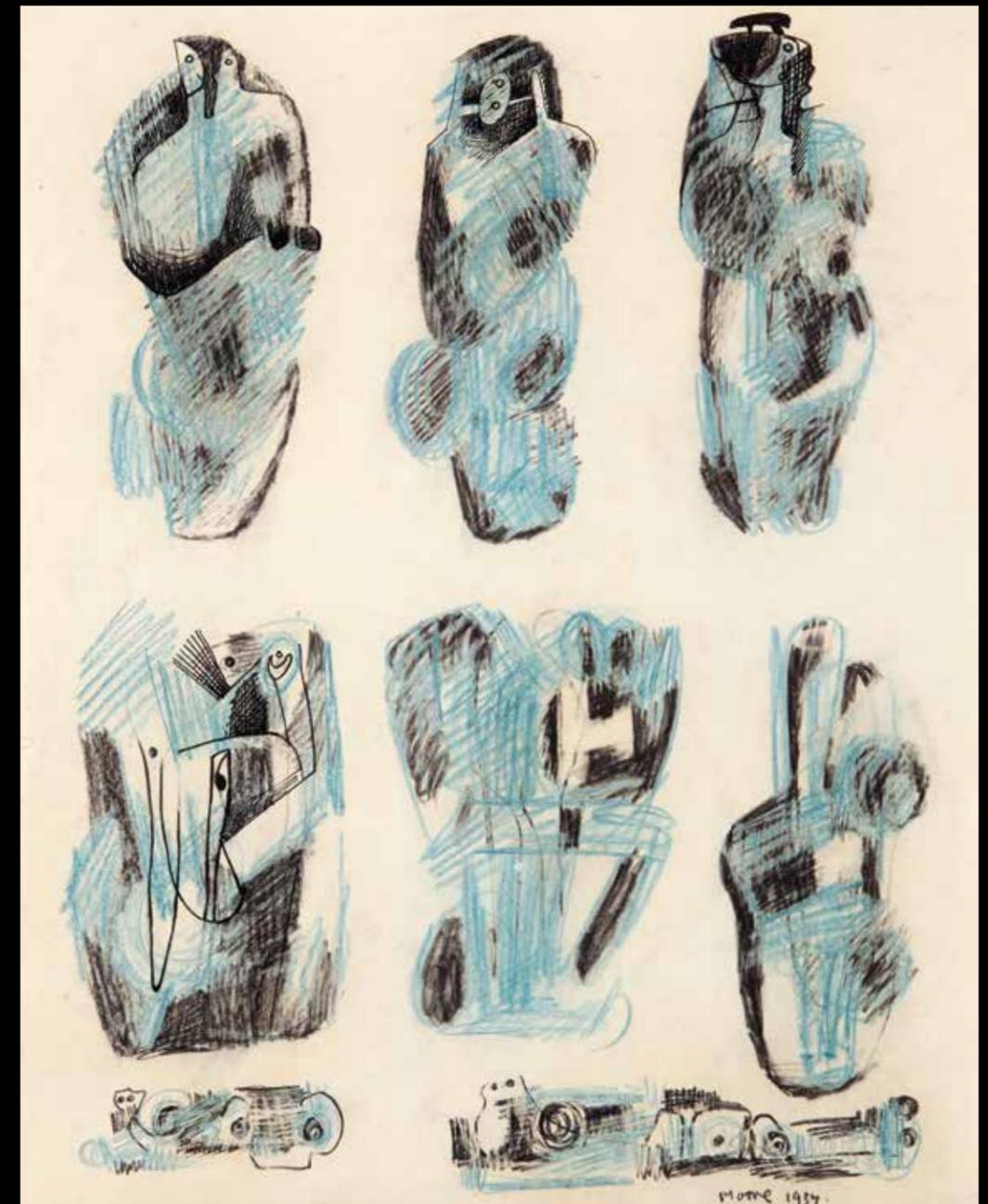
PROVENANCE

Wilfried Roberts
Torgils Borjesson, Sweden
Private collection, Sweden

LITERATURE

Ann Garrould, *Henry Moore, Complete drawings*
1930-1939, London, 1998, vol II, no. AG37.3
(HMF 1335a), p.182 ill.

From 1936 to 1940 Henry Moore is member of the surrealist group in England and participates in collective exhibitions. His evolution during the Thirties from a naturalistic towards a more fundamental and symbolic visual language was likely influenced by his acquaintance with the work of Giacometti and Tanguy, but the intense manner with which he investigates the properties of the material may not really be called surrealist. And just like for the most important artists of his generation, the confrontation with Picasso plays a very great role. Moore had been very much taken by Picasso's paintings and designs for sculptures from the late-Twenties, where the body becomes an anthropomorphic structure of detached but erotico-suggestive abstract forms. These 'pilings' recur in Moore's work as well. In these drawings from 1937 the figure again seems assembled and Moore experiments with the tension between empty and full; the architectural-style penetrations of the coherent volumes must lend vitality to the static sculpture. The motif still always provides pretext for seizing an underlying biological principle and making it visible. In 1934 Moore writes: 'The human figure is what interests me most deeply, but I have found principles of form and rhythm from the study of natural objects such as pebbles, rocks, bones, trees, plants, etc.'



HENRY MOORE

(1898-1986)

Nine ideas for sculpture, 1937

Colored crayon, pastel, wash, pen and ink on
paper, 260 x 205 mm
Signed *Moore* bottom left

PROVENANCE

Wilfried Roberts
Torgils Borjesson, Sweden
Private collection, Sweden

LITERATURE

Ann Garrould, *Henry Moore, Complete drawings*
1930-1939, London, 1998, vol. II, no. AG37.2
(HMF 1334a), p.182 ill.



PABLO PICASSO

(1881-1973)

Four studies, 1946

Four drawings, pencil on graph paper,
each 21,6 x 34,3 cm
Each dated: 21.F.46

Preparatory drawings for the paintings *Still Life With Skull on Chair* (26 February 1946) and *Skull and Book* (27 February 1946)

PROVENANCE

Marie-Thérèse Walter, Paris
Private collection, Switzerland
Pace Gallery, New York
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago
Private collection, USA

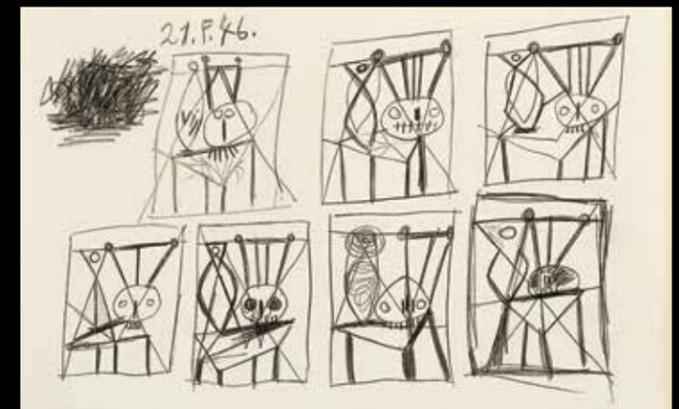
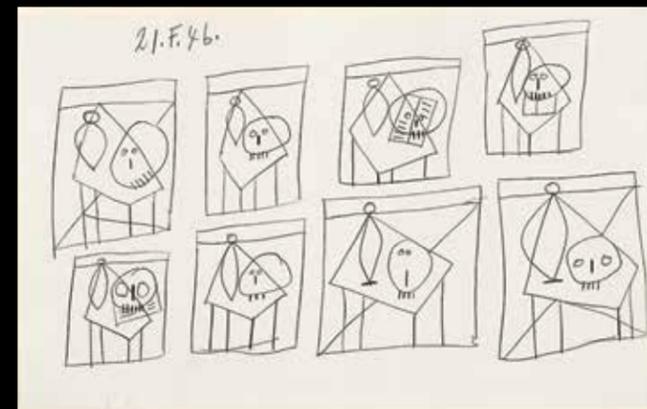
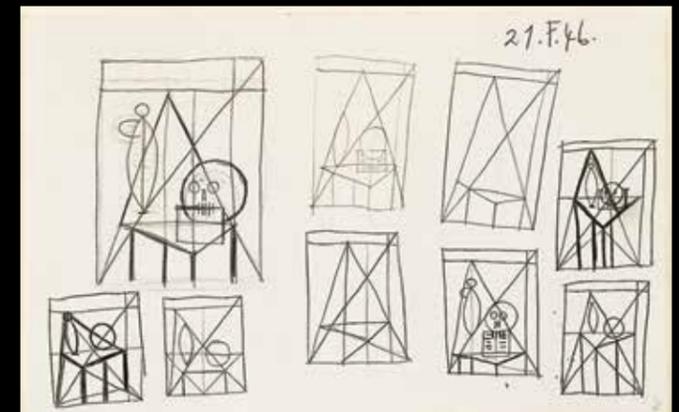
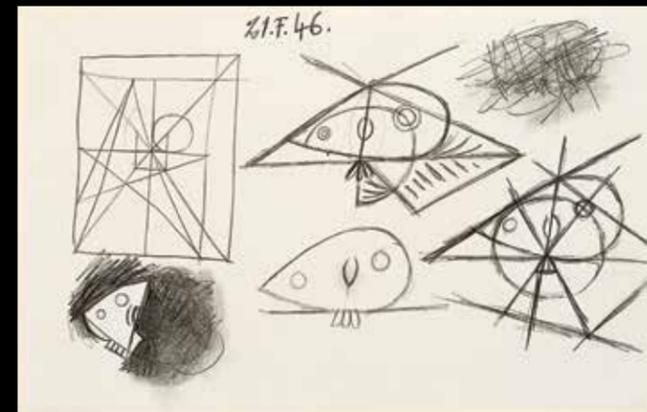
EXHIBITED

Geneva, Galerie Jan Krugier, *Une collection Picasso: oeuvres 1937 à 1946, 1973, nos. 99, 100* (Zervos 153, 158)
Chicago, Carrie Secrist Gallery, *Plotting : A Survey Exhibition of Artists' Studies*, 2002 (Zervos 156, 157)

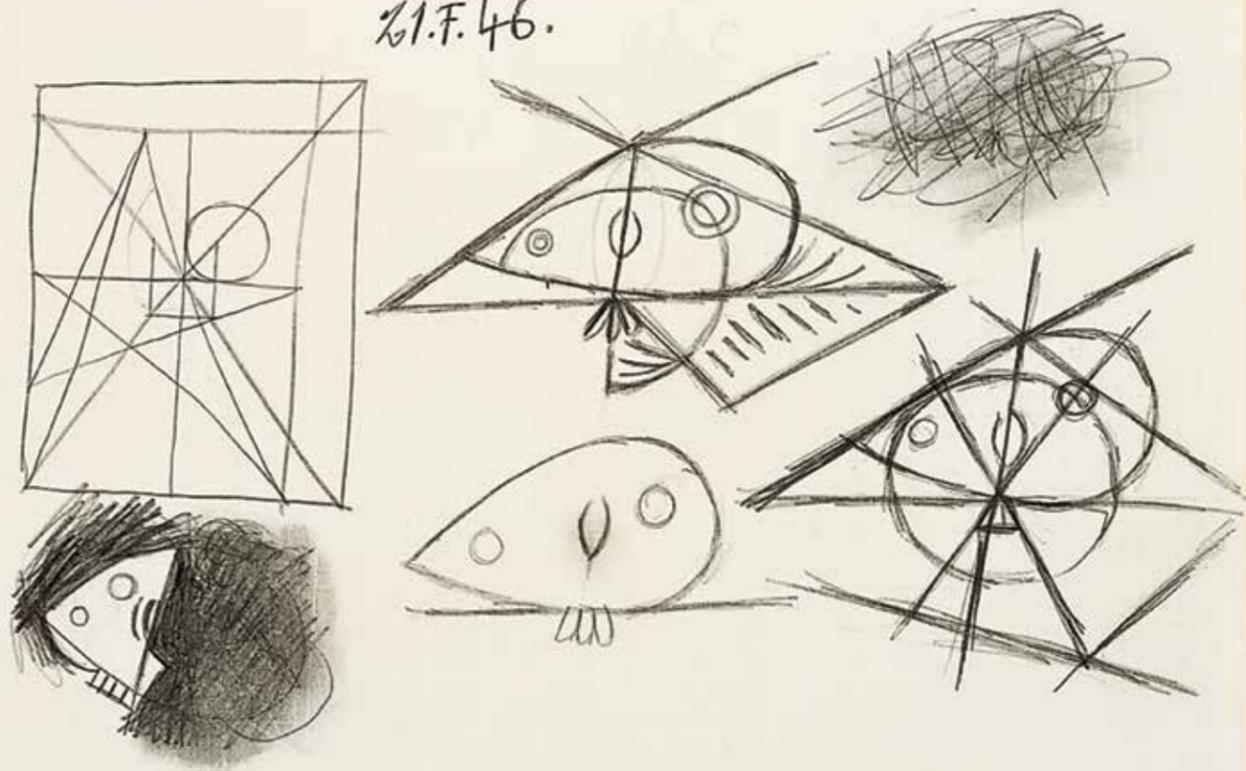
LITERATURE

Christian Zervos, *Pablo Picasso. Oeuvres de 1944 à 1946*, (vol. 14), Paris, 1963, nos. 152, 156, 157, 158, ill. p.66-67
The Picasso Project, *Picasso's Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings and Sculpture : Liberation and Post-War Years 1944-1949*, San Francisco, 2000, nos. 42-023, 46-025, 46-027, 46-029, illustrated p.64-65

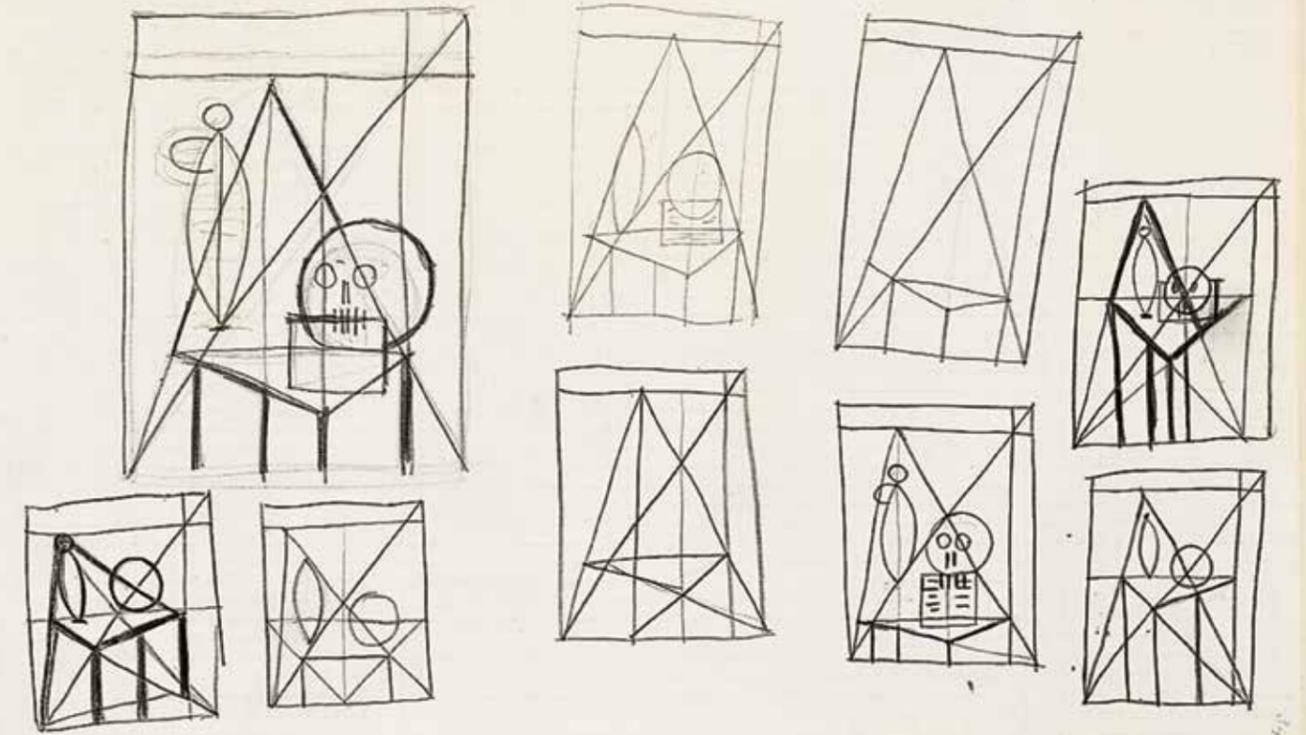
The still lifes made by Picasso at the end of the World War II, and shortly thereafter, are thematically and formally akin to the large *memento mori* works from the same period. Only then did the nightmare become clear in all its horror. In 1943 Picasso modelled a skull in plaster and, when cast in bronze, it became a permanent fixture in his studio. It also featured in many drawings and paintings where, together with other objects – here, jug and book – it takes on a dramatic persona. As these studies show, the conflict plays out between life and death (the jug as dynamic figure) in a neo-cubistic segmented space, with a clearly organized incidence of light. The symbolism of this conflict, the suggestion of closed, rastered space (legs of the table, spindles of the chair) goes beyond the unequivocal. Picasso himself spoke of ‘visual rhyme’, where latent relationships within a work are established by force of form and symbolic content, the purpose being to liberate the viewer from his or her usual ways of seeing. Thus no *vanitas* preaching resignation. Here, too: the grandiose ambition of the artist to create a universal image-language that replaces representation with expressive ideograms, signs that refer to underlying significances; a language that can express all phenomena (including feelings and thoughts), and that has incorporated within itself the history of art in its entirety.



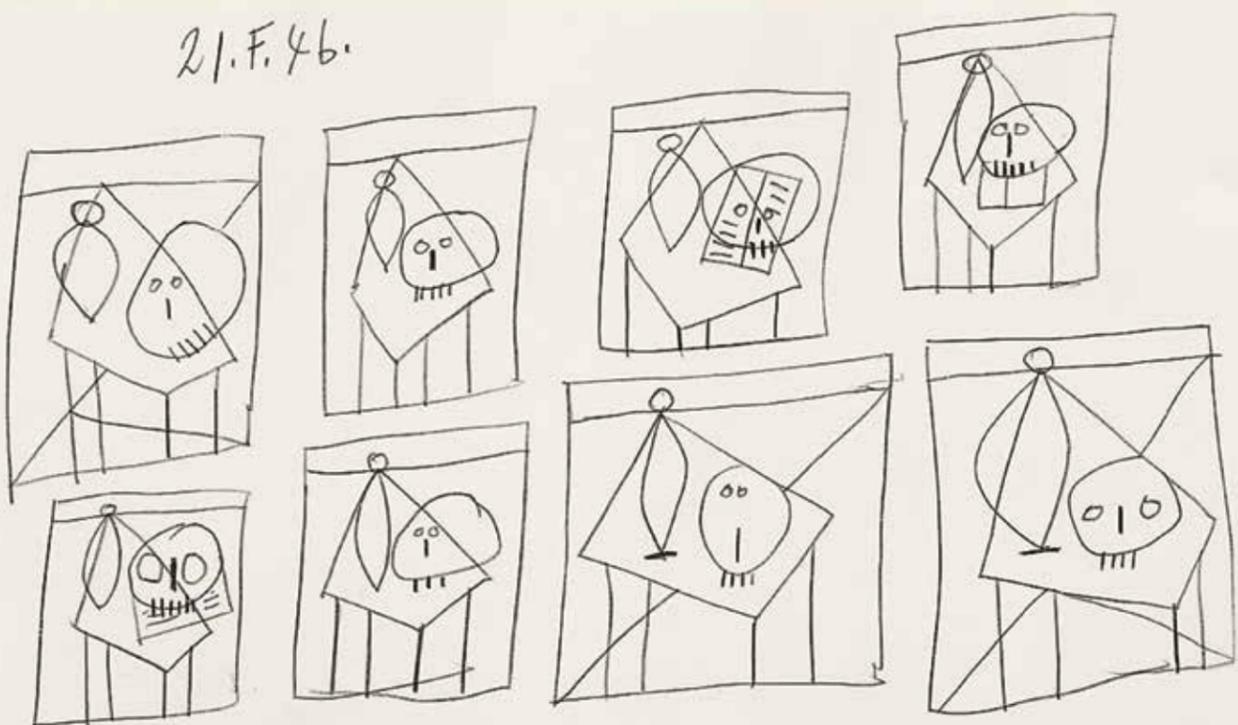
21.F.46.



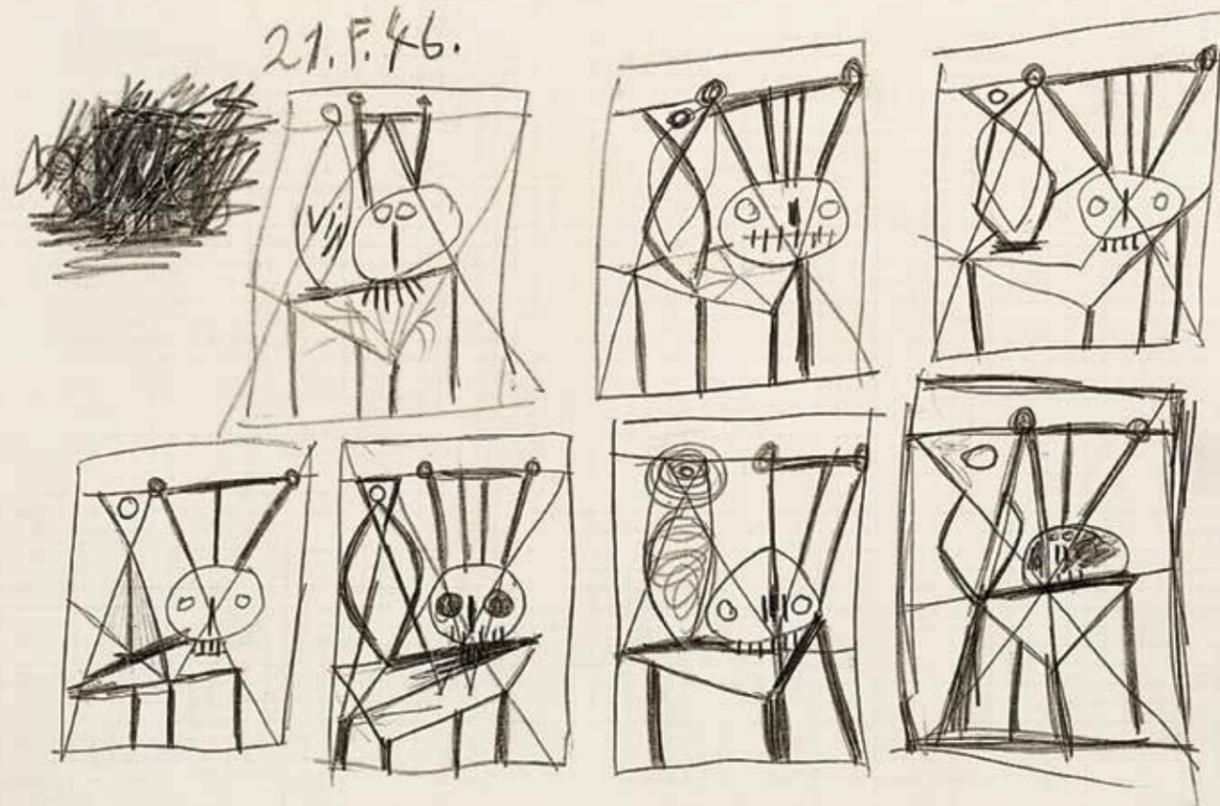
21.F.46.



21. F. 46.



21. F. 46.



NAUM GABO

(1890-1977)

Maquette for the *Bijenkorf Construction*, 1954

Wood, steel and plexiglass, 26 cm high
(including wooden base)

PROVENANCE

A gift from the artist to N.H. Benninga, Laren,
c. 1954
Collection Piet and Ida Sanders, Schiedam
Sale Christie's Amsterdam, 26 May 1993, lot 300

EXHIBITED

Schiedam, Stedelijk Museum Schiedam,
Collectie Piet en Ida Sanders. Leven met kunst, 2012

LITERATURE

H. Read, *Gabo, Constructions, Sculptures, Paintings, Drawings, Engravings*, London 1957, p. 184,
no. 98-99 (another model illustrated).

S. Nash and J. Merkert, *Naum Gabo: Sixty Years of Constructivism: Including Catalogue Raisonné of the Constructions and Sculptures*, Munich 1985,
no. 67.3, p. 244.

Anonymous, 'Gabo-maquette ter veiling',
in: *Rotterdams Dagblad*, 25 May 1993 (illustrated).
Piet Sanders, *Herinneringen*, Amsterdam, 2009,
p. 116 (illustrated).

Naum Gabo together with his brother Antoine Pevsner are pioneers of constructivism. He is a central figure in the Russian avant-garde, and also remains very active in modernist circles following his departure from Russia in 1922. From early on his artistic vision is influenced by developments in the exact sciences. The artist has a spiritual mission, his work shows the way to an ideal world: 'Those mentally constructed images are the very essence of the reality of the world which we are searching for.' Gabo's choice of materials is also consistent with this utopian attitude. The iron and glass of his early constructions make way for synthetic materials. The choice is not driven by aesthetic motives, but because the new materials allow greater transparency to contain more space and make it visible. Sculpture moves in the direction of architecture, to help in lending form to the surroundings. After 1950, Gabo will carry out large commissions in conjunction with new architecture, like this grandiose construction next to the Bijenkorf Building in Rotterdam, designed by Marcel Breuer. Despite the large scale – 26 meters high, a weight of 40 tons – the sculpture evokes a sense of lightness and movement, and shines as a lyrical counterpoint to the functional building. Within Gabo's oeuvre, the construction is also related to the freestanding variations on the 'spheric' leitmotif that he realizes in various materials and formats from the late-1930s on. – In a caption accompanying a photograph of the just completed monument, Carola Giedion-Welcker, historian and great defender of modern sculpture, speaks of Gabo's ambitions as well as his historical importance: 'The interior view of this spatially activated construction (...) reveals the effects of interpenetrating forces which was first accepted esthetically in the Eiffel Tower and is here conveyed by means of today's intensified dynamics.'



JEAN BRUSSELMANS

(1884-1953)

I am the painter of the cold hearth (Je suis le peintre du 'Kouden Haard'), 1947

India ink and pen on paper, 164 x 120 mm

Signed and dated *Jean Brusselmans le 25 janvier 1947* middle and lower left; titled upper right.

PROVENANCE

Private collection

LITERATURE

Ostend, Mu.ZEE Kunstmuseum aan zee, *Jean Brusselmans*, 2012, ill. on cover

The Brabantine hamlet where Jean Brusselmans long lived is called Koudenaerde. Years spent on the edge of poverty explains the play on words 'Kouden Haard' (cold hearth) which was also the name he gave to his home and workplace. Brusselmans' oeuvre stands out from that of his contemporaries by the symbiosis of construction and figuration that he doggedly held onto despite the vagueries of art fashion. The proud tone of 'Je suis le peintre du Kouden Haard' combined with objects from his immediate surroundings that so often recur in his still-lives – chessboard, vase with flowers, platter with fish, shells – turn the drawing into a design worthy of a gallant blazon or banner. The frontal presentation of apparently independent elements indicates the strict way he arranges and re-arranges reality on his canvases until the painterly image is born, in his landscapes as in his still-lives. The constantly recurring motifs – with minor variations – fit in with an unbounded ambition to provide the world with order, but without dissolving it. A combative temper reigns in Brusselmans' oeuvre. With 21 subzero days, January 1947 was especially cold and Brusselmans probably wished to warm himself in the belief that painting also implies joining the battle under the flag of one's own forms.



JEAN BRUSSELMANS

(1884-1953)

Peasant woman with cap, 1948

Watercolor on paper, 610 x 453 mm

Signed and dated *Jean Brusselmans 1948* bottom left

PROVENANCE

Sale Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels,
March 1964

Collection J. Komkommer, 's Gravenwezel

LITERATURE

Robert-L. Delevoy, *Jean Brusselmans, Catalogue raisonné établi par G. Brys-Schatan*, Bruxelles : Laconti, 1972, cat.446 a, ill.

Jean Brusselmans stands out among expressionists by virtue of the tight, constructive composition of his works. Equally, they have a penetratingly concrete character achieved by clear strokes and delineation. His unique, self-confident and consistent approach never tails off into illusion or abstraction. Perhaps less emphatically than for his landscapes, this also holds for his figure studies. Here, sections of shadow and light give rise to a near-decorative scheme with mutually compensating black and colored planes. The personality of the woman 'disappears' in the composition's intentional planarity. The clothing as well as the filled basket and clogs are still recognizable, but for the painter they serve purely as pretext. He searches for the typical, he searches for new significant symbols. In a time when sentimental 'animism' enjoyed its heyday, the hard tone of his oeuvre translated his free, independent position. No wonder that Brusselmans had a great influence upon young Belgian painters, for he is one of the few who had drawn useful conclusions from pre-1940's 'isms'.



RENÉ GUIETTE

(1893-1976)

Black sketchbook, 1949-1951

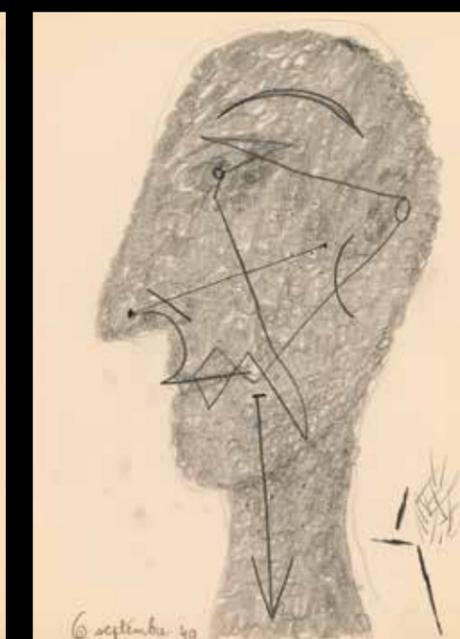
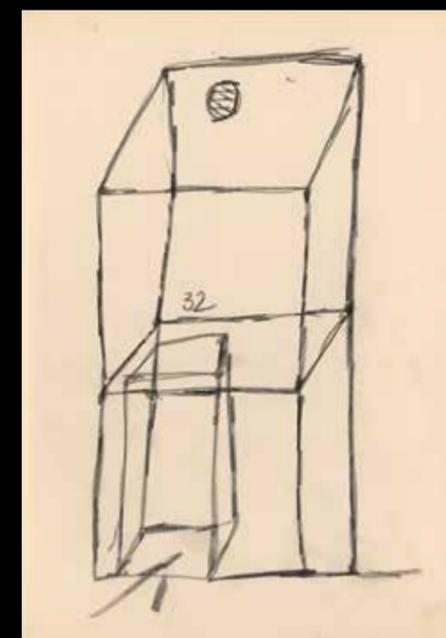
43 drawings, pencil and black crayon on paper,
278 x 212 mm each (one drawing with collage of
a bird feather)

Signed and dated on verso of front cover *René
Guiette 1949-1950/51*; most drawings dated.

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist

From 1927, René Guiette lives and works on the outskirts of Antwerp, in a house designed by Le Corbusier. Guiette is a cosmopolitan figure, steeped in Parisian culture. He is also one of the few Antwerp artists with international contacts. After 1945 he starts to paint much more spontaneously, with deliberate references to unartistic visual languages. He then also becomes member of the *Compagnie d'Art Brut*, by which co-founder Jean Dubuffet wanted to shake the art world awake. In a certain sense, Guiette's intentionally 'primitive' working method is a return to the origin, to the 1920s when he (as autodidact) became enthralled by folk art and expressionism. The experimental period post-1945, with heavily accentuated paintings, liberates him from a style and thematic that had perhaps become too elegant. Under Dubuffet's influence – who didn't give a damn about pictorial conventions of any sort – Guiette does not wish to please per se (with his new visual language). His main intention is to express a more searching freedom, as in this sketchbook. For example, he succeeds by means of an apparently simple drawing to bear witness to the living symbiosis between himself and the house wherein he lived and worked.



RENÉ GUIETTE

(1893-1976)

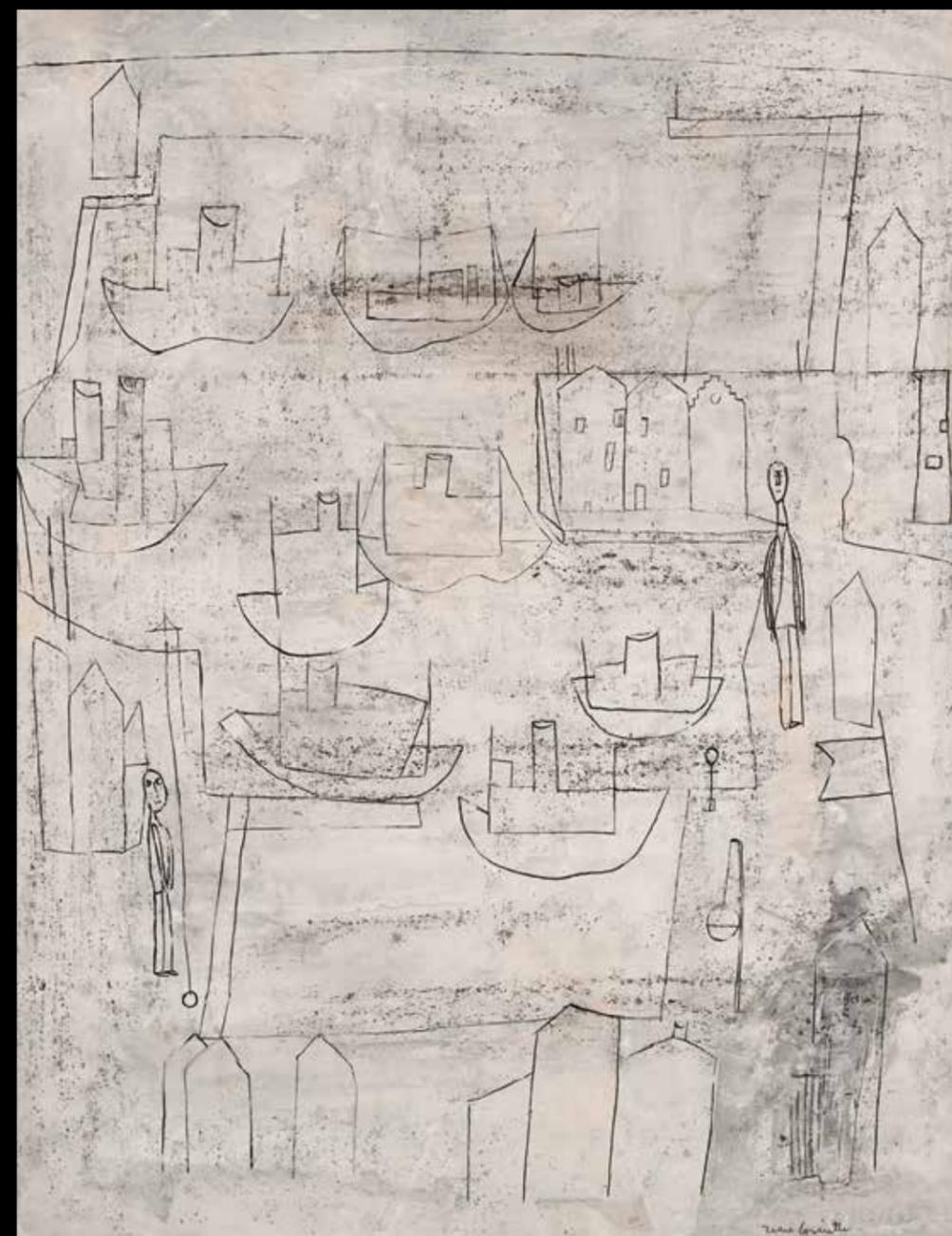
Untitled (Mediterranean port), c. 1950

Gouache and ink on paper, 495 x 390 mm
Signed René Guiette bottom right

PROVENANCE

Estate of the artist

For the painting *Port gris* from December 1951, Guiette probably set out from this drawing. The first thing one notices is the great difference with respect to medium. The elegant line drawing is elaborated in oil and plaster to achieve a rougher, less 'artistic' effect. In contrast to the drawing's monochrome background, the harbor bassin in the painting is much more onerous, what was idyllic now becomes dramatic. Although Guiette had come a long way artistically since the years of the Twenties, the drawing harks back to the harbor views of his early years when he worked in a faux-naïf style, inspired by folk art and expressionism. As in these 'unrealistic' works, here too there reigns a dreamy mood – perhaps with echoes of Klee – while in the painting the influence of Dubuffet is more emphatically present. Instead of the two pausing flâneurs who look landward in the drawing, in the painting we have a row of graffiti-like silhouettes waiting for a ship to come in that never will. One might, as with other paintings from the early Fifties, call this 'existentialist'. While a threatening air dominates in the painting, the drawing has a holiday feel, far from the post-war impasse. An elegant sketch brought back from a trip to southern climes can acquire a wholly new identity in a wintry atelier, and engender deliberate references to unartistic visual language.



Nude on a couch, 1948

Pen and India ink on paper, 245 x 320 mm

PROVENANCE

Tony Curtis, Beverly Hills
Private collection

LITERATURE

Virginie Monnier & Jean Clair, *Balthus: Catalogue Raisonné of the Complete Works*, Paris, 1999, # D.647, ill. p. 253

The enduring attraction of Balthus is inextricably bound with his talent to combine the serene stateliness of the early Renaissance – as in the work of Piero della Francesca – with a slightly perverse atmosphere, painted in a style that looks perfect within the limitations set by the painter himself. A more expressive handling of his favorite leitmotif – the latent violence coupled to forbidden pleasures – would have proved less effective. The nude on the couch could be one of his girls in that so-typical, provocative pose. She is sketched in symbiosis with the lascivious piece of furniture more proper to a boudoir. She appears not aware of the effect of her seductive body on the viewer, but that is part of the intrigue: there is no such thing as youthful innocence. – The execution of line does not remind us – as the theme does – of the Rococo, heyday of the libertines, but rather of the Romantic. Perhaps a kinship between this and the drawings that Delacroix made of lions at rest and in action, is not as strange as may at first seem. The fact that the personage appears caught in the middle of a movement, before or after a decisive dialogue, may be linked with Balthus's work for the theatre – set designs – during the Thirties and Forties.



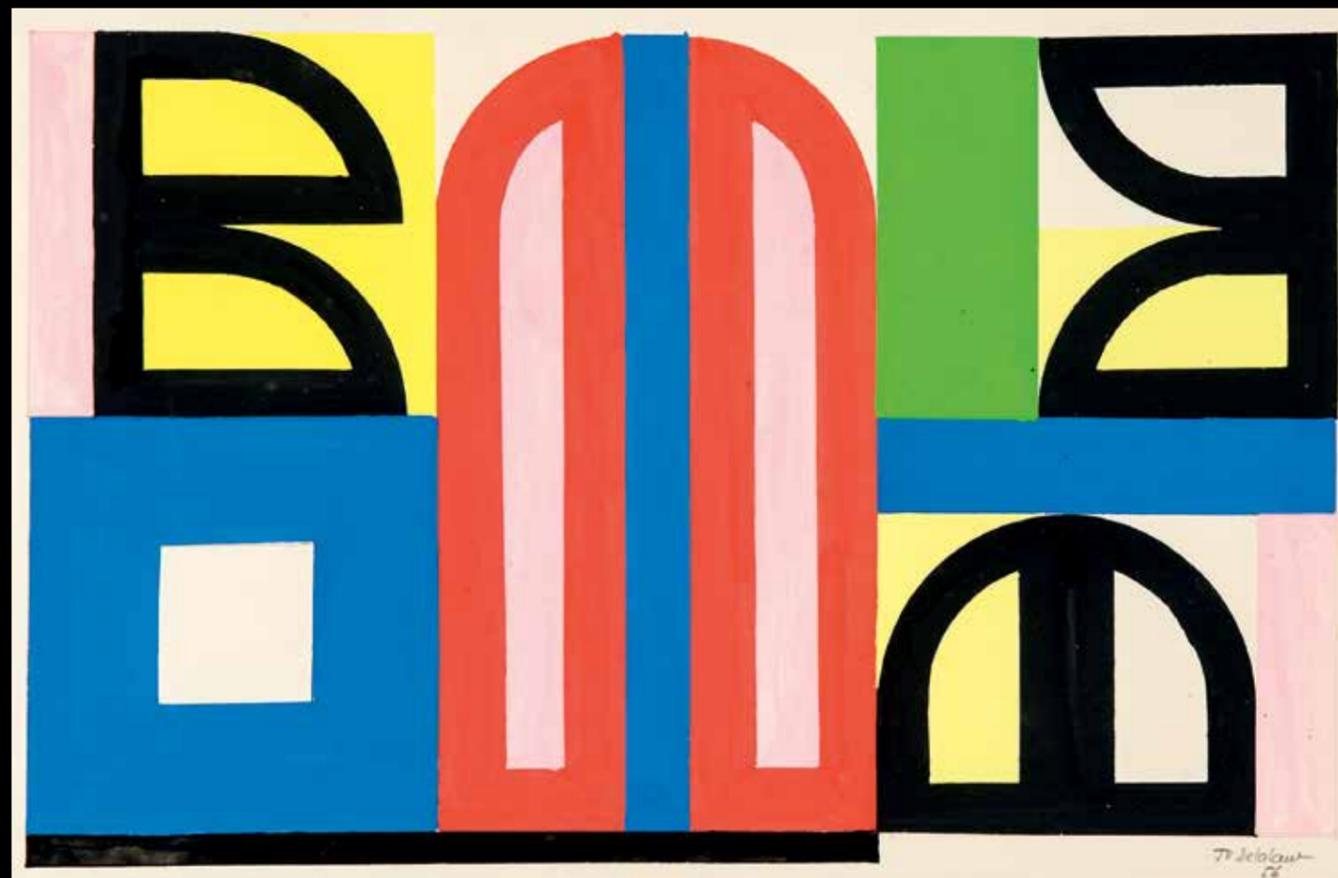
JO DELAHAUT

(1911-1992)

Untitled, 1956

Gouache on paper, 280 x 425 mm
Signed and dated *Jo Delahaut 56* bottom right

Jo Delahaut is the only non-figurative artist of the Jeune Peinture Belge. As with Herbin, Dewasne or Vasarely, he links up with pre-war geometric abstraction, with the ideal of a 'concrete' art that no longer is based on reducing reality but rather organizing the art work solely in terms of geometric forms and colors. The oeuvre of Delahaut displays systematic variation, evolves in elaborated series, obstinate and independent of prevailing fashions. Starting in 1952, Delahaut makes thematic series with U-shapes which he then halves into rounded rectangles, against rectangular and square backgrounds. Without any reference to reality, the painter composes a rhythmic image whose bright colors and spacing evoke a musical dynamic.



JEAN DUBUFFET

(1901-1985)

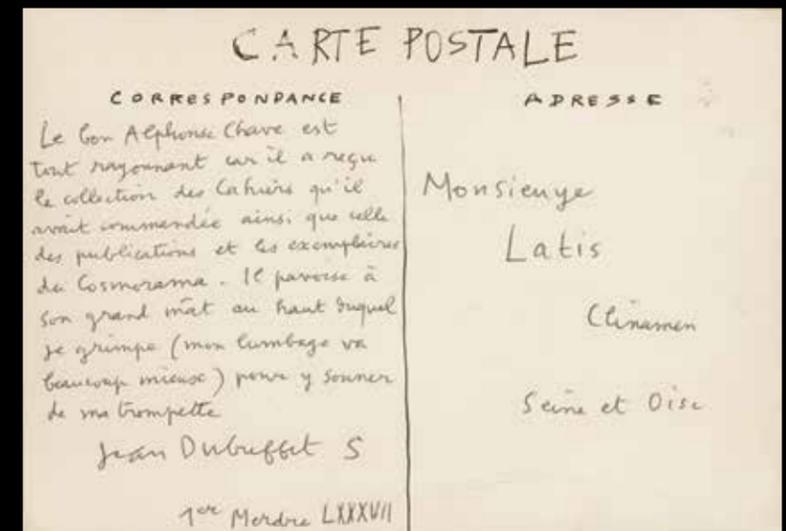
La Côte d'Azur pittoresque – Mère et enfant dans les jardins du Casino – NICE (Alpes Maritimes), 1960

Pen and ink on paper, 150 x 103 mm
On verso autograph letter signed *Jean Dubuffet* S (Satrape), addressed to Latis, pseudonym of Emmanuel Peillet, one of the founders of the Collège de Pataphysique, and dated *1er Merdre LXXXVII*, 18 May 1960 in the pataphysical calendar.

PROVENANCE

Emmanuel Peillet

Dubuffet always wanted to make art of a *different* kind, and always wanted to be an artist of a *different* kind. His life and work bear witness to a relentless one-man war, in word and image, against the established culture that he considered as the greatest obstacle to authentic creativity. It is known that under the heading of *art brut*, he wished to stimulate interest in visual output that is generally not considered as art – by virtue of its being 'naïve', or made by madmen, or just anonymous graffiti – and that this 'acultural' visual language had frequently been the starting point for his own work. In contrast to these non-professional, often monomaniacal painters and object makers whom he considered as a counterweight to sclerotic art, Dubuffet was a multifaceted and sophisticated artist who deliberately switched from the one experimental phase to the next. Naturally there are constants, like the humor that ranges from ironic to caustic. – Dubuffet certainly hated the sort of tourism that makes every spot so banal. Not surprising then, that with the title of this drawing he alludes to the once renowned casino of Nice and its beautiful gardens – immortalized on countless postcards – that had to make room for urban 'progress'. But nostalgia has no place at Dubuffet's table. This image is not female- or child-friendly, it is no idyllic souvenir. Rather it reminds us of Saturn who devours his children, of the circle of the eternal return to the same thing. Or have both personages identified themselves with the labyrinth that made the gardens such a pleasant place? Considering the letter on verso, addressed by Dubuffet to a fellow member of the Collège de pataphysique, the image may also refer to the spiral Gidouille that Jarry drew on Ubu's belly and that the Collège has been using as a logo.



ASGER JORN

(1914-1973)

Untitled, 1953

Pen and ink on paper, 225 x 145 mm

(On verso of a document of the Silkeborg health insurance institution, dated November 20, 1953)

Asger Jorn is the most heroic artist of post-1945 Europe. He was co-founder and very active member of Cobra, of the Mouvement pour un Bauhaus imaginiste and of the Situationist International. He was a tireless, demanding and consistent defender on freedom's ramparts. His multifaceted and bounteous oeuvre – he was painter, sculptor, graphic artist and author – masterly evokes the near-mythical power of the image. – For treatment of recurring tuberculosis (first diagnosed in 1929, at age 15), Jorn spends much of 1951-1952 in a sanatorium at Silkeborg in his native Denmark. This period of enforced sedentary existence, but also of intense artistic productivity, signifies a turning point in his oeuvre. He has a working-space at his disposal and in the most difficult of circumstances he succeeds in publishing *Held og Hasard (Luck and Chance)*, a book where he expounds on his ideas on aesthetics, and that he illuminates with eighty colored linocuts. He commences a series of works under the heading 'silent myth', inspired by human history from the Ice Age to Columbus. From 1951-1953 he fills a sketchbook, mostly in black ink and blue watercolors, with a chain of ideas that he will elaborate in paintings and graphic work, and also in 'wild' ceramic works. The works from this series have in common that they are constructed around a central axis that is an open space rather than a figure, as in this drawing where the mythical animal-people and people-animals – masked beings – press to the center or want just to break out of the drawing. Jorn continually and purposefully experiments. From *Held og Hasard* (1952): "When the aesthete reads a sign 'The ice is unsafe', then this is for him an enticement not only to test whether the sign is telling the truth, but also to know how unsafe ice feels. This is the condition of aesthetics, development and progress: stepping out on thin ice."



CHRISTIAN DOTREMONT

(1922-1979)

Trajectoire d'une projection, 1972

Sumi ink on paper, 545 x 725 mm
Signed, dated and text of the logogram

PROVENANCE

Anthony P. Russo, New York
John B.I. Goodwin, New York

Logogrammes are not 'illustrations' of the text. They consist of deft brushstrokes on paper that develop a rhythmically linear pattern that takes on its own life. Simple or complex, always assymetrical, alive and moving, evocations of moments of 'enlightenment' that the painter-poet is eminently capable of provoking. These are more fantastical landscapes than lived portraits, on the way to an intuitive communing with reality. From *dépaysement* (disorientation) to magic, the brush scurries through the time-space of the white sheet, along unexpected vistas, from full to empty moments, from silences to explosions, and back. Luc de Heusch rightly speaks of 'wild script', of the return of the hand, the sense of touch and the eye that that were supplanted by the sound of the words, after the writers had left the caves, on the way to tamed nature. The brush is at once 'seismograph' of arm-wrist-hand movements and of the deepest stirrings of the artist. The results are labyrinths of ink that can be described with the many epithets used by connoisseurs long ago to assess the work of master Oriental calligraphers: 'an elegance of execution without precedent', 'powerful but flowing', 'carefree, in all directions, more dancing than running', 'exuberant, full of sensitivity and strength'... Unfortunately enough, Dotremont did not get the chance to emulate the wild calligraphy of the ancient Chinese, who used their hair as brush or in a mad fit would douse one another with ink and then pull each other over the paper.



CHRISTIAN DOTREMONT

(1922-1979)

L'espace fait feu des quatre formes, 1979

Sumi ink on paper, 550 x 700 mm
Signed, dated and text of the logogram

PROVENANCE

Private collection, France



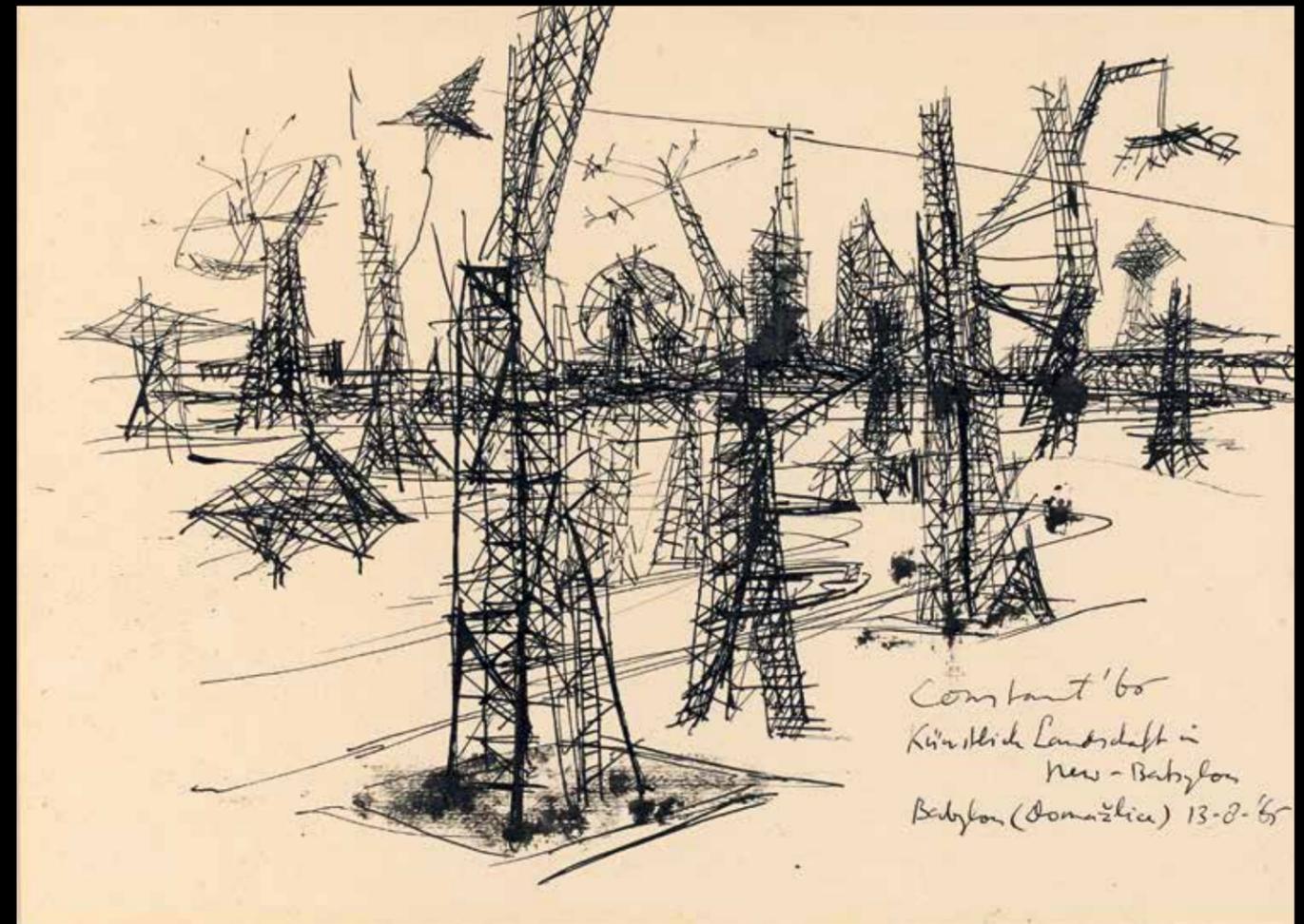
New Babylon, 1965

India ink on paper, 29 x 40 cm
Signed and dated *Babylon-Domazlice* 8-65

LITERATURE

Wigley, Mark. *Constant's New Babylon*.
The Hyper-Architecture of Desire. Rotterdam: 1998,
repr. p.166

New Babylon (it seems the term was suggested by Guy Debord) started as a project within the Situationist International, that Constant co-founded in 1957. Developing the theories of *dérive* and psychogeography, and the project for a flexible gypsy encampment from 1956, the plans and models for a future, nomadic city are meant as a critique of the use of space in this society; or, better, a critique of the absence of use. *New Babylon* goes beyond traditional art or architectural practice; it is sort of anti-propaganda. But soon, the paths of Constant and the situationists separated, and in June 1960 Constant resigned. He continues to develop *New Babylon* – in models, drawings and texts – as blueprint for a post-culture of the future where emphasis would lie on the element of play and collective creativity. 'New Babylon is an unmeasurable labyrinth. Each space is temporary, nothing is recognized, all is discovery, everything changes, nothing can serve orientation. The disorientation is essential for the *New Babylon* lifestyle. It is an important means of creating a psychological space that is many times greater than the actual surface area.' (Constant) After the revolution, *homo faber* (man at work) will make way for *homo ludens* (man at play). – Constant's drawings for *New Babylon* remind one not only of the Baroque, they are also closely related to the *capricci*, imaginary landscapes where painters like Guardi, Tiepolo and Piranesi so excelled in. No accident that they were artists from Venice, that 'fun town' *avant la lettre*.

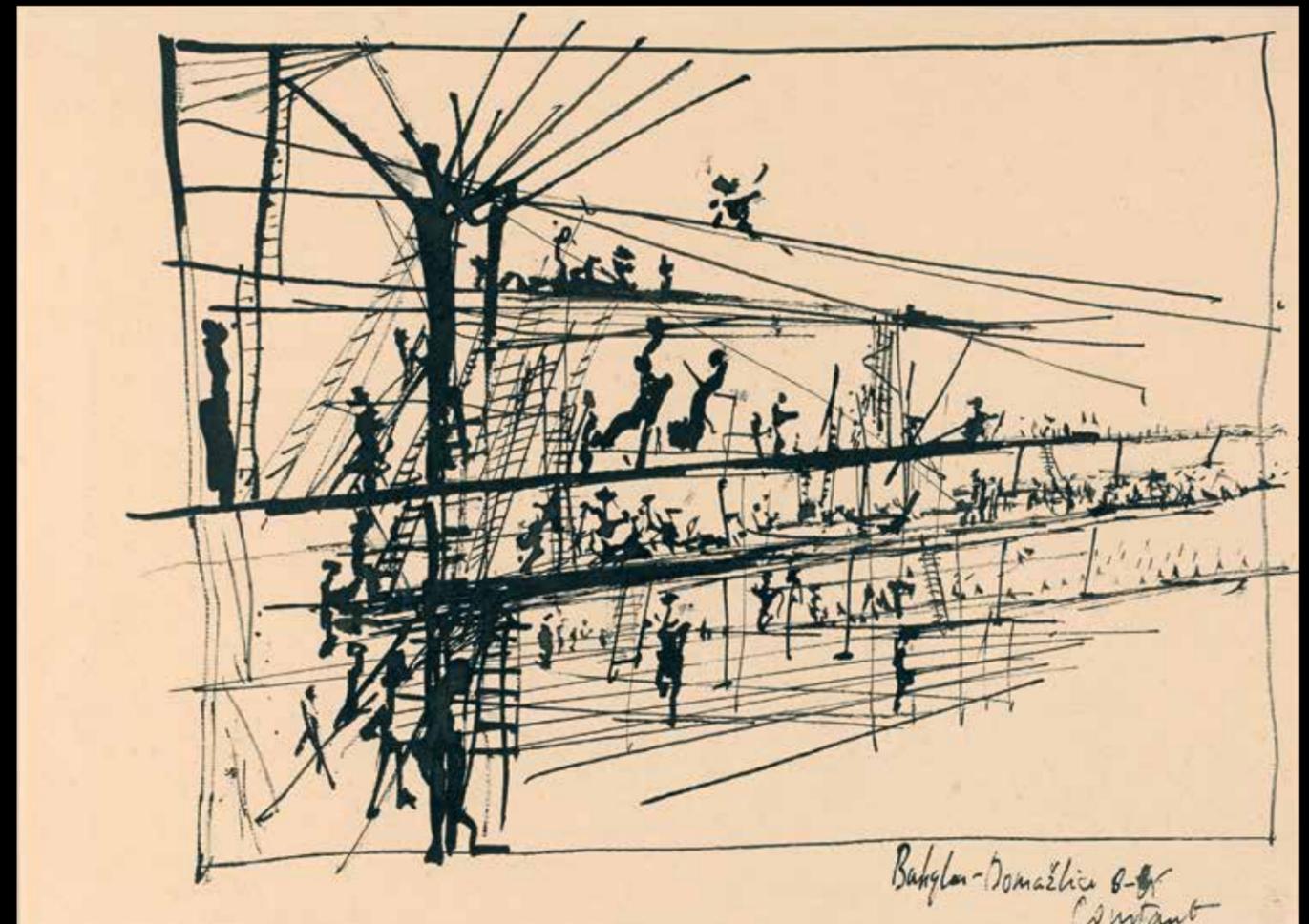


*Artificial landscape in
New Babylon (Künstliche
Landschaft in New
Babylon), 1965*

India ink on paper, 29 x 40 cm
Signed and dated *Babylon (Domazlice) 13-8-65*

LITERATURE

Wigley, Mark. *Constant's New Babylon*.
The Hyper-Architecture of Desire. Rotterdam: 1998,
repr. p.159



PAUL VAN HOEYDONCK

(B.1925)

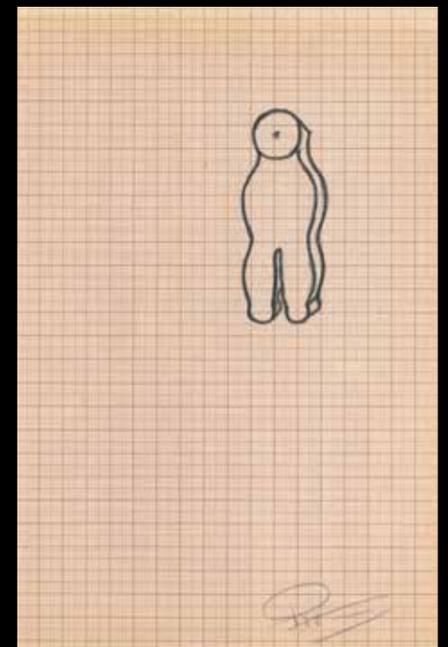
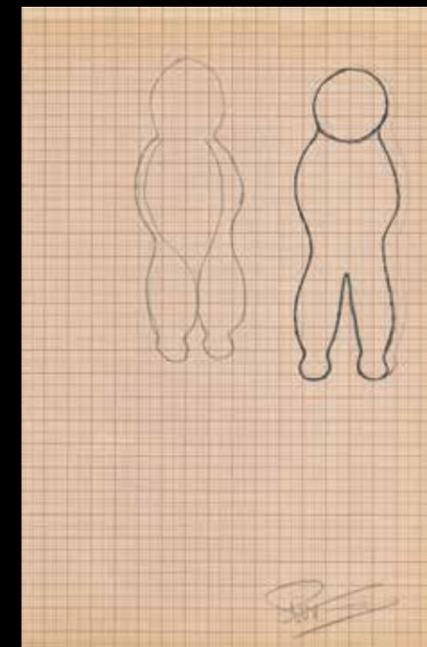
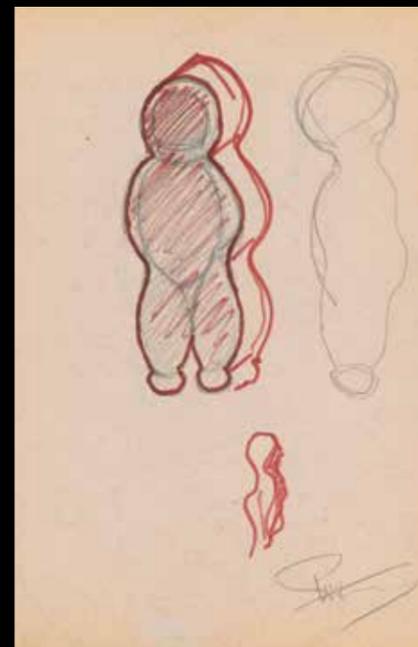
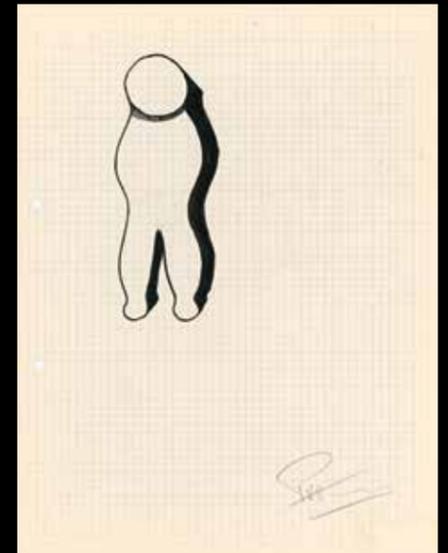
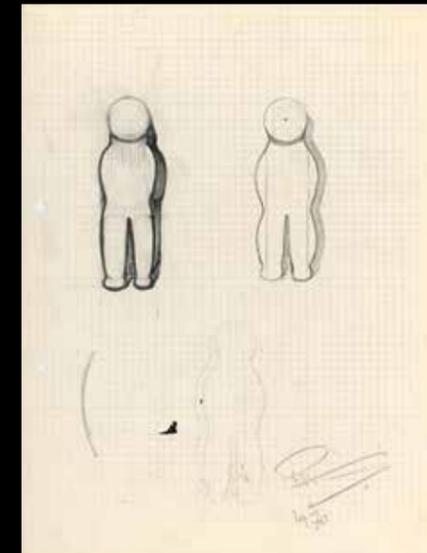
Studies for *Fallen astronaut*, 1970

Pencil and ink on paper, three sheets, each 275 x 190 mm.

Pencil on tracing paper, two sheets, each 280 x 180 mm

All studies signed

Van Hoeydonck is the only artist to have succeeded in having an art work installed on a planet other than Earth. On August 2nd 1971, *Fallen astronaut* was placed in a moon crater by astronaut David Scott, close to Apollo 15's landing site. More than a work of art, the aluminum sculpture – admittedly small, at 85 mm. in length – is a monument commemorating American astronauts and Russian cosmonauts 'who have died in the line of duty.' With its schematic form, *Fallen astronaut* is distinctive in its marked contrast to the baroque assemblages Van Hoeydonck produces at the end of the 1960s and where he makes reference to space travel as man's most future-oriented activity. No doubt Van Hoeydonck's NASA commission was made more difficult by a number of technical limitations that ruled out a more exuberant design. While the preliminary studies consist of stylized standing figures, in the sculpture there is no recognizable sign of life, something more appropriate for a funeral monument. Although here Van Hoeydonck could literally realize his dream of 'space art', the preliminary drawings as well as the definitive sculpture remind one of a previous phase in his oeuvre, namely during the 1950s when he worked in the context of geometric abstraction. Perhaps, too, his notion of space was then already more romantic than the 'scientific' vision of his orthodox colleagues. For that matter, he often remarked that he had no problem with anecdotal art, and that reading Flash Gordon and Jules Verne in his youth had had a lasting influence on him. With *Fallen astronaut*, Van Hoeydonck becomes part of a great modern legend.



DAN VAN SEVEREN

(1927-2009)

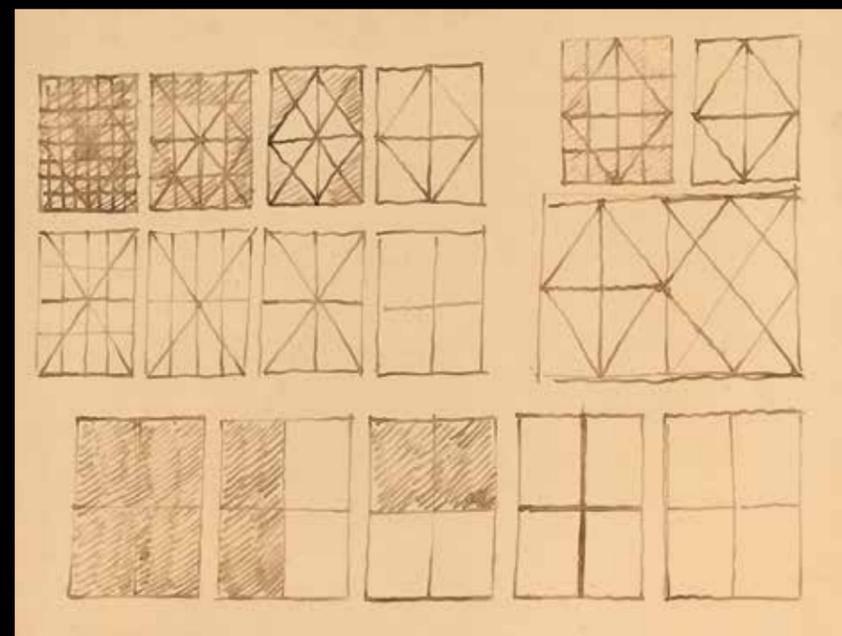
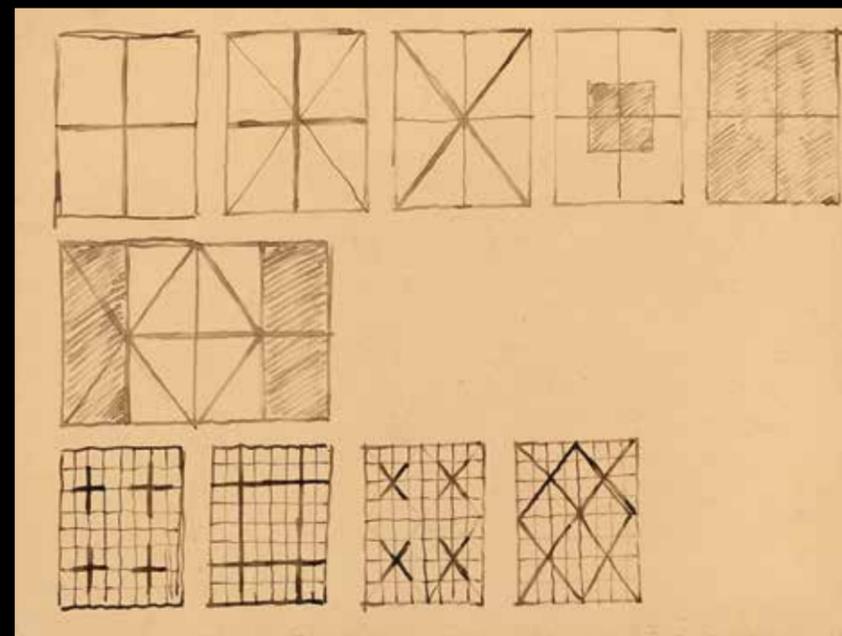
Untitled, 1973

India ink on paper, two sheets,
each 225 x 290 mm
Both signed and dated 73 on verso

EXHIBITED

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Dan Van Severen*
1959-1974, 1974, no. 44, illustrated

For Dan Van Severen, everything is part of a quest for the essential: unpretentious compositions based on a few motifs – circle, rectangle, square, rhombus – that become purified into the central cross as a near-obsessional starting point and terminus. The slow maturation process, further reinforced by choosing to work with ‘palpable’ materials like artisanal paper, pencil and tempera; the limited color-range with refined nuances of whites and grays. Van Severen is more a romantic or symbolist than an abstract artist. He does not make art that is based on pure calculation, that enthusiastically wishes to ally itself with the ‘scientific’ spirit of the age, as with the geometric abstract painters. And when he works in series, as well – like with these drawings – it is not a question of quantity. In an interview with Yves Gevaert in 1974, he comments about this: ‘For me the works in series are not a response to purely serial searches. In my work ‘the serial’ should be thought of in terms of pure exercise, a test of possibilities. It helps keep me awake. One always runs the perpetual risk of falling into a system and losing the essence.’ Van Severen’s work testifies to a great nostalgia for simplicity and authenticity, silence and restraint. Though in the middle of the modern age, he wants to evoke a sacral atmosphere, translating the unsayable of mystic experience into images. From the same interview in 1974: ‘I have the impression that in the current mental mess, a kernel of the essential still exists and remains preserved. And like a worldly monk I try to work with it. I believe in it, and that’s the only thing that drives my work.’



RAOUL DE KEYSER

(1930-2012)

Five studies, 1981-1987

Gouache, acrylic paint and pencil on paper;
each signed and dated on verso
200 x 75 mm, signed *Raoul De Keyser*,
dated 1981-1982

190 x 147 mm, signed *R.D.K.*, dated 82-83

185 x 145 mm, signed *RK*, dated 83-84

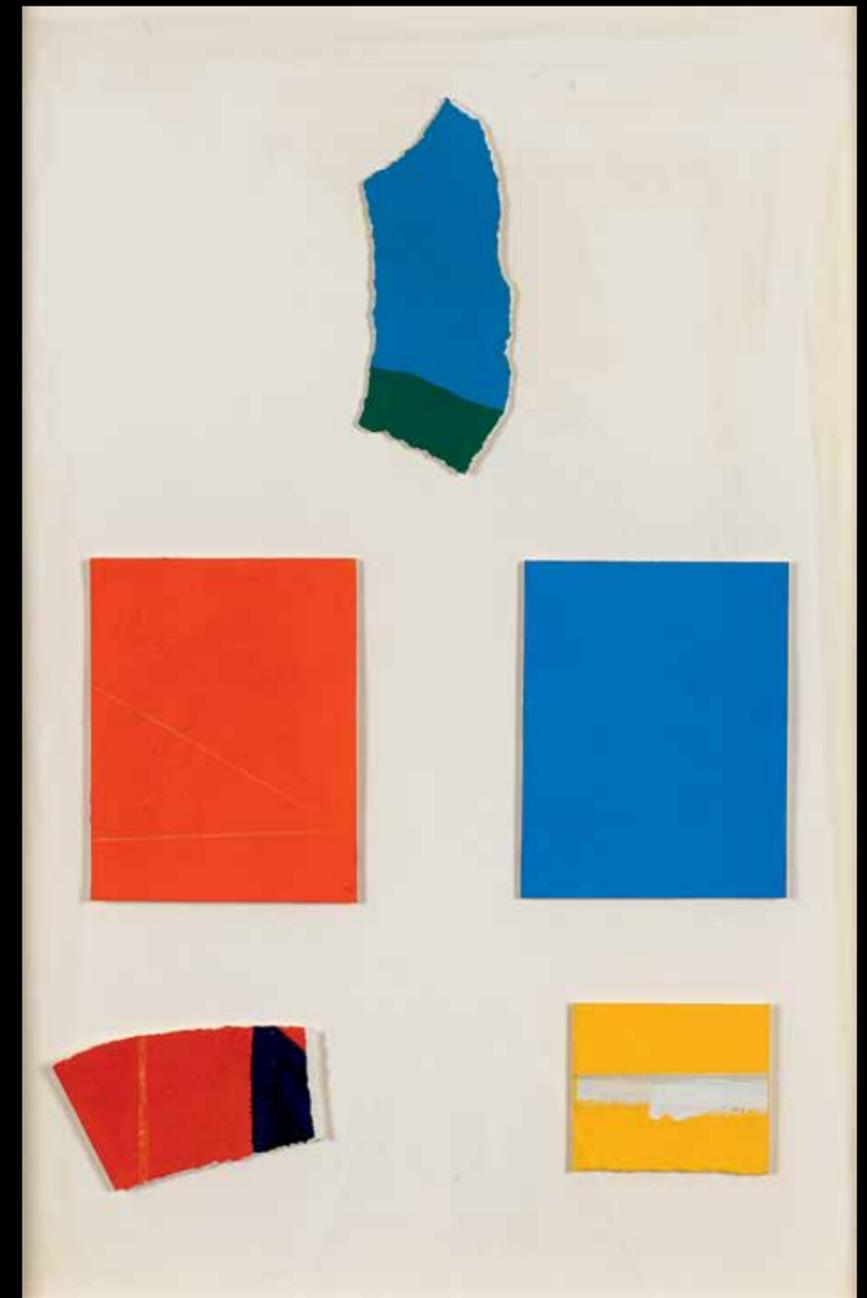
80 x 140 mm, signed *RK*, dated 85-86

95 x 109 mm, signed *RK*, dated 87-88

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Antwerp
(new year's gifts from the artist)

In the 1960s De Keyser works within the perspective of the 'nieuwe visie' (new vision) painting style, a perspective that he shares with Raveel, Elias and Lucassen. Elements from everyday surroundings are simplified into planes and lines, but remain recognizable. From the start of the Seventies, De Keyser evolves in the direction of a more autonomous painting. Canvas and motif – the chalk-lines of a football field, for example – coincide. He focuses his investigation on the medium itself, he explores its borders. These explorations also imply 'mistakes' that can be 'corrected' in fresh attempts. De Keyser tries to elude the definitive nature of the work of art. That is why he also deliberately makes the creation-process of the work visible. For De Keyser art is a physical matter, not a conceptual one; the hand ever in contact with the medium. In this sense it is hardly surprising that scraps of torn-up drawings sometimes serve as the starting point for his compositions. – These five studies are not merely preliminary studies, they are stages of a work in progress. The art critic Ludo Bekkers describes the open character of De Keyser's work: 'A work is never finished. From the canvas's edges you can read how it was overpainted to arrive at a satisfying result. But evidently it is never really acceptable, because the investigation continues in a following work, sometimes with a different approach, a different formal structure, a different use of color. And this process of adjustment, self-correction and overpainting is precisely what makes this oeuvre compelling. Its significance lies not in the reminder of reality, but in the search for the final painting of which the previous ones have been steps along the way'.



ANDY WARHOL

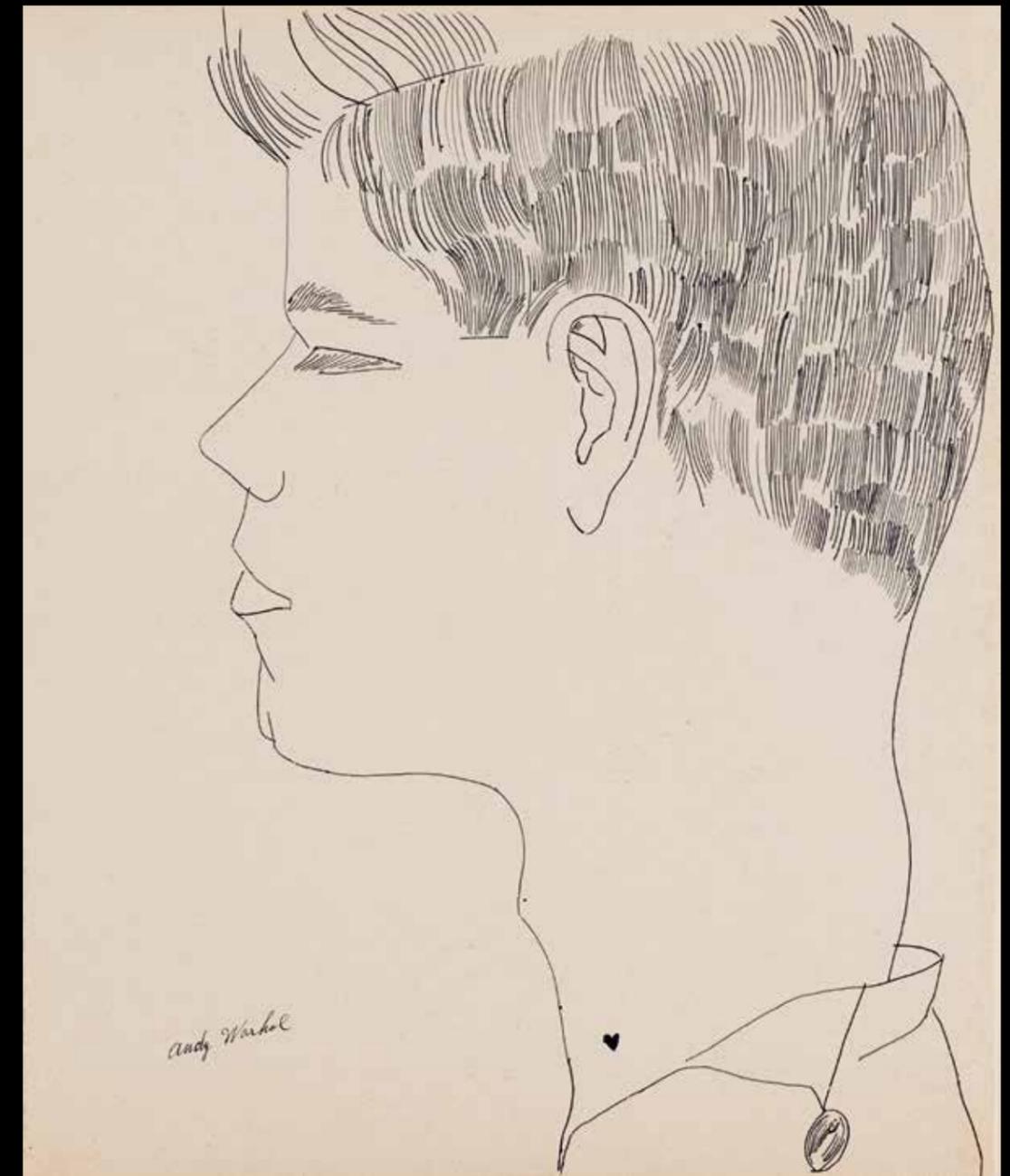
(1928-1987)

Charles Lisanby with heart, c. 1956

Pen and black ink on cream wove paper,
425 x 355 mm
Signed lower left

With an authentication from the Andy Warhol
Art Authentication Board, Inc., New York,
November 7, 2011, and the Andy Warhol Art
Authentication Board, Inc., blue stamp and
identification number A116.1110 in pencil, verso.

Prior to Andy Warhol's emerging as the most famous art entrepreneur of his time and acquiring his blue chip status, he was a much sought after advertising artist. In contrast to his later pop-method of presenting near-unaltered mass-media icons and commercial brands as art, in his advertising work he provides objects and figures precisely with unique traits and creates an atmosphere more evocative of fairytales and dreams than commerce. During these years he draws on a realistic tradition that had developed a simple, clear line in parallel with modernism. These artists are often more pragmatically inclined than the modernists. They do not eschew the anecdote, they allow humor or caricature, and they know how to efficiently handle decorative elements in their compositions. They illustrate books, children's books too, and make a lot of commercial illustrations. Much of their work shows a humanistic, social-critical tendency. It is in this context that the young Warhol starts to work. Aside from the influence of artists like George Grosz and Ben Shahn, the simple, elegant drawing style of Matisse also provided impetus, something clearly seen in both these drawings. The portrait of his then friend Charles Lisanby and the suggestively framed crotch of a man in jeans date from the same period as his *Boy Book*, a series of drawings that ultimately did not wind up as a book. Even more so than Matisse, the drawings seem reminiscent of Jean Cocteau's illustrations in his homo-erotic *Livre blanc* from 1930. Just like Cocteau, Warhol knew how to preserve a diplomatic equilibrium between private and public, a balance that shifted as a function of the media and legislatures becoming more tolerant towards 'immoral' behavior that long had remained underground. There is no true break between Warhol's advertising work and free drawings from the Fifties and his pop art. Warhol had never practiced 'high art' but had always remained close to everyday life. In the private sphere as well, like with these drawings that advertise still-forbidden pleasures. Just like Cocteau, Warhol did not become famous thanks to his early erotically tinted drawings, but once he had acquired star status – and when the time was ripe - he would (in 1978) recycle pornography for the hardcore *Sex Parts* series. What in the 1950s was still private and intimate – the little heart in the neck of his friend – and intended for the incrowd, in the Seventies becomes perverse-light amusement for a bored jetset. – Warhol, who in the Fifties had also designed LP covers, in 1971 makes the artwork for the famous zippered cover of *Sticky Fingers*, with the Rolling Stones cashing in on their bad-boy image with hits like *Brown Sugar*, *Wild Horses* and *Sister Morphine*. Warhol didn't have to draw anymore, a photo would have sufficed, but he couldn't resist using the zipper in service of a somewhat childish joke. Underground had become mainstream.



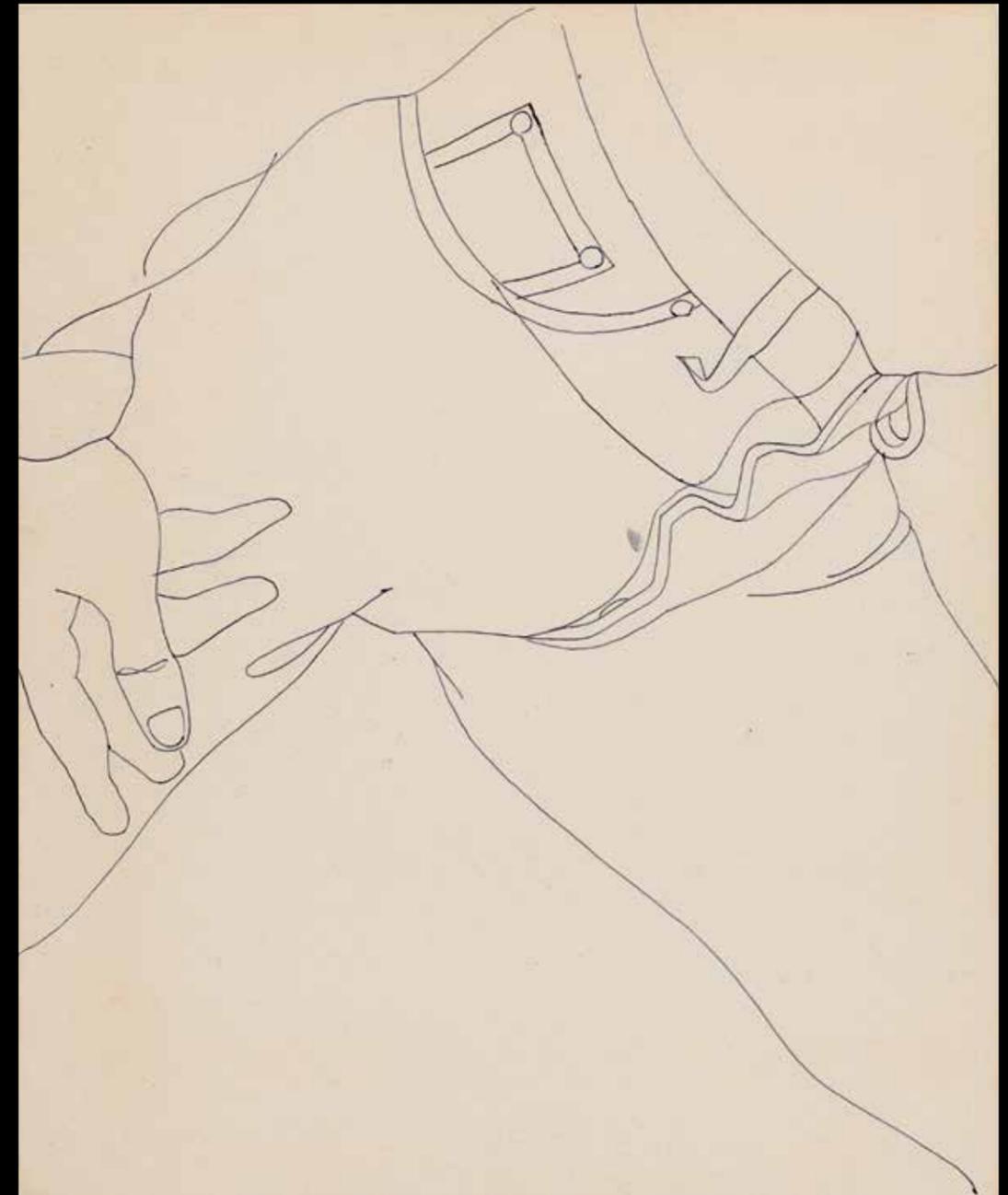
ANDY WARHOL

(1928-1987)

Untitled (Pants), c. 1956

Pen and blue ink on cream wove paper,
427 x 355 mm

With an authentication from the Andy Warhol
Art Authentication Board, Inc., New York,
November 7, 2011, and the Andy Warhol Art
Authentication Board, Inc., blue stamp and
identification number A117.1110 in pencil, verso.



MARCEL BROODTHAERS

(1924-1976)

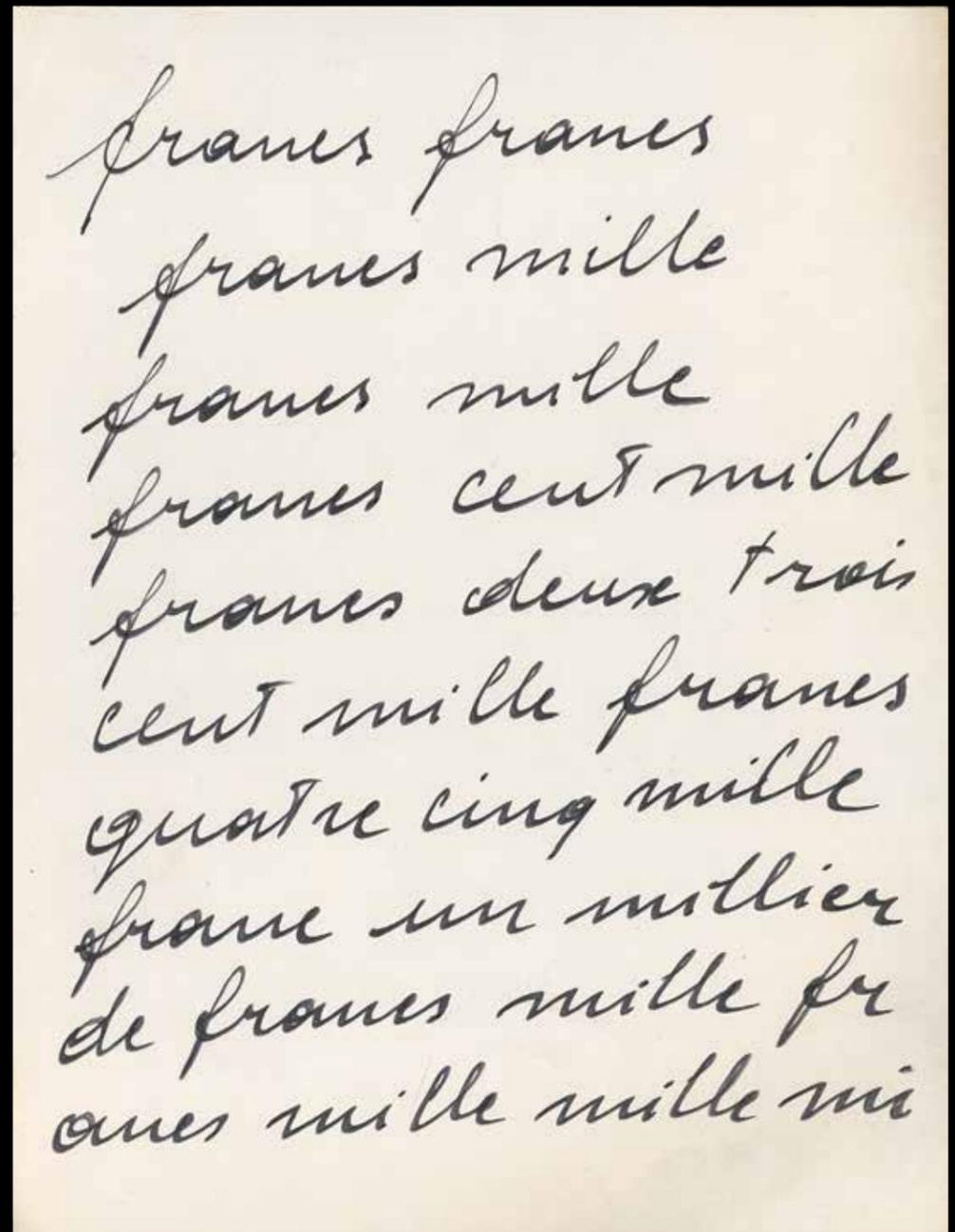
Francs francs..., 1966

Black marker on paper, 300 x 232 mm

PROVENANCE

Private collection

From his very first appearance as an artist, Marcel Broodthaers shot right to the center of the art world. The text from the invitation to his first one-man show in 1964 can be seen as the cornerstone of his entire oeuvre: "I, too, wondered whether I could not sell something and succeed in life. For some time I had been no good at anything. I am forty years old... Finally the idea of inventing something insincere finally crossed my mind and I set to work straightaway. At the end of three months I showed what I had produced to Philippe Edouard Toussaint, the owner of the Galerie St Laurent. 'But it is art,' he said, 'and I will willingly exhibit all of it.' 'Agreed,' I replied. If I sell something, he takes 30%. It seems these are the usual conditions, some galleries take 75%. What is it? In fact it is objects." - 'Money is very important in the history of art' (Michael Baxandall) is an insight that, when applied in proportion, holds not only for the Italian renaissance but also to the art world of the 1960s. Marcel Broodthaers is not alone in holding forth on this point. The optimistic adjective of 'multimillionaire' that Panamarenko adds to his own appellation during these same years, also alludes to the change of status of contemporary art from underground to trendy and luxury, at first still for a small group of supporters and collectors, later for a larger public and clever speculators. One of the major themes of Broodthaers' oeuvre is the way that art increasingly becomes a commodity, and the consequences that this evolution carries in its wake. - For the final issue of the review *Happening News* (probably Spring 1966), he makes a number of drawings which with their everyday motifs - eggs, mussels, glass jars - connect to the leading tendencies of pop art and nouveau réalisme. But for those who do not quite get that his approach differs from these other artists, he puts down this text to say what it's about. As a former poet, Broodthaers occupies a quite particular position in contemporary art, something that in part sees expression in the great difference between his effective use of language and the pseudo-philosophical discourse of concept art. That is why this art work resounds like the words sung by a gang of galling kids that stick in the mind more than Warhol's gigantic canvases with hundred-dollar bills.



MARCEL BROODTHAERS

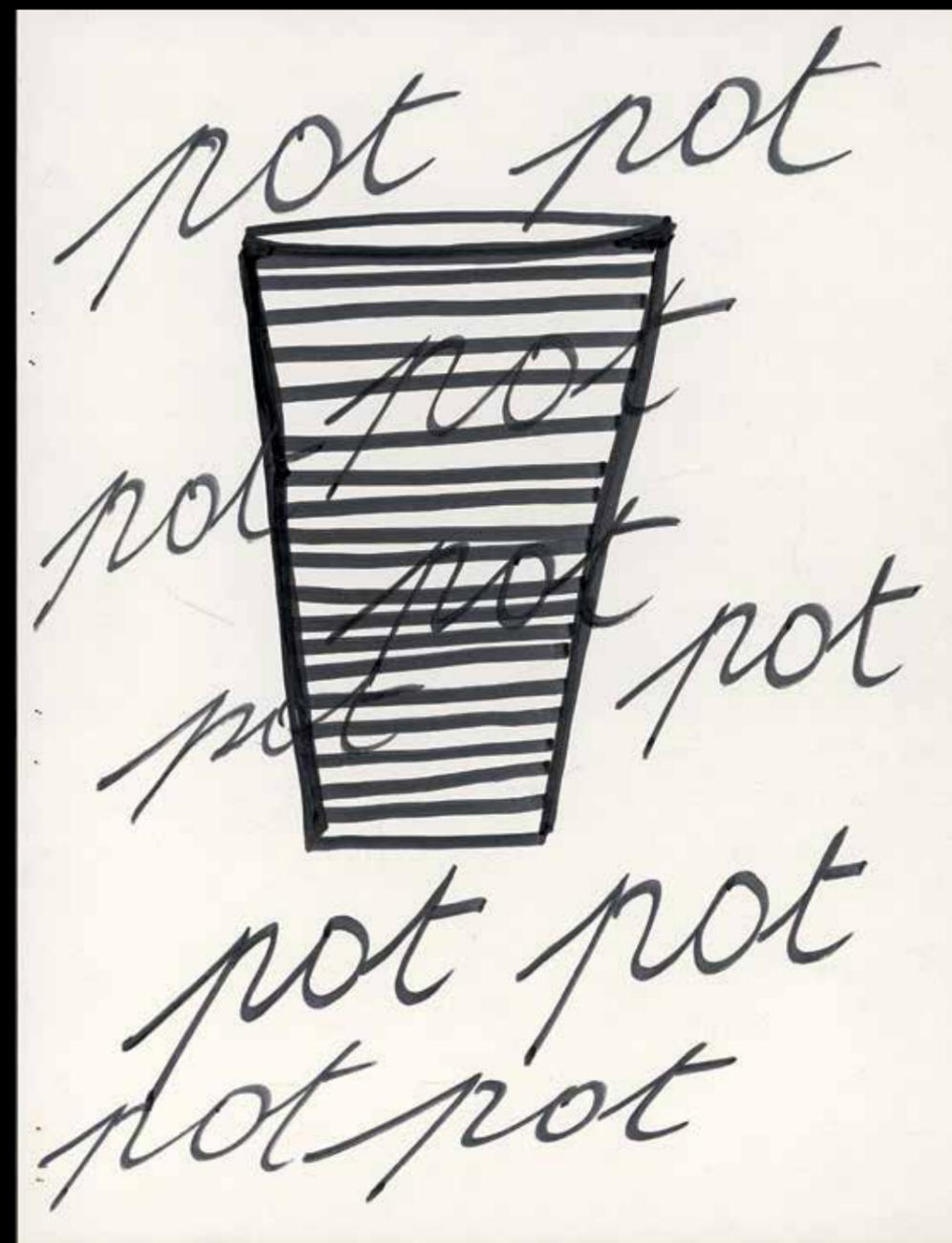
(1924-1976)

Glass jar (Pot), 1966

Black marker on paper, 300 x 232 mm

As included in no.6 of *Happening News*, last issue of the periodical (probably Spring 1966). – We join a complete set of *Happening News*, Nos.1-6, all published. Antwerp, 1965-1966. Detailed description of the periodical upon request.

In Brussels in February 1966, appears no. 62 of the review *Phantomas*, dedicated in its entirety to the drawings and texts of Marcel Broodthaers. Pages with Broodthaers' monogram, calculations with sums in francs, drawings of eggs, mussels, glass jars and hearts; texts that hark back to his last poetry collection *Pense-bête* (1964), and which have a harder edge than most of the artistic and literary reviews have to offer: 'Does he want to be famous or simply show that he's right. That he's always right. He overflows with natural power, with murder.' – 'No more flags, no death, no victory, no prayer, no kisses, no poetry. Nothing at all, I am interested in nothing.' But the last text, *Le cœur*, a prose poem, has a hope-giving conclusion and sounds like a program: 'What do I need? I need four essential forms. Mussel, egg, jar that I already feel able to fill. And the heart. Will this reminder help remind me? And the logic of illuminations. And my tiger? essential tiger' – Running from 26 May to 26 June 1966, at the Wide White Space Gallery in Antwerp, is the exhibition *Mussels, Eggs, Frites, Jars, Coal from Marcel Broodthaers*. The makers of the review *Happening News* – including Panamarenko – are closely involved with this gallery and its policy of putting the newest art on the map. So it is perfectly fitting that Broodthaers supplies a contribution to the review's last issue. – The glass jar often recurs in Broodthaers' work, filled with cotton balls or photographs of eyes or lipsticked female lips, as independent object or in piled series, but in this drawing Broodthaers seems rather to treat one of Magritte's propositions in *Les Mots et les images* (1929): 'An object encounters its image, an object encounters its name. It happens that the image and the name of this object encounter each other'. Like the complex relationship between Broodthaers the poet and Broodthaers the artist, the complex relationship between word and image is decisive to his unique body of work and his unique position within the art world. By writing the name of the object over and around the image of the glass jar, he sows doubt about what at first sight seems a tautology. By referring to what could be blackboard script at a language lesson for beginners, at once he also refers to the axioms that underlie education and culture as a whole, and which on closer inspection are found to be false. Images and words are more – and sometimes less – than they seem to be. This is a terrain long known for its quicksand.



ELAINE STURTEVANT

(b.1930)

Duchamp's In Advance of the Broken Arm, 1967

Gouache on gelatin silver print, 205 x 152 mm
Titled, signed and dated *Paris '67* lower edge

Duchamp's In Advance of the Broken Arm, 1967

Gouache on gelatin silver print, 228 x 177 mm
Titled, signed and dated *Paris '67* lower edge

Sculpture de Voyage (After Duchamp), 1969

Gelatin silver print, gouache and photomontage, 215 x 215 mm
Titled, signed and dated *17, rue de Sévigné Paris 68-69* on verso

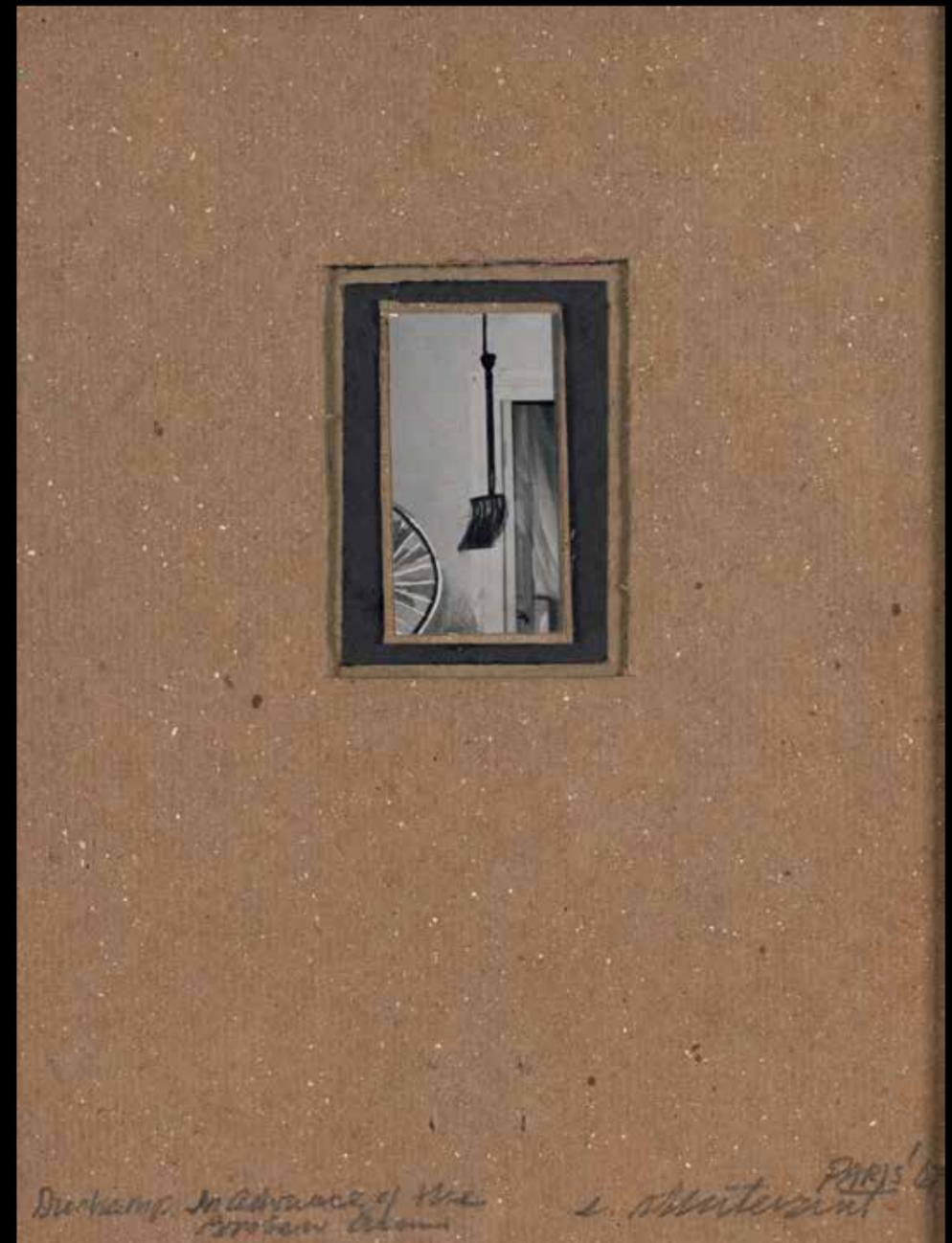
PROVENANCE

Galerie Paul Maenz, Cologne
Frank Kolodny, New Jersey

EXHIBITED

Cologne, Galerie Paul Maenz, *Elaine Sturtevant*, 1989

Elaine Sturtevant is the pioneer of appropriation art. She starts in 1965 by re-painting works by Lichtenstein, Johns and Warhol. At the end of the 1960s she turns her attention to Beuys and Duchamp. These three 'replicas' are interesting from many points of view. It's not about the remaking of paintings like she did with pop art that was on the rise when she herself stepped on to the art scene, but about the repainting of remade photographs that document works now lost. The earliest readymades which Marcel Duchamp originally used as his basis to definitively undermine the work of art, are nearly all lost. In the *boîte-en-valise*, a portable museum of his oeuvre that he starts working on in 1936, he includes miniature replicas of some readymades, while a number of others are present as photo documents. But like with the majority of elements of the *boîte-en-valise*, Duchamp manipulates the photographs until they take on a form that falls between art and reproduction. He has photos of his studio from 1917/1918 retouched to better delineate the readymades and to reduce the contrast of the surrounding space. These reworked photographs are then printed in collotype (an outdated technique even at the time) and the readymades are then colored-in by hand (pochoir process) to better set them off against the background. – Concerning her method, Sturtevant says that it's not about copying; rather, it's a process of repeating, that at the same time serves as an investigation into the understructure of the original works. And here this working method comes to successful fruition. Sturtevant reconstructs the readymades and their installation as in Duchamp's studio in 1917/1918, and of these 'reenactments' makes photographs which she then retouches and partly overpaints. She concentrates on Duchamp's method of sowing confusion between original and reproduction, for example by leaving out the coloring of the readymades and simplifying the surrounding space even more than in the retouched photos that Duchamp used. In order to have *In advance of the broken arm* play the leading role twice, she for once just omits the hanging urinal. For *Sculpture de voyage* she reverses Duchamp's approach: the interior regains all its sharpness, the sofa and the lampshade look realistic all the way. – By 1967 Marcel Duchamp had grown from an art-historical inside tip into the artist's artist par excellence of the twentieth century. It can be no accident that it was at just this moment that Sturtevant decided to take the pioneer of all appropriation art as subject. With her opting for manipulated photographs of lost objects that had only become art because the artist had designated them as such, she says much about her own strange position in the history of contemporary art, sowing confusion between the original and its remake.





Dechamps' In Advance of the Broken Om ... Student Paper 1912



JOSEPH BEUYS

(1921-1986)

Verschaffeltia (Palme), 1972

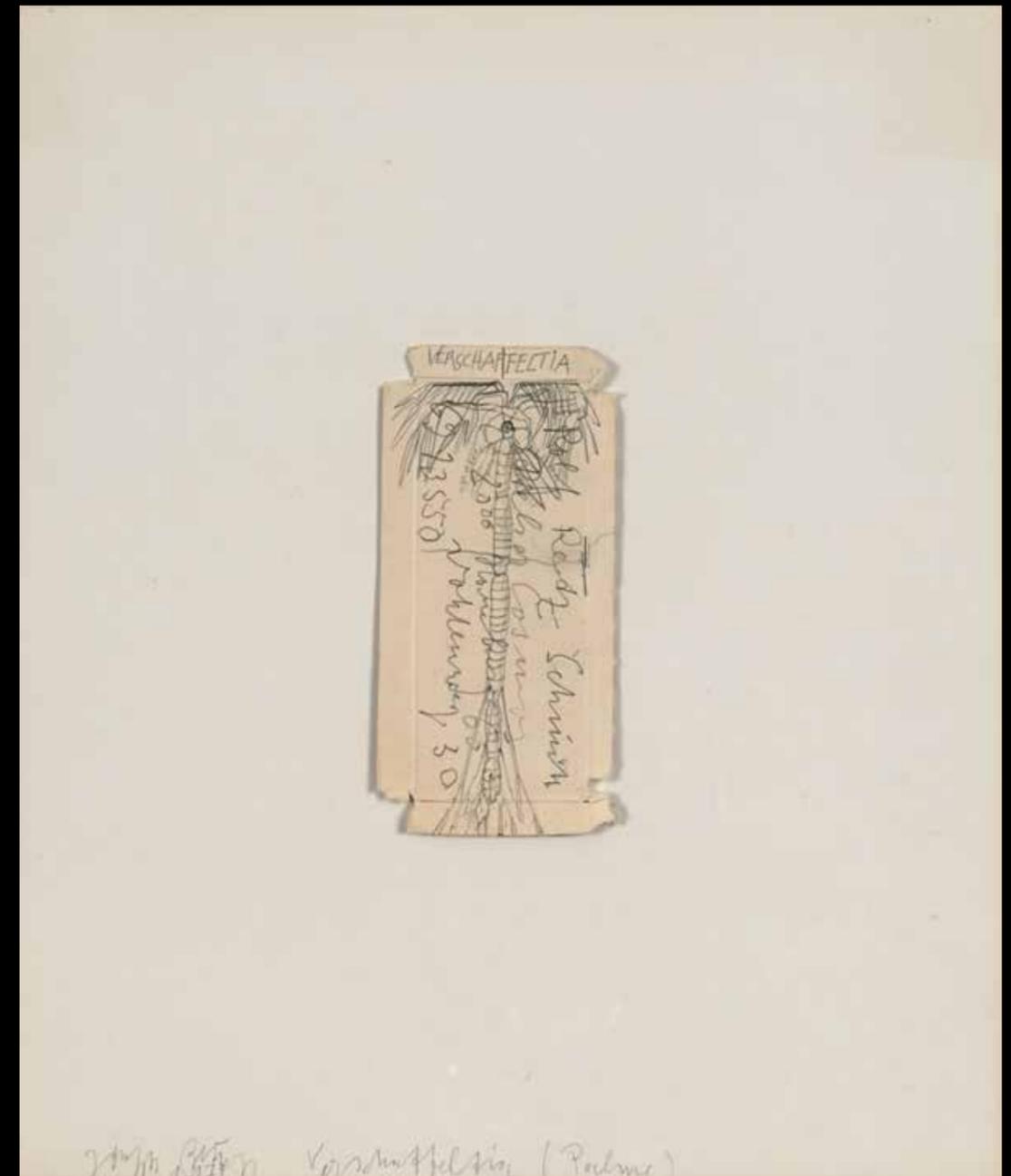
Graphite and cardboard collage on paper,
317 x 266 mm

Signed, titled and dated *Joseph Beuys 1972*
Verschaffeltia (Palme) along the lower edge

PROVENANCE

Cleto Polcina Arte Moderna, Roma
Lucio Amelio Gallery, Naples
Private collection, London

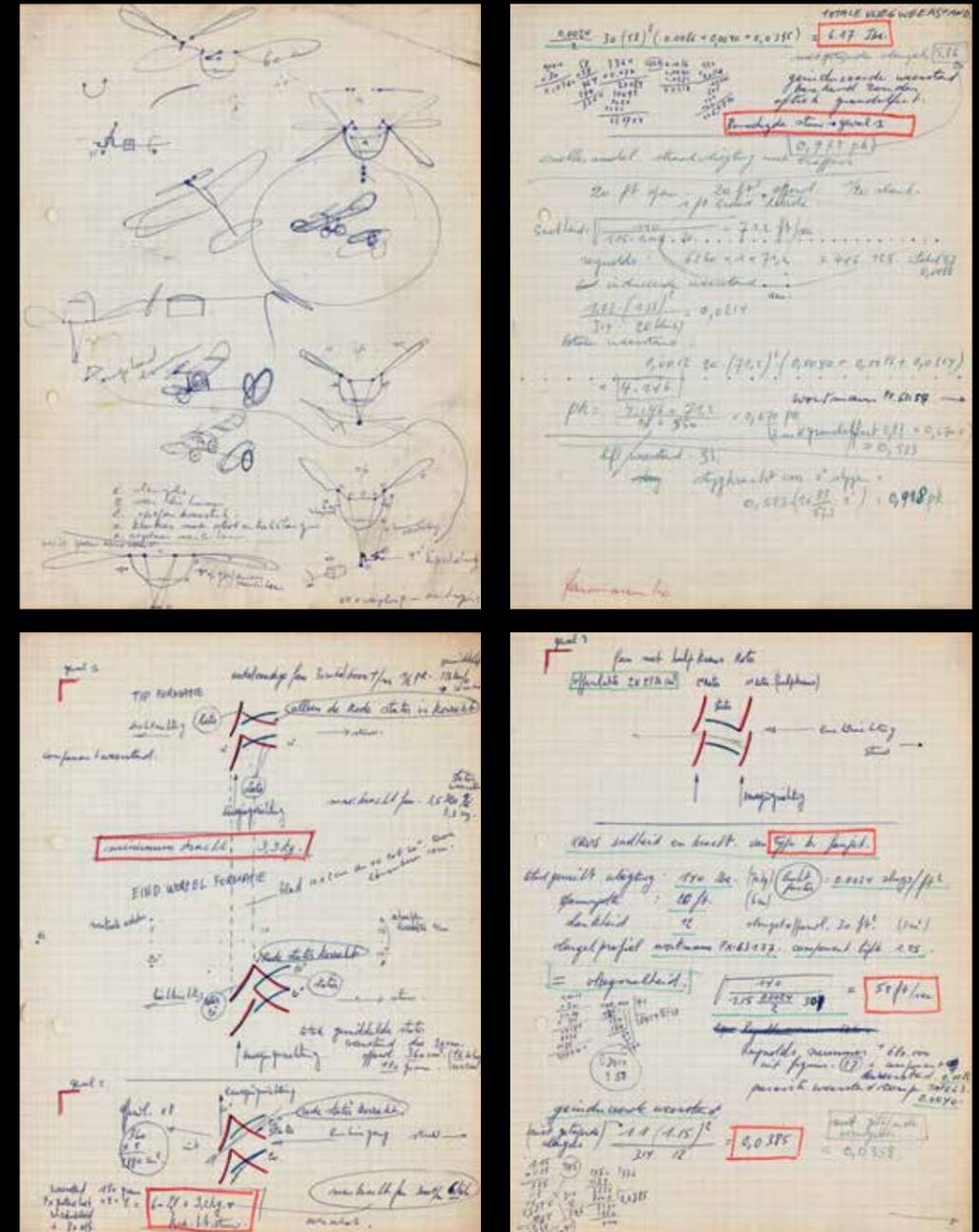
The unity between life and art – a subject Beuys repeatedly returned to – is here nearly literally both the theme and the medium. A piece of wrapping material becomes the support for a drawing that, considering the title, alludes to a botanical handbook. In the history of recent art Joseph Beuys stands chronicled as a figure who enlisted all arms to make his life and work into myth, in order to confer the artist with a heroic status. Thirty years after his death, he is indeed 'larger than life and, ultimately, sacrosanct: a German icon.' Many of his artistic choices – unusual materials like fat or honey, a predilection for brown and gray – are associated with his provocative attitude, as culminated in his performances as well. In his masterplan based on an 'expanded concept of art' that harks back to the anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner, scientific knowledge is also subservient to art and the artist acquires a shaman's role, a high-priest who shall meld material and spiritual forces. – Here Beuys intentionally combines an awkward sketch, on a background of banal notes, with the scientific appellation of a rare species of palm, the *Verschaffeltia splendida* that is found only on three islands in the Seychelles, and whose name was first given by the famous Belgian horticulturalist Ambroise Verschaffelt (1825–1886), member of a family of professional nursery-men who imported many exotic plant species into Europe. Like the animals in Beuys's performances that serve to revive ancient myths and rites, to reconcile nature and culture, trees too play a great role in his work – up to and including planting 7,000 oak trees (with the help of volunteers) in the run-up to Documenta 1982 in Kassel, Germany, as 'social sculpture', as expression of the universal capability of being creative. In this context perhaps *Verschaffeltia splendida* stands for the role that the exceptional artist can play as pioneer.



Studies for *Umbilly* and *U Control*, c. 1972

Ink and ballpoint on paper, four sheets, each 265 x 210 mm
Signed

Panamarenko is known as a designer of vehicles that propel themselves on the ground, on water or in the air. The fact that he also actually built a number of these craft (and that some indeed work) is important, but more important still is the manner of execution itself. Right from his first appearances in the art world, Panamarenko understood that you have to be recognized as different. That applies both to the character of the eccentric multimillionaire far removed from the underdog artist as well as to the technical-scientific look of his oeuvre. In this context his greatest art work is undoubtedly the *player* Panamarenko himself, and it does no prejudice to the myth of his work to consider it within the perspective of the history of sculpture. The intuitive-looking, but in fact very well thought out combinations of machine aesthetics and pop art, not without a dose of *art brut* that ensures an ironic reserve, find their extension and/or departure point in his illustrated 'theoretical' writings. In this regard, too, Panamarenko wishes to differ as much as possible from all other makers of artistic objects, both from the classical sculptors who make vague sketches before confronting the material itself as well as vis-à-vis the minimalist artists with their ascetic construction plans. Panamarenko's illustrated manuscripts are not only important for understanding the genesis of the work, they are integral components of that work. They look like the results of technical or scientific investigation, but only compete in a *pro forma* way with actual technology and science. For example, academic argumentation never contains written-out multiplications – a scientist works with the latest calculators – but for an artist who wishes to stand out among all those old-fashioned printmakers, they do indeed play a role. Instead of going into the sometimes all too obvious or incorrect hypotheses in Panamarenko's studies, perhaps one must consider them as compositions, and see them in terms of mutual similarities and differences, relationships between word and image, use of color, etc. Elegance is a quality characteristic of the best scientific argumentation, the economy of means used to prove a hypothesis. Here, as well, Panamarenko is no scientist, his argumentation is unnecessarily complex, he likes to orbit around the problem and preserves all his experimental trials, as though it's not the result that really interests him but rather the game played along the way. He handles physics and mathematics like artistic materials. He transforms the 'greatest achievements of science and technology' into artistic motifs, in a manner reminiscent of the *faux naïf* paintings of schooners for the board-rooms of shipping companies. With a great feel for ambiguity – for example to be found in the patina of the materials he makes use of and their unusual combinations – for most viewers Panamarenko calls into question their certainties with regards to science and technology, and particularly to art. Perhaps he wishes to attain the same effect with his preliminary studies. A knowledge of an artist's younger years is not really necessary for a good understanding of his life and work, but it cannot be any accident that his first artistic-technical work was a self-made pinball machine. The dexterity that the game demands differentiates it in the eyes of the law from gambling machines. Panamarenko's oeuvre, his 'studies' included, illustrate just how dexterous he is.



Toy model of space (The mechanical model behind quantum mechanics), 1992-93

The original material for the edition -
maquette: ink and collage, 420 x 300 mm; signed
autograph manuscript signed, pencil on paper,
10 sheets, each 208 x 165 mm;
the original videotape

EXHIBITED

Antwerp, Galerie Ronny Van de Velde,
Panamarenko - Toy model of Space, November 13,
1993 - January 30, 1994

TOYMODEL OF SPACE

The Sun and the stars

Panamarenko,

By allocating "weight" to the "fast" parts of stars, the model keeps everything in orbit, with a force other than gravity.
The toy model derives, a stable electron orbit, mass and... noveltys, for constructing spaceships.

A star moves somewhere in the Milky Way, its speed only 750 times slower than the speed of light.

The star possesses a lagging and leading side, due to its proper rotation. Creating a velocity difference of hundreds of km. per second in its forward motion.

In fact, so much, that the lagging side has no speed at all and the leading side has twice the forward speed (2v). The object rolls -

like a wheel on

THE SPACE FIELD.

An gives, to the leading side, more mass.

This mass is multiplied by the centrifugal acceleration of the star period of rotation.

The result is enough to form an orbit without gravity

The star must rotate, antiparallel to the rotation of the orbit. The leading, faster and more massive side is oriented toward the center of the orbit. This extra mass is converted to "weight" by the axis rotation and forces the star into a circular path.

The total mass continuously rolls through a radius of gyration, the advancing part gains mass and turns back to the retreating part, where the extra mass vanishes. The created forces are not reversed in this process. **

To find the distance from the center of the orbit, R =

Lorentz factor, $\sqrt{1 - (v/c)^2}$ with $2v = 2(2v/c)^2 = R(v/c)^2 = R(2/c)^2$

$c^2/\omega^2 r$

Pulsar PSR 1913+16 pulsar neutron star, period 16,9 times a second, its radius = 5 km., and 1,500,000 km. radius of the orbit, according to observation. Supposed to orbit a black hole... R =

$(3.5)^2$

$(16,9,2,3,14)^2 \cdot 5$

= 1,59⁶ km. And no black hole!

In 1971** Hafele and Keating flew four atomic clocks around the world (Science, 177:166-170, 1972) and observed that the effects on the clocks came from the structure and field properties of empty space.

The fast low flying aeroplanes flew against and with the rotation of the Earth.

They landed and started over and over again.

The time slowing effects from the faster flying planes (side) versus the slower (side) remained permanently - as the clocks as a witness of these difference in speed.

The aeroplanes that fly faster have more mass and are flattened a fraction.

By giving the Earth and the aeroplanes the same speeds as the pulsar, the effects that hold for PSR 1913+16 can be deduced.

Between the stars there are hydrogen clouds emitting radio waves by switching from parallel to antiparallel spin.

Electron size and stable orbits around these atoms can be calculated with the toy model formula.

The total energy of the electron is divided by the Planck constant.

$8,18724 \cdot 10^{-14} \text{ (joule/sec)} / 6,62617 \cdot 10^{-34} \text{ (joule/sec)} = \text{period/sec } 1,23559 \cdot 10^{20}$

$f_e \text{ electron} = c^2/\omega^2 R$

$(2,997924 \cdot 10^8 \text{ cm.})^2$

$(1,23559 \cdot 10^{20} / 2\pi)^2 = 5,29177 \cdot 10^{-9} \text{ (Bohr R) orbit}$

= 2,81794⁻¹³ cm.

r. electron, velocity electron = $1/2 \omega r = 2187,691 \text{ km/sec.}$

.....

The electron thinks it is following a straight path and radiates no more.
Creating a stable rest orbit behind quantum mechanics.

The Sun and the stars

The Sun is rotating around the Milky Way in a clockwise way and spins on its own axis anticlockwise (antiparallel). The Sun's visual radius is 696000 Km. its mass is highly concentrated in the center and very thin at the surface. A radius of gyration, where all the mass is centered around the axis must be used. The radius of gyration is 1/4 of the visual radius. At that depth the Sun rotates only one time in 35 days. The equatorial speed on the radius of gyr. is 0,33 of a km. **THE SUN'S FORWARD SPEED, 220 KM/SEC.**

A reduced form of Lorentz transformation shows.

Distance of the Sun from the center of the Milky Way =

300000 Km. speed of light divided by 0,33 Km. = 800000 Km.

this multiplied by the radius of gyr. of the Sun gives 28000 light-years as a result.

Handwritten notes: $0,33 \cdot c = 100000 \text{ km/sec}$
 $2,81794 \cdot 10^{-13} \text{ cm} = 2,81794 \cdot 10^{-16} \text{ m}$
 $2,81794 \cdot 10^{-16} \text{ m} \cdot 2,187691 \cdot 10^8 \text{ km/sec} = 6,16 \cdot 10^{-8} \text{ m} = 6,16 \cdot 10^{-11} \text{ km}$

The Toy model is invariant and therefore the forward speed of the Sun does not matter. But for more Earthly realism one can multiply the 220 Km/sec. Lorentz factor with the centrifugal force of the Sun's spin (1 rotation in 35 days) the result is the same as the centrifugal force of the Sun in its large orbit around the Milky Way.

The Sun and the stars evolve around the galaxy with a force other than gravity.

Untitled, 1979

Charcoal on paper
505 x 770 mm
Signed with the artist's initials and dated JES 79

PROVENANCE

Galerie Gillespie Laage Salomon, Paris
Piet and Ida Sanders, Schiedam

Joel Shapiro is counted among the ranks of minimalism, but in contrast to the impersonal ideal of this extreme modernist tendency, Shapiro's oeuvre is precisely characterized by personal involvement and near-emotional intensity. His early work consists of small bronze sculptures – abstractions of ordinary objects like a house, a barn, a chair – which by grace of their intimate scale within large white gallery spaces, made for an incisive effect. Shapiro reworks the then dominant influence of artists such as Robert Morris, Richard Serra, Carl Andre and Donald Judd. In this drawing he addresses an issue that those artists – despite all appearances – have not definitively resolved. In 2007, Shapiro comments on this as follows: '(...) I see the history of Minimalism as a history of relief: It's all about the wall and the presumption that the wall is a plane, or a page. It doesn't really challenge a lot of notions about space. There are more expansive possibilities that I'm interested in investigating.' Compared with the accentuated, monumental and compelling drawings of Serra in lithographic crayon, this drawing has an open nature. Shapiro's drawing is more exploratory than the work- or construction drawings to which many minimalist sculptors deliberately limit themselves to. Without completely breaking with the businesslike, near-industrial visual language of his colleagues, Shapiro allows more artisanal elements and more intermediate steps between idea and realization. Rhythm and uncertainty slip into the still clear schema, and a near-romantic idea of space as well. The smears and stains come over like a critique of strict minimalist diagrams and their virginal white supports. – From around 1977, the structure of Shapiro's work becomes more sophisticated. This drawing dates from the period when he makes large bronze floor pieces that delineate spatial masses, and also thin rectangular bronze planes that stick-out from the wall with hollow beams attached to them. Like with these sculptures, the drawing concerns open and closed, negative and positive spaces. More abstract than his early work, but still emotionally charged. Speaking about a sculpture from the same period, Shapiro says that the work is 'about entering and being entered' and this invests it with 'sexual potency'.



WILLY DE SAUTER

(b.1938)

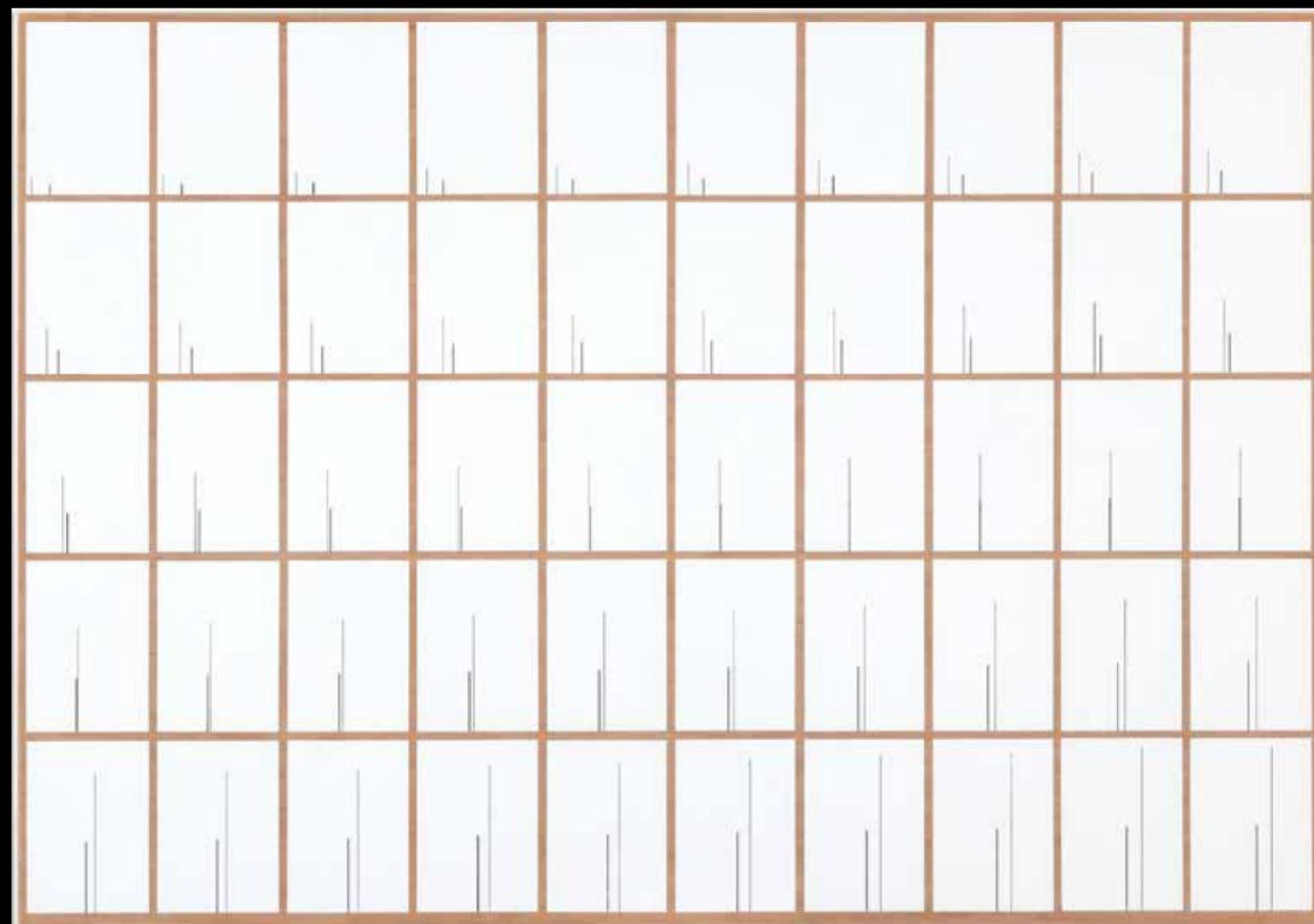
Untitled, 1981

Ink and pencil on paper, 790 x 1145 mm
Signed and dated on verso

LITERATURE

Willy De Sauter. Antwerpen: MUHKA, 2001,
p.29 ill.

Willy De Sauter is one of Belgium's most consistent practitioners of fundamental painting. He limits himself to the study of the interactive exchange between the support, the flatness of the support and the nature of the materials used, but this is a self-imposed limitation within which he displays a multi-faceted mastery. As in this near-monumental serial experiment where, in identical rectangles, he shifts parallel lines of different lengths from small to large and from left to right, so creating a fascinating rhythm. – In the period when this work was made, critic Wim Van Mulders noted: 'The plastic oeuvre of Willy De Sauter consists of an analysis of the line's expressional value. Here the line segment is the value-measure and norm for relationships and gradations that can exist in a rectangular field. (...) the meaning of this work always lies in the experimentation with varying relationships and *attitudes* between line, plane and material. De Sauter makes us feel that the act of drawing a line (setting a boundary) on a support is an existential matter, namely in the sense that the line behaves as an *organic* being that intuitively reveals controlled plastic results.' (in *Kunst in België na 45*, 1983)



WALTER SWENNEN

(b.1948)

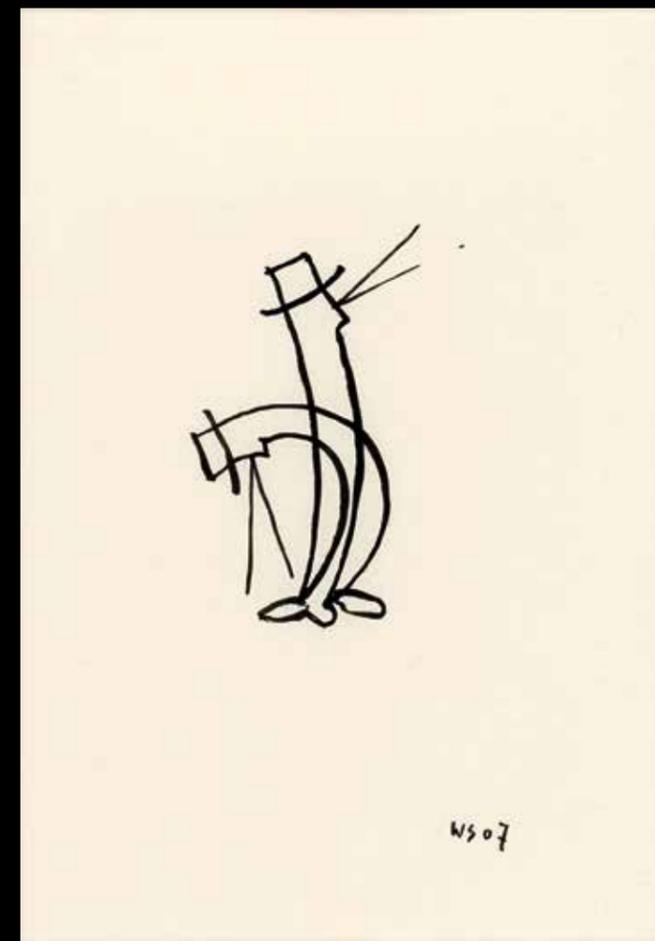
Untitled, 2007

Pen and ink on paper, 185 x 130 mm
Signed and dated WS 07 lower right

Untitled, 2007

Pen and ink on paper, 185 x 130 mm
Signed and dated WS 07 lower right

Walter Swennen is counted among the 'new painters' who came to the fore in the 1980s, parallel to the Italian *transavanguardia* and the German *heftige Malerei*. On first view his oeuvre seems like it was made by different artists, but appearances are deceiving. Indeed, Swennen is no slave to any typical style; he is a pre-eminently free artist. According to critic Hans Theys, Swennen's poetics are 'marked by a radical stance, that he himself sums up in the sentence: "Listeners do not make the music" (headphones and the public create nothing). For Swennen this implies the total autonomy of the art work; it does not have to be understood, does not have to evoke emotions. The art work does not have to do anything. It owes its status to the fact that it was made by an artist.' The movement known as 'new painting' was characterized by great productivity (in contrast to the scarce works of conceptual and minimal artists), and by the unscrupulous reuse and combining of techniques and motifs taken from old or modern currents. The creative freedom that exudes from Swennen's work – that sometimes seems nonchalant, but always engenders confusion – is not motivated by an aim to shock, it is related to a rather defensive egocentric attitude. And if there is anarchism here, then it is of the individualistic, Stirner variety. An announcement of a large-scale retrospective of his work speaks of 'a poetic-humorous analysis of the relationship between symbol, readability, meaning and execution; marked by a free but precise painterly treatment.' – A novice swimmer on the gallows or a figure who spits or shouts in two overlapping positions emphatically testify to a 'poetic-humorous' spirit, but even more so to an anti-pictorial attitude. Before starting to paint, Swennen was active as a poet, and the way that he handles motifs – he takes them as he finds them, high or low, and manipulates them at will – harks back to this previous incarnation. What is said about Magritte, about his best work, also holds for Swennen: he makes paintings with images like a poet makes poems with words.



Study for sculpture (Latches), 1997

Pencil and watercolor on paper, 297 x 420 mm
Signed

Koen Theys – mainly known for his video work – also makes objects. Starting in 1990, he exhibits casts of everyday objects in polyurethane rubber – a door, a window, loudspeakers, alarm boxes, dustpan and brush, etc. With their uniform grey color and their semi-soft material, they seem like parodies of solid bronze sculptures with ‘historical’ patinas. To be unique, the massively reproduced everyday objects have to leave their original function behind. Their new utility is related to the videos where the artist mixes elements from the entertainment industry and art history, often insolently, to illustrate just how much power images can exercise. Aside from these replicas, Theys also makes new objects that put into perspective the banal and existential character of the spaces where so-many hours of life are spent. Among these is a coat rack with raised middle-fingers as hooks, or expressionist-like molded door latches in all formats, from real size to giant. In a review of a double-exhibition in 1997, a journalist writes: ‘Elsewhere in the gallery hang door latches of all sizes. They are fairly useless, because they would just lamely fold if tugged on. Anyway: they don’t hang on a door, but are screwed to a wall where there is no getting through.’ (Max Borcka) However pleasant the colors of these door handles screwed to the wall are, by divesting the object of its practical and symbolic function and by replicating the pre-eminently solitary object *ad infinitum et ad absurdum* he evokes the same claustrophobic atmosphere that we feel in some of his videos. An atmosphere that commentators describe as a tunnel- or vacuum feeling, a feeling that they link to the suburban culture the artist grew up in and knows so well, a culture that has repetition as an essential attribute. In a certain sense, the way that the surface of the door latches is molded in a deliberately sloppy manner, is akin to the punch-in-your-face tendency of his video work. – Theys himself says: ‘Opening doors makes no sense, because opening one just leads to another. You’re better off just playing with the latch.’ And perhaps he wants his work to be experienced like this as well.



Storyboard for *Fanfare, Calme & Volupté*, 2007

Pencil on paper, 298 x 420 mm

Signed

The video installation *Fanfare, Calme & Volupté* is based on a performance by a brass band and corps of majorettes. 'Musicians and majorettes, seemingly dressed up for a public performance, are sound asleep. They have their brass instruments with them, but their drowsiness prevents them from playing. Time is suspended in this 'tableau vivant' and the tiniest gesture of one of the sleeping majorettes becomes an event, creating a tension in the image that contrasts with its picturesque composition. On the flatscreen-monitor one can see the total view of the scene, while on the projection details of that same scene appear.' This working-drawing illustrates the calculated character of Theys's video pieces, and also how the final work differs from the preliminary study. In the final version there is less physical contact between the personages, they barely support each other, they don't form a tangle as on the drawing. The director has meanwhile changed his mind and breaks with the usual pyramidal composition, horizontality predominates in the central portion, the sitting musicians comprise two red vertical margins that prop up the white-draped majorettes. The video image is more tranquil as to composition than the drawing, and also perhaps more emphasizes the difference between the men and the women. Koen Theys himself says: 'As a visual artist I'm interested in creating that one image that contains all the tension, where others need a whole story to achieve it. (...) Precisely due to its stillness, each slight movement that occurs there becomes a complete event.' All this harks back to the 19th century popular theatre that evoked paintings with *tableaux vivants* of immobile actors. Perhaps Theys's videos, where the borders between the media blur, play a comparable role as the *tableau vivant* in the development of the modern theatre. 'The *tableau vivant* inaugurates a dramaturgy describing social environments, grabbing life in its everyday reality and giving of man an ensemble of pathetic images using genre paintings. The stillness, as with Greuze, is meant to contain the germ of movement.' (Patrice Pavis)



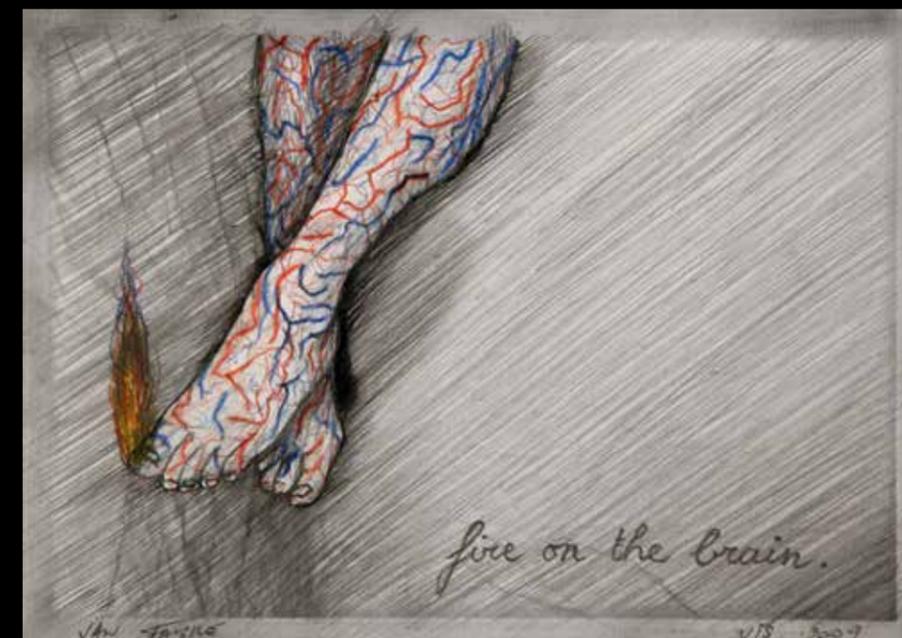
Angel's wing and jawbreaker (Engelenvleugel en toverbol), 2009

Pencil and colored pencil on photographic paper, 127 x 177 mm
Signed Jan Fabre bottom left, dated bottom right

Fire on the brain, 2009

Pencil and colored pencil on photographic paper, 125 x 175 mm
Signed Jan Fabre bottom left, dated bottom right

It has already been often said and written, but apprentice-sorcerer Jan Fabre proves each time anew that he can mix cocktails of high and low culture as no other. He also spontaneously mixes autobiographical features from his youth with what he has encountered since then on his successful and universal path through culture. He feels not the slightest reluctance to confront the greatest names from the canon with the everyday elements which he still knows well from the not so affluent surroundings where he grew up. Meanwhile, he built a recognizable stock of images from out of which he draws motifs at will, varying them like a composer on a theme, combining them with old or new motifs. And all this not without humor, sometimes light-footed, sometimes almost black. In each case, viewers get every chance to give free rein to their powers of association. – The 'toverbol' (literally: magical candy) that enters into confrontation with the angel's wing is a 'gobstopper' (or 'jawbreaker'), usually consisting of a number of layers, each layer dissolving to reveal a different colored (and sometimes differently flavoured) layer, before dissolving completely. For Fabre, the brain (or at least his brain) perhaps works like a 'magical candy' that provides for a reality of infinite layers, starting with the two-colored brain lobes. One wing of an angel, from one such ethereal, supernatural being of indeterminate sex (they also appear in Fabre's theatre pieces) has remained behind here due to some accident or other. Or are we looking here at the artist's workbench, and has he colored-in the plaster brain with a two-colored ballpoint pen from his school days, and is there also a pheasant's wing laying around to sweep up bits of shed eraser? – And then the brain changes into a pair of alluring female legs – who else but Fabre would work over these with the same ballpoint pen – that end in passionate fire. Fabre seizes the occasion to rummage in Belgian national art history: Magritte, who in *The Ladder of Fire* (1939) sets a wad of paper, an egg and a key on fire, without affecting the table they lie upon. There is also the recurring tale of spontaneous combustion, especially on slow news days.



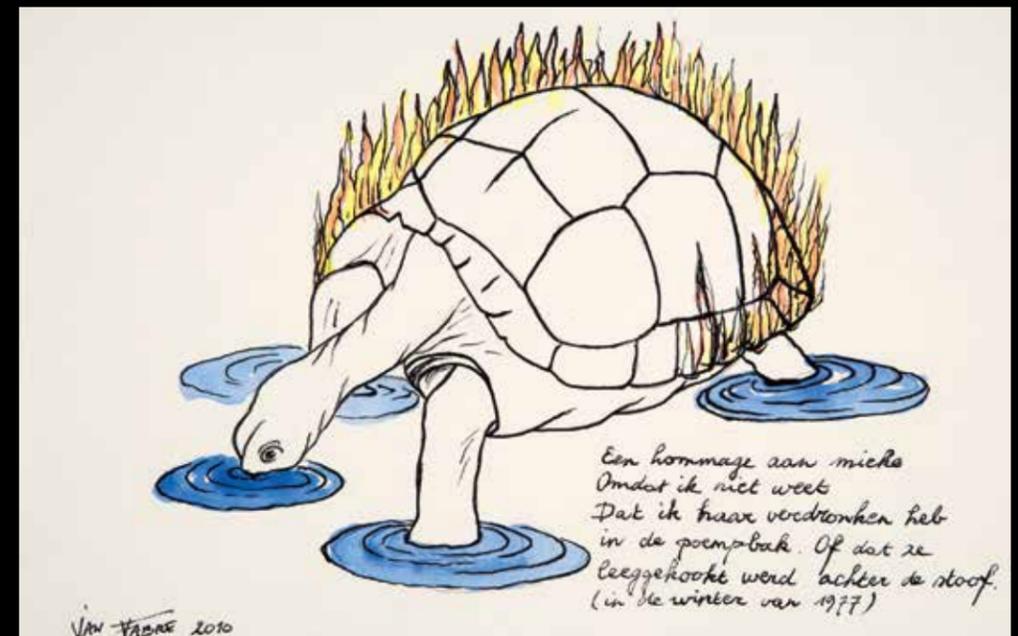
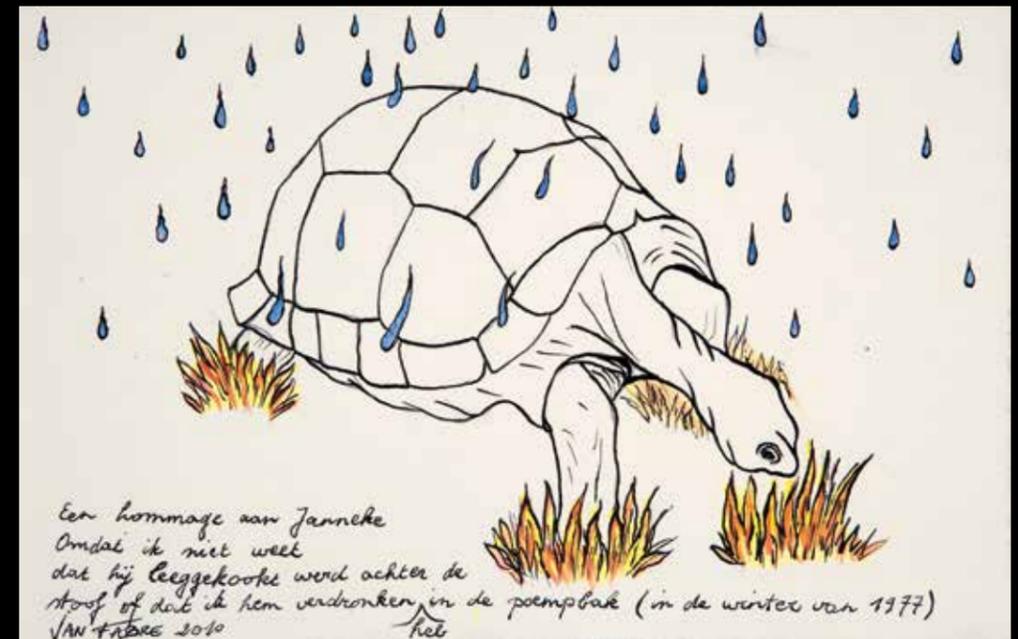
*An homage to Janneke,
the tortoise (Een hommage
aan Janneke, de schildpad),
2010*

India ink and watercolor on paper, 238 x 150 mm
Signed and dated Jan Fabre 2010 bottom left;
titled and annotated lower left

*An homage to Mieke,
the tortoise (Een hommage
aan Mieke, de schildpad),
2010*

India ink and watercolor on paper, 238 x 150 mm
Signed and dated Jan Fabre 2010 bottom left;
titled and annotated lower right

These 'homages' to the pair of tortoises that the young Fabre had as pets, and which probably came to their end in the winter of 1977 – 'boiled dry behind the stove' or 'drowned in the sink' – were the motif for mosaics to decorate the entrance portal of Antwerp's famous zoological gardens, in 2010. Part of Fabre's intervention, as well, was a bronze sculpture of a tortoise within the zoo proper, which for that matter has a tradition as a sculpture park with work from well-known sculptors like Rembrandt Bugatti. As is always the case with Fabre, his work sets out at an autobiographical level in order to transcend it. He is not too bothered about using the most banal of first names, 'Janneke' and 'Mieke', for animals of great symbolic value – slow amidst so much absurd modern speed, looking prehistoric and innocent amidst so much design and greed – just like he spectacularly enlarged the same animal with himself portrayed riding on top like a horseman, in a gigantic bronze sculpture facing the sea on the Belgian coast at Nieuwpoort. – The trial by water and fire that Fabre subjects the tortoises to, does not seem to harm them. He can *pro forma* still feel guilty about his youthful acts of misbehavior, but happily lumbering along, the tortoises seem to triumph nonetheless. More than merely innocuous animals that reach a ripe age, tortoises have over the centuries become incarnations of tranquility and wisdom. There is so much projected onto the tortoise that it could be an 'invented' animal, timeless rather than prehistoric. It plays a role in the most diverse cultures, from myths where the animal bears the weight of the world and assures the planet's stability, to Aesop's famous fable where the tortoise overtakes the boastful hare to the finish line, slowly but surely, with diligence and perseverance. Perhaps it is not so strange that the artist identifies with this 'clever' animal, and thus pays homage to it.



PAUL MCCARTHY

(b.1945)

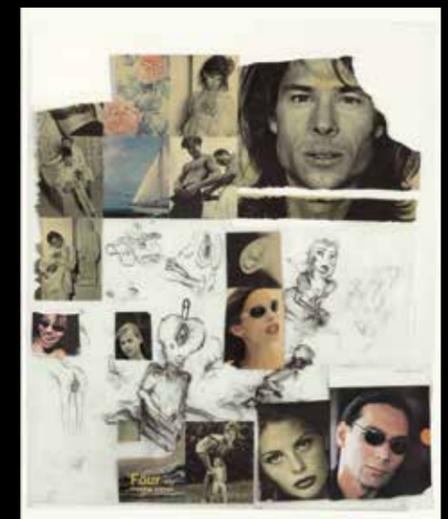
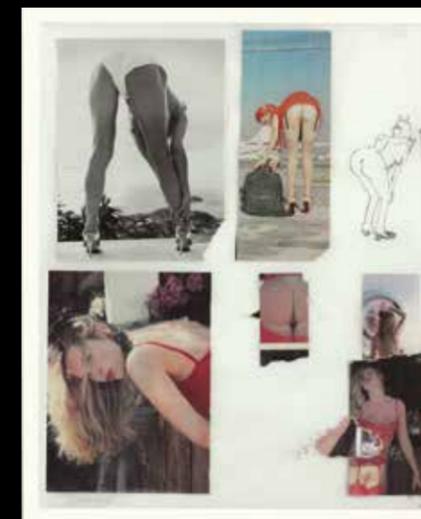
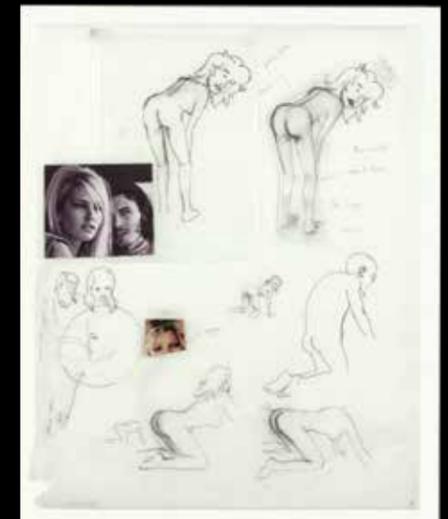
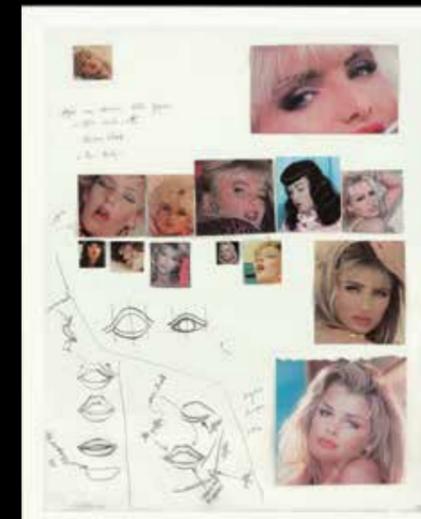
Yaa-Hoo, 1996

Six sheets, each appr. 603 x 482 cm, with magazine and printed paper collage, graphite, plastic tape on vellum and paper.
Signed *Paul McCarthy* on verso of sheets 2, 3 and 5

PROVENANCE

Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York
Sale Phillips de Pury, New York, 14 May 2004,
lot 152
Private collection

Contemporary artists like Paul McCarthy have learnt from the misunderstanding that had befallen their predecessors. In order not to be wrongly interpreted, they pull out all the stops, borrow their motifs from the dominant visual language continually produced in Hollywood, including clichés from the so-profitable porn variant. McCarthy comes out of the performance scene and does 'presentations' where with much overacting he goes over the top (ironically enough, his art studio used to be a film studio). McCarthy holds a mirror up to the American 'air-conditioned nightmare' by mixing the mendacious Disney idyll with freaky low-budget films and the emotional degree zero of porn. To unmask the *happy end* as the permanent propaganda that it is, the viewer must be forcibly wrenched from his usual comfort zone. - The preparatory collages and drawings reveal McCarthy's way of working, in this case for a component of an installation combining the myth of the Far West with rough sex. With as much an eye for the telling detail as an art director whose day-job is making commercials and who supplements his income by doing porno shoots on weekends, he combines Marilyn Monroe with anonymous starlets until he finds the perfect pouting mouth or 'working pose' for the female protagonist. Like a car wreck, the last remains of personality and history are crushed. The resulting visual masquerade functions not as a release-valve like the carnival that temporarily suspends social conventions. These are grim, cynical montages that confront you like a slap in the face with the barbarity just waiting to burst through the thin layer of high-tech civilization. McCarthy sometimes seems like a contemporary version of James Ensor, but whereas Ensor remained above the melee, McCarthy's American *grand guignol* is entangled in a race with the oh-so-powerful image industry. He must constantly extend his boundaries. What was shocking yesterday is today fodder for video-clips. And always faster, because under the masks are only more masks. In a certain sense, Paul McCarthy is related to Hunter S. Thompson with his texts of 'fear and loathing' that come close to the horrific center of an existence dominated by sex and money and violence, consigning all moral values to the trash can.



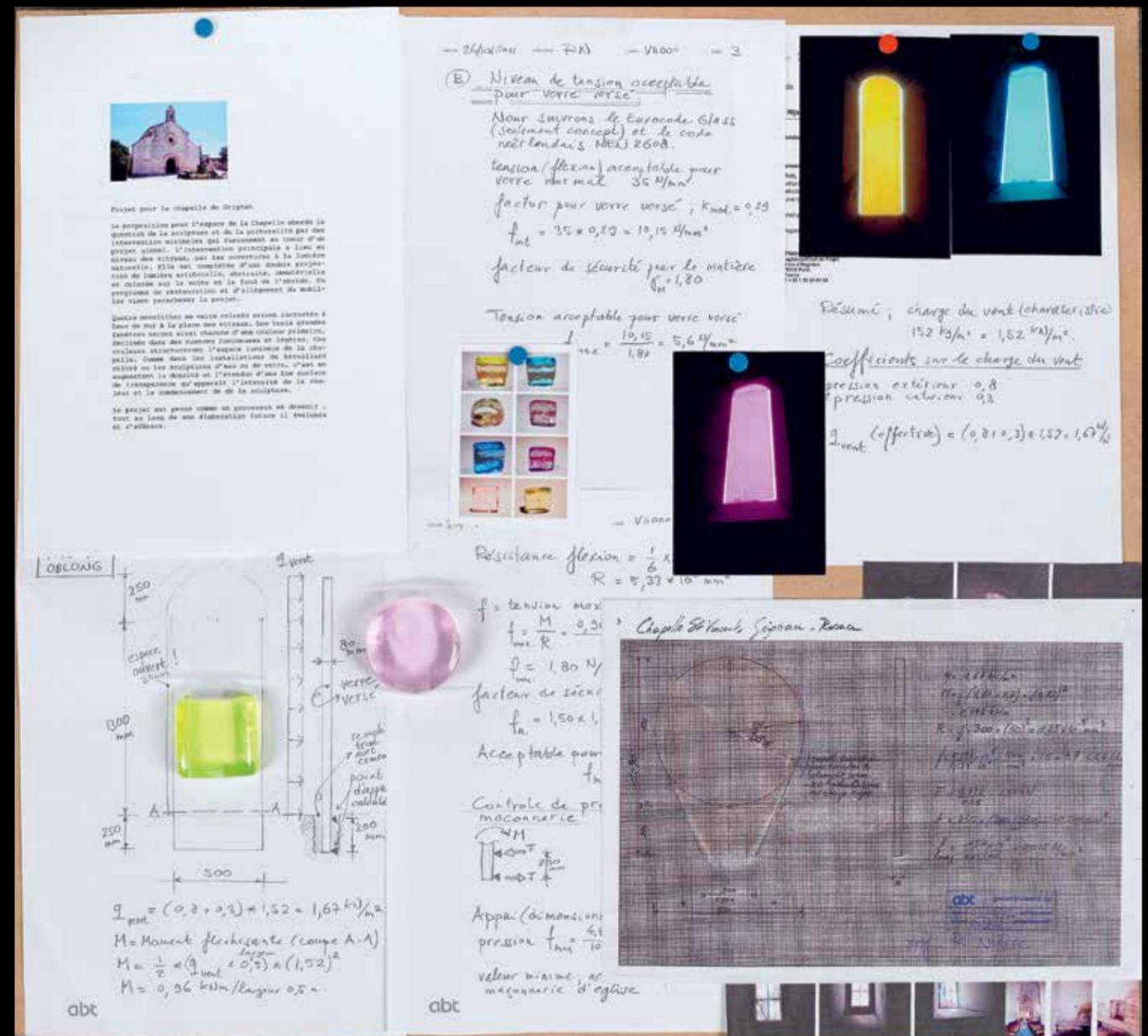
ANN VERONICA JANSSENS

(b.1956)

Study for La Chapelle Saint-Vincent, Grignan, 2013

Collage on wood, 570 x 620 mm

The artist comments on her own work: 'I always experiment with the possibilities of rendering fluid the perception of matter or architecture which I see as some kind of obstacle to movement and sculpture. My use of light to infiltrate matter and architecture is undertaken with a view to provoking a perceptual experience wherein this materiality is made unstable, its resistance dissolved.' She continues: 'My projects are often based on technical or scientific facts. The resulting plastic proposition is then akin to a laboratory revealing its discoveries.' The montage of preliminary studies for the chapel in Grignan well evokes the atmosphere of a creative process that is closer to that of a laboratory than to an artist's studio. The intervention in the Roman chapel limits itself to an effective minimum: in the window openings, four glass plates of different colors are placed, creating a constantly changing fall of light, complemented by a double-colored light projection within the chapel proper. The heavy glass plates are placed loose from the window openings and, like the ancient glass windows where the figures were at once otherworldly and tangible, these glass plates have the 'immaterial' function of manipulating the penetrating light and they can also be experienced as transparent monochrome sculptures. In her careful thinking through of the matter, Ann Veronica Janssens' intervention finds echoes in the architecture of the High Middle Ages. Henri Focillon on Roman Church building: 'The architect interpreting gravity is also the interpreter of light in the way that he calculates and combines the effects.' And perhaps even more apt: '(...) the material is epiderm and color, and through that, it contributes with charm, with power, to the life of an art that is not only conceived for technical analysis and for anatomy, but for the satisfaction of our sight.' Light itself becomes sculptor and painter, expressing the space in its simplicity and complexity. The area between the media where Ann Veronica Janssens operates reminds one of the Baroque using, from painting up to architecture, theatrical effects of light - mainly the chiaroscuro - in order to achieve a strong impact on users' emotions. It is not clear, and does not have to be so, whether the artist started from the characteristics of the glass or from the given space, or even from out of the desired effect that experience has taught her how to achieve. Her experiments cannot be reduced to simple formal effects like in pop art; the space-time experiences she creates have a non-coercive character and are tightly context-bound. In Grignan the day and night, the sun and the clouds are all co-responsible for a sculpture of light that also might be termed a 'proposition' which, in stark contrast to light or heavy sculpture works, changes in a constant and subtle fashion, allowing viewers to escape into a twilight zone where fleetingness sets the tone.



ANGEL SANTIAGO VERGARA

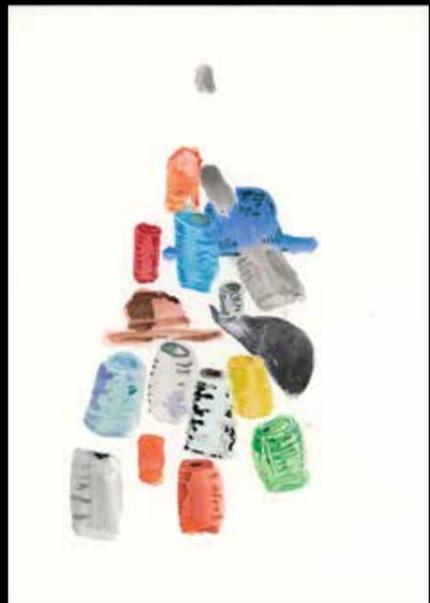
(b.1958)

Studies for *Chandelier made of hats and tin cans*, 1994

Watercolor on paper, 14 sheets, each 420 x 298 mm
Title page with autograph text in pencil, 420 x 298 mm

The drawings are part of the project *L'idée, L'oubli, La fragilité (Chapellerie haute)* from 1994, that Vergara himself describes as 'installation, painting, performance'. In a store-like space, hats and caps are presented on shelves; on a shop counter, next to a pile of newspapers with a hat on top, the artist sits under a white sheet, like a ghost in a comic book, a camouflage he often uses for his public appearances as *Streetman*; the whole is illuminated by a chandelier of hats and tin cans. The title, which he repeats on the big price-list behind the counter, situates this project within a series of actions that call into question the behavior of spectators in public, usually commercial spaces. In 1992, Vergara transformed a gallery in Brussels into a café – *L'usage, L'échange, Le Récit* (Café de la Galerie des Beaux-Arts) – and in 1993, in Calais, he installed *Le travail, l'œuvre, l'action* (Salon Public). In these interventions, Vergara harks back to the 'distancing' methods of both Magritte and Broodthaers to draw spectators' attention to the large measure of routine in their daily lives, but compared to these artists he makes a more direct appeal to the public, he hopes it will encourage participation and dialogue. With banal reality as his starting point, in a non-provoking way Vergara wants to focus attention on the social and liberating role that this art can play despite the constricting economic context it appears in. – The preliminary studies for the chandelier of hats and tin cans show that here Vergara is not interested in making an ecological gesture like recycling, but rather in producing a slightly confusing pictorial-sculptural presence. In the case of one watercolor the objectives are well recognizable – in cheerful colors, floating like frisbees or seats in a carnival ride – but most often we see patches of color like we'd see if we looked into the chandelier, or like the light we'd like see festively scattered around, not in terms of its wattage, but as art itself.





JAN DE COCK

(b.1976)

Denkmal 11 – Module CXX, 2007

Durst Lambda chromogenic color prints mounted on cardboard, 850 x 600 x 40 mm
Signed and dated on verso. One of an edition of three copies.

EXHIBITED

New York, The Museum of Modern Art,
Denkmal 11, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, 2008, January 23–April 14, 2008

De Cock's exhibition *Denkmal 11* in 2008 in the MoMA in New York was announced by the museum as 'a kaleidoscopic view into the lineages of modernism through his own interdisciplinary lens.' In his typical 'encyclopedic style', De Cock combines famous modern art with image quotes from the history of photography, architecture and film. The announcement put the emphasis on what for the artist was his essential use of 'repetitive framing devices, extreme close-ups, and fragmentation'. In an interview, De Cock claims Jean-Luc Godard's 260-minute *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1998) – a soaring collage of film clips and stills, music fragments, sound effects, on-screen text, and voice-over – 'to be more important in the formulation of twentieth-century culture than Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* (O. J. R. Version O). Like this film De Cock's 'freely associative approaches to image-making and nonlinear display seem to ask, "What is the most important thing that remains: the images or a way of looking?"' The two-dimensional *Modules CXX* and *CXXI* contain all the stimuli that make his large installations so fascinating for the viewer. Here De Cock knows how to very well evoke the effect of the endlessly varying, the at once revealing and concealing vistas of his sculptures through fragments of architecture at different scale, an archeological maquette, a photograph in a photograph and an indication of time that falls beyond time. – In a certain sense, De Cock's view of the open character of art history is as optimistic as that of Yves Saint Laurent when, in 1965, he uses a Mondrian painting as motif for a dress.



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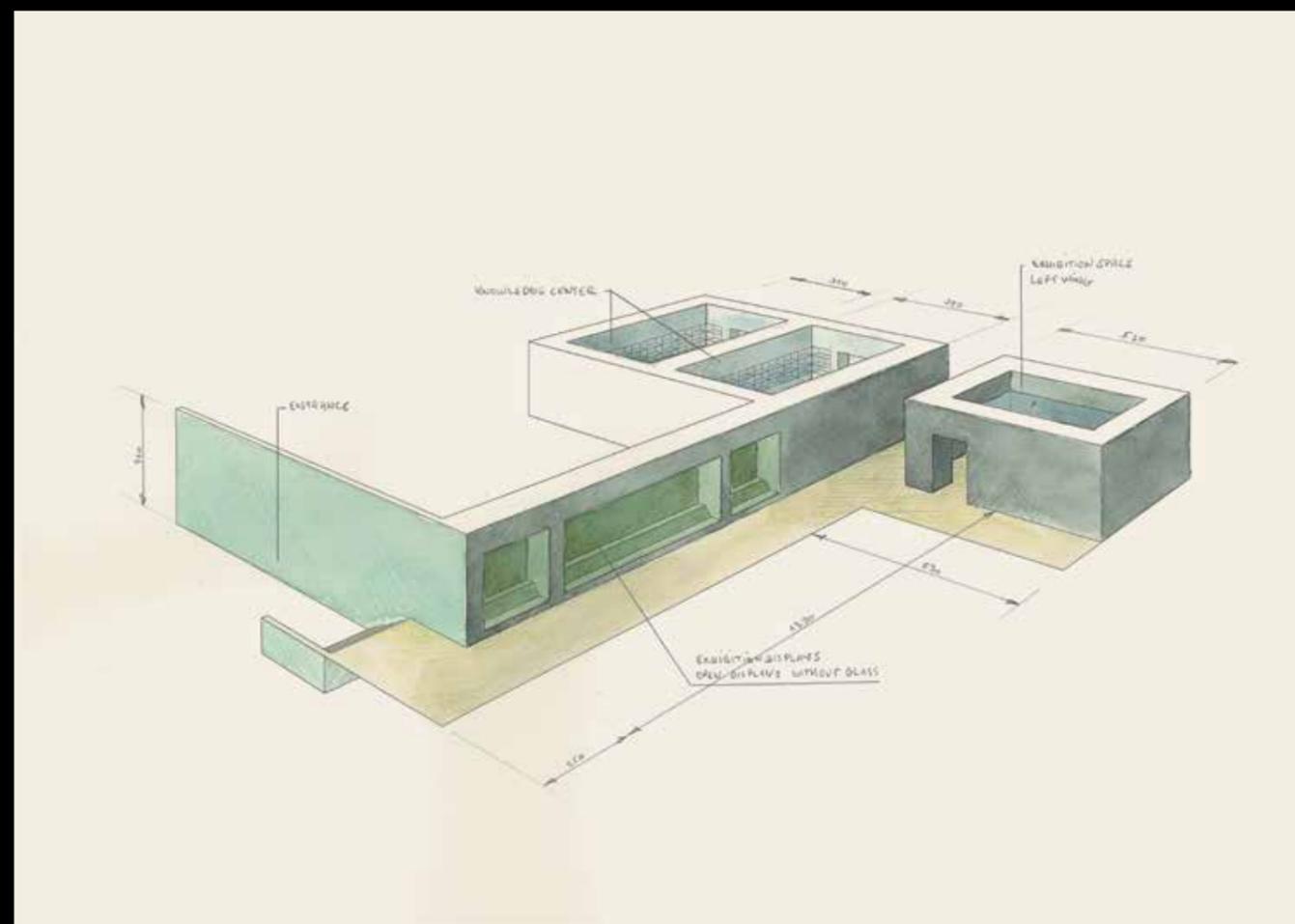
New York, The Museum of Modern Art,
Denkmal 11, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street,
New York, 2008, January 23–April 14, 2008



Research Building – Congo Collectie, Knokke, 2010

Preservation of archival materials
Five construction sketches, each 270 x 400 mm
Watercolor and ink on paper, each titled,
signed and dated, numbered 1 to 5

With his large-scale installations, Wesley Meuris examines the influence of exhibition architecture on human behavior. An important component of his oeuvre treats the naming, rationalizing, cataloguing and archiving of art and art-related information. His quasi-museographical standpoint raises questions concerning the uncritical acceptance of the organization of spaces that have lost their original meaning. Behind the infotainment perspective within which exhibitions are mounted today – from museums to zoos – there lurk mechanisms of control that the artist wants to elucidate via presentation of fictitious exhibitions. Sometimes these installations consist purely of exhibition architecture, empty showcases that are intended to have visitors reflect upon their own, essentially passive stance vis-à-vis the manipulative intentions of all these *shows*. – These drawings concern his project *Congo Collection*, an exhibition of tribal art in Cultuurcentrum Scharpoord in Knokke in 2010. Aside from the exhibition spaces, the fictitious museum also included a research center, laboratory and depot space – all accessible like on a company's 'open-house' day. The objects were presented in a usual museum sort of way, and on shelves in the depot as well. The transformation of the museum into a 'naked' installation is difficult to misunderstand; it undermines the visitor's customary deferential attitude. By banning all 'public-friendly' aspects from the interior arrangement, the artist focuses our view and thoughts to the museum as an institution inextricably linked to the authoritarian organization of society. Meuris reminds us that seeing and making one see are not innocent activities.



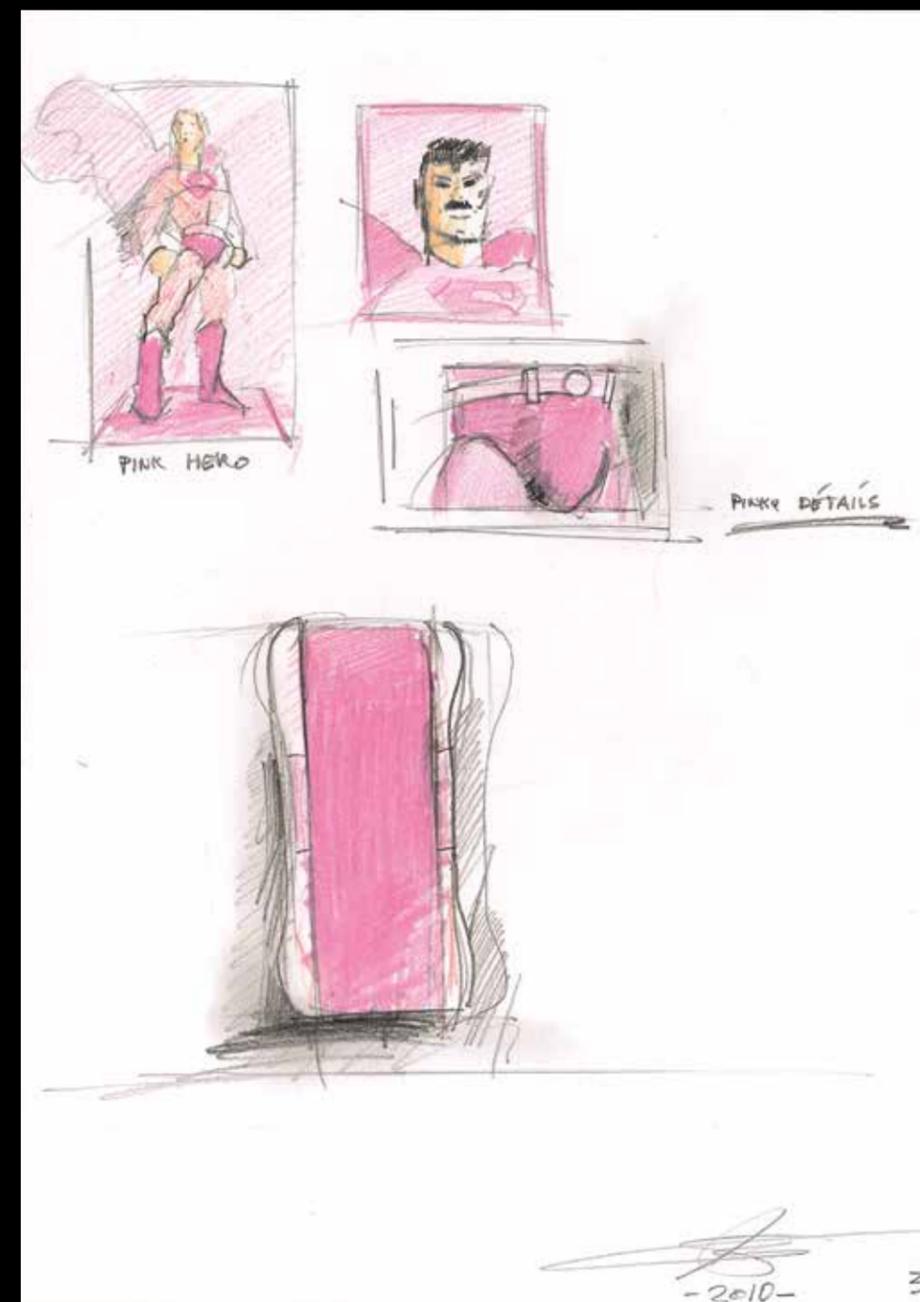
SERGIO DE BEUKELAER

(b.1971)

European Superhero, 2010

Colored pencil and fluorescent marker on paper,
three sheets, each 297 x 210 mm
Signed and dated

Much of the work of Sergio De Beukelaer provides ironic commentary in images regarding the geometric abstract tendency in modern art. When at the end of the Sixties and the beginning of the Seventies the last exponents of this current had repeated a few radical gestures of the pioneers in a 'minimal' way, all seemed to have been said. De Beukelaer understands that when you're headed down a dead-end, it's advisable to turn around. He engages with the real world, the world of color fans and painting supplies. Hard edge becomes soft edge in his fat canvases, the 'shopping' of forms replaces the asceticism of the previous generation. De Beukelaer does not simply poke fun at his deadly earnest artistic forebears. He also does not simply sample monochrome or shaped canvases; his is not an attitude of 'anything goes'. Each new work – or new series of works – is an attempt to mark a difference in the endless image flood submersing the artistic and non-artistic world. For informed viewers the use of unexpected supports and colors perhaps harks back to the (meanwhile anointed) classic moderns, but for 'average' viewers the works differ, subtly and not so subtly, from the colored objects with which they are constantly confronted. The potential impact of his work – knocking the viewer off-balance – has more to do with its 'un-artistic' tendency than with any eventual role the work might have within an art-historical or art-critical discourse. – These three drawings undermine the 'impregnable' power of Superman by changing the colors that are inextricably linked to the brand. Transforming the battle colors of the American hero par excellence in white and black (Obama!) to pink. From the 'European Superhero' via a self-portrait as hero and 'dental fresh', it runs to the 'pink hero' that has a closer kinship to Freddy Mercury or Grace Jones as conclusion. – De Beukelaer manipulates the comic book figure in a less respectful manner than in pop art. He uses the low-culture motif not to pull the rug out from under the exaggerated pretensions of his predecessors, but as a starting point for his own, egocentric practice. The artist sees himself as an actor in a battle of giants. Who else dares to tackle other heroes and reduce their supernatural powers to color and put a parrot on their shoulder?



EUROPEAN SUPERHERO

I THINK THAT CLICHE AND RHYTHM
MADE AN OBE AND THE SAME
[2012]



ANTHROPOMORPHIC AS A HERO

BLACK HERO. 1
WHITE HERO
WING HERO
DARK ASIAN HERO.



DENTAL FRESH
"WHITE TEETH"

CRACKS



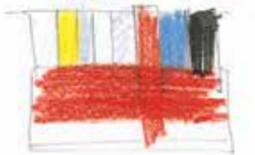
BLACK HERO



WHITE HERO

EUROPEAN HERO

SUPER-TEST-IMAGE
= 4 SUPERMAN <



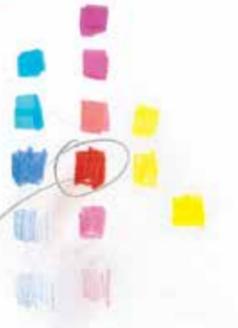
THE
THIS
BACKED
WINGS



SUPERMAN
NOT
PARAGLIDER
ARA

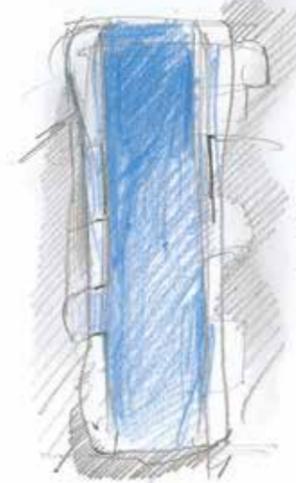
DARK
LIGHT

CROSS



3

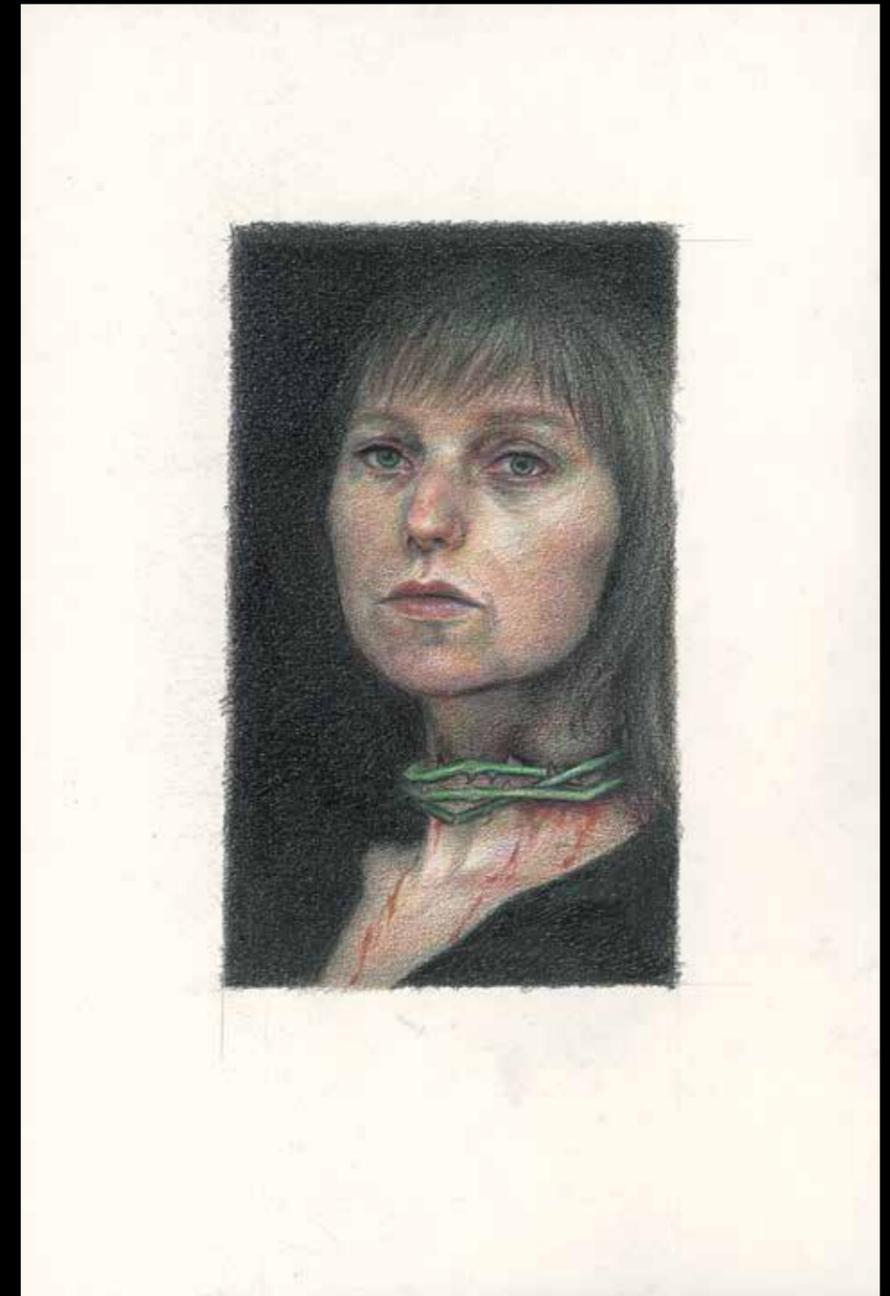
- CROSS
- SHARP
- WHITE
- LOW KEY
- VIBRANT
- HARMONY



Study for *Self-portrait*, 2008

Colored pencil on paper, 300 x 200 mm
(image 175 x 105 mm)
Signed

Cindy Wright is known for her large-scale close-up portraits and still-lives on the border between figuration and abstraction. She favors a deceptive photorealism that, via framing and brutal choice of motif (e.g. raw meat), confronts in a non-expressionist manner viewers' habitual ways-of-seeing and emotions. Her self-portrait is, if possible, even more confrontational. Stronger still than the blood trickling from her neckband of thorns, is her eloquent gaze. A gaze that speaks to the viewer: 'Don't look away, don't act like you don't know anything, nobody's innocent...' Of course, it is an imaginary, provocative image, effective due to its hyperrealistic execution. Cindy Wright does not see herself as a reissue of the Savior on the cross, she in no way wants to pay for our sinful ignorance. This self-portrait has to do with the power of images, about how these can penetrate deep into our consciousness in an almost magical way. Beyond any eventual art-historical references, self-portraits say much about the aesthetics of their makers and about the role they want to play in their time and space. This self-portrait seems to have the self-portrait itself as subject. The question remains open as to whether the artist is a self-aware genius or an unsung martyr, or both. The drawing demonstrates a softer version than the larger than life-size painting for which this is a preliminary study. There the gaze is directed more to the side, the expression is more self-assured, the skin color more pale. What was still intimate and enigmatic becomes a compelling public presence.



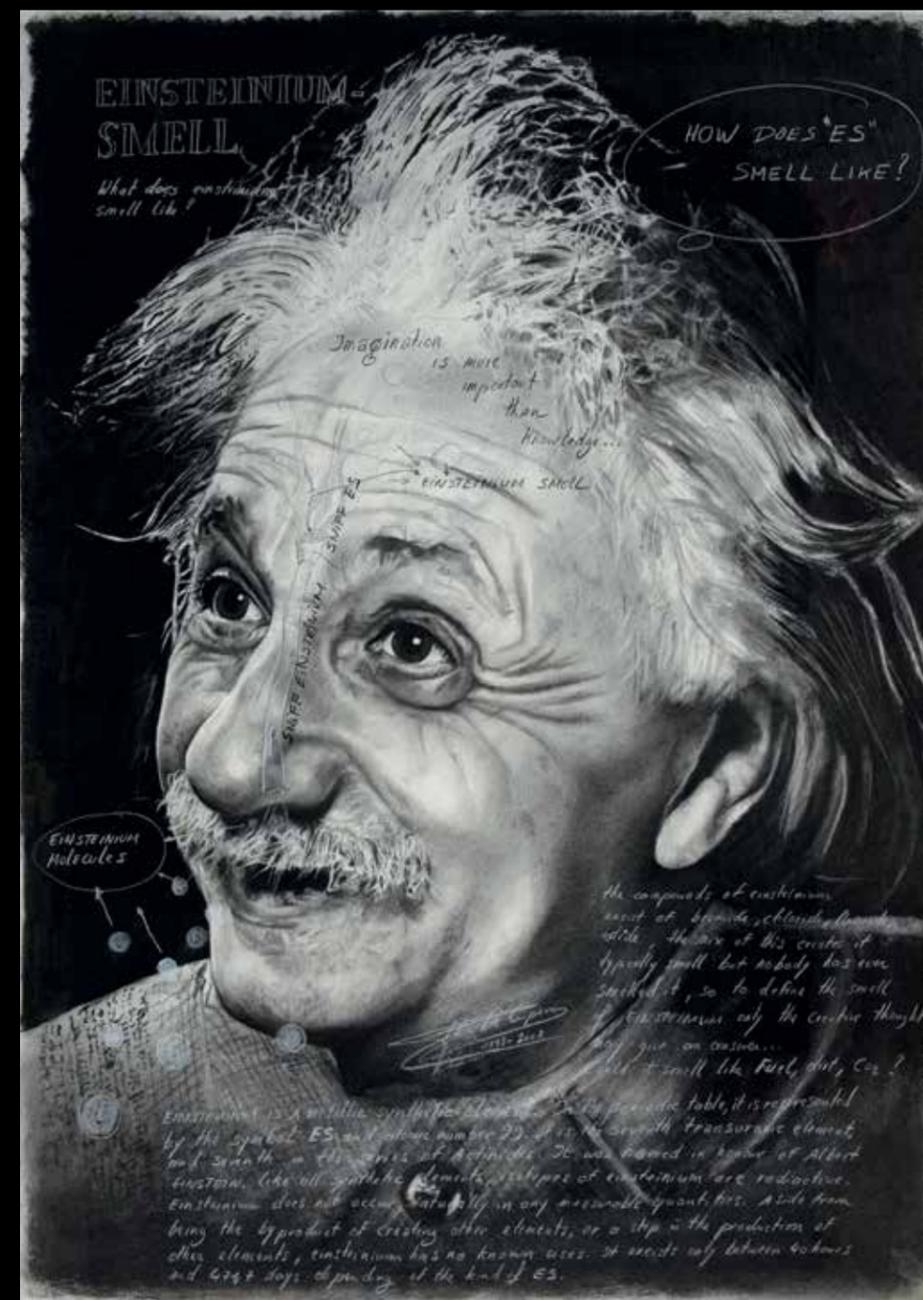
PETER DE CUPERE

(b.1970)

Einsteinium smell, 1998-2008

Mixed media on paper, 640 x 480 mm
Signed and dated lower center

Peter De Cupere is perhaps the only artist consistently working with smells, objects and installations of smells, and smells as the motif in videos and performances. With his exposé on the smell that the chemical element Einsteinium, a highly radioactive metal, might exude, he tries to penetrate the world of science. No-one knows what Einsteinium smells like, and here De Cupere sees his chance for 'unscientific' creative thought. The fact that no scientist ever even posed the question, is seen by the artist as an excellent starting point (for that matter, Einsteinium's sole use thus far has been to produce 17 atoms of Mendelevium, itself also of no known use). De Cupere combines the photorealistic style of portraits hawked to vain passers-by at tourist spots, with an extensively formulaic and probably unanswerable question that only a smell artist would be interested in. He alludes to the status acquired by Einstein of having a genius that surpasses science alone, by applying a famous aphorism of his across the bridge of his nose - 'Imagination is more important than knowledge' - something equally applicable to art. De Cupere's work was once summarized as follows: 'By exploiting the subjective, associative impact of smells, in combination with visual images, (he) generates a kind of meta-sensory experience that goes beyond purely seeing or smelling.' Perhaps the antecedents of his work must be rather sought in literature, for many writers have examined the 'difficult' senses like smell and taste. Perhaps De Cupere is searching for an update of Rimbaud's method - 'It is about reaching the unknown through the disruption of all the senses.' - or does he wish to go in the direction of Jean De Esseintes with his perfume-organ in Huysmans' novel *A rebours* (1884), an aesthetic manifesto of decadence. De Cupere's study of the grammar and syntax of smell illustrates how contemporary art connects with earlier applied art or even craft, whose practitioners remain in the shadow of their creations, as with Edmond Roudnitska, one of the greatest master perfume-makers of the 20th century, who stated that a beautiful perfume 'produces a shock, a shock to the senses followed by a psychological shock.'



BOY & ERIK STAPPAERTS

(b.1969)

Color study in studio, 2013

Color photograph, 1150 x 970 mm
Signed

From the work of Boy & Erik Stappaerts it is readily apparent that color and light are the primary drivers of abstract art. And also 'the basis of a research which serves with its pure structural values, not only as a measuring rod for a new "esthetics", but in their functional values for a desirable new social order.' (Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, 1947) With his *Pentagonium* project, Stappaerts seems to extend the tradition of artists who wished to launch a universal style. The most visible aspect of that project are the *Conflict Paintings*, which with their rhythm of horizontal bands lean towards the strict visual language of minimal art. But any kinship is at the same time put into perspective by the non-artistic colors that evoke an atmosphere of indulgent hedonistic weekends without end. Fragments of a flashy disco-world, propelled forward by a drum machine. Stappaerts is no heir to the orthodox painters who with their 'pure imaging' wanted to bring rest and harmony to an 'irrational' world. The secret of the *Conflict Paintings* is the precise dosage of references: a color palette that one associates with hip adverts or pop-up projects, the horizontal strips that seem to be snipped from an endless band, and of a format that is just too long for a seascape. The final effect is ambiguous, because the viewer who hopes to repress permanent fears with still more powerful images, realizes that these are mirages. – In releasing this preliminary study – a photograph of the floor of his studio – Stappaerts reveals much about his working method. At first sight no-one associates this bright green lava crust with his work; seemingly, the real rectilinear Stappaerts has taken a sideward's step, amusing himself with an expressive *image trouvée*. Nothing is further from the truth – it has to do with an obsessive gesture. Stappaerts gives us a color-sample card of the entire world, and even of a floor that is well beyond cleaning. He well understands that color not only has more impact than form, but also that centuries of culture have contributed to it and that it has exercised a symbolic effect. He leaves suspended the question as to which aspects he gives priority. In this perspective, these brutally illuminated images in cold green create more doubt than certainty, they approach the point of pure detachment where the subject has gone up in smoke. – From a recent text by the artist himself: 'For a while now we find ourselves in a pivotal time where all sorts of artisanal and analogue objects are evolving within a digital visual culture. I see my work as a monument to this pivotal period.'



CONCEPT

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