

# CLAUDE RUTAULT

D'OUÛ JE VIENS OÙ J'EN SUIS OÙ JE VAIS

AN ARTIST'S DONATION TO THE MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE

21 OCTOBER 2015 – 11 JANUARY 2016

In 1973 the French artist Claude Rutault took a radical decision: his canvases would be the same colour as the wall on which they were hung. With this, Rutault conferred a new and very different status on the object that is the painting, which no longer distinguished itself from the wall behind but rather resembled it. It also stopped being an unalterable object, for it was to change colour depending on where it was shown. This exhibition at the Centre Pompidou brings together seven of Rutault's works, six of which he recently donated to the museum along with a selection of his archives,

now lodged in the Bibliothèque Kandinsky. As a group, they evidence the most significant aspects of the artist's work as it has developed since 1973. If the congruence of colour between painting and wall is the best-known and most obvious feature, the work as a whole testifies to a new politics of painting – that is, a far-reaching redistribution of roles among the actors of the art scene and a radical change in the status of painting itself – a shift whose significance the exhibition seeks to make clear.

Centre  
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## THE DEFINITION/METHOD

If the actualisations of a work by Rutault are each based on a written text, the definition/method that lays down the rules that partly define it (format and size of canvases, modes of display), they can nonetheless differ from one another. In fact, the definition/method – a score or protocol defining the way it is to be realised – leaves it to the person who then takes charge of the work (whether collector or exhibition curator) to determine those aspects it does not cover. With Rutault, the painting thus changes in status: it is no longer an object to be conserved as long as possible in its original condition, but has to be “performed”, in a way, like a piece of music, existing only in these different actualisations.

### ***toiles à l'unité, 1973/légendes, 1985, 1973 – 1985***

Exhibited 1989, 1990, 1996, 2000, 2005, 2012

Actualisation of 2015

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne

Purchased from the artist, 1988

A stretched canvas painted the same colour as the wall on which it is hung. All commercially available formats can be used, be they rectangular, square, round or oval. The canvas is hung in the customary fashion.

Beside this canvas, in the place of the usual label, is hung another very small canvas, a No. 0 “landscape” or “seascape” format [18x12, 18x10 cm], also painted the same colour as the wall. If the wall is not painted, the label isn't either.

### ***AMZ ou « le soleil brille pour tout le monde », 1985-1987, toile n° 44***

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne  
Gift of the artist, 2015

The work is in three parts, A, M and Z.

A is a fixed group of 100 canvases, each with a different format. They are non-painted and displayed in stacks in the same space (Frac des Pays de la Loire). M is the dispersed group of all the replicas of the A canvases as they are taken in charge. Each M replica reproduces its model, but in a form reduced in accordance with two parameters: the distance separating the m from A – the farther from A, the greater the reduction; and the order in the list of charge-taking – the longer the buyer waits, the greater the coefficient of reduction. Each time a work

is moved, it will need to be reconstructed. The M canvases are painted the same colour as the wall on which they're hung. Z is a collection of 100 sheets of paper whose dimensions express the difference in surface area between each m canvas and its model A. Its colour will be determined by that of the wall: if the wall is white, the paper can be any colour other than white; if the wall is not white, the paper must be white.

### ***je ne vous dirai pas la vérité en peinture, 2010***

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne  
Gift of the artist, 2015

A room in which at least one wall is not white.

Set on the floor are stacks of small canvases, rectangular, round, square and oval, each consisting of three to five canvases of mixed shapes and sizes. These small stacks, at least ten or so in number, are distributed throughout the space in accordance with no particular rule. They must however be spaced apart. These provisions do not exclude the possibility of hanging other works on the walls of the space, though two of them must remain empty.

### ***d'où je viens où j'en suis où je vais, 2015***

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne  
Gift of the artist, 2015

The painting stretches along a long wall and is visually divided into three groups from left to right. Up against the left-hand corner is a stack of between 20 and 30 canvases of different sizes and colours. In the middle, a number of canvases are set against the wall, unpainted and primed in white. Hung above them, and extending beyond them to the right, three canvases the same colour as the wall, the third de-painted. Then come an unpainted canvas set flat on the floor against the wall, then four canvases leaning vertically against the wall – the first turned against the wall, painted the same colour as it, front and back, the three others, of different sizes and shapes, unpainted, also being turned against the wall. The last part of the wall is empty. The wall is not white.

### **ready to be made, 1994**

Multiple in eight examples

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne

Gift of the artist, 2015

A stack of eight 80 x 80 cm canvases. The stretchers are covered in raw, unprimed canvas. The stack is arranged canvas upward. No account is taken of the colour of the wall. On the other hand, the stack will have a label above on the right in the form of a small 12 x 12 cm canvas, left bare if the wall is not painted, painted the same colour as the wall if it is. Set in front of or beside the stack a ready-made by Marcel Duchamp, any one will do. *With Air de Paris* (1919-1964).

### **promenade au musée, 1997**

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne

Gift of the artist, 2015

A number of stacks of white canvases, six at least, all of different height. A canvas from the museum's collection is set flat on top of each stack. The choice of canvases is left to the exhibition curator.

The canvases exhibited may be different at each presentation. On this occasion, the works selected are Jean Hélion, *Nature morte* (1946);

Oscar Dominguez, *La table noire* (1950);

Natalia S. Goncharova, *Forêt d'automne* (1950);

François Morellet, *Violet, bleu, vert, jaune, orange, rouge* (1953); Josef Albers, *Homage to the Square* (1956); Erró, *Watercolors in Moscow* (1975);

and Eugène Leroy, *Fin d'été 98* (1998).

### **vocabulaire 1974-1979, 2014**

Paris, Centre Pompidou, musée national d'art moderne

Gift of the artist, 2015

In this work, Claude Rutault revisits several definitions/methods written between 1974 and 1979 which explore the different ways in which canvases can occupy a wall and the different possible spatial relationships between the canvases.

# EXHIBITION

## **CURATOR**

Michel Gauthier  
Curator, musée national d'art moderne

## **CURATORIAL OFFICER**

Rita Cusimano

## **HEAD OF ARCHIVES, BIBLIOTHÈQUE KANDINSKY**

Stéphanie Rivoire

## **PRODUCTION**

Malika Noui

## **EXHIBITION DESIGN**

Laurence Fontaine  
assisted by Alexane Guillemenot

## **GRAPHICS**

Bastien Morin

With the support of Marin Beaux-arts,  
Arcueil

# INFORMATION

**01 44 78 12 33**

**[www.centrepompidou.fr](http://www.centrepompidou.fr)**

## **EXHIBITION OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

21 October 2015 – 11 January 2016

Galerie du Musée

Every day ex. Tuesday,

11am – 9pm

Ticket office closes 8pm

## **ADMISSION**

### **with "Museum & Exhibitions" ticket**

Valid the same day for one admission to  
each area: the Museum, all exhibitions  
and the View of Paris

€14, concessions €11

Free for under-18s and holders of the  
annual pass

## **Tickets on line**

[www.centrepompidou.fr/billetterie](http://www.centrepompidou.fr/billetterie)

## **TWITTER**

#Rutault

<http://www.twitter.com/centrepompidou>

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## **Graphic design**

MODULE

## **Printing**

Graph2000, Argentan, 2015