

## Centre Pompidou visits

Guided audio tours through the exhibitions and permanent collection.

## "Baselitz. The Retrospective" exhibition

This podcast invites you to an immersion in the life and work of Georg Baselitz. Discover the exhibition (20 October, 2021 - 7 March, 2022) through a storytelling including focuses on works by Pamela Sticht and various quotes of the artist.

### Colour code:

**In black**, the voice of Clara Gouraud

**In bold black**, the focuses by Pamela Sticht, exhibition's curator

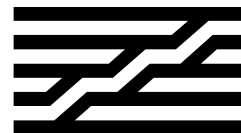
**In blue**, quotes from Georg Baselitz

**In green**, other quotes

**In purple**, the musical excerpts

**In red**, all the other sound indications





# Podcast transcription

## 1 - Introduction

[Jingle of the show]

Hello, good evening, welcome. Open wide your eyes and ears.  
You'll be taken for a visit at the Centre Pompidou.

[Jingle of the show]

This podcast accompanies the exhibition entitled "Baselitz, the retrospective", which is presented in the Centre Pompidou from the 20th of October 2021 to the 7th of March 2022.

Pamela Sticht, curator of the exhibition with Bernard Blistène, introduces us to the issues in this retrospective and reviews Baselitz's first steps as an artist.

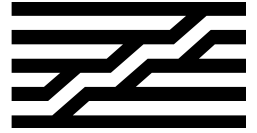
**With "Baselitz - The retrospective", presented in Gallery 1, the Centre Pompidou presents the first exhaustive exhibition of the German artist.**

**Some six decades of creation – comprising paintings, sculpture, drawings and engravings – are presented in chronological order, while highlighting the most striking periods in the artist's work.**

**With each successive group of works, Baselitz experimented with new pictorial techniques, applying aesthetic principles based on various references to the history of art.**

[transitional sound]

**Hans-Georg Kern was born near Dresden in Saxony, in 1938, during the Third Reich. As a child, he grew up in the village of Großbaselitz in the midst of the Second World War.**



**From 1949 onward, his youth was spent under the authoritarian regime of the German Democratic Republic.**

**In 1956 he became a student at the Berlin-Weissensee college of art, later crossing the border to West Berlin in the Federal German Republic. There he joined an international class at the School of Fine Arts and discovered the avant-garde as it was taught in West Germany.**

**While still a student, he developed an interest in non-conformist artists, like Edvard Munch, Antonin Artaud, Lautréamont and Vrobel, being attracted to the work of artists suffering from mental disorders.**

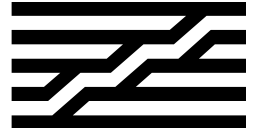
**The exhibition begins at a time when the artist broke with the ambient artistic ideologies to invent "new images" beyond the established limits, between figuration and abstraction.**

"The most important thing for me was to feel a sense of the avant-garde, the destruction of the pictures of the past.

With time, it helped me to really free my mind of all the thought-ballast from the East that I was still carrying around in me.

But don't imagine that was a process lasting years on end. It all happened in a single semester, during which I worked my way through the entire avant garde; the winter semester of 1957–58".

[transitional sound drums]



## 2 - Self-portraits of an experience

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

In August 1961, just after the Berlin Wall was built, the young Hans Georg Kern, aged 23, adopted the pseudonym Georg Baselitz, a reference to the village of his childhood.

He changed his name because he suspected that his first public exhibition would not go unnoticed. Which is what happened.

Inspired by the poems and plays he read, the first exhibition of his works at the Werner & Katz gallery in West Berlin evoked wartime atrocities and created a scandal, followed by a highly mediatised court case.

Some of the paintings exhibited represented a naked man with a disproportionately large penis.

"I had read that Brendan Behan, the poet, had opened his fly during a public reading. I saw that as a powerfully provocative gesture".

The works entitled *The Big Night Down the Drain* and *The Naked Man* were confiscated by the West Berlin authorities and Baselitz was tried for obscenity.

"We went through a difficult time there.

Firstly, because all the questions about my work were badly formulated by bad people.

Secondly, because there were no sales.

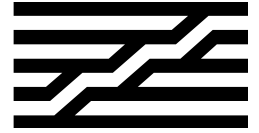
With that exhibition we sold one watercolour and a small canvas to a dealer friend.

And that was all for two years."

**This work entitled *The Naked Man* is an allegory of the war.**

**It was painted in 1962, the same year as the picture entitled *G. Antonin*, representing a floating head, which is shown at the entrance to the exhibition.**

**The two pictures are an explicit homage to Antonin Artaud's writings.**



You could even say that it is a sort of pictorial interpretation of certain passages from his *Pèse-nerfs* collection dealing with the abyss, solitude and the suffering of the body, being in the world.

Georg Baselitz was still a student in the School of Fine Arts in West Berlin. He and his friend Eugen Schönebeck, a student in the same school, survived on literature and poetry, particularly Antonin Artaud, whose *Pèse-nerfs* had just been translated into German.

They were inspired by the Comte de Lautréamont's *Chants de Maldoror* and the books of Samuel Beckett to create programmatic texts which they entitled the pandemonic manifestos.

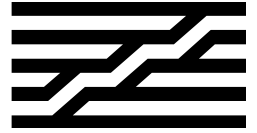
The three originals are exhibited in the graphic art cabinet in Room 4. These texts provide a framework for a first cycle of sombre paintings, *The Naked Man* being one of them.

Against a backdrop of the trial of Adolf Eichmann, the high-ranking Nazi official, which began in 1961, the young artists were revolted and wished to express their rage in both their writing and painting.

The title of the manifestos is a reference to the palace of Satan, named *Pandaemonium*, described by John Milton in *Paradise Lost*, an epic poem written in 1667.

*Pandaemonium* is an imaginary place they chose to reflect the post-apocalyptic aspect of Germany in 1945, and as such it is a critique of post-war society.

"The poets lay in the gutter,  
their bodies in the morass. (...)  
Their wings did not take them to heaven –  
they have dipped their feathers in blood,



did not waste a single drop while writing –  
but the wind carried their songs  
that unsettled the faith ... "

(*Pandemonic Manifesto I*, Second version, 1961)

[transitional sound drums]

### 3 - Fallen heroes

[transitional sound effect jingle of the show]

In 1965, Georg Baselitz was awarded a grant to spend six months at the Villa Romana in Florence, where he immersed himself in the drawings and engravings of the Mannerist painters.

[Musical excerpt : *Intabolatura de lauto: Fantasia No. 30* by Francesco da Milano interpreted by Paul O'Dette]

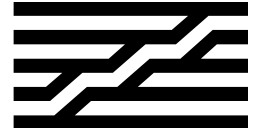
He was attracted to these 16th century artists for their non-academic approach and the distorted motifs that characterise their works.

Through his readings, he learned about the hard lives of these painters and quickly identified with them: "I think Mannerism essentially means living outside the norm, doing something non-academic. And the same held true for me."

As soon as he returned to Berlin, he nurtured a project to create a new German painting.

He set about a body of works with a deliberately provocative title: *A New Type*. Today this series is known as *Heroes*.

Poets, partisans, painters and survivors returning from the war make up a gallery of characters whose disproportionately large bodies are distorted, after the fashion of the Mannerists. Contributing to their histories, they all have particular attributes, such as a paint brush or clodhoppers.



This series concludes with the manifesto-painting *The Great Friends*, painted in 1965, which expresses all the tragedy of Germany with two wounded survivors standing in a backdrop of ruins and incapable of reaching out to each other.

Today Baselitz says that he sees these two characters as himself and his wife.

In the text accompanying the first presentation of this work, the artist wrote:

"This picture is an ideal picture, a gift of God, *a sine qua non* – a revelation.

The picture is the *idée fixe* of friendship drawn from pandemonical entrenchment and about to sink back in again – according to a biographical decree.

It is ambiguous because there's more to the canvas than one might think."

The painting in the *Heroes* series entitled *Image-S* seems to be a self-portrait of Baselitz.

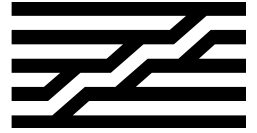
[Musical excerpt : *Magnificat septimi toni* de Costanzo Festa, interpreted by Huelgas Ensemble and Paul Van Nevel]

In 1965, during his residency at the Villa Romana in Florence, Georg Baselitz read Giorgio Vasari's book *The Lives of the Artists*, written in the middle of the 16th century, and took an interest in the fate of the artists, some of whom had tragic endings.

In this context he created this self-portrait against a red backdrop.

We can distinguish a young man who may have corresponded to the canons of beauty for a hero, but who is deformed and marked, as if to express deep wounds and anxieties.

With this Christ-like figure, the work also shows the signs of deliberately exaggerated mortifications, as practised by Renaissance painters such as Mathias Grünewald.



**Baselitz has always had a deep interest in representing the ugliness of maimed and tormented bodies.**

[transitional sound drums]

## **4 - Fractured Images**

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

Baselitz moved to the country in 1966, far from the agitation of Berlin and memories of his trial. [birds chirps] He painted large pictures with rural motifs with a multitude of twists and turns.

Forest wardens, dogs and trees are broken off, at an angle of 90 or 180 degrees. This is the cycle of *Fractured Pictures*, which features *Two Meissen foresters*, painted in 1967.

These motifs testify to a desire to break with the conventions of figurative painting by using the cadavre-exquis method.

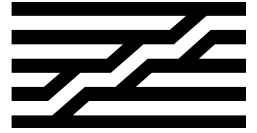
**This representation of foresters and their dogs intrigues us with these two silhouettes on the right and these hacked trees and mutilated dogs floating horizontally on the left, focussing our attention on the new creative process he has adopted: progressively changing the orientation of the images.**

**The artist broke down the motifs for purely formal reasons.**

**By organising the elements, it evoked a famous series by Van Gogh, entitled *The Cows*, dating from 1890, itself inspired by *Studies of five cows*, created in 1624 by painter Jacob Jordaens.**

"I thought that to do a picture I did not necessarily have to have an interesting subject. The object had no intrinsic importance any more.





So I chose insignificant things. I painted a cow, a dog, a beautiful landscape; but I never did them from nature, I reinvented them and organised them in the picture in an unaccustomed way.

It was an unaccustomed kind of organisation because the objects, dogs for instance, were climbing up towards the top of the picture, or else coming down. Or the painting fractured in the middle of one image to start on another.

I painted the dog in a completely normal way. I painted half of it and then broke off, then started again, and broke off again, and so on.

This experience led to the idea that an object does not have a lot to do with the value and the reality of a painting. It isn't necessary."

[transitional sound drums]

## 5 - Inverting the Image

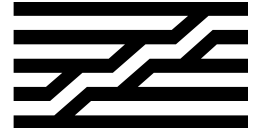
[transitional sound jingle of the show]

In 1968, Baselitz was awarded a grant by the National Federation for German Industry to pursue his pictorial research. He was looking for a way to continue to make figurative pictures but without having to present faithful representations of reality.

In 1969, following the *Fractured Pictures* cycle, he began to make his first paintings with inverted motifs based on photographic portraits of his wife, his gallerists and his friends.

These pictures were exhibited in a Cologne gallery in 1970, and created a sensation. That same year, the first retrospective of his drawn work was presented at the Kunstmuseum in Basel.

Baselitz, who had previously struggled to live from his art, was now becoming successful and his reputation flourished.



"The object expresses nothing. Painting is not a means to an end. On the contrary, painting is autonomous. And I told myself that if this was so I would have to take things that were a traditional part of painting on the level of subject matter – that is to say a landscape, a portrait, a nude – and turn them upside down.

This is the best way to empty the content out of what one paints. When one paints a portrait upside down, it is impossible to say: "This portrait represents my wife, and I gave her a particular expression". This method leaves no possible room for literary interpretation."

In *The Falcon*, painted in 1971, Baselitz used the same principle of inverting the orientation of the image while employing a motif dear to his heart.

**Birds are in fact one of Baselitz's motifs of predilection. [birds chirps]**

**As a child he liked to observe them around the ponds near his house where there was a forest path called Sandteichdamm.**

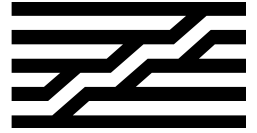
**As an adolescent he assisted a naturalist photographer, Helmut Drechsler, with his catalogue entitled *Teichsommer* [The Pond in Summer].**

"When I was at school I was friends with a wildlife photographer. [birds chirps] I helped him take shots of waders, which he made into a book that he gave to me. It became a kind of 'motif book'.

And there were eagles in that – sea eagles to be precise – but still eagles, although with no programmatic significance.

These birds have distinct personalities; you can easily use them as a vehicle for symbolic meaning."

**Here the falcon is painted in the most realistic manner possible, in a blurred and undefined landscape, the ensemble being deliberately placed off-centre**



by a strip of uniform paint, the left part being painted over with vigorous white brushstrokes.

In this composition, Baselitz thus juxtaposed figurative realism with abstract expressionism. These two styles were theoretically defined as "incompatible" by authorities on figurative and abstract painting.

Here again, Baselitz was seeking to break through formal and ideological boundaries.

[transitional sound drums]

## 6 - Between Abstraction and Figuration

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

By 1975, Baselitz's success was established.

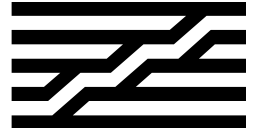
[Musical excerpt : *So What* by Miles Davis]

He had already had several retrospective exhibitions, commissions were pouring in, and a catalogue raisonné of his engraved work was published.

That year, he travelled to New York and Sao Paulo, where he was invited to participate in the biennale of contemporary art.

He then moved with his wife, Elke, and his two children, to Derneburg castle in Lower Saxony. There he began a series of paintings in a style close to abstract expressionism, with a highly contrasted palette of colours.

This change of style is characteristic of Baselitz, who presents his pictures in series. His regular research enabled him to create what he called "new images".



"If I had to look into the future today, I wouldn't know what might still be up ahead. But looking back, every day and every year so much has happened and come to light that you might perhaps be able to present it in themed chapters, but certainly not as linear progression.

There is absolutely no progress towards, for instance, some form of perfection. Of course, it would be possible to divide up the work along the lines of existing ruptures. You could certainly say: that's one stage, consisting of 50 paintings, and then there's a new stage with 30 paintings."

In the picture entitled *Birch, Russian school book*, painted in 1975, Baselitz draws on his childhood memories in order to work on a new technique.

**Having attended school in the German Democratic Republic, Georg Baselitz now returned to the motif of the Russian school book he had kept.**

**His style had become more abstract since he painted an inverted image in 1969. In fact, the artist had forced himself to respect "methods" in order to experiment and create what he called "the new image".**

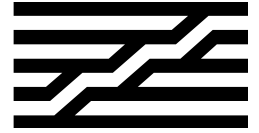
**The palette is deliberately limited. Silhouettes of trees appear on blocks of colours that at times provide an effect of depth, at times an effect of light.**

[sound of wind and tinkling little bells]

**We can also observe variations in the density of the material, sometimes thicker, sometimes diluted to the point at which the paint begins to run.**

**The overall effect invites us to stroll visually in this intriguing pictorial space.**

[transitional sound drums]



## 7 - Beyond Abstraction

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

In 1977, Baselitz began to build up a large collection of African art, which includes many figurines that inspired his work.

When he was invited to represent the Federal German Republic at the Venice Biennial in June 1980, contrary to all expectation, he chose to exhibit his first sculpture, entitled "Model for a Sculpture". [sounds of a gallery opening]

Here again, he created a scandal: the public saw the raised arm as a Nazi salute, whereas Baselitz had been inspired by the posture of a Lobi sculpture that turns the palm of the hand toward the sky:

"I said: "For the love of God, that's not my intention at all. He raises his hand as if wishing for rain, it's a Lobi figure." But they didn't know that, all they knew was Adolf Hitler and the Nazi salute. It was a disaster."

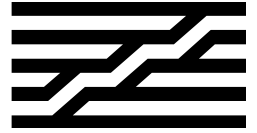
Several voices were raised in the artist's defence and he ended up selling his sculpture to one of the most influential German collectors and sponsors, Peter Ludwig. [bell sound]

A week later, Baselitz was contacted by New York galleries inviting him to exhibit: the artist's international career entered a new dimension.

[bell sound]

His works from the 1980s are now considered to be the artist's most important and emblematic. They are also the most expensive on the art market.

Still applying the principle of series, Baselitz created cycles that combined his preoccupations concerning the human condition – as in the drinker series – and his reinterpretations of certain works by artists he venerates, like Edvard Munch.



The artist painted the *Drinker* series in 1981.

This picture, the largest in the series, was unveiled when Baselitz made his American debut in the Xavier Fourcade gallery in New York.

As the American critic Donald Kuspit wrote:

"the figures have a flayed, raw look that goes with spiritual nakedness. We seem to have a rogue's gallery of mutants for whom even the simplest act – eating a fruit, drinking from a bottle – is difficult, a horrendous, urgent event.

It is no accident that such elementary acts are depicted – acts of survival, which show the human figure in a simple yet tortured or maddened state of being, as if only by such stark simplicity could inherent suffering be made self-evident."

[transitional sound drums]

## 8 - The Poetry of Everyday Life

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

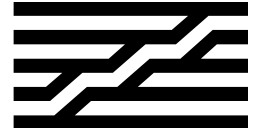
Alongside his painting, Baselitz created drawings and engravings through which he explored different motifs and styles, varying them in his series of paintings.

He experimented with engraving techniques, particularly linocuts.

"My linocuts don't embody new images, but repeat what I had done with drawing and paint, just as the drawings exist one hundred times within the same work.

You can't cheat by making corrections when you are engraving. I don't find anything good in this cheating, which isn't the goal of the exercise. That's why I use as few lines as possible in linocuts."

In his linocut of the *Orange Eater*, made in 1981, Baselitz represents himself with a motif taken from the history of art.



During this period, Baselitz seemed to embrace his role as a provocative artist with the *Orange Eater* series, a hybrid representation evoking a clown, and the fictional character of Shock-headed Peter, or Struwwelpeter in German.

In the history of art the motif of the clown is one of those that enabled post-war painters to experiment with styles, increasingly blending figuration and abstraction, like Oskar Kokoschka.

The motif of the orange also alludes to Matisse and to Paula Modersohn-Becker, who often represented the fruit in their pictorial compositions, or to Hans von Marées's triptych entitled *The Hesperides*.

Baselitz thus used these motifs to compose a gallery of images that speaks essentially of the act of painting, images he also reinvents with many engraving techniques, as here in this linocut in which the artist's interest in African culture shines through.

[transitional sound drums]

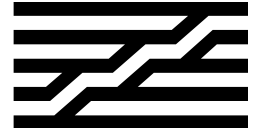
## 9 - Zeitgeist

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

In 1982, as Baselitz's star continued to rise, the artist was still painting everyday subjects in a group of increasingly melancholic pictures.

Some paintings were inspired by Edvard Munch's self-portraits, others represent the artist's father looking through the window.

One of the most emblematic series of the year 1982 is entitled *Man in Bed*. It was presented that same year in the "Zeitgeist" exhibition in the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin.



[scary music] It depicts disturbing nocturnal ambiences, its motifs being freely inspired by Georg Trakl's poem, *Lament*, published in 1914.

At the same time, Baselitz was turning increasingly toward wood sculpture, [sound of woodworking] created from linden, beech, birch and ayous trunks that he carved with a saw or wood chisel.

He created anonymous characters whose forms were inspired by African art and Gothic sculpture.

"African sculpture is also our past, also mine, here in Northern Europe."

The *Untitled* sculpture created in 1982-83 is a figurative sculpture made of roughly hacked linden wood. [sound of woodworking]

Spectators are overawed by the two and a half metre high figure whose legs seem to be imprisoned in the wooden base.

Rough brush strokes with black and blue paint appear on the torso and left leg of the figure. [sound of brush strokes]

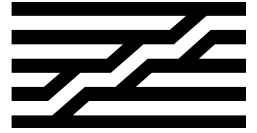
More extensive blue streaks outline the largely expressionless face.

[sound of woodworking] The deep crevices and rough gashes created by the artist's tools are particularly visible in the legs, the swollen belly and the arms, revealing the process of creation and endowing the figure with a primitive or totemic aspect.

[transitional sound drums]

Painted in 1982, the picture entitled *The Drum* is clearly influenced by his work as a sculptor during those years: the naked man drumming alone against the blackness in a ritual gesture appears to be chiselled into the surface of the painting.





**A narrow strip of white faces the barely broken blackness that dominates two thirds of the image.**

[Musical excerpt : Musik im Bauch by Karlheinz Stockhausen interpreted by Les Percussions de Strasbourg]

**The man, in brilliant yellow, seems to be in the grip of two forces struggling with each other, and it is no accident that they are dressed in the colours of Germany.**

**It evokes the interne German conflict that still simmered during this cold war period. Or alternatively, the drummer is summoning the people to announce an important event associated with the figure of the clairvoyant blind man.**

**The character is at one with the black and white of the background to the image.**

**The colour and formal composition are clear and unambiguous, while the content remains deliberately open to interpretation.**

[transitional sound drums]

## **10 - The space of memories**

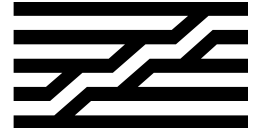
[transitional sound jingle of the show]

In November 1989, just after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Baselitz immersed himself in his childhood memories.

Inspired by the women who rebuilt the city of Dresden after it was bombed in 1945, in 1990 he created the series of sculptures entitled *Women of Dresden*.

This was also the year of his first retrospective exhibition in the GDR, in the middle of the process that reunited the two Germanies.

Between 1991 and 1995, he commenced a new cycle consisting of a series of 39 monumental pictures entitled *One Picture over Another*.



He superimposed variations on motifs drawn from his memories.

The formats of the pictures were so large that they had to be worked on the floor. We can even see traces of the artist's footprint in some of them.

"I laid the canvas out in order to track down whatever was under the floor or in the ground or behind the wall. It is not what I see that's beamed out and captured on the canvas; I'm no reflector and I don't return a call like an echo.

Fishermen use a bottomless pail to find their catch under the surface of the water. I do more or less the same when I lay out the canvas. That way I can find something that was, until then, hidden in dark spaces.

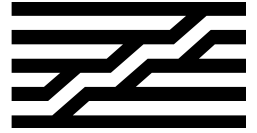
When I find it, all I have to do is draw it on the canvas. For that I don't need any media abilities." [Musical excerpt : Étude sur les mouvements rotatoires by Ivan Wyschnegradsky, interpreted by Sylvaine Billier, Martine Joste, Gérard Frémy, Fuminori Tanada and Fernand Vandenbogaerde]

**In Picture-eight dating from 1991, the canvas consists of many random colors, slightly removed from the center, creating a white border on the left. Six ill-assorted black circles seem to upset a certain harmonious structure.**

**From the time of his first creations, Baselitz has been interested in how to create disharmonies in order to create a visual vibration, an energy that engages the spectator.**

"This ornamental juxtaposition of disharmonies may perhaps create the impression of despair, but all it's doing is deferring, delaying 'cosiness' [Gemütlichkeit].

The strange thing one learns is that, after some time, from out of this disharmony beauty sets in again, in other words, harmony." [transitional sound drums]



## 11 - From Russian Pictures to Remix

[transitional sound jingle of the show]

[Musical excerpt : GDR anthem interpreted by Großer Chor des Berliner Rundfunks]

In the mid-90s, Baselitz acquired access to files the Stasi had kept on him and members of his family who had remained in the GDR. He was stunned to discover that he had been suspected of spying for the west and his every move had been monitored since his adolescence.

"It was a trying experience for me: I had been observed with such intensity, the least of my conversations, my smallest movements were recorded. All the misery of this period came back to the surface when I learned this."

Following this discovery, he focussed on his East German childhood memories until 2005, revisiting the propaganda images disseminated in the GDR in a series of paintings entitled *Russian Pictures*.

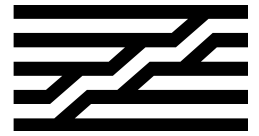
In 2006 Baselitz and his wife moved to the banks of the Ammersee, in Bavaria.

[birds chirps] This new stage drove him to review his own work and the sources of his influences.

In a series entitled *Remix*, he reinterpreted his old pictures, using different materials and techniques. He reworked the compositions and added new references.

"It's an exciting game, which I can recommend as a way of keeping yourself busy. The outcome is a deepening of all that you have experienced so far – very fulfilling and affirmative. (...)

Much of the aggression I used to feel has simply gone. Like the fear of being isolated. As a Saxon you always see ghosts. That's all over now."



In the picture entitled *Browning*, painted in 2009, Baselitz returned to a motif from his wartime memories.

**Angled 90 degrees to the right, a silhouette is dressed in a brown coat resembling the clothes of the Nazi paramilitary police normally called the "Brownshirts". Is this a childhood memory of the Nazi period? Or of the war?**

"I played with ammunition. I played with soldiers. I ate in the mobile kitchen. There were no classes. The school where we lived was requisitioned by the soldiers who had their radio station in the basement.

There was running and shooting, my mother, my brothers and sister shouting, and most of all, innumerable refugees who thought the end of the world was near. It was absolute chaos, an apocalyptic world where you had to watch your step."

[transitional sound drums]

## 12 - What Remains

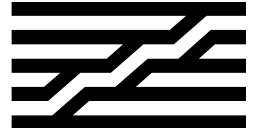
[transitional sound jingle of the show]

In 2015, Baselitz began to reflect on the passage of time, the memories and physical changes associated with age.

He painted old bodies, fragile skin, evanescent silhouettes inspired by a dream.

He varied these motifs in monumental self-portraits and double-portraits, using prints made with matrices, often on plain backgrounds.

In 2018, when he turned 80, there were many exhibitions, while he reviewed his memories in certain pictures, as in *Sandteich Drugstore I*.



***Sandteich Drugstore I* is a new variation on one of the first motifs painted by the artist.**

**[birds chirps] It presents a view of a forest path near a pond bordered by sand and situated very near his childhood home in Deutschbaselitz in Saxony.**

**Nothing remains of the original image, in which the trees were more realistic and right-side-up, except a sort of blurred impression of two stylised, semi-abstract white trees against a grey-blue background.**

"The important thing is that I became more and more isolated in my painting.

Increasingly, I plunged into myself to draw out all that I do.

I live with old catalogues, with old photos and I do nothing else. I paint between me and myself and on both of us. That's it."

In October 2019, he was elected associate foreign member of the Academy of Fine Arts.

Still today, Georg Baselitz continues to paint for three or four hours every day.

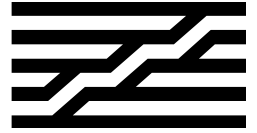
"Age doesn't fall upon us. We have a lot of time to prepare for it.

As I myself age, I strive to see it not as a decrease but as an increase."

**The eternal provocateur, Georg Baselitz distinguishes himself radically from the formalisms dictated by the different political regimes of the 20th and 21st centuries.**

**His work, with its constantly renewed techniques, demonstrates the complexity of being an artist in post-war Germany.**

**How to create autonomous art that owes nothing to any ideology, but is not abstract?**



**How to maintain a balance between what is imposed and what is arbitrary?  
But above all: what is the particular role of painting among the different forms  
of artistic expression?**

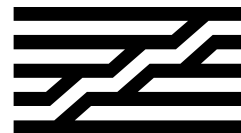
**Equally succinct and complex, Baselitz's response consists in seeking the  
synthesis that is as close as possible to figuration and abstraction, in a path  
that allows for free association.**

**Teeming with references to the history of art and autobiographical elements,  
his works speak to us of our human condition, and never leave us indifferent.**

[Jingle of the show]

It was a Centre Pompidou podcast. You can find all our podcasts on the Centre Pompidou web site, its listening platforms and social networks. See you soon with the next podcast!

[Jingle of the show]



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