

**COMMUNICATION  
DEPARTMENT**

**PRESS PACK**



**NEW HANG  
OF THE MODERN COLLECTION**

**FROM APRIL 2010**

**MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, LEVEL 5**

**THE  
NEW HANG**

**Centre  
Pompidou**

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# NEW HANG OF THE MODERN COLLECTION

FROM 1905 TO THE 1960s

FROM APRIL 2010

MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, LEVEL 5



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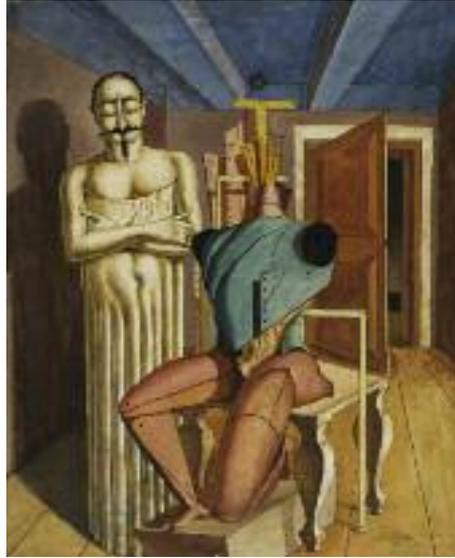
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13 april 2010



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PRESS BACK  
**NEW HANG**  
**OF THE MODERN COLLECTION**  
FROM 1905 TO THE 1960s

**FROM APRIL 2010**  
MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE, LEVEL 5

The Musée National d'Art Moderne is proud to unveil the new hang of its Modern collection, from 1905 to the 1960s. Occupying 7,000 m<sup>2</sup> (the whole of Level 5) this is devoted to the movements, themes and leading figures of 20<sup>th</sup> century art, beacons that illuminate a century of creative activity. Both thematic and chronological in organisation, it reveals the links, analogies and dialogues between key works in the different disciplines : painting, sculpture, photography, film, architecture and design.

The new hang also reflects the continuing vitality of the Museum, presenting not only the foundational movements of Modern Art (from Fauvism to the Nouveau Réalistes and Kinetic Art) through the work of such greats as Picasso, Brancusi, Delaunay, Duchamp, Kandinsky, Léger, Matisse and Mirò, but also recent acquisitions, among them the Geneviève Catti-Gherasim Luca donation, and the works of Jean Le Moal presented in lieu of taxes by the artist's estate.

At the same time, other rooms organised by period (Le Corbusier and Esprit

Giorgio de Chirico : *Il Ritornante*, 1918 (Le Revenant)

Achat en vente publique, avec le soutien du Fonds du Patrimoine et avec la participation de Monsieur Pierre Bergé, 2009.

Ancienne collection Yves Saint-Laurent et Pierre Bergé.

Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Pompidou.

© Adagp, Paris 2010

Nouveau), or theme (biomorphism), or cross-cutting multidisciplinary perspective (Italian Art and Design, 1950-60), bring in the graphic arts, photography, architecture and design. To complement the resources of the permanent collection, outstanding works have been loaned by a number of foundations : the Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti, Paris ; the Fondation Le Corbusier ; and the Fondation Georges Rouault.

And finally, until 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010, the artist Sarkis will be intervening in a number of spaces within the Museum, notably the room devoted to André Breton's studio wall, for his exhibition "Passage."

The idea behind the new hang is to provide a chronological display that reflects the successive emergence of the most important movements across the century, but punctuated by presentations of the Museum's holdings of major individual artists. And peppered here and there within this wider scheme are more ephemeral displays of donations, recent purchases, and tributes.

The visitor is guided through the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century art by a new and more effective system of signage, the whole exhibition being divided into two parts : from 1905 to 1945, and from 1945 to the 1960s. It is complemented by other displays of works and documentary materials that echo elements of the central narrative : painting and sculpture by Victor Brauner, documents from the Kandinsky archives, photographs by Gherasim Luca and drawings by Jasper Johns.

The new hang as a whole, its rooms historical, thematic or devoted to a single artist, is the fruit of the collective labours of the Museum's curators in their different fields. Painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, film, architecture, designs, documentation : all offer evidence of the encounters, alliances and ruptures that go to make up the history of the different currents in modern art.

Offering the public a better idea of the breadth of the Museum's collections, this new hang will be itself periodically renewed by the replacement of some works by others that will take their place in the story, casting new light on it in their turn.



## 2. EXHIBITION ORGANISATION, WITH PLAN

### 1945 - années 1960

35 The Art of Assemblage

36 US, 1950-1960 Art and Design

37 Italy 1950-1960 Art and Design

38 Light and Movements

39 Instability

40 Donation Lucien Hervé

41 Matisse/Bonnard Late Works

42 Scandinavian Design: The 1950s

43 Yes Klein

Terrace

### 1905 - 1945

18 Georges Rouault: Les Fleurs du mal

19 Léger and the Body in Space

20 Under the Sign of Venus

21 André Breton Sarkis

22 Magical Surrealism

23 Léger and the Spirit in Photography

24 Gestural Abstraction

25 The Art of Assemblage

26 The Surrealist Spirit in Photography

27 The Surrealist Spirit in Photography

28 Léger and the Body in Space

29 Léger and the Body in Space

30 Donation Le Moal

31 Dubuffet/Oldenburger

32 Gestural Abstraction

33 Nouveaux réalistes

34 Rauschenberg and American Neo-Dada

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15 Man Ray: Casting Shadows

16 Figurations after 1914

17 Biomorphism

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9 Early Abstraction: The Musical Eye

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5 Cubism Braque/Gris/Laurens 1912-1918

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Terrace

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2 Fauvism

3 Primitivism and expressionism

4 Cubism Braque/Gris/Laurens 1912-1918

5 Cubism Braque/Gris/Laurens 1912-1918

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Henri Matisse



The new hang of the Museum's collection presents a chronological account of 20<sup>th</sup> century art through its foundational movements (e.g. Cubism, Expressionism, assemblage...) and its individual masters (Brancusi, Braque, Delaunay, Duchamp, Dubuffet, Giacometti, Kandinsky, Laurens, Léger, Matisse, Mirò, Picasso...), punctuated by multidisciplinary presentations evoking the wider context.

#### **THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MUSEUM : A TRIBUTE TO JEAN CASSOU ROOM 1**

Room 1 is entirely devoted to the acquisitions of Jean Cassou, first director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne when it opened in 1947, focussing more particularly on works acquired in the post-war period, directly from the artists, among them Matisse, Mirò, Picasso and Brancusi.

#### **FROM 1905 TO 1945 ROOMS 2 TO 19**

The emergence of Fauvism (Room 2) in 1905 and then of Cubism (Rooms 4 and 5) in 1907 made Paris the capital of creative art. The explosive colour of Derain, Matisse, Laurens, Braque was rapidly followed by the geometrized forms of Picasso, Brancusi and Léger (Rooms 2 to 7). An outstanding display of early constructions by Laurens (Rooms 5 and 6) has been made possible by loans from the G.L.L collection and from a private collector.

From Delaunay to Kandinsky and from Kupka to Klee, the years 1911-1913 saw the development of abstraction in Europe, with compositions organised around the contrast of colours and in analogy with music (Rooms 8 and 9).

The historical exposition is punctuated by displays of particular artists: works by Robert and Sonia Delaunay from the Sonia and Charles Delaunay Donation (Room 10), a selection of photographs by Man Ray on the theme of shadows (Room 15), a room devoted to Rouault's illustrations for Baudelaire's *Fleurs du mal*, accompanied by related works loaned by the Fondation Georges Rouault (Room 18). Other rooms testify to the diversity and vitality of European art in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The avant-gardes of Eastern Europe are represented by the Constructivist works of Moholy-Nagy and Pevsner and the Suprematist architectones of Malevich. These can be seen alongside an installation by Sarkis, invited to make a three-month intervention in this new hang (Room 12).

Other spaces are devoted to Dada (Hausmann, Picabia, Duchamp) (Room 13), the emergence of early Surrealism, around André Breton (Picasso, Mirò, De Chirico, Dali and others) (Room 14), to figuration in France and Germany after 1914 (Soutine, Modigliani, Dix, Schad and others) (Room 16), and the biomorphism of Calder, Arp and Mirò (Room 17).

In the fields of architecture and design, Room 11 is devoted to Le Corbusier and the journal *L'Esprit nouveau*. There, the model of the Maison Citrohan is a temporary loan from the Fondation Corbusier. Together with Charlotte Perriand's *Studio-Bar*, part of it purchased in 2009, part on long-term loan from Mme Pernette Perriand-Barsac, it evokes the new architectural and aesthetic ideas that emerged in the period between the wars.

#### **FROM 1945 TO THE 1960s ROOMS 20 TO 42**

The second part of the exhibition reveals the wealth of creative exploration, in all disciplines, that followed the second world war. Influenced by André Breton, a "second Surrealism," inspired by myth and imbued with eroticism, saw the emergence in Paris of a new generation of artists (Simon Hantai, Jean Degottex) and photographers (Pierre Boucher, Pierre Molinier). In parallel with Surrealism, there emerged a gestural abstraction close to the idea of automatism, exemplified by a painting of Georges Noël's and a drawing by Serpan, both acquired in 2008-2009. These thematic explorations are complemented by rooms devoted to Picasso after 1945 and to the late works of Henri Matisse and Pierre Bonnard.

Recently donated in lieu of tax, the works of the Dation Jean Le Moal (Room 30) engage a dialogue with those of Alfred Manessier and Jean Bazaine, illustrating the continuing vitality of the School of Paris. Comprising more than 60 images, the recent donation by the family of photographer Lucien Hervé (Room 40) is a worthy tribute to this artist well-known for his collaboration with Le Corbusier. A plaster on temporary loan from the Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti, Paris (Room 23) illuminates the development of other works of the same series in the collection of the Musée National d'Art Moderne.



Certain themes, such as that of the representation of the body, are explored through both painting and photography, in the juxtaposition of Francis Bacon with Arnulf Rainer (Room 25) and of Fernand Léger with Raoul Ubac (Room 29). Room 31 looks at the relations between Europe and the United States in the post-War period, highlighting the play of influence and opposition between Dubuffet and Oldenburg in the 1950s and 1960s. The early 1960s saw the emergence of an art of appropriation or recycling with the Nouveaux Réalistes (New Realists) in France, which paralleled the emergence of assemblage art in the United States, with Rauschenberg installation *Oracle* and the work of the American Neo-Dadaists (Room 34).

While abstraction flourished in Italy, notably in the work of Lucio Fontana, Alberto Burri and Piero Manzoni (Rooms 36 and 37), the 1950s also saw the emergence of a new energy in architecture (BBPR's Torre Velasca) and design (Gino Sarfatti's lighting). It was during this same period that the Scandinavian design of such as Arne Jacobsen and Hans Wegner (Room 42) became widely influential. These new displays have been made possible thanks to the generosity of a number of donors: the Clarence Westbury Foundation, Alberto Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Tecno, and Paris design galleries Christine Diegoni-Zyman and Dansk Møbelkunst.

Rooms 38 and 39, which bring this part of the exhibition to a close, are largely devoted to the kinetic art that developed in Europe in the 1950s and 60s. For the first time at the Musée National d'Art Moderne, a room is devoted to the artists of the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (1960-1968), thanks to the recent acquisition of works by Yvaral, Francisco Sobrino and Joël Stein, illustrating the principle of "instability" that they championed (Room 39). The room "Lumières et mouvements" (Light and Movement, Room 38) shows art that consciously exploits 20<sup>th</sup> century technological advances, such as the "luminokinetic" works of Piotr Kowalski and the "spatio-dynamic" pieces of Nicolas Schäffer, evoking one of the strains of utopianism most prevalent in the art of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



### 3. SOME KEY WORKS



Fernand Léger  
*Composition aux deux perroquets*, 1935

#### SALLE 1 THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE

Opened on 9 June 1947 under curator-in-chief Jean Cassou, the Musée National d'Art Moderne had its first home at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. To fill in the gaps in the collection, Cassou pursued an energetic policy of acquisition through donations, bequests, and purchases on highly favourable terms from artists and collectors. In this way, works by Braque, Delaunay, Léger, Matisse, Miró, Picasso and others, as well as the contents of Brancusi's studio, joined the Museum's collection, contributing to its growth. Its substantial holdings of certain movements – Fauvism, Cubism – and of major individual painters are a distinctive feature of the Museum's collection.

Conceived by French president Georges Pompidou as “a museum and centre of creation, where music, film, books and audiovisual experimentation have their place alongside the visual arts”, the Centre Pompidou opened on 31 January 1977. The MNAM moved there with its collection of some 10,000 paintings, sculptures, drawings and photographs. Today extended to cover architecture, design, film, video and new media, the collection includes more than 60,000 works. In this chronological hang, Level 5 presents a selection from 1905 to the 1960s

#### SALLE 2 FAUVISM

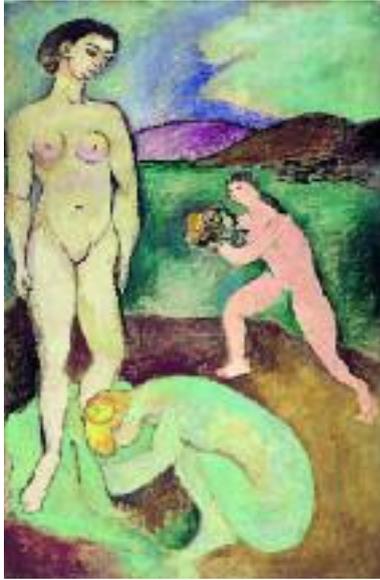


Raoul Dufy  
*La Rue pavoisée*, 1906

Laying the ground for the future autonomy of form and colour, Fauvism burst onto the scene at the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1905. The young painters Derain, Vlaminck, Marquet and Manguin – gathered around Matisse and to be joined the next year by Dufy and Braque – caused a scandal with paintings that privileged schematic renderings and pure colour. Seeing a classical sculpture by Albert Marquet amidst these pictures, critic Louis Vauxcelles compared it to “Donatello among the wild beasts (fauves)”. The name stuck. Matisse explained the formal revolution they effected: “Fauvism shook off the tyranny of Divisionism. It's impossible to live in too orderly a household, a household of maiden aunts. So you go off into the bush, looking for simpler methods that don't suffocate the spirit. In this there was also the influence of Gauguin and Van Gogh. These were the ideas of the time: construction through coloured surfaces, a quest for intensity in colour...”

### SALLE 3 PRIMITIVISMS AND EXPRESSIONISMS

In their endeavour to invent art anew, the early-twentieth-century avant-gardes looked to new sources: the African statuary discovered at Universal Expositions or ethnographical museums such as that at the Trocadéro, but also archaic and Romanesque art or the popular imagery of woodcuts and ex-voto offerings. While drawing on these forms, they sought to construct their works through a truly contemporary language combining pure colour, expressivity and economy. Throughout Europe there flourished a number of distinctive Expressionisms that united nostalgia for a lost paradise with a sense of urban modernity: in Germany Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter, in Russia the “Knave of Diamonds” group, in France the Fauves.



Henri Matisse  
*Le Luxe I, 1907*

### SALLE 4 CUBISM: BRAQUE / PICASSO 1907-1911

Created by Braque and Picasso, Cubism enjoyed its most creative period between 1907 and 1914. A crucial moment in 20<sup>th</sup> century art, it gave concrete expression to the idea of art as intellectual construction, inventing a new language that took from Cézanne his geometrization of forms and finding in African sculpture a model of non-naturalistic expression. Abjuring perspective, their paintings first treated volumes as cubic masses and then flattened and deconstructed them into facets. Colour and narrative both disappeared. Figures or still lifes were suggested by fragmentary outlines hinting at the subject and the space containing it: the edges of planes, half-circles, arrows, all unified in the muted glow of greys and beiges. The rhythm of the brushwork gives energy to compositions that may be dense or translucent, forming and unforming before the eye, verging on abstraction.



Georges Braque  
*Grand nu, 1907/08*



Pablo Picasso  
*Buste de femme, 1907*

**SALLE 6**  
**THE TWENTIES: THE “RAPPEL À L'ORDRE”**

The years between the wars were marked by a revival of the unambiguously figurative called by Jean Cocteau the “rappel à l'ordre,” the return to order. In the case of Picasso, his collaboration with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, a journey to Italy in 1917, and his fondness for the Old Masters led to a return to the autobiographical figures of his Pink Period, such as the Harlequin, and a reinterpretation of classical models. He shared with Derain an ambiguous realism loosely derived from the examples of Ingres, David and Renoir, embodied in cold, elegant portraits and nudes of solid and generous forms. Laurens's stone sculptures testify to a rediscovery of volume and mass and are informed by the same synthesis of classical rigour and monumental form. After the difficulties and deprivations of the war years, Matisse's caryatids and odalisques mark a return to the sensual. His portraits of women echo Manet, or feature decorative backgrounds evoking the romance of the East.



Henri Laurens  
*Cariatide assise*, 1929/1936

**SALLE 7**  
**LÉGER / LAURENS / BRANCUSI**

In 1956, a year before his death, Rumanian-born sculptor Constantin Brancusi bequeathed to the French government the contents of his studio in Montparnasse, on condition that it be reconstructed at the Musée National d'Art Moderne. Today sited on the piazza in front of the Centre Pompidou, the studio contains 144 sculptures by the man considered to be the inventor of modern sculpture. Among his late works is the grey marble *Phoque* [Seal] of 1943, acquired by the Museum in 1947. This illustrates the distinctive characteristics of his work: the gleaming smoothness of the highly polished surface, the simplified or fragmented forms from which all detail has been lost. Intended originally to revolve, thanks to a small electric motor within the stone base, the sculpture figures a metamorphosis, in which are superimposed the vision of a young woman half-rising and that of a seal about to take to the sea. Sign triumphs over representation, and the sculpture becomes a symbol of mankind's relationship to the earth.



Constantin Brancusi  
*Le Phoque*, 1943

**SALLE 8**  
**EARLY ABSTRACTION : COLOUR AS LIGHT**



Sonia Delaunay  
*Prismes électriques*, 1914

The abstract revolution occurred almost simultaneously across Europe around 1911-1913, and it is difficult today to say whether Kandinsky, Kupka or Delaunay was the first to cross the boundary to non-representational painting. Analyzing optical phenomena in terms of the decomposition of white light by the prism, Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Kupka and the Futurist Balla produced non-representational compositions with sometimes cosmic overtones. Their coloured spectra in circular motion expressed the intensity of light, gazed at "until dazzled", as Sonia Delaunay said. The Delaunays' abstraction, described as "Orphic" by Apollinaire, paved the way for "pure painting." Also termed "Simultaneism", it was concerned with "colour contrasts ... developing over time, but perceived simultaneously, at a single moment" (R. Delaunay).

**SALLE 9**  
**EARLY ABSTRACTION : THE MUSICAL EYE**



Vassily Kandinsky  
*Mit dem schwarzen Bogen [Avec l'arc noir]*, 1912

Pioneers of abstraction like Kandinsky and Kupka were particularly aware of the possible analogy between the visual arts and music, which helped them take their distance from the real to imagine a non-figurative painting. In his treatise *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, Kandinsky – who had discovered Schönberg's atonal music in 1910 – described a painting whose business would be "to investigate its own powers and methods." In a letter to the Austrian composer he described his intention as follows: "I will show, however, that construction is also to be attained by the principle of dissonance." Pictorial harmony would now be based on the dissociation of line and colour, on contrasts and contradictions. Kupka too was interested in the analogy with music, endeavouring to create forms unrelated to reality: "I think I can find something between sight and hearing and I can produce a fugue in colours as Bach has done in music."

**SALLE 10**  
**THE SONIA AND CHARLES DELAUNAY DONATION (1964)**

In 1964, Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979) and her son Charles made a magnificent donation to the Musée National d'Art Moderne : 35 works by Robert Delaunay (including 16 paintings and 14 drawings), 67 works by Sonia Delaunay (including 13 paintings, 38 drawings and 14 objets d'art), selected to fill the gaps in the collection and to illustrate the development of two great artists, from the beginning to the end of their careers. Among them are valuable masterworks, such as Robert Delaunay's *Paysage au disque*, 1906, and Sonia Delaunay's *Contrastes simultanés*, 1912, or the lovely group of "Rythmes", 1930, also by Robert, but there are also more intimate pieces and remarkable series of drawings that reflect both their complicity and the radicalism of their investigation of "the visual poetry of colour." In accordance with the terms of the gift, a representative selection of these works is kept on permanent display. This includes 10 of the 29 paintings or reliefs, alongside which are shown three other works of different provenance. In addition, works by the Delaunays can also be seen in other parts at the beginning of the exhibition.



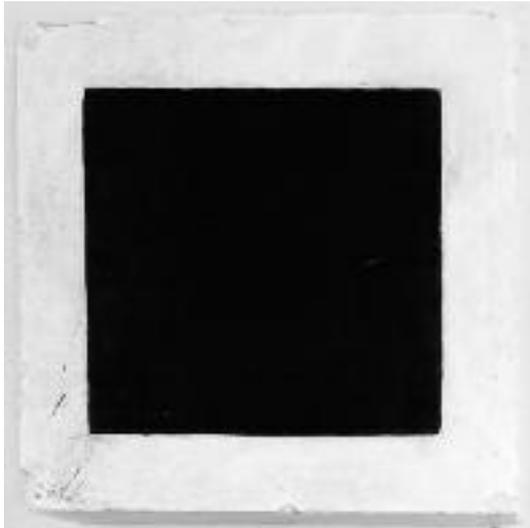
**Robert Delaunay**  
*La Tour Eiffel*, 1926

**SALLE 11**  
**LE CORBUSIER AND L'ESPRIT NOUVEAU**

Founded in 1920, the journal *L'Esprit nouveau* was edited by Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier), Amédée Ozenfant and, briefly, Paul Dermée. The 28 issues between then and 1925, devoted for the most part to aesthetics and the criticism of art, literature and architecture, served to promote not only Purism but also modern technology. The journal supported many artists, among them Fernand Léger, Willi Baumeister and Jacques Lipchitz. During this period, Le Corbusier continued to paint as he pursued his career as an architect, building the Villa Besnus, the Ozenfant studio, and the La Roche-Jeanneret and Lipchitz-Miestchaninoff houses. He also researched the Citrohan house and the Immeubles-Villas. In the *Esprit Nouveau Pavilion* he built for the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs of 1925 he showed his studies in urban planning, notably his "Plan Voisin for Paris."



**Le Corbusier**  
*Maquette de la Maison Citrohan*, 1922  
 Fondation Le Corbusier



**Kasimir Malevitch**  
*Carré noir*, [1923-1930]

## SALLE 12 CONSTRUCTIVISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

Emerging in Central Europe and Russia in 1915-1916, Constructivism was a quest for the distinctively modern not only in art but also in society, more especially after the October Revolution in 1917. It had its origins in "0,10: The Last Futurist Exhibition" in Saint Petersburg in 1915, where Tatlin showed his *Counter-Reliefs*, insistent in their emphasis on volume, space and material, and Malevich exhibited his first Suprematist works. In Moscow in 1920, Pevsner and Gabo defined artistic creation as "the realization of our perceptions of the world in the forms of space and time." After the failure of the Hungarian Revolution in 1920, the Hungarian artists dispersed throughout Europe. In Vienna, Kassák relaunched the journal *Ma* (Today), with Moholy Nagy as its German correspondent. It was at an exhibition at the gallery Der Sturm in Berlin that Gropius noticed Moholy-Nagy's work and invited him to teach at the Bauhaus. There he promoted a photographic style that made much use of high- and low-angle shots, for example, to offer a "New Vision" of the world.

## SALLE 13 DADA

In Zurich in 1916, the poets Ball, Huelsenbeck and Tzara and painters Arp, Janco and Taeuber came together at the Cabaret Voltaire under the banner of Dada, whose most important European centres would be Zurich, Berlin and Paris. At Dada events, anything was permitted if it served to attack the ideas of art, aesthetics or morality: performances, noise pieces, assemblages, collages, tracts... Hausmann, Man Ray, Picabia, Schwitters, Taeuber and others in this way promoted the absurd, the random and the provocative as the expression of a freedom without limits. In New York in 1913, Duchamp had produced his first ready-made: an "ordinary object raised to the dignity of a work of art by the mere decision of the artist" (André Breton) and formulated the concept of "anti-art."



**Francis Picabia**  
*Dresseur d'animaux*, 1923

**SALLE 14**  
**EARLY SURREALISM**

In his *Surrealist Manifesto* of 1924, André Breton marshalled together under the term "Surrealism", coined by Apollinaire in 1917, a range of pictorial and poetic practices that relied on "automatism." The following year, the exhibition "La Peinture surréaliste" at the Pierre gallery in Paris offered a survey of this type of experimentation, which sought primarily to express the life of dream. At the same time, De Chirico's "metaphysical" painting was winning a following for its mystery and melancholy. This influenced Dalí and his "paranoiac-critical" method, Ernst, and also Miró, who in 1928 began to be interested in found objects and their 'magnetic force.' Until 1934, Giacometti's sculptures – "mobile, silent objects" – were characterized by ambiguity of form and meaning. Such "disagreeable objects to be thrown away" were conceived as expressions of the unconscious.



Giorgio De Chirico  
*Il Ritornante*, 1918

**SALLE 15**  
**MAN RAY : CASTING SHADOWS**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, manuals for photographers advised that they should not let their own shadows appear at the bottom of the picture. It was a question of maintaining the illusion of a medium perfectly objective on account of the absence of human intervention, by eliminating any trace of the latter's presence. With the avant-gardes of the Twenties and Thirties, the shadow became, in the images of such as André Kertész, Raoul Hausmann or Umbo, the visible sign of a technique that declared itself and of a creator who had no wish to hide. Man Ray is the most famous of these new "shadow-casters." He played with his own shadow, and with that of objects placed directly on photographic paper. With him, photography became skiagraphy, a writing with shadow.



Man Ray  
*Rayographie*

## SALLE 16 FIGURATION AFTER 1914

The German *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) and the French “School of Paris” were two aspects of figurative art after 1914. Representing the left wing of New Objectivity, Otto Dix and Christian Schad cast an unsparing eye on the modern world, their “Verist” vision rendered with a care for detail that contrasts with the earlier Expressionist aesthetic. In France, the first “School of Paris” was essentially made up of non-French artists (Chagall, Modigliani, Soutine), many of them based at the La Ruche studios in Montparnasse. In France as in Germany, the artists of the past were a source of inspiration, with Derain referring to Greco and Goya, Modigliani finding his poses in Ingres, and Dix evoking Grünewald, Cranach and Holbein. Balthus privileged the portrait and the relation to the model, rediscovering the traditional technique of Piero della Francesca in paintings exhibited in 1934 at the Galerie Pierre in Paris, whose realistic representation of naked young women scandalised the public.



**Otto Dix**  
*Le Portrait de la journaliste  
Sylvia von Harden, 1926*

## SALLE 17 BIOMORPHISM

In the mid-1920s, forms whose rounded contours and sinuous lines recalled the aesthetic of Art Nouveau began to appear in the work of many painters, as fascinated by the tiny worlds revealed by the biologist’s microscope as they were by the vastness of the universe seen through the astronomer’s telescope.

It was in 1936, on the occasion of the exhibition *Cubism and Abstract Art* at MoMA, New York, that Alfred H. Barr Jr. introduced the term “biomorphism” to distinguish such work from geometric abstraction – this “ism”, however, representing a shared feature rather than a movement to which any painter declared allegiance. The Surrealists deployed these organic and vegetal forms, in part the fruit of chance: not only Arp but also Calder, Tanguy and Miró. Familiar with the Surrealist painting of Miró and Arp after his move to Paris in 1933, Kandinsky introduced organic motifs drawn from biological illustrations found in the scientific works he had already used as sources of images in his teaching at the Bauhaus and for his treatise *Point and Line to Plane* (1926).



**Alexander Calder**  
*Requin et baleine, 1933*

**SALLE 18**  
**GEORGES ROUAULT : LES FLEURS DU MAL**



Georges Rouault  
*Satan, 1917*

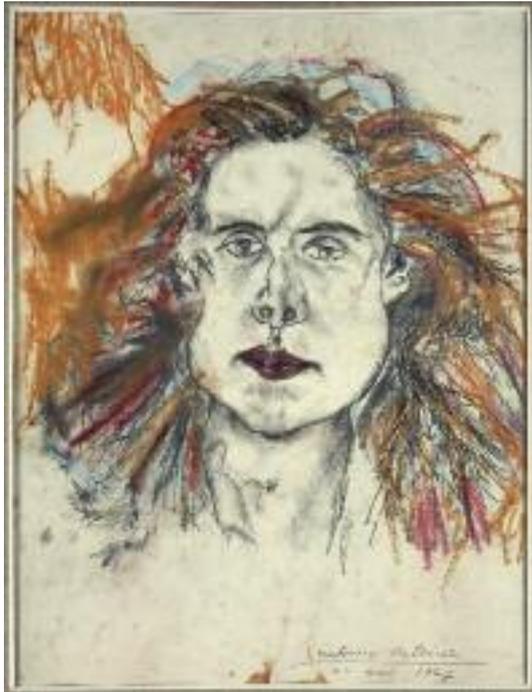
Published in 1857, Charles Baudelaire's collection of poems *Les Fleurs du mal* was an important influence on the many artists who illustrated it, among them James Ensor, Gustave Moreau, Odilon Redon and Henri Matisse. For Georges Rouault, the poet was a tutelary figure, as witnessed by the presence of his portrait alongside that of the artist's teacher Gustave Moreau in his *Souvenirs intimes*. Rouault began work on *Les Fleurs du mal* in 1918, and in 1926 and 1927 produced 14 aquatint etchings in a run of 500 for his dealer Ambroise Vollard, followed by a further 12 colour aquatint etchings in 1936-1938. Vollard's death in 1939 brought the project to a halt, the book being published posthumously in 1966, in an edition designed by the painter's children. Baudelairean subjects (Satan, skeletons, languishing young women) recur often in Rouault's art, notably in his many unfinished works. He returns to them constantly in the different keys that made up what he called his "painterly keyboard."

**SALLE 20**  
**UNDER THE SIGN OF VENUS**



Max Ernst  
*Le Jardin de la France, 1962*

Recurrent in Surrealist art, representations or evocations of women raise the question of the eroticization of the gaze, which can go so far as voyeurism. To this question, raised by Gustave Courbet in his famous painting, *The Origin of the World*, Marcel Duchamp added the problematic of contact, in a series of casts of parts of the female body made for his last work, *Étant donnés*. Jean Arp's bulges and crevices may suggest a divine torso, but also primordial forms convulsed by internal forces or surges of energy. The curves and virtual reliefs of Joan Miró and Dorothea Tanning are also marked by this same commingling of the visual and tactile impulses.



Antonin Artaud  
*Portrait de Minouche, 1947*

## SALLE 21 ANTONIN ARTAUD

Suffering from a profound psychological and physical breakdown, from 1937 onwards Artaud found himself confined in a series of psychiatric hospitals. Drawing then became for the author of *The Theatre of Cruelty* a means of self-reconstruction, not so much a search for a style as a struggle, by “thrusts and blows”, to give form to disaster. After years of filling the paper with “charms”, disaggregated body parts (a “bouillabaisse of forms”), between June 1946 and January 1948 Artaud produced works of greater coherence. The faces, often surrounded by protective spells of words, are more than portraits of himself or his friends: they are paroxysmic manifestations of secret, inner being, that is, of the forces of life and death, of the artist’s terror and suffering and his profoundly anarchic spirit.

## SALLE 22 ANDRÉ BRETON



André Breton  
*Mur de l'Atelier*

“The eye exists in its savage state”, declares Breton at the start of *Surrealism and Painting*: it is the poet’s task, then, to strike out into new territories, often the least civilized, to identify secret affinities, to bring the “marvellous” to light through serendipitous discoveries. This is the realm of chance and surprise, the domain too of the “demon of analogy”, who, weaving his web across the wall of the studio, institutes a secret order among the heteroclite “objects of affection” that Breton accumulated his whole life long. The accompanying artworks – many of which belonged to him – testify to the other diverse concerns that were central to him and his friends in the Surrealist group: mockery of authority and the denunciation of tyranny (Victor Brauner), the “physics of poetry” and the metamorphosis of the object (Man Ray, Magritte, Dora Maar), surrender to the power of paranoiac delirium and ghostly hallucination (Dalí, Tanguy).

Jusqu’au 21 juin prochain, Sarkis fait dialoguer son œuvre *La Vitrine des Innocents* avec le Mur de l’atelier Breton.

**SALLE 23**  
**ALBERTO GIACOMETTI**



Alberto Giacometti  
*Le Nez*, 1947



Alberto Giacometti  
*La Cage, première version*, 1949-1950  
Fondation Annette et Alberto Giacometti, Paris

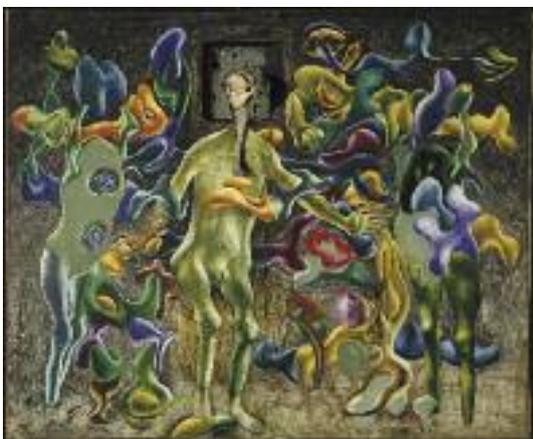
When Giacometti returned to his Paris studio in 1945, he returned too to working from the model. Ignoring the principles of scale and of conventional morphology, bodies extend almost indefinitely, the heads perched atop these hieratic figures seemingly at the point of disappearance. There is monumentality, though, in an isolated limb (*La Grande Jambe*) and in the tragic violence that marks the face of the artist's mother. The surface of the sculpture is irregular, convulsive, and constructed of the least noble of materials: plaster, sometimes simply applied rather than modelled on its iron armature. What might seem a mere sketch is a pure expression of humanity, without any pretence, wrote Jean Genet.

The loan of works by the Fondation Annette et Alberto Giacometti has permitted the inclusion here of unfinished works, polychrome pieces and studio graffiti by the artist. This ensemble drawing on the collections of both the Museum and the Fondation brings out the processual aspect of Giacometti's work (*Femme de Venise*), but equally reveals the pre-eminence of an imagery of enclosure (*Le Nez* and *La Cage*).

*La Cage*, 1949 - 1950

"J'ai vu cette composition dans sa forme et sa couleur avant de la commencer" A. Giacometti

**SALLE 24**  
**ANDRÉ BRETON AND THE GALLERY "À L'ÉTOILE SCELLÉE"**



Simon Hantai  
*Femme miroir II*, 1953

In the early Fifties the Surrealists opposed both the abstraction then coming to artistic pre-eminence (whether "lyrical" or "geometric") and the realism promoted by poet Luis Aragon and the Communist intellectuals. From 1952 on – notably through his gallery, "À l'Étoile scellée", whose name is taken from the alchemical tradition – André Breton sought to demonstrate the possibility of a third way for Surrealist painting. This was to be renewed by an opening towards a new generation of artists, among them Balthus, Fred Deux and Simon Hantai. Nonetheless, through the International Surrealist Exhibition held at the Galerie Maeght in 1947 Breton had become close to the art critic Charles Estienne, which led to a somewhat unexpected alliance between Surrealism and gestural abstraction. In 1953 "À l'Étoile scellée" showed Jean Degottex and René Duveillier, and Judit Reigl in 1954.



**Francis Bacon**  
*Female Nude standing in doorway, 1972*

**SALLE 25**  
**BACON / RAINER**

Born in Dublin in 1909, Francis Bacon began to paint in 1931, under the influence of Picasso. Like him he was interested in the deformation of the body, dislocated, flayed or transformed by the doubling or shifting of point of view. Bacon's few major themes – nude, portrait, self-portrait, crucifixion – reflect the centrality of the human figure to his work. It was in the 1950s that he began to paint friends and produce self-portraits. Then, inspired by Muybridge's scientific photographs, he began to work on the representation of the body in movement.

The work of Arnulf Rainer, related to the Viennese Actionism of the 1960s, is characterised by a fierce obsession with the body and its expressions. Fascinated by the grimacing busts of 18th-century Austrian sculptor Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, Rainer uses photography to work with own image. Spattered with paint or smeared with wax crayon, the photo-booth pictures and other photos in which he captures his facial expressions present themselves as archetypal masks of existential tragedy.

**SALLE 26**  
**MAGICAL SURREALISM**

With the publication in 1957 of his book *L'Art magique*, in which he discussed both Primitivism and the art of his own time, Breton staked out his position with regard to painting: for a renewal of everlasting myth, a "passion for the legendary, the sumptuous, the irrepressible" as against the abstraction of the second School of Paris, which drew on science and rational thought. The "Glazier" myth in Matta's monumental *Xspace and the Ego*, an homage to Duchamp, assembles in its "chaosmos" – a transparent space of interpenetration – a number of humanoid figures together with retorts and other vessels suggesting a science-fiction laboratory. For their part, Brauner's symbolic compositions and Lam's impassive totems radiate what poet Édouard Glissant described as "all the manifest energy of the world."



**Matta**  
*Xspace and the Ego, 1945*



**Pierre Molinier**  
*Jeune fille voilée*, 1973

**SALLE 27**  
**THE SURREALIST SPIRIT IN PHOTOGRAPHY AFTER 1945**

In the years 1935-1950, as many artists fled an afflicted Europe, there emerged a new generation of Surrealist photographers. Boucher, Brihat, Facchetti, Lorelle and Ubac experimented with and diversified the formal codes of the image, rediscovering the themes and techniques of Surrealist photography: overprinting, solarisation, close-up, photomontage, anthropomorphism, absurdity, automatism. In their suggestion of the occult and the uncanny and their evocation of dream and sexual fantasy these works exhibit great transgressive force, a power of undermining reality. Fetishist and self-taught photographer Pierre Molinier was introduced into Surrealist circles following his 1955 encounter with André Breton, who was impressed by his obsessional endeavour to give visual expression to the obscurer reaches of sexual desire.

**SALLE 28**  
**LATE PICASSO**

Whatever his continuing attachment to the masters of the past (David, Delacroix, Poussin, Velasquez, Rembrandt, Manet), Picasso's very last paintings testify to an energy and a creative power undiminished by age. Their themes are few: the studio, the painter and his model, nudes and other figures in multiple – transformative – variations, all offer free rein to his virtuosity. In a deliberately relaxed style, his fluid and dynamic brush evokes totemic figures whose sexual vigour and weighty charge of fierce parody give them immense presence. Painted just before his death, in a period dominated by abstraction and conceptual art, these violent and sensual images come across as provocations, a final lesson in freedom from a Picasso who confessed: "Painting is stronger than I am / it does what it wants with me."



**Pablo Picasso**  
*Petite fille sautant à la corde*, 1950



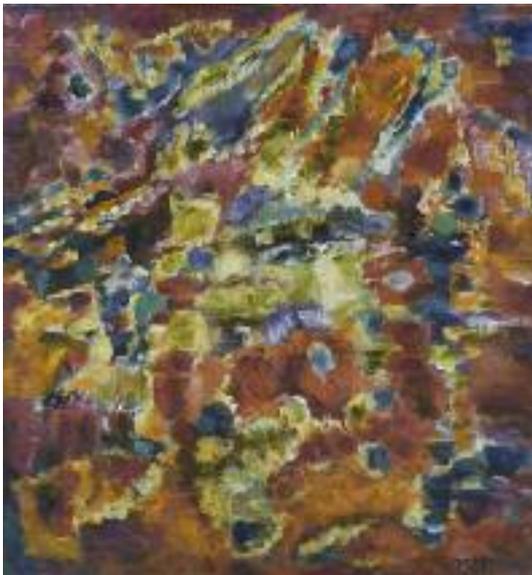
**Fernand Léger**  
*Les Loisirs-Hommage à Louis David, 1948-1949*

**SALLE 29**  
**LÉGER AND THE BODY IN SPACE**

Theorist of the figure as object who treated the human figure as “a plastic value”, Fernand Léger reformulated the canons of the representation of the body in figures both massive and supple, gigantic and harmonious. The series of “divers” begun in American wartime exile continues in the line of the “acrobats” of the 1920s. Rendered in grisaille, suggesting blocks of stone stacked one upon the other, or brightly coloured, like jigsaw pieces or balloons floating in space, the divers form powerfully dynamic ensembles.

In the 1930s the body was photographed from every angle, running, dancing, gliding, leaping, seemingly airborne. Sometimes highly idealized, it was celebrated for its natural qualities. Leisure-time, holidays, sport and excursions into the countryside all offered themselves to photographers as new opportunities for experiment.

**SALLE 30**  
**DATION LE MOAL**



**Jean Le Moal**  
*Eclats, 1975*

Trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Lyon, in 1935 the painter Jean Le Moal joined the Académie Ranson in Paris, studying under Bissière. He participated in the exhibitions of the Témoignage group in Lyon and later in Paris, where he was one of the “Young Painters in the French Tradition” exhibited at the Galerie Braun in 1941. Like Manessier and Bazaine, after the Second World War Le Moal attempted a synthesis between Impressionism and a quasi-abstract. In the 1950 he abandoned his interiors, marked by the influence of Picasso, for a lyrical landscape painting whose palette often seemed to borrow its warm shades from Bonnard. A garden in summer, a scene on a visit to South America, or a view of the sea – a frequent inspiration to this Breton-born painter – would prompt Le Moal to paintings whose brushwork testifies to a special sensitivity to the fabric of the visible. The works presented in this room were acquired by Museum following a donation in lieu of taxes by the artist’s estate.



**Claes Oldenburg**  
*Ghost Drum Set, 1972*

### **SALLE 31** **DUBUFFET / OLDENBURG**

From his very first exhibition at the René Drouin gallery in 1944, Jean Dubuffet set out to overturn traditional pictorial values and reinvent the vocabulary of figuration. Seeking an art free of the weight of “suffocating culture”, he turned to the clumsy drawing of children and the mentally ill and inverted traditional values: his landscapes occupy a space without perspective, while his portraits, their features incised in dark paints mixed with sand, recall graffiti. Discovering Dubuffet’s work in New York in 1956, Claes Oldenburg too turned to ‘poor’ materials, working with found objects. In 1961 he began to show his reliefs in The Store, opened in his own studio. In his works in plaster, vinyl and papier mâché, and then his soft sculptures, Oldenburg offered an ironic reflection on the commodities of American consumer society at a time when these were being proliferated and sometimes celebrated in the works of such artists as Warhol, Lichtenstein and Rosenquist.

### **SALLE 32** **GESTURAL ABSTRACTION**



**Georges Noël**  
*Grand palimpseste jaune, 1960*

In the late 1940s there emerged in France a gestural abstract painting that rejected geometrical formalization in the name of spontaneous subjective expression. The term “lyrical abstraction”, proposed as a name for the movement by Jean-José Marchand and Georges Mathieu in 1947, soon had competitors in the “art informel” of critic Michel Tapié and the “Tachisme” of Charles Estienne. Beyond these terminological and theoretical disagreements, the painters themselves used a pictorial language reliant on free improvisation, even a gesturality verging on automatism. In 1951, the exhibition “Véhémences confrontées” at the Nina Dausset gallery in Paris brought the work of French painters Bryen, Hartung and Mathieu face to face with that of Americans like Pollock, De Kooning and Riopelle. The American example led to the adoption of large format painting in France, as for example that of Olivier Debré from the Sixties onward. Recently acquired by the Museum, the works by Georges Noël and Serpan deploy an abstract calligraphy that largely covers the canvas.



Jean Tinguely  
*Baluba*, 1961-62

### SALLE 33 LES NOUVEAUX RÉALISTES

In the late 1950s a number of French artists rejected the artificial lyricism of contemporary abstraction, some of them reviving the spirit of Dada in their appropriation of found objects or their sense of irony and provocation. In October 1960, Arman, Dufrêne, Hains, Klein, Raysse, Spoerri, Tinguely and Villeglé signed the *Constitutive Declaration of the New Realism*, drawn up by Pierre Restany, who wrote the following year: "What we are discovering, both in Europe and the U.S.A., is a new sense of nature, of our contemporary, industrial, mechanical, advertising-driven nature." So it was that Tinguely made fun of both classical sculpture and the modern machine in *Baluba*, 1961-1962, and Spoerri fixed the passing moment of the present in *Le Repas hongrois*, 1963, while Hains and Villeglé, like archaeologists of the real, found layered posters torn by passers-by and presented them as art.



Jasper Johns  
*Figure 5*, 1960

### SALLE 34 RAUSCHENBERG AND AMERICAN NEO-DADA

Influenced by Marcel Duchamp and John Cage, the American Neo-Dadaists can be seen as the second generation of the School of New York. Taking their distance from Abstract Expressionism and in some ways prefiguring the Pop Art that would follow, they were the first to confront a fully developed consumer society. Working "in the gap between art and life" (Rauschenberg), they practiced an art of assemblage. Stankiewicz recycled junk and scrap metal in his sculptures, while Jasper Johns introduced everyday images and objects into his paintings (American flags, targets, numbers). Following his earlier "combine paintings" (paintings-cum-collages-cum-objects), Rauschenberg's *Oracle* is an installation of scrap materials (sash window, bathtub, car door...) and a radio. This was originally an interactive environment: free to move among the elements, the viewer could also retune the radio.



Robert Rauschenberg  
*Oracle*, 1962-1965

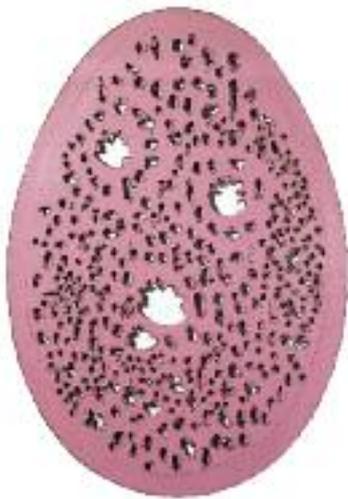


**Christo**  
*Package on a Table, 1961*

**SALLE 35**  
**THE ART OF ASSEMBLAGE**

In their appropriation of everyday objects the members of the Nouveau Réalisme group founded by Pierre Restany offered their own take on Marcel Duchamp's Dada ready-mades. As Restany put it, they were concerned to appropriate modern reality as whole. Their discovery of the folklore of the modern most often found expression in a serial practice whereby objects were accumulated (Deschamps), wrapped (Christo), compressed (César) or fixed in their chance arrangements (Spoerri). At the same time, in New York, the American Neo-Dadaists were equally concerned with appropriation and recycling, as witnessed by the assemblages of objects produced by such artists as Bruce Conner. In 1961, the exhibition "The Art of Assemblage" in New York brought together European and American Neo-Dadaists.

**SALLE 36**  
**ITALY 1950-1960 ART ET DESIGN**



**Lucio Fontana**  
*Concetto Spaziale, La fine di Dio, 1963*

During the 1950s, architecture in Italy was characterised by a great diversity of approaches to the heritage of the Modern Movement. Of the architects who had made reputations before the war, Libera concentrated on housing, while Ponti pared down the forms of his buildings, reducing them to the essential. The BBPR group proposed a dialogue with the historic city that cast new light on the language of Modernism. Of the younger generation, Portoghesi insisted on the evocation of the classical and historical, while Aymonino grounded his schemes in urban morphology.

During the same period, abstraction flourished in Italy after the sombre years of war. While Burri experimented endlessly with "poor" materials (used sacks, wood, metal), Fontana pierced, lacerated or slit the surfaces of his paintings. In this he was the forerunner of the next generation (Manzoni), who would seek a painting that was as much of an object as possible.



**B.B.P.R.**  
*Torre Velasca, 1950-1958*

### SALLE 37 ITALY IN THE SIXTIES: ART AND DESIGN



Gino Sarfatti  
*Applique n° 226, vers 1959*

After the Second World War, Italian furniture design flourished particularly in the region of Milan, the city becoming a symbol of modernity in the 1950s and 60s. Architects, designers, engineers and industrialists worked in close collaboration: Gino Sarfatti with lighting company Arteluce, architect Marco Zanuso with Arflex, the Borsani brothers with the Tecno furniture company. In Turin, Carlo Mollino stood out with furniture characterised by a preference for organic, curvilinear forms. Painting too flourished in Italy after the war, as a domain of diverse experiment, e.g. the exploration of unorthodox materials (Burri), the introduction of relief in monochrome canvases (Castellani) or the use of serial signs in abstract paintings (Capogrossi).

### SALLE 38 LIGHT AND MOVEMENT



Piotr Kowalski  
*Identité (n°2), 1973*

The earliest artistic experiments with the use of movement – whether real or optical – appeared with Duchamp, Calder, Gabo and Moholy-Nagy in the period between the wars, strongly marked by the machine aesthetic. The kinetic art that emerged around 1953-1954 was far from constituting a uniform current. It included Schöffer's "spatiodynamic" sculptures but also the "luminokinetic" works of Kowalski, Takis and Vardanega. Pieces by Agam, Cruz-Diez and Soto stimulate the viewers' senses, making them "participants in movement." For this art closely related to 20<sup>th</sup> century scientific research and technical progress, artists made use of novel materials and techniques (Plexiglas, polarised light, flexible steels...).



**François Morellet**  
*Néon bilingue et aléatoire*, 1971

### **SALLE 39** **INSTABILITY**

During the 1950s, kinetic art became well established in France, thanks to artists such as Vasarely, Soto, Cruz-Diez and Tinguely. Coming together in the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (1961-1968), the kinetic artists of the following decade – Garcia-Rossi, Le Parc, Morellet, Sobrino, Stein, Yvaral – sought a social function for art: the viewer became active, and the art interactive. Rejecting aestheticism, the GRAV artists believed that the work of art should avoid all subjectivity so as to allow viewers to make full use of their own senses. In compositions based on optical effects, the habitual materials and conventions of painting were abandoned and “instability” (the title of one of the Group’s exhibitions) became the rule. Sobrino made use of Plexiglas and metal, Yvaral thread stretched in front of geometrical figures, Le Parc reflections and deformations, Stein kaleidoscopic effects, Garcia-Rossi light-boxes and Morellet aleatory distributions generated by mathematical systems.

### **SALLE 40** **LUCIEN HERVÉ DONATION**



**Lucien Hervé,**  
*Le Corbusier devant son « Cabanon »*  
*de Roquebrune Cap-Martin*, 1951

Hungarian-born Lucien Hervé (1910-2007) patiently built up one of the most distinguished bodies of 20<sup>th</sup> century photographic work, characterised by its rigorous framing and formal elegance. Having moved to Paris in 1930, he was granted French citizenship in 1937, and the following year he began his career as a photographer, working for the illustrated press in a vein close to the humanist photography of Doisneau, Ronis and Izis. It was in 1949 that he met Le Corbusier, becoming his close photographic collaborator until the architect’s death in 1965. It was in this context that Hervé produced his best-known work: images true to their subject, expressing its whole beauty, yet going beyond simple documentary photography. Today he is recognised as one of the masters of modern architectural photography. In 2009, his widow Judith Hervé generously presented to the Museum a group of 63 original prints that trace the entirety of his career, from the early humanist photography to the experimental work of the 1960s, including of course his work with Le Corbusier.



**Henri Matisse**  
*Polynésie, le ciel, 1946*

#### **SALLE 41** **MATISSE / BONNARD : LATE WORKS**

In the late 1930s, Henri Matisse and Pierre Bonnard both found themselves living in old age on the French Riviera, their late works sharing the same themes: interiors, portraits, still lifes. At Cimiez, above Nice, the ailing Matisse achieved in his last paintings “the absolute expression of colour” (Matisse). Places, objects and figures, stripped of anecdotal detail, are held together in a single plane constructed and set in place by colour, dense or light but always raised to “maximum power.” These paintings foreshadow the gouache cutouts he will make first for his book *Jazz* (1943-1946) and then develop in the decoration of the Chapelle du Rosaire at Vence (1948-1951). Bonnard too was making his last works, in the village of Le Cannet above Cannes. Motifs of the greatest simplicity (objects on a table, a nude in a bathroom) are transformed into pure painting by the play of colour contrasts and an enigmatic disorganisation of composition. Verging on abstraction, the painting thus becomes “a series of marks that join together to form the object” (Bonnard).

#### **SALLE 42** **DESIGN SCANDINAVE : THE FIFTIES**



**Hans J. Wegner**  
*Chaise longue Dolphin, 1950*

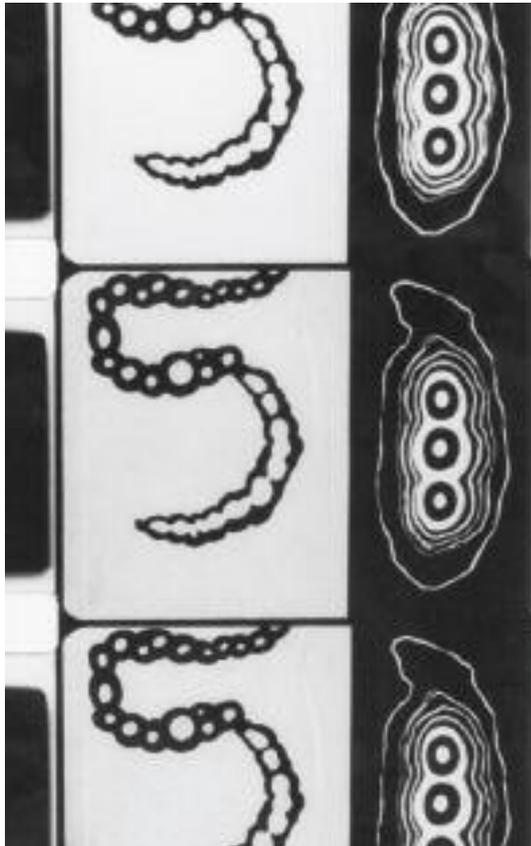
This wall light is from the Scala cinema in Århus, in the Jutland region of Denmark. On the two side walls of the auditorium were 24 such lights, angled at 45° to avoid dazzle. The ribbon of polished aluminium is painted white on the inner side to better reflect the light. Specially produced filament bulbs provided a warm light. When the auditorium was remodelled in 1980 the seating capacity was reduced from 370 to 285 places and some of the lights were disposed of.



Marc Chagall  
*Double portrait au verre de vin*, 1917

### SOUTH CORRIDOR

After a first, four-year stay in Paris, Chagall returned to Russia, via Berlin, in 1914. Celebrating his relationship with Bella, whom he had married in 1915, the *Double portrait à verre de vin* [*Double Portrait with Glass of Wine*] is a Dionysiac representation of the earthly and supernatural power of love, a triumphal hymn to life: lively as a flag in white, red and green, husband and wife fly above a dark and sleepy Vitebsk, defying both gravity and time and filling the sky with a swirling light. A vital source of inspiration to the painter, the theme of Bella, a figure both sensual and mystical, here finds a direct and lyrical expression. The amorous intoxication of these acrobats of joy seems hardly dissipated by the presence of the angel of the Annunciation offering his blessing to the newly-weds.



Len Lye  
*Tusalava*, 1929

### CROSS PASSAGE

This animated film on the "beginning of organic life" is by Len Lye, a New-Zealand-born sculptor and filmmaker influenced by Maori art and mythology. Its style recalls the concern for the "primitive" that characterised much work in the visual arts in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Emigrating first to England, then to the United States, Lye made some of the most important works of experimental animation.

## COULOIR NORD



**Yves Klein**  
*L'Arbre, grande éponge bleue, 1962*



**Mark Rothko**  
*Untitled (Black, Red over Black on Red), 1964*

In 1955 Yves Klein showed monochrome paintings of different colours, "monochrome propositions" that made visible the material "colour." He pushed the idea even further when in 1956 he developed "International Klein Blue" (IKB), a distinctive ultramarine blue, also applied to his sponge sculptures, that he would patent in 1960. In 1958, Klein experimented with a new way of painting in his "anthropometries", impressions on canvas or paper of naked female bodies covered in blue paint, which he called "living brushes." He developed on this in his first "cosmogonies" of 1960, canvases that bore the impression of natural phenomena (wind, rain), and in the "fire paintings" of 1961, executed with a blowtorch. With these new techniques, Klein established a new relationship of the artist to the real.

In the late 1940s, Rothko marshalled together the discoveries of his transitional period (the "multiforms") to arrive at the formal idiom that distinguishes him among the American Abstract Expressionist painters, characterised by soft-edged rectangles of colour set against a ground. Colour, in all its vibrancy, the mythical subject of all painting, here emerges as "the simple expression of the complex thought", as Rothko put it. From 1950 until his death in 1970, he pursued, within this formal framework, a long investigation of colour, his palette becoming darker and narrower. Very recently acquired by the national collection in lieu of tax, *Untitled (Black, Red over Black on the Red)* offers a magnificent example of the artist's working process: starting with a monochrome surface, he saturates the canvas and then blurs the outlines of the two great, frontal rectangles, orchestrating modulations of luminous, immaterial colour.

## 4. PRATICAL INFORMATION

### PRACTICAL INFORMATION

#### Centre Pompidou

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métro

Hôtel de Ville, Rambuteau

#### Opening

11 am – 9 pm

every day ex. tuesdays

#### Admission

€10 - €12, depending on time

#### Concessions

€8 - €9

ticket valid the same day for the Musée National d'Art Moderne and all exhibitions

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Press officer

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#### LES PROMESSES DU PASSÉ

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Press officer

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JUNE 23 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2010

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exhibition design

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