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LE JOURNAL  
DES VENTES  
AUX ENCHÈRES



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# EDITORIAL



**Céline Piettre**  
EDITORIAL MANAGER

In an electric atmosphere at Drouot on 14 December, an Imperial seal from the Qianlong period achieved a record €21 M (Pierre Bergé & Associés): the highest auction price this year in France for an objet d'art. Largely relayed on China's messaging app WeChat, with its 800 million-odd users, its sale to a Chinese collector created a strong sense of national pride. Much the same happened a few hours later at Christie's Paris, when a gilt-bronze Vairocana Buddha from the Liao dynasty levitated up to €13.3 M. Splendid hammer prices that confirm the French capital's position in the Asian art market, and contribute to the rosy health of national auction houses – whose end-of-year results were decidedly heartening, with an average rise of 5% to 10% for the leading trio, Christie's, Sotheby's and Artcurial. Meanwhile, Drouot and its 75 affiliated auction houses boasted a result of €370 M and the creation of a new international online sales platform: Drouot Digital (p 18). The Paris market can thus move serenely into 2017, with renewed confidence. Let's hope this year will be as rip-roaring as the Ferrari sold to an American buyer for €32 M by Artcurial in February: the year's top auction price in France regardless of category. Happy New Year!

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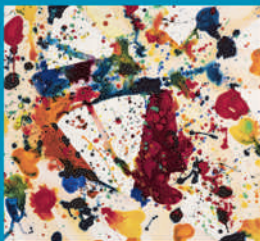
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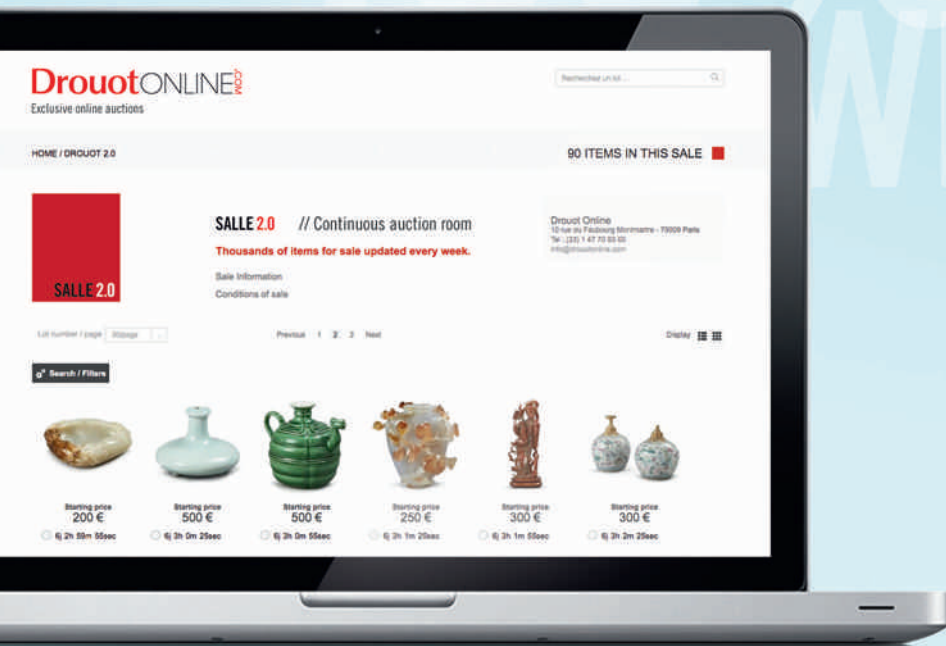
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# NEWS IN BRIEF



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*Renamed "Biennale Paris", the Biennale des Antiquaires will now take place every year. The next edition will be held at the Grand Palais from 12 to 18 September 2017.*

## Cézanne as portraitist

Paris's Musée d'Orsay, London's National Portrait Gallery and Washington DC's National Gallery of Art have joined forces to present over 50 portraits by Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), chosen from around 200 he painted throughout his career. The very first exhibition dedicated to the subject, it will feature the faces of those close to the "father of modern art", such as Madame Cézanne (made to pose endlessly), as well as self-portraits, including some that have rarely been shown. The exhibition opens in Paris next summer (13 June), and will be hosted by the three museums in turn.

## The early days of Impressionism

Until 5 March 2017, the Musée d'Orsay (Paris) is presenting an exhibition of works by the pre-Impressionist Frédéric Bazille (1841-1870), put together by the Musée Fabre in Montpellier, his home town. He died young in the Franco-Prussian war, leaving only sixty-odd paintings, and is thus little-known. The exhibition situates his work at the heart of the Paris avant-garde of the 1860s, setting his works alongside those of his illustrious contemporaries Delacroix, Manet and Monet. It reveals a highly personal style marked by large open-air compositions, where natural light plays a central role.

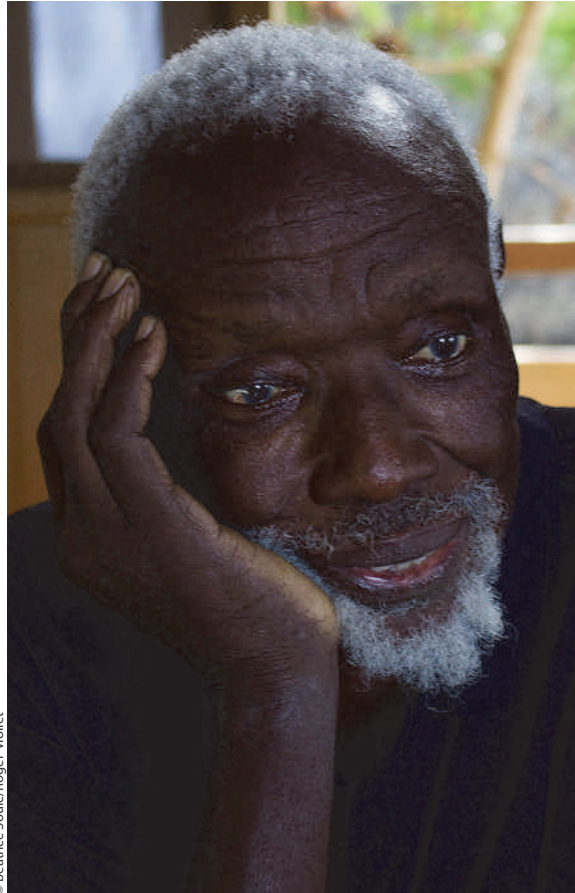




## Ousmane Sow dies at 81

The Senegalese sculptor Ousmane Sow (b. 1935) died on 1 December in his home town of Dakar. The former physiotherapist spent most of his life between Senegal and Paris, where he was the first African to be admitted to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He is best known for his monumental bronze sculptures of men and wrestlers, including “The Maasai”, “The Zulus” and “The Fulani”, which featured at the Venice Biennial, and many critics have praised his intimate knowledge of human anatomy. His works have been widely exhibited in France and his 1999 retrospective on the Pont des Arts (Paris) attracted over 3 million visitors.

**The British architect Norman Foster has been chosen to renovate a 17th century building planned to be an extension of the Prado Museum, Madrid. He will be assisted by the Spanish architect Carlos Rubio.**



© Béatrice Soulé/Roger-Vollet

## Fine Fabrics

As a Parisian counterpoint to the mammoth Maison&Objet (Villepinte), Paris Déco Off offers the general public and professionals a chance to discover the capital's top names in furnishing fabrics and interior design. For five days, from 19 to 23 January, these suppliers (all found on either side of the Seine between Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Rue du Mail) will be opening their showrooms, suitably decked out for the occasion. The 8th edition features Casal's Belle Epoque collection, sublime cashmeres from Chase Erwin, the latest products from the French companies Lelièvre and Pierre Frey (suppliers to Sonia Rykiel and Jean-Paul Gaultier), and an exhibition at Hôtel Drouot dedicated to the winners of the student competition. A top-notch, welcoming event.

UPCOMING AUCTIONS



### 12月18日 御制千手观音唐卡

苏嘉比拍卖行将在巴黎后与亚洲艺术专场，为此，该行征集了一系列亚洲古玩珍品，其中包括一件康熙年间的御制镀金无量寿佛像和一幅1765年乾隆时期的御制千手观音唐卡(左图)。这两件重要藏品的估价分别为30万-40万欧元和4万-6万欧元。绘画方面，报价价从低到高可在到蓝大理石1939年竹石图、黄宾虹的一幅山水和其中一幅齐白石于1948年作的山水(估价35,000至45,000欧元)。值得一提的是，黄宾虹对中国传统绘画在现代的复苏起到了重要作用。



### 12月17日 来自中国北方

苏嘉比拍卖行将在巴黎后与亚洲艺术专场，此行征集了一系列亚洲古玩珍品，其中包括一件康熙年间的御制镀金无量寿佛像和一幅1765年乾隆时期的御制千手观音唐卡(左图)。这两件重要藏品的估价分别为30万-40万欧元和4万-6万欧元。绘画方面，报价价从低到高可在到蓝大理石1939年竹石图、黄宾虹的一幅山水和其中一幅齐白石于1948年作的山水(估价35,000至45,000欧元)。值得一提的是，黄宾虹对中国传统绘画在现代的复苏起到了重要作用。



### 12月17日 玉如意

如意如意，如人心意。如意自古便具有强烈的象征意义。祝福、长寿、财富。如意在古代是一种只有所有这些吉祥寓意的物件，常被作为送礼佳品。如意所用材料的珍贵程度一般也和其主人的社会地位息息相关。图上是柄清代如意以青绿软玉制成，是塔希桑来行(Tajan) 12月17日巴黎拍卖会的一件精品(估价30,000-50,000欧元)。当日拍卖会上拍的还有一只乾隆年间制作的镀金栴檀花丹灵芝纹四方瓶(估价20,000-40,000欧元)和一件收藏由俄罗斯白玉雕成(估价8,000-12,000欧元)。



### 12月19日 来自中国北方

苏嘉比拍卖行将在巴黎后与亚洲艺术专场，此行征集了一系列亚洲古玩珍品，其中包括一件康熙年间的御制镀金无量寿佛像和一幅1765年乾隆时期的御制千手观音唐卡(左图)。这两件重要藏品的估价分别为30万-40万欧元和4万-6万欧元。绘画方面，报价价从低到高可在到蓝大理石1939年竹石图、黄宾虹的一幅山水和其中一幅齐白石于1948年作的山水(估价35,000至45,000欧元)。值得一提的是，黄宾虹对中国传统绘画在现代的复苏起到了重要作用。

Stéphane Perle Dubois



# GAZETTE DROUOT INTERNATIONAL

ALSO IN  
MANDARIN



## Art Basel Miami: less is more

Despite the high-quality programme and dependable sunshine, there were definitely fewer visitors in the aisles of the Convention Center and twenty-odd fringe fairs at the 15th edition of Art Basel Miami (1-4 December). Some blamed the Zika virus, others the election of Donald Trump. But, as proclaimed by the phrase “Crisis? What crisis? We came for the party!” sported on the provocative badges of activist artist Trevor Paglen, distributed at the stand of the Metro Pictures Gallery, the crisis – whether political, medical or economic – didn’t prevent the festivities from taking place in style, nor the sales successfully concluded in a confident atmosphere. Two paintings by Cuban artist Carmen Herrera went for \$450,000 each at the Lisson Gallery, while a Georg Baselitz sold for \$800,000 at Michael Werner. “More business, with half the amount of people,” said Lisa Spellman, owner of the 303 Gallery.

*At its sales on 6 and 7 December, Sotheby’s Paris notched up two world records: one for a painting by Simon Hantai (€4,432,500) and the other for “Squelette arrêtant masques” by James Ensor (€7,357,500), making its first appearance on the art market.*

## Drouot Digital is born

Drouot Group has announced a strategic partnership with venture capital company NextStage AM. This company is making an initial contribution of €2 M for the development of a new entity, Drouot Digital, which will incorporate Drouot SI, the administrator of DrouotLive and DrouotOnline. NextStage AM also provides Expertissim, a sales site with leading online expertise supported by a network of independent specialists. Managing director of Drouot Group, Olivier Lange, explains: “Drouot Digital will be the undisputed leader of art sales in the French online market, a powerful showcase for the international world”.



Photo by Juergen Teller

## 2016 Turner Prize

London-based sculptor Helen Marten has won the British Turner Prize, awarded for an outstanding exhibition by an artist under 50. The panel found her "baffling" sculptures, made of objects like snooker chalk and shells, highly appealing. She follows in the footsteps of Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and, more recently, Laure Prouvost.



**In January 2017, Stéphane Corréard will take over the Piasa auction house's contemporary art department after six years at Cornette de Saint Cyr.**

**On 1 January 2017, Christie's CEO Patricia Barbizet, will hand over the reins to the auction house's owner, Guillaume Cerutti. After two years in the post, she will now become Vice Chairwoman.**



Courtesy The Sumida Hokusai Museum

## Hokusai gets his own museum!

The first museum dedicated to the work of Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) opened on 22 November in Japan. The permanent collection of the "ukiyo-e" artist consists of over 1800 works, which come from the former collection of the late Hokusai specialist Peter Morse, and a bequest by art historian Muneji Narazaki. Located in Hokusai's birthplace, Sumida, the institution will also recreate the studio of the man "mad about drawing". The museum, designed by Kazuyo Sejima and entirely covered in aluminium, reflects Hokusai's interest in oblique angles and forms.

## A goldmine

"My eyes jumped out of their sockets," said Carmen C. Bambach, curator at the New York Metropolitan Museum to the *New York Times*, describing the moment she saw a drawing of Saint Sebastian attributed to Leonardo da Vinci in Paris. "It exactly complemented the Hamburg St. Sebastian," continued the specialist in Spanish and Italian drawings, who staged an exhibition of the Renaissance master's works on paper in 2003. This one was discovered by Thaddée Prate of the Tajan auction house in March. It was one of fourteen drawings owned by a retired doctor with a bibliophile father. Patrick de Baysier and Carmen C. Bambach both confirmed the intuition of the director of the Tajan's Old Masters department, indicating Leonardo as the artist. Its estimate is €15 M and the sale will take place in June.

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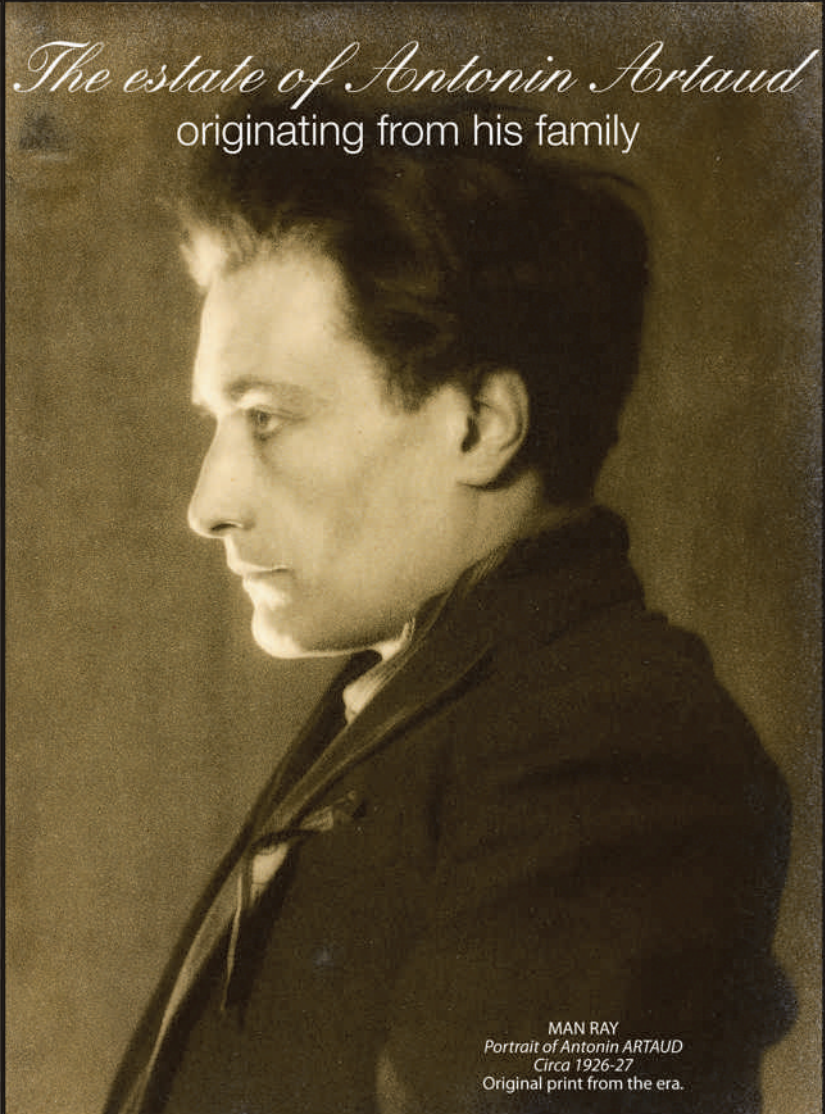
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# UPCOMING AUCTIONS

FIND THE CALENDAR OF UPCOMING AUCTIONS

W

France

# Painting in the Indochina era

## 24 JANUARY

Last May, Art Valorem staged its first sale of Vietnamese and French painting from the Indochina era (1887-1954): an extremely fertile period for art. A very successful undertaking, which met high demand from Vietnamese collectors in a rapidly-expanding market segment. This second round (Drouot, Paris) must definitely arouse their interest. While few French people lived in Indochina in those days, it attracted various artists, like Henri Mège, a soldier who arrived in 1931, married the great-niece of the last viceroy of Tonkin and painted the beauty of Vietnam's landscapes in his spare time. His view of Ninh Binh, "La Baie d'Along terrestre", a place highly popular with European tourists, is estimated at €7,000 to €9,000. Between 1920 and 1940, Vietnamese artists were trained in the purest Western painting tradition at the Fine Arts School of Indochina, founded in 1925 under French rule. One of these was Nguyen Sang, whose "Le peintre et son

modèle" has a very modern style but uses a traditional technique: lacquer (estimate: €10,000/15,000). Luu Van Sin followed on in the line of great Ming and Qing portraitists: his rare portrait on silk of a nun or Buddhist priestess, holding a rosary in her hands and visibly absorbed in prayer, has a strikingly realistic face (same estimate, see photo). Meanwhile, Luong Xuan Nhi resisted French domination after his studies at the Fine Arts School of Indochina (he became its director from 1955 to 1981). His painting "Vie champêtre", estimated at €5,000 to €8,000, was a preparatory sketch for a fresco now in the Hanoi Fine Arts Museum. The selection also features several colonial posters, together with autographs and photographs, including a print of Khai Dinh, Emperor of Annam (€2,000/2,500) and an unpublished series of photos of Nam Phuong, wife of Bao Dai and the last Empress of Annam and Vietnam (€600/800). **Agathe Albi-Gervy**



HD



**Luu Van Sin** (1905-1983), "Bonzesse",  
c.1934-1936, painting on silk fixed to paper  
and cardboard, 90 x 55 cm (detail).  
Estimate: €10,000/15,000.



Casteldurante or the Duchy of Urbino, 1531, round plate with small stand, full polychrome decoration on blue background with a woman's bust, known as « Bella », inscription: « Cornelia. B », diameter: 21.5 cm, total height: 4 cm (detail). Estimate: €20,000/25,000.

# Back to the roots of earthenware

When a collector's prestige combines with excellent taste, you get a sale like the one involving Jean-Pierre Guerlain's majolicaware. Between 1970 and 1980, this art lover directed the historical perfume company of the same name: the quintessence of French elegance since 1828, now managed by his nephew, Jean-Paul. The Guerlains are famous as one of the great 20th century collector families – as witness these Hispano-Moorish majolicas from the High Renaissance (the period from the late 15th century to the 1530s), which Jean-Pierre Guerlain mainly acquired between the pre-war era and the 1960s. His taste for such early pieces of majolica contrasts with today's preference for *istoriati* (historiated majolica). This museum quality collection, part of which he sold in the late 1980s, comes from the estate of his wife. Italian work predominates in these thirty rare pieces up for sale at Drouot (Paris) with Beaussant Lefèvre. Some have recently been reattributed, thanks to new research techniques. There are five pieces from the late 15th century, including an albarello (apothecary jar) with two handles from the Montelupo workshop, featuring a bust on one side and Gothic foliage on the handle (€40,000/50,000). There

## 31 JANUARY

are two Neapolitan albarelli from the same period, one embellished with a woman's profile (€30,000/40,000), the other with a man's (€30,000/35,000). Their highly-characterised faces suggest they are portraits of the people who commissioned them, Petrella and Tristano. More idealised are the features of the "Bella": a front-facing bust on one of five bowls produced in around 1530 in Casteldurante or the Duchy of Urbino (€30,000/40,000). One lovely detail is worth noting: two braids falling down the beauty's neck, with the knot forming a heart. And there are also five pieces of French primitive earthenware, including a pair of 17th century flasks with a wavy background from Nevers (€25,000/30,000), exhibited in the city's museum in 1937. A collection that certainly proves Jean-Pierre Guerlain's outstanding admiration for antique majolica.

Agathe Albi-Gervy

# An icon of the Enlightenment

31 JANUARY

Though they barely knew each other, François-Marie Arouet called Voltaire (1694-1778) and Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741-1828) each embodied the spirit of the French Enlightenment. The two men were linked by a large group of busts executed by the sculptor when the philosopher only had a few months to live. When they met for the first time in 1778, Voltaire had just returned from a long exile in Switzerland. Now 83 and ill, he nonetheless granted Houdon several sittings. Proposed at auction by Muizon-Rieunier (Drouot, Paris), this "Portrait au naturel" is one of the series of "bare-headed" busts, the most accomplished Houdon made of the philosopher, and the only ones to truly satisfy their creator. Here he remains faithful to

"antique-style" representation, without employing the idealisation considered de rigueur to glorify great men. Voltaire is shown with the marks of age: wrinkles, leanness, thinning hair and sagging skin. This desire for naturalism was typical of the French artist and his contemporaries – like Jean-Baptiste Pigalle, whose "Voltaire nu" at the Musée du Louvre incidentally caused a scandal for its excessive realism. We recognise Houdon's specific technique of hollowing out the iris and pupil, giving the gaze the expressiveness of a living man. A smile on his lips, Voltaire (that master of irony) defies approaching death, certain that the Enlightenment will triumph over obscurantism. Estimated at €60,000/80,000, this bust (very similar to the ones in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Angers and the New York Metropolitan Museum) should be of considerable interest to public institutions – and English-speaking collectors, whose passion for the most anglophile of French philosophers is well known...

Céline Piettre



**Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741-1828),**  
"Portrait au naturel de Voltaire", bust in  
marble, 47.5 x 21 cm. Signed and dated "  
HOUDON 1778" on the right shoulder,  
the studio's wax stamp on the back.  
Estimate: €60,000/80,000.

HD



Keith Haring (1958-1990), "Untitled", acrylic on paper. Provenance: De Vuyst gallery, Lokeren and Guy Pieters (detail). Estimate: €60,000/80,000.



# Pop culture

## 31 JANUARY

What do the contemporary artists Keith Haring, Robert Combas, Philippe Pasqua, Takashi Murakami, JR and JonOne have in common? They are all coming up for auction with Villanfray & Associés, on 31 January at Drouot Paris, and much of their work, incidentally, belong to the same private collection. But what else? Though of different styles and nationalities, they all share a certain bent for the monumental, and an aesthetic inspired by popular culture, from urban art stars JonOne and JR to French painter and sculptor Philippe Pasqua, with his highly Rock n' Roll "Crâne tatouage" (€25,000/30,000). The great Keith Haring (see photo) dominates this falsely heterogeneous group with a black and white acrylic on paper estimated at €60,000/80,000. With this maestro of figurative All-Over, "relationships between people are as exciting as they are cruel", to

quote the catalogue of the fine exhibition devoted to him by the Musée de la Ville de Paris in 2013. With rare precision, his labyrinthine compositions express the complex connections linking the individual with society. It is impossible to know if his small figures are wriggling with jubilation or suffering from the oppression of the group, speed or lack of space... Much in vogue at auction, design is represented here by the Israeli Ron Arad, famous for his experimental approach and unconventional materials. You can buy the first edition of his "Memo" pouffe (1999, €2,000/3,000) and his celebrated "Big Easy", this gleaming throne became an iconic figure of the late 1980s style: a kind of laid-back version of the traditional club armchair, which should interest those who love singularity and sensual design. Pieces that speak of their times.

Céline Piettre

# Under Athena's protection

2 FEBRUARY

The reckless Athena leapt fully armed from the head of her father Zeus, the King of Olympus – whose chronic headaches were clearly contractions! Prudent in her practice of war, and the guardian of Athens, she was venerated throughout Ancient Greece. Her worship continued under the Roman Empire, when she was assimilated with Minerva. As proud as ever, the goddess features prominently among the fine pieces of the archaeology sale staged by Pierre Bergé & Associés (Drouot, Paris), as a bronze effigy estimated at €60,000/80,000. While she has a remarkable Greek profile and sports the Corinthian crested helmet worn by Athenian hoplites, her DNA is thoroughly Roman. Dating from the 1st/2nd century AD, and represented as a bust (a highly popular form in Roman art) she

stands on a moulded niello pedestal of small palms and foliage. All the attributes of her warlike functions are present: the aegis (the skin of the goat Amalthea given to her by her father) and the Gorgon's head surrounded by intertwining snakes (evoking the hair of the monster, whose gaze turned people to stone). A drape covers her shoulders, and her delicately braided hair falls over her bust, in the style of the now lost "Athena Parthenos" by Phidias. Her martial charm is softened by a fine patina and inlaid silver (notably used for the eyes) and a pensive attitude – for she is also the goddess of wisdom. Alongside her in the sale we find a collection of glass objects owned by the late Israeli jeweller Shlomo Moussaieff. Built up between 1948 and 1990, his collection contains various touching and relatively affordable pieces, with rare treasures like a head of Tyche of Antioch, goddess of fortune, estimated at €70,000/80,000, and a pyx as blue as the skies of Sidon, the Lebanese city it comes from (around €60,000). May Hermes (or Mercury) smile on the bidders!

Céline Piettre

HD



Roman art, 1st/2nd century AD, bust of Athena in bronze and inlaid silver, h. 27.4 cm. Former collection of M. P., Munich, Germany, late 1960s. Estimate: €60,000/80,000.

HD



JonOne (b.1963), "Broken Glass", 2012, oil on canvas, 147 x 137 cm (detail), signed, titled and dated on the back. Estimate: €12,000/15,000.

# JonOne & Co...

The American artist JonOne (who has lived in France since the late 1980s) is one of the most collected street artists today, and his price index has constantly risen in the last few years. So he is quite naturally part of this Leclere sale (Drouot, Paris) dedicated entirely to urban art, with a firework display of a painting (€12,000/15,000; see photo) and a sculpture of a rhinoceros colourfully decked out during Marseille's year as European Capital of Culture in 2013 ("The Force of the Sun", unique piece: €18,000/22,000). A pioneer in New York graffiti and founder of the collective 156 All Starz, he started out by tagging his name and street number on Harlem trains, then moved to abstraction. His art is often compared with the expressionistic style of Jackson Pollock. With a touch of readily-assumed egocentricity, he likens himself to Giacometti, in terms of tousled hair and creative dynamism. JonOne finds his true satisfaction in action and colour, though that does not prevent him from working in black and white, inspired (he points out) by Chinese calligraphy. Other key names

## 3 FEBRUARY

who often appear at auction will be going under the hammer with him, like Shepard Fairey, Speedy Graphito (with a hunting scene at €14,000/16,000, which found no buyer last June) and the inevitable, mysterious Banksy. All lots date from the last ten years, with estimates between €500 and €50,000. Also featuring in this already substantial list is Spain based artist Felipe Pantone, who stood out at the 2016 Art Basel Miami with his psychedelic urban art, and the German duo Moses & Taps, ultra-trendy figures in post-graffiti: a street art influenced by painting and graphic art, which has come in off the street into the gallery. In short, a meeting between the old and new generation of a style that definitely has the wind behind it.

Céline Piettre

# In the world

## Old Masters in New York

24 AND 25 JANUARY

With few buyers and an increasing dearth of high quality pieces, the Old Masters market (now somewhat eclipsed by a growing interest in modern and contemporary art) drives operators to double their efforts to find works that will appeal to collectors. As every year in January, sales devoted to Old Masters start off the season in New York. This time, Sotheby's (25 January) is banking on Spanish artists. A "Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria" by Francisco de Zurbarán (\$1.5/2 M) leads the estimates. With typical sobriety, the painter turns this episode from the "Golden Legend" into an intimate scene. Here, tenderness and spirituality take precedence over the narrative of St Catherine's vision, with the infant Jesus discreetly placing a ring on her finger in token of the mystic marriage. This painting is followed by a still life in a kitchen attributed to Diego Velazquez (\$1.5/2 M), which might be officially authenticated in the future.

This Spanish section closes with a "Saint Veronica Holding the Veil" attributed to El Greco, and a complete series of "Los Caprichos" by Francisco Goya. Also worth mentioning: a young woman with a candle by the Antwerp master of chiaroscuro, Adam de Coster (\$1.5/2 M), and the "Fountain of Love" by Jean-Honoré Fragonard (\$1.5/2.5 M), from the Edward M. Snider collection. A late work by the artist, the painting is sure to gain from the reputation of its two matching pieces, now in the Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Wallace Collection in London. Surrounded by a cloud of putti, a couple are seen drinking at the Fountain of Love: an allegory that might be thought overly sentimental if not for the magnificent evanescent lines and chromatic harmony of the whole scene. Not far from there, at Christie's (24 January), a sale of drawings boasts a "Head of a Young Man" in the fleshy lines of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, which has a fairly high estimate of around \$180,000/220,000. Hand on cheek, gaze turned towards an invisible interlocutor, he shares top billing with a study of weightless angels by the French artist Charles de La Fosse (\$30,000/40,000). An event not to be missed by lovers of Baroque and Rococo painting.

Céline Piettre



Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664),  
"The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of  
Alexandria", oil on canvas, 121 x 102.7 cm  
Estimate: \$1.5/2 M.



26 JANUARY HD ○

## Mucha's passion...

Though he lived there for no more than four years, the high priest of Art Nouveau Alphonse Mucha developed a special relationship with the US – if only because it provided a patron for his famous "Epopée Slave", a cycle of monumental paintings he worked on until he died. His recognition in America, exalted in the Sixties by hippy culture, is as glowing as ever. So it is no surprise that an American auction house, Swann Auction Galleries, will be selling some 200 works by the Moravian artist and his circle (Eugène Grasset, Henri Privat-Livemont and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec) on 26 January in New York. They include posters (around €10,000/15,000) and a few original drawings (€2,000 apiece) identified as studies for his "Documents décoratifs". This collection of sketches, published in Paris in 1902 by the Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, is a compendium of the illustrator's skills: a point of reference for his collectors (who incidentally include the tennis player Ivan Lendl!). Mucha's works are not rare at auction, but the fact that they come from the same private collection (that of the late businessman Harry C. Meyerhoff) adds lustre to the sale's pedigree. The master's passion for ornamentation and female curves should take care of the rest...

Céline Piettre



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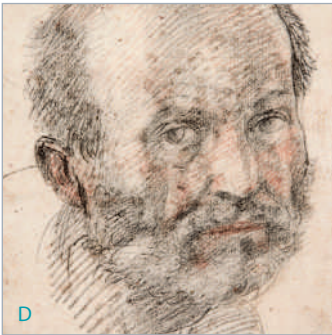
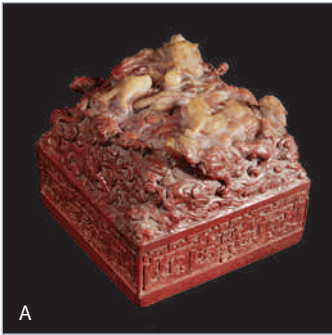
# AUCTION RESULTS

FIND AUCTION RESULTS ON THE INTERNET

W

> €1M

## In France



**D €3,936,000**

Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530), front: "Étude de tête d'homme", back: "Étude d'œil", circa 1522-1525, front: black stone and sanguine, back: sanguine, 23 x 18 cm.

Paris, 17 December, Gestas & Carrère auction house. Cabinet de Bayser.

**E €2,875,000**

Attributed to Gil de Siloé (1440-circa. 1500), Castille, "Sainte Cécile" in alabaster sculpted in the round, h. 49 cm.

Paris, Drouot, 12 December, Daguerre auction house. Mrs Fligny.

**F €2,295,078**

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Luba-Shankadi headrest, wood, 17.5 x 17.2 cm.

Paris, Drouot, 15 December, Millon auction house and Christie's France. Messrs Vanuxem.

**A €21 M**

China, Qianlong era (1736-1795), beige and red soapstone seal; on the underside, the inscription: "Qian Long Yu Bi Zhi Bao" written in Zhuanshu (seal script), 9 x 10.5 x 10.5 cm.

Paris, Drouot, 14 December, Pierre Bergé & Associés auction house. Cabinet Portier & Associés.

**B €1,015,480**

Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985), "Chiffre légendaire du lavabo", vinyl on canvas. Signed, countersigned, entitled and dated "February 1965", 100 x 81 cm. Versailles, 11 December, Versailles Enchères Perrin-Royère-Lajeunesse auction house.

**C €1,128,000**

Complete dinosaur skeleton, "Allosaurus" (Marsh, 1877), USA, Upper Jurassic, l. 750 cm.

Lyon, 10 December, Aguttès auction house. Mr Mickeler.

HD



Rembrandt Bugatti (1884–1916), "Giant Anteater", 1909, bronze proof, brown patina with green highlights, no. 5, lost-wax cast by Adrien-Aurélien Hébrard, dating from before 1934, 34 x 47.5 x 21.5 cm. Paris, Drouot, 2 December, Crait + Müller auction house. Mr Lacroix.



## €1,512,000

An imposingly large mammal but not terribly glamorous, the giant anteater is not used to finding itself in the limelight. But that's exactly what happened to one member of the species... Sculpted by Rembrandt Bugatti (1884-1916), it emerged from the tropical forests to garner a bid of €1,512,000 offering its brilliant creator a French record (source: Artnet). Rembrandt Bugatti did not criss-cross the planet to hunt down his models: he just visited zoos – the ones in Antwerp and

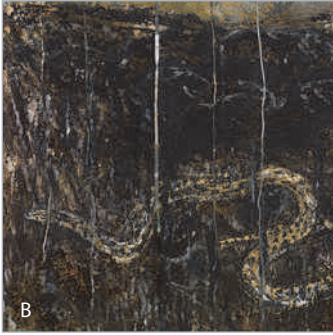
the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. 1909 saw the arrival of a new style of representation, defined as more futuristic and thus more innovative. In fact this anteater is difficult to absorb in one glance, as the sculptor has clouded the issue, and it's hard to tell the head from the tail. The "Babouin sacré Hamadryas" also dates from this period (\$2.77 M, Sotheby's New York, 2015), and holds the current world record for the artist.

Anne Doridou-Heim

€300,000-€1M



A



B

**A €475,000**

China, Ming period, end of the 16th-start of the 17th century, subject in gilded bronze representing Yaowang Guanyin, 71 x 40 x 27 cm.

Nice, 6 December, Hôtel des ventes Nice Riviera auction house. Ansas - Papillon d'Alton firm.

**B €943,920**

Anselm Kiefer (born in 1945), "Die Schlange" (The Serpent), 1982-1991, oil paint, straw, staples, screws, emulsion and lead on canvas, 190 x 285 cm. Paris, 5 December, Tajan auction house.

**C €881,250**

Yellow gold ring adorned in the centre by a Marquise cut diamond between six rectangular diamonds, gross weight: 7g. Accompanied by an analytic diamond report by L.F.G no. 319409 from the 15th September 2016 which states: 11.25 ct (weight), D (colour), VS1 (purity), type: Ila.

Paris, Drouot, 1 December, Beaussant-Lefèvre auction house. Messrs Emeric and Stephen Portier.

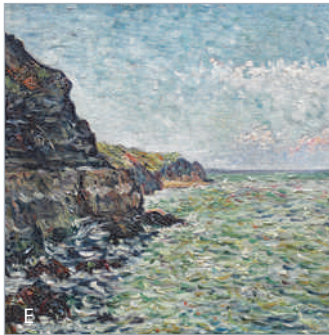
**D €300,000**

Martin Carlin (circa. 1730-1785), chest of drawers with mahogany corners and gilded bronze castings, curved protruding front, white embedded marble top, Louis XVI period, 92 x 163 x 53 cm.

Paris, Drouot, 9 December, Beaussant-Lefèvre auction house. Messrs Bacot, de Lencquesaing.



C



E

**E €372,000**

Paul Signac (1863-1935), "Port-en-Bessin" (study no. 2), 1883, oil on canvas, entitled "les Falaises du Calvados", 45 x 63.5 cm.

Evreux, 4 December, Hôtel des Ventes d'Evreux auction house. Mr Willer.

**F €525,600**

Democratic Republic of Congo, 19th century, Luba Kibango staff, hard wood with brown patina and red copper temper, h. 115 cm.

Paris, Drouot, 24 November, Binoche & Giquello auction house. Messrs Caput, Dulon.

**G €349,988**

Swiss fabrication, circa. 1800, musical watch with golden and polychrome enamel automatons, inlaid with pearls, for the Chinese market.

Paris, Drouot, 26 November, Auction Art Rémy Le Fur & Associés auction house. Déchaut-Stetten firm.



D



F

HD



G

< €300,000



HD



**A €245,005**

Henry Moret (1856-1913), "Falaises à Clohars-Carnoët", 1904, oil on the original canvas, 73 x 93 cm. Paris, Drouot, 23 November, Millon auction house. Mrs Ritzenhaler.

**B €96,866**

Eva Gonzalès (1849-1883), "Sur la plage, Dieppe", circa. 1875-1880, oil on a canvas stretched across card, 34.7 x 26.7 cm. Paris, Drouot, 9 December, Leclere auction house. Mr Millet.

**C €75,000**

Probably Moroccan, middle or end of the 10th century of the Hegira (16th century), astrolabe in brass, diam. 19.6 cm. Paris, Drouot, 21 December, Chayette & Cheval auction house. Anthony Turner.

**D €134,606**

Giulio Campi (1502-1572), "Léda et le cygne", fountain pen and brown ink, bistre ink wash and white gouache retouching on ocre-yellow paper, 14.8 x 25.3 cm. Paris, Drouot, 9 December, Audap-Mirabaud auction house. Mr de Bayser.

**E €39,000**

John Gibson (1790-1866), "Cupidon céleste", white marble bust, circa. 1830-1840, h. 57 cm. Paris, 29 November, Tajan auction house. Mr Lacroix.

E



Pat Steir (b. 1940), "Calming Waterfall", 1989, oil on canvas, 193 x 321 cm.  
Paris, Drouot, 7 December, Auction Art Rémy Le Fur & Associés auction house.



€281,250

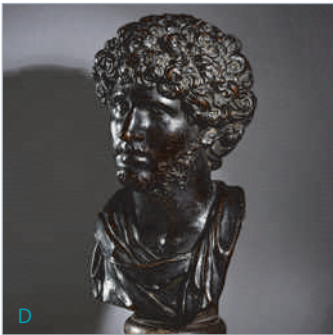
The price of €281,250 marked a French record and the third-highest price (source: Artnet) for a work by American artist Pat Steir (b. 1940). She appears regularly in New York contemporary art sales but far less often on the French market, so it is important to stress this fine result. In most of her works, the painter and engraver explores the many changing aspects of waterfalls, and began her "Waterfall" series in the late Eighties. Inspired by traditional Chinese painting and Daoism, she endeavours to express the harmonious merging of nature, man and the cosmos. A huge undertaking, which takes the form of big harmonious formats illustrating powerful elemental forces – now found in the Whitney Museum and Metropolitan Museum of Art, no less.

Anne Doridou-Heim





B



D

**A €196,004**

Camille Dolard (1810–after 1884), "Autoportrait en fumeur de narguilé dans un décor oriental", 1845, full-plate daguerreotype, 16.5 x 21.3 cm (in sight). Paris, Drouot, 20 December, Baron Ribeyre auction house, Millon auction house. Mr Goeury.

**B €135,960**

Albert Marquet (1875–1947), "Rouen, le pont Boieldieu et le quai de Paris", 1912, oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm. Dijon, 3 December, Hôtel des Ventes Victor Hugo auction house. Mr Millet.

**C €138,000**

Box of 12 Romanée-Conti vintages in perfect state, staggered from between 1998 and 2009. Alençon, 3 December, Orne Enchères auction house. Mr du Pontavice.



C

**D €252,500**

North Italy (Venice?), 16th century, bust of a young man, bronze with black patina, h. 46.5 cm. Paris, Drouot, 23 November, Coutau-Bégarie auction house. Mrs Fligny.

**E €50,000**

Bourgogne, school of Hugues Sambin, final third of the 16th century. Double-bodied sculpted armoire, walnut, 248 x 37 x 67 cm. Saint-Raphaël, 10 December, Var Enchères Arnaud Yvos auction house. Mrs Fligny.



E

# RESULTS

## In the world



A



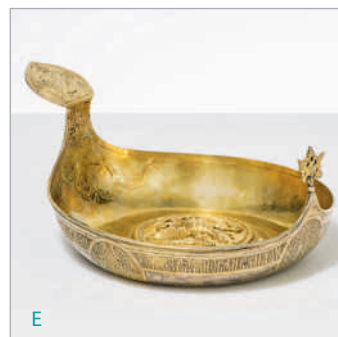
B



C



D



E

HD



F

### A €2.6 M

Henri Rousseau, called Le Douanier Rousseau (1844–1910), "Deux lions à l'affût dans la jungle", c. 1910, oil on canvas, signed Henri Rousseau on the bottom right, 84.5 x 119.8 cm.

Monaco, 14 December, Hôtel des ventes de Monte-Carlo auction house.

### B \$81,250

Robert Laurie & James Whittle, "The Complete East-India Pilot, or Oriental Navigator", London, 1797. New York, 8 December, Swann Auction Galleries.

### C €725,000

Emil Nolde (1867–1956), "Figur und Clematis", 1935, oil on canvas. Signed lower right. Signed and titled on the stretcher, 88.5 x 67.5 cm.

Munich, 10 December, Ketterer Kunst auction house.

### D CHF243,000

Chu Teh-Chun (1920–2014), "Composition, hiver", oil on canvas, signed and dated 1987, 73 x 92 cm. Geneva, 14 December, Piguet auction house.

### E CHF230,000

Russia, mid-17th century, large decorative *kovsh* engraved in the centre with the Imperial double-headed eagle of Russia, the edge revealing that it was given by the Grand Duke Alexei Mikhailovich, By the Grace of God, Tsar of All the Russias, to Trofim Dushkin, in charge of the tax on alcohol in Tula, silver and silver-gilt, 26 cm, 360g.

Geneva, 13 December, Genève Enchères auction house.

### F \$225,000

Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), "Prototype chair, for William A.M. Burden, Northeast Harbor, Maine", 1947, burlap-covered steel, copper, 71.1 x 52.7 x 63.5 cm. New York, 13 December, Phillips auction house.



Sanyu (1901-1966), "Chrysanthèmes dans un vase en verre" signed in Chinese; signed 'SANYU' (lower right), oil on masonite, 91.6 x 125 cm. Painted in the 1950s. Hong Kong, 26 November, Christie's.

## HK\$2.43 billion

In Hong Kong, a series of varied sales (Christie's) straddling late November and early December totalled HK\$2.43 billion. With ceramics, the Yangdetang collection produced a triumph with a pair of Yuan dynasty green celadon bottles highlighted with black spots (HK\$12.06 M). But its chief attraction consisted of pieces from the Song dynasty, including a "jun" bowl with purple decoration on a blue background (HK\$4.86 M) and a tripod burner, sold for HK\$1.18 M. The "general" sale that followed included a fine bowl with foot from the Xuande period (HK\$68.86 M), embellished with a dragon that seemed to protect a tiny bowl with plum tree branches on a red background (Yongzheng period, HK\$40.86 M). We move on to jewellery, whose colours made up a positive rainbow, from the green of a jade necklace (HK\$26.3 M)

to the yellow of a rectangular diamond (28.78 ct, VVS1, HK\$15.66 M) and the blue of two other diamonds, one pear-shaped (5.19 ct, IF, HK\$13.26 M), the other marquise-cut (4.29 ct, VVS1, HK\$91.26 M) mounted in rings by Cartier and Moussaieff, respectively. Modern and contemporary painting dazzled almost as much as the jewels, with a shower of records. The most spectacular went to the Chinese artist Sanyu, whose "Chrysanthèmes dans un vase" (c. 1950) inspired a battle up to HK\$103.58 M (see photo). Just behind this splendid price came the HK\$91.82 M obtained for Chu Teh-Chun's diptych "Snowy Vertigo" (c. 1990-1999). To celebrate their purchases, collectors had time to drink some wine, though at a spanking price: 12 bottles of Romanée Conti (1988 vintage) required no less than HK\$1.34 M to pop their corks... Xavier Narbaitz



Brafa 2016

© Emmanuel Crooy



# MAGAZINE

# Brafa, a winter warmer

In the deep midwinter, while the little world of art briefly dozes, the Brafa (21-29 January) is giving a wake-up call. This year is decidedly dynamic and colourful, as the Brussels art fair pays homage to the Argentinian artist Julio Le Parc. After an exhibition at the Emmanuel Perrotin Gallery in New York this autumn, the maestro of kinetic art, co-founder of the GRAV (Visual Art Research Group) in the 1960s, is in the spotlight until 19 March next year at Miami's Perez Art Museum. Four of his works will be found at the Brafa in a special staging, featuring a huge red sphere and a vast mobile seen at the Palais de Tokyo's 2013 retrospective in Paris. This should certainly whet the appetites of visitors to this 62nd edition (who totalled 58,000 last year). They will be able to explore 132 stands in the former customs brick warehouses at the (heated!) site of Tour & Taxis, on the edge of the town centre. There is a loyal following for this event, which has an unrivalled niche in the calendar of events specialising in art and antiquities. Some call it one of the best fairs in Europe. Others see it as a "little Tefaf" – a way of saying that it is similar to without

equalling it. Some of the exhibitors also participate in the Maastricht fair, in fact. But in truth, the Brafa is like no other fair. It has its own particular character: elegant, friendly and welcoming. Its often highly cultivated visitors readily linger to chat with dealers. In cultural terms, it is a Belgian fair, far closer to the spirit of France than the Tefaf, with its distinctly Dutch feel. It is mainly hosting Belgian and French galleries, together with a few from Switzerland, the UK and Germany, one from Canada and another from Hungary. "The Brafa appeals because of its diversity and its wide range of prices, between €5,000 and €5 million," says the Ghent dealer Francis Maere, one of the fair's two vice presidents – the other being his colleague Didier Claes. Alongside works by the Belgian expressionists Constant Permeke, Emile Claus and Rik Wouters, the latter's stand is focusing on Eugène Dodeigne, who died in 2015. "One of the great sculptors of the 20th century", this Belgian artist featured in two exhibitions at the Musée Rodin in Paris, and his works adorn the impressive sculpture parks of Middelheim in Antwerp and Kröller-Müller in the Netherlands. One



HD



Rembrandt Bugatti (1884-1916), "Deux petits léopards l'un derrière l'autre", c. 1912-1913, bronze with dark patina and brown undertones, lost wax bronze by A.A. Hébrard, h. 37.5 cm.





of the Brafa's great strengths, which sets it apart from the Biennale Paris (formerly Biennale des Antiquaires) and the Tefaf, is that it also includes affordable works: a genuine balancing act between a top-level offering and objects people "fall in love with", not just within the grasp of the very rich. "We need to meet the expectations of confirmed collectors with precise knowledge and requirements, and at the same time inspire art lovers with the desire to acquire a piece," says the fair's president, Harold t'Kint de Roodenbeke, himself a well-known modern art dealer in Brussels. This unusual combination partly explains why visitors sometimes travel long distances to see its wares – from Germany, Holland and even Russia...

### Something for all tastes

The Brafa provides a select melting pot for the modern collector, who is eclectic and more of a butterfly than previously. This year, twelve new galleries are making an appearance, including Anne Aute-garden for 20th century decorative arts (Brussels), Bernard de Grunne, a major tribal art dealer in the Belgian capital, and Rodolphe Janssen, established in the same city, for contemporary art. A sample reflecting the wide scope of an event that embraces both Egyptian archaeology and strip cartoons (with key players Huberty & Breyne and a new arrival from Luxembourg, Belgian Fine Comic Strip). Meanwhile, thanks to the participation of leading Belgian galleries – including that of Didier Claes – and their French colleague Bernard Dulon, not to mention Jacques Germain from Quebec, this multidisciplinary art fair has the highest concentration of ethnic arts. In this field, Bernard de Grunne is contributing two Pende masks from the Congo at between €30,000 and €50,000 apiece. Archaeology is almost on a par, with ten galleries including Chenel, Harmakhis and Cybele, depending on whether or not you include professionals dealing in other specialities. David Ghezelbash, from Paris, is showing a bas-relief pharaoh's head from the Ptolemaic period at €65,000. As regards the "Haute Epoque", (i.e. the

Middle Ages and Renaissance), while other fairs have reduced it to its bare bones, it plays a full part in the proceedings here. For example, Jan Muller Antiques of Ghent will be presenting a 16th century triptych of The Adoration by Dirck Jacobsz, from a private Belgian collection. Asian art is also fittingly represented, with prominent galleries like the Parisians Jacques Barrère, specialising in China and Japan, Indian art expert Christophe Hioco and Jean-Christophe Charbonnier, a specialist in Japanese armour. Lovers of 18th century classical decorative arts, particularly from France, are sure to visit the stands of the Perrin Gallery and Benjamin Steinitz, a loyal participant. For decorative arts from a more modern period, in the absence of Marcilhac this year, you should definitely stop at the stand of the Mathivet gallery, which has Art Deco pieces by Paul Dupré-Lafon and Jean Dunand. But if there is one field that makes the Brafa particularly proud, and rightly so, it is 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture, which is well-represented today. Mathias Ary Jan, a specialist in Orientalist painting (who "very much likes this fair, with its ever-rising quality") is not restricting himself to this theme, but also has a range of works with female subjects by Jean-Gabriel Domergue, Gustave De Jonghe and Léon de Smet. One of the most expensive pieces looks set to be a pair of panthers by Rembrandt Bugatti (see photo), a sculptor much in the limelight this autumn at various Paris sales. The price of this Hébrard cast proposed by the Galerie de la Béraudière is close to €1 million. Bailly (Geneva) will be exhibiting a painting by Nicolas de Staël, "Les Martigues", for a tidy sum, we imagine. Lastly, the Belgian gallery Boon is presenting a work on paper by Basquiat, on the theme of the electric chair and the inventor Thomas Edison, for over €300,000 (see photo). A bagatelle compared with the \$57 million obtained by one of the American artist's large paintings last May in New York!

Alexandre Crochet

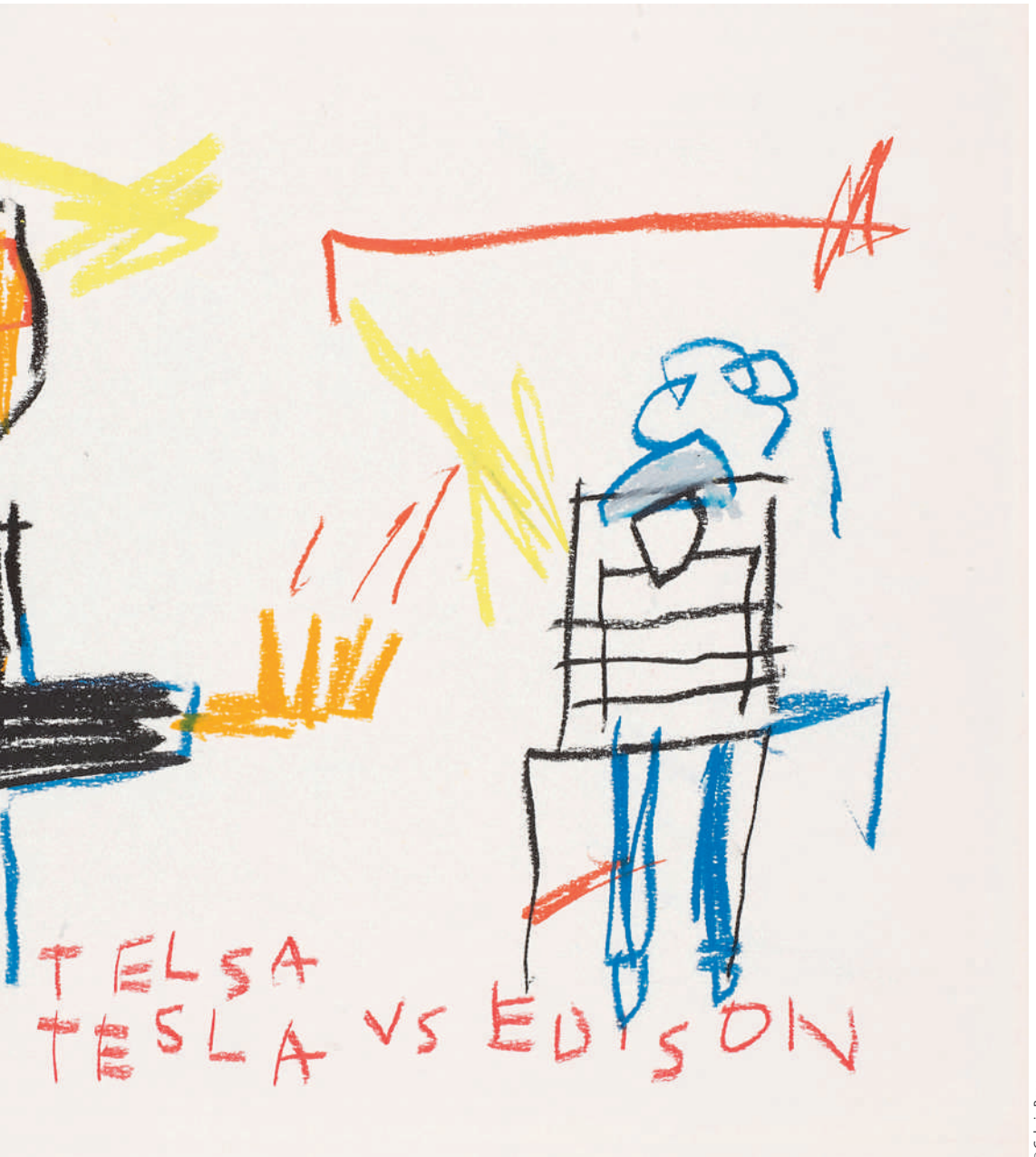
Brafa: from 21 to 29 January 2017,  
Tour & Taxis, Avenue du Port 86 C, Brussels.

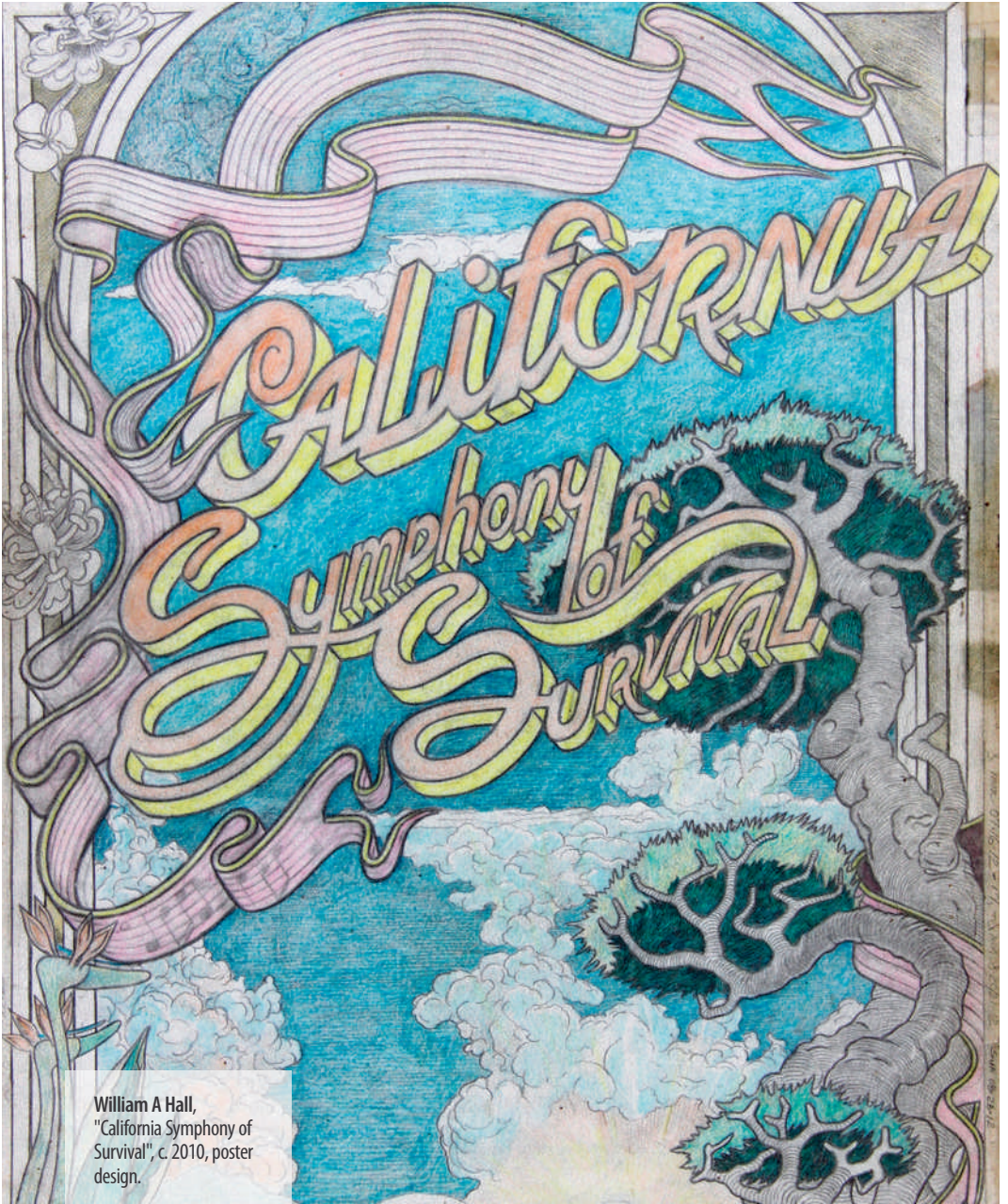
[www.brafa.art](http://www.brafa.art)

W



Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), "Tesla vs Edison", 1983,  
charcoal and oil stick on paper, 32 x 43.5 cm.





William A Hall,  
"California Symphony of  
Survival", c. 2010, poster  
design.

Courtesy of Henry Boxer Gallery

# The Outsider Art Fair, 25 years old!

In 2017, the Outsider Art Fair celebrates its 25th anniversary: twenty-five years of discovery and support for an art that is still little-known and often misunderstood. In New York, the Metropolitan Pavilion is hosting sixty exhibitors between 19 and 22 January. "This year, we have achieved considerable diversity, with galleries from Austria, Japan, Canada and the UK," says Becca Hoffman, the fair's francophone and francophile director. Over a quarter of a century, the definition and price index of outsider art have certainly changed: "For the last ten years, there has been a growing number of museum exhibitions devoted to these artists, and of workshops working with artists suffering from mental or physical illness". To such an extent that mainstream art now has its eye on this segment: some exhibitors are contemporary art galleries. Will this blur the borders? "Buyers are ready to spend money, but prices don't affect the nature of outsider art, because they are not as high as for contemporary art. Only dead artists, like Henry Darger, achieve high prices". These are preci-

sely the sort of questions to be discussed at a round table during the next edition. "The market's discovery of outsider art is little talked of in our milieu," says Becca Hoffman, "but it's an interesting development, because they are not professionals." To celebrate its anniversary, the fair is also featuring a retrospective exhibition curated by the journalist Edward Gómez, who has chosen twenty-five works representative of the previous editions. The director is delighted with the selection, which will "provide a history of the fair, and show how much energy it has injected into this market." The works presented mainly reflect the country's social and political situation: a speciality of southern Afro-American artists, much admired by New York visitors. An edition, then, that takes stock of "today's world" and a highly singular art.

Agathe Albi-Gervy

Outsider Art Fair, from 19 to 22 January,  
Metropolitan Pavilion, New York.

[fr.outsiderartfair.com](http://fr.outsiderartfair.com)



# Arne Glimcher, art as a religion

On his way through Paris, Arne Glimcher – not only the founder of the Pace Gallery but also a producer and film director – talks about his career, developments in the market and the place of art in society.

## **Pace galleries are now all over the world, in New York, Beijing and Paris.**

I love Paris. You know, I've adored art ever since I was little. And if you were interested in art then, you had to come to Paris – likewise if you wanted to open a gallery. I opened my own in Boston 56 years ago. You could buy a small Giacometti at the Maeght gallery or at Claude Bernard. The capital was pretty lively! The history of Modernism was written here, and I'm an apostle of Modernism! Paris went through another magnificent period after the war with Dubuffet, one of the great 20th century artists. If you look at his work and those by Giacometti produced right at the end of

the Second World War, isn't that just how people looked: crushed, drawn-out, mere sketches?

## **You have a keen interest in Chinese creation...**

At the moment, I think there are more new and powerful things in China than in the rest of the world. I went there for the first time in 1983, and was immediately spellbound. At the time, there was no contemporary art – at any rate, nothing that struck me. I had gone there to try to make a film: a story set in the last days of the Shanghai International Settlement. Since then, I have gone back regularly. In 2003 I discovered a great many talents and an incredible vitality, sadly lacking in the West at the time. It was daring – just like Western art in the early 20th century. And so we opened a gallery in Beijing.

## **With all these specialist galleries (Pace/MacGill, Pace Prints, Pace Beijing, and so on), how would you define the Pace spirit?**

I think there is a real sensitivity about Pace, and a specific identity, mainly due to artists like Agnes Martin, Robert Ryman, Chuck Close and Robert Irwin. There's a

Pace Gallery, New York, 32 East 57th Street,  
New York NY 10022.

[www.pacegallery.com](http://www.pacegallery.com)

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Arne Glimcher with the artist  
James Turrell (on the right).

Sol LeWitt at Pace Beijing.



Photo: Darbu Photography Studio

certain minimalist feel. I was the first to exhibit Irwin. I gave money to James Turrell so he could create his first pieces. He had just told me what he wanted to do... It was a very idealistic time. We felt we were building a new world, with art as its religion. For me, art has always been a religion.

### **In this respect, what is your view of the art market at present?**

I think a lot of the market is manipulated. By this I mean that a large part of the market is not real. The public has grown so broad! There were two critical moments... I was responsible for one, unfortunately, and the other was due to Ben Heller. In 1979, he sold "Blue Poles" by Jackson Pollock to Australia's National Gallery for \$2 M, making it the most expensive work ever sold at that point.

### **And the other event?**

One month later, I sold "Three Flags" by Jasper Johns to the Whitney Museum for \$1 M: the highest price ever achieved by a living artist. I didn't do it for the money, and incidentally, I didn't make a cent on the sale. The sellers were the Tremaines, two of my top customers. A German collector, Peter Ludwig, was offering \$500,000. The Tremaines thought it important that a painting so representative of American art should go to a European collection. I thought that this painting was the quintessence of America, and ought to be in the most "American" museum of the time: the Whitney. I went to see Emily and Burton [Tremaine] and asked if they were ready to leave the work in the USA if I found a buyer for \$1 M. They said yes. My childhood friend Leonard Lauder gave me \$250,000; three other people gave the same amount, and "Three Flags" entered the Whitney. These two sales changed everything. From one day to the next, a work of art was worth a million dollars – at a time when very few people were millionaires.

### **What effect did this have on artists?**

I think it had a big effect on bad artists, and very little on the good ones. Jasper Johns wrote to me after the sale, saying: "You know, Arne, for my generation, \$1 M

is an incredible sum; but you have to remember that this has nothing to do with art." When someone pays \$175 M for a Picasso, does that have anything at all to do with art? I don't think so. There are two separate things: art, and art as a commodity. But whatever happens in the market, art's role in society never changes. And to tell the truth, no one needs that much money, whether or not they are an artist.

### **You recently devoted a major exhibition to Mark Rothko (until 7 January in New York): an artist you knew well...**

I worked for ten years on this show. When I design an exhibition, I don't just want to show beautiful works: it has to have meaning. As a result, every show is different. When I was very young, I lived right opposite Mark Rothko's studio. When I was on my way to school, he would let me go in. There was a deep red and brown painting on the wall. Absolutely magnificent. I was fascinated by this work. I've always preferred dark paintings, and all the ones I own personally are dark. I talked to him about this painting and he said "I've chosen it for a female collector who's been asking me for a painting for many years."

**"When someone pays \$175M for a Picasso, does that have anything at all to do with art? I don't think so."**

If you wanted a work by Rothko, he chose the one he allowed you to buy. If you didn't want it... too bad! She came to look at the work in the studio and said to him, "Oh, Mr Rothko! It's a beautiful picture but I would so much have liked a cheerful painting – a yellow, a red or an orange..." He said to her, "Yellow, red, orange – aren't they the colours of hell?" Isn't that interesting, people's different perceptions? Anyway, I was the one who got the work, and I'll never part with it!

Pierre Naquin

# Pierre Charpin, seeker of forms

**H**is stand will be one of the focal points of the next edition of that major show in interior design, the Maison&Objet exhibition (Paris). A regular at the event, Pierre Charpin has now – finally! – been acclaimed "Designer of the Year". A Holy Grail of a title, which loudly proclaims what people have been murmuring quietly for a while. Pierre Charpin is surely one of the subtlest representatives of French design. Having studied at art school in Bourges, he excels in drawing: a stage intrinsic to his creative process. Pencil in hand, he transforms his "thought flows" into seemingly silent objects. Solemn vases, enlivened with a clown's nose (Kreo gallery); an armchair cut up into colourful slices ("Slice"); an austere breadbasket (for Alessi) sporting kinetic effects – in short, creations you would like to live with, which are neither boring nor too invasive, and whose "friendly" presence becomes established over time. "I don't like arrogant objects," says the man who

has made simplicity a priority. It is not a question of saturating the eye, particularly with objects repeated in a single space. Even the functional side is not always obvious at first glance. When Mr Charpin uses technology, he likes it invisible, as with the PC Lamp, his latest creation produced by Wrong London and unveiled at Maison&Objet. Its articulated arm, unified by the colour, conceals a complex system of pistons and LEDs. An archetypal object from head to foot, it inspires all kinds of interpretations. Does it remind you of a high-perched heron, a drinking horse or a heliotrope? With Pierre Charpin, the elementary feeds the imagination.

## Collector designs

Whether he creates unique pieces or limited editions through his Kreo gallery (Paris and London), or collaborates on industrial series with Alessi or Ligne Roset, Pierre Charpin remains a seeker of forms. You might push open the door of his gallery to find a table... but in a questing spirit, too. His loyal collectors (who can be counted on the fingers of one hand) include the Franco-Tunisian couturier Azzedine Alaïa, an ardent admirer of the designer who never misses any of his exhibitions, and Marcel

Maison&Objet, from 20 to 24 January,  
Paris Nord Villepinte (hall 7).

[www.maison-objet.com](http://www.maison-objet.com)

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"PC Lamp", desk lamp, 2016, Wrong London.

© Pierre Antoine



"Kiko, Pipo, Alex", vases, 2015.  
Manufacture nationale de Sèvres.



Brient, a leading French contemporary art collector. Some will flush him out in the auction room, at Piasa or Artcurial, which now offer his works for sale. On the production side, Europe and the US have been won over; he now needs a foothold in the Asian market. Incidentally, Pierre Charpin does not hide his fascination for Japan's material

**" I don't think there is a French school in terms of design, as in Holland, for example. Instead, you tend to find individualities that live together. "**

production. "Over there, craftsmen are interested in what goes on between objects." Commissioned by Hermès, his "Lacquer" boxes and bowls (2016) highlight ancestral lacquer techniques. Pierre Charpin loves lacquer for its fragility. "It's a material that develops a patina and alters, reflecting the passing of time." These solar discs open and close smoothly, faithful to the "art of placing" sought by the designer. Reflecting its environment like a landscape, the box is free of any patterns, though colour – here, red, orange and green – is an integral part of the object's structure. "Colour enters the creative process very early on; I consider it rather like the degree zero of decoration." In this, Pierre Charpin is the worthy successor to the Memphis group (Italy, 1981), and its leader Ettore Sottsass. Like the latter, he advocates open, communicative design. Presented at the Maison&Objet stand, the porcelain vase produced for the Sèvres factory bears witness to this desire to share. Like a blank page, it is meant to be decorated by other artists. Alongside it, in this area of 150 m<sup>2</sup>, other creations by Pierre Charpin hold sway, including an imposing metal "Bell": a sound object exhibited at the same time at the Cité du Design in Saint-Etienne. "I wanted to show the diversity of my techniques without setting up a hierarchy between the objects." So we can discover the designer's drawings, accompanied by his own texts – in other words, the entire world of a great man in French design.

Céline Piettre

**1962** : born in Saint-Mandé, in the Paris region.

**1984** : graduated from the École nationale supérieure d'art de Bourges.

**1998** : release of the "Slice" armchair.

**1998-2001** : collaborated with CIRVA (International Research Centre for Glass and Plastic Arts) to create a series of glass vases.

**2005** : elected as "Creator of the year" by the Meuble de Paris salon.

**2011** : retrospective at the Grand-Hornu museum (Belgium).

**2017** : elected "Designer of the year" by the Maison&Objet salon.

## EXHIBITION

# America, the age of anxiety

The United States of America celebrated the victory of 1918 up and down the country, with parades to welcome "the boys" home in big cities and small towns alike. Americans were imbued with a sense of power and euphoria: having rushed to the rescue of the Old World, from which most of them had come, they firmly believed in democracy, liberty and progress. Reality very soon caught up with them. There were already signs of the oncoming Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression, but the politicians didn't see them. The people's disillusion was all the more complete as a result. Writers and artists put forward their own visions of a lost paradise, or a world needing to be fundamentally rethought. These visions can be seen in the exhibition "American Painting in the 1930s: The Age of Anxiety" at the Musée de

l'Orangerie, in Paris, which runs until 30 January. Having started at the Art Institute of Chicago, it will end its journey at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. All these artists paint a picture of daily life during their times, imbuing them with an idyllic backward-looking vision, vaunting the industrial era, and also highlighting poverty and social and ethnic conflict. Concerns that seem to resonate with recent events...

### An icon: "American Gothic"

All Americans know this picture by Grant Wood (1891-1942), painted in 1930, exhibited in Chicago and acquired by the Art Institute the same year. It is seen on stamps, and parodied in advertisements, films and TV series – like "The Simpsons" and "Desperate Housewives", where it appears in the credits. The painter was not a dyed-in-the-wool regionalist, as he was described and decried by the "modernists". Like many of his contemporaries, he travelled to Europe in the 1920s to continue his studies, discovering both the Old Masters of the 14th and 15th centuries and the various avant-

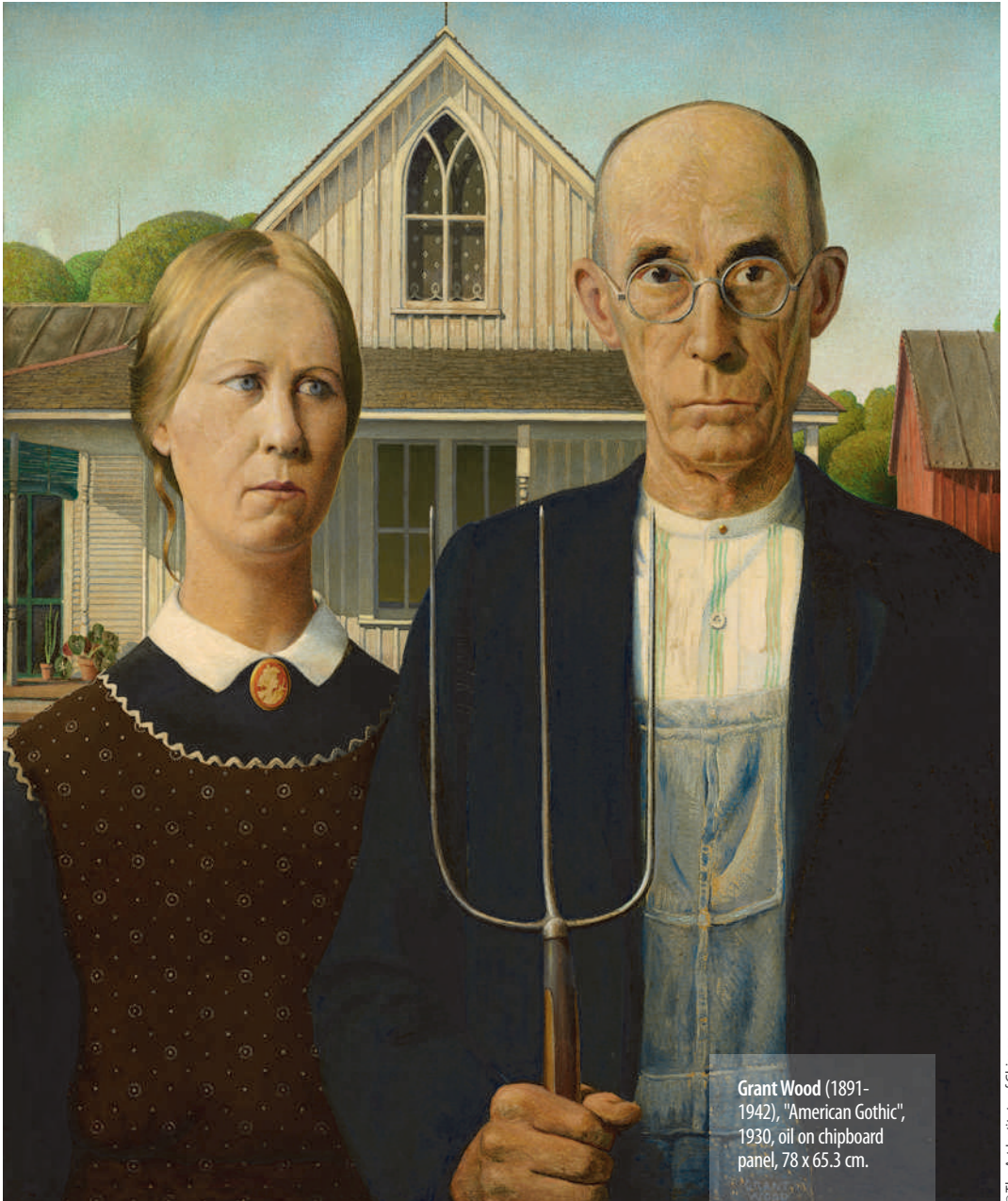
"American Painting in the 1930s: The Age of Anxiety",  
until 30 January 2017 at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris,  
and from 25 February to 4 June 2017 at the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

[www.musee-orangerie.fr/en](http://www.musee-orangerie.fr/en)

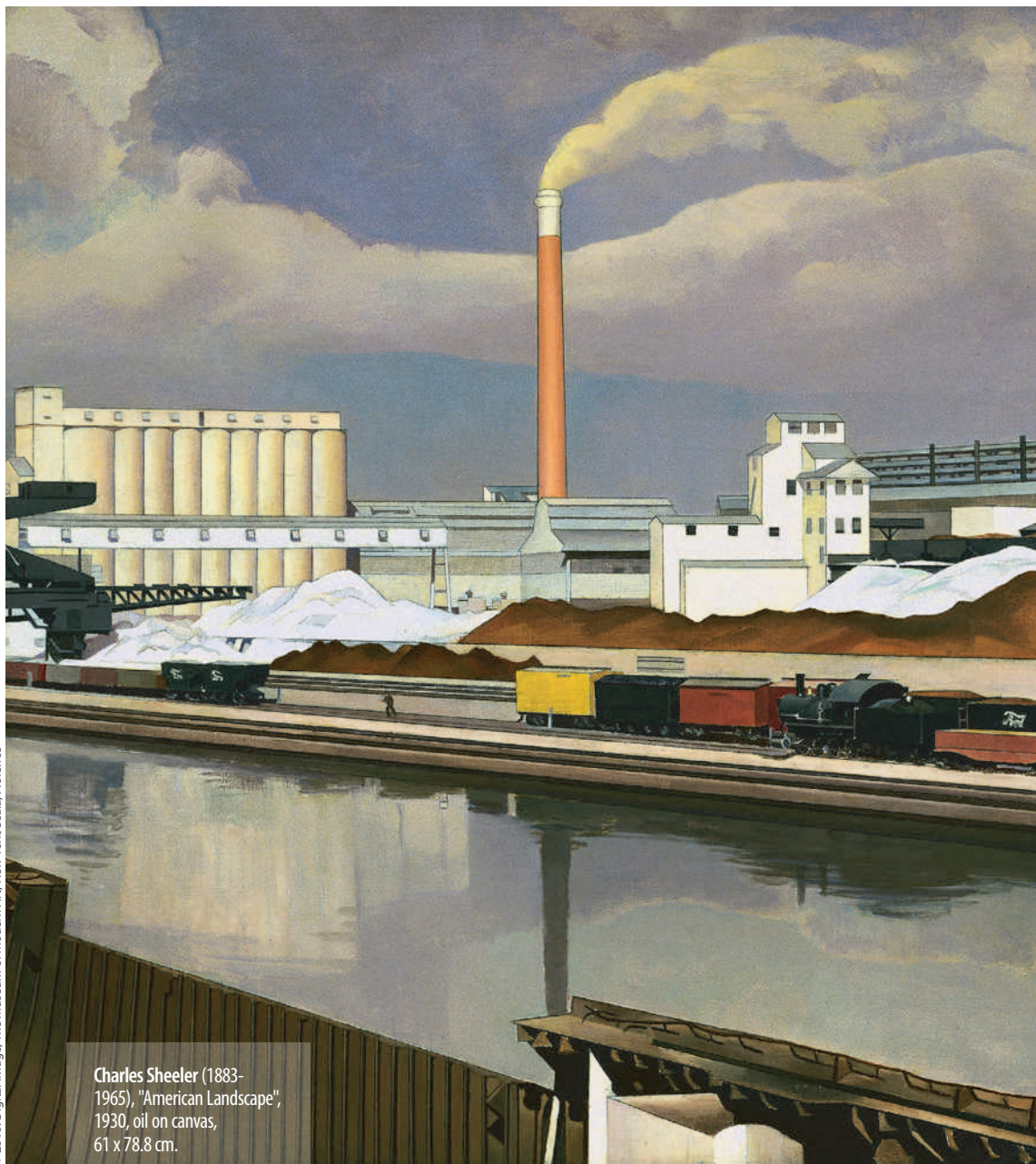
[www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)







Grant Wood (1891-1942), "American Gothic", 1930, oil on chipboard panel, 78 x 65.3 cm.



Charles Sheeler (1883-1965), "American Landscape", 1930, oil on canvas, 61 x 78.8 cm.



garde movements. Echoes of all this are found in his quest for "a native, authentic artistic expression rooted in the soil." The painting's title alludes to the Gothic Revival architectural style prevalent in the Midwest, particularly in Iowa, his native state, where he also lived. "It gave me an idea: to find two people whose straitlaced appearance would reflect the austere prudery that fits with this type of house," he noted, not without irony. In his work, Wood shows us an Arcadian vision of a lifestyle that was already gone. Meanwhile, the paintings of Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975) underlined the poverty-stricken reality of African Americans in the Southern states: sharecroppers too poor to make the journey to the industrial cities of the North. "Cotton Pickers" (1945) is a poignant example, painted like a fresco.

### Made in America

After a period in Paris, Stuart Davis (1892-1964) said in 1931, in an article for the review *Creative Art*: "It helped me to understand America's immense vitality compared with Europe." During this decade, like Arthur Dove (1880-1946), he adopted the universal language of abstraction. In 1931, Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986) discovered the landscapes of New Mexico, where she later went to live. Her "Cow's Skull" series combines geometric coloured planes with the realism of the skull. Charles Demuth (1883-1935) and Charles Sheeler (1883-1965) also sought a highly personal aesthetic vocabulary, transposing the lessons of Cubism into industrial landscapes treated as planes that are simultaneously realistic and geometrically abstract, where people are absent – or appear in the form of tiny figures. During these crisis years, they all invented an "American" art not only through the subjects they chose – a look back at the history of the founding fathers, a return to the earth after the economic depression, urban life, industrial modernity and nostalgic farmland settings – but also through the paths they opened up, which were the glory of American painting after the Second World War. And this was due to the "Federal Art Project" of the Work Progress Administration, introduced by Roosevelt and the New Deal players, who notably commissioned over 4,000 frescoes to embellish public buildings, from post offices to high courts, by very different artists. They included Grant Wood, Philip Guston and Jackson Pollock, to name but a few.

Anne Foster

# Lé Phô, straddling three continents

In Paris on 24 October, a painting by Lé Phô (1907-2001) fetched €369,750 in a sale at Drouot. In posting the fourth-best price for a work by the artist, the Aguttes auction house confirmed France's excellent position in the market for the Vietnamese painter, having sold a "Jeune fille à l'éventail" for more than €300,000 last spring. Lé Phô's name is well-known from the banks of the Red River to the Seine. Born in Hà Đông, in northern Vietnam, the son of the Viceroy of Tonkin, he spent most of his career in Paris. In 1930, the young man of 23 came to the capital on a grant to attend the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts. The curriculum was familiar to him: he was in the first student intake at the Indochina College of Fine Arts (now known as the Vietnam University of Fine Arts), founded in 1925 on the model of its elder sibling in France. He stayed there for five years, studying the history and techniques of European art. Though designed to train young Vietnamese artists in Western techniques, the school did not neglect local traditions such as painting on silk and lacquer, thus providing a mixed education. This institution was the seed of the Vietnamese modern style admirably illustrated by Lé

Phô. According to the art critic Waldemar-George, who published a monograph on the artist in 1970, "Lé Phô's work is not a compromise between Chinese-inspired Vietnamese art and Western art. It is a blend of two mentalities, two worlds and two continents." The painter, he continues, "stands at the crossroads of Asia and Europe. Eastern and Western art once again dialogue in brotherly style."

## A Vietnamese artist in Paris

The young man arrived in Paris in 1930. He made trips to Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy, where his discovery of the Primitives had a strong influence on his work, as witness his fluid, graceful lines and penchant for the mother-and-child theme. He then taught at the Hanoi school from 1933 to 1936 before returning to the French capital for the International Exhibition of 1937 (where he was the artistic director of the Indochina section) and settling there permanently. France thus played a key role in Lé Phô's career and recognition. This was also where he sold his first nine works, before 1992. The country lies second in



**€369,750**  
 "Mère et enfant", 1950, ink  
 and colours on silk with stamp.  
 Paris, Drouot, 24 October 2016,  
 Aguttes auction house.



€93,750

Five-panel screen in lacquer, showing flower beds and a plum tree against hills.

Paris, Drouot, 15 March 2010, Gros & Delettrez auction house. Mr Raindre.



terms of the number of lots proposed, behind the USA (no. 3 in terms of lots sold). And if we look at his turnover alone, France is third behind Hong Kong and China, with America in fourth place. In clearer terms, the average price of lots sold in the US is €10,000 less than those sold in France, and €40,000 less than those sold in Hong Kong.

### Market recognition

Although the artist is not often exhibited in large-scale events, he has become increasingly established in the market. Before 1997, five of his works on average came up for sale each year, with an average turnover of \$12,022. From 1997 to 2005, 44 works came up each year with an average sale price of \$556,810. After 2005, the number of works doubled to 91 lots each year, while the turnover quadrupled to \$2,323,705. This was the year when Lé Phô's price index really began to soar. In Hong Kong in November, Christie's sold "À l'approche du Têt", an ink on silk, for \$206,400 (HK\$1,912,000). Less than a month later in Paris, Aguttes knocked down a painting of a young woman for \$138,382. They were the two best bids of 2005. Lé Phô was equally at home painting on silk and in oils. The latter is also the medium that most often comes up at auction – nearly 1,200 lots to date – and represents over 80% of his output. However, the turnover for his oils is only \$18.7 M, i.e. 61.05% of the total, making an average price of just under \$20,000. Meanwhile, works on silk or paper, with only 200 lots presented at auction (14.4%), represent \$11.9 M, i.e. 38.84% of the sales total. The average price for this medium is \$70,000: three and a half times higher than for his oils. If we look at creation periods, 80% of works that come to auction are undated. However, it is note-

# \$26,552

AVERAGE PRICE for a work by Lé Phô.  
His global turnover is \$30.67 M.

worthy that the ones from between 1938 and 1940 are most prized by collectors; the 61 lots presented at auction have made a total of \$3,034,489 while the 73 lots produced between 1950 and 1960 have only garnered \$760,000. His works produced during his "classic" Vietnamese period are particularly sensitive and poetic. At the time, Lé Phò was strongly influenced by his immediate environment. Next come the paintings inspired by the Italian Primitives he discovered during his stay in Italy, in which he refined his line and used a more shimmering palette. After that, he focused almost entirely on oil painting, returning to the post-Impressionist teaching of the Hanoi school. His works of this period are bathed in an appealing light rendered with the use of a strong yellow, like "Gâteau d'anniversaire": a 1975 oil on canvas that fetched HK\$1,820,000 (\$234,817) on 25 November 2012 in Hong Kong (Christie's). Women were still his favourite subject. He portrayed them in intimate scenes, like a mother and child painted on silk in around 1940, which sold for HK\$4,880,000 (\$629,141)

on 2 October this year, again in Hong Kong (Sotheby's). As we can see, the former British colony is a solid marketplace for Lé Phò's work. With only 152 lots sold, it accounts for 27.9% of his global turnover, i.e. \$8.5M. Compared with his contemporaries, Lé Phò is still the most popular 20th century Vietnamese figurative painter. For example, Vũ Cao Đàm, who also practised sculpture, has obtained an average price per work of \$14,200, with 453 lots sold of 555 on sale. His friend Mai-Thú, whose career followed the same lines as Lé Phò's from the Indochina College of Fine Arts to the French capital, with 417 lots sold of the 519 offered at auction, has obtained total sales of \$9.45 M, i.e. an average price per work of \$22,680 (compared with \$26,552 for Lé Phò). But France occupies an even more predominant position for this painter, whose favourite subject was children: 56% of the lots proposed have come up in France. Interwar Paris was clearly the centre of modernity for young Vietnamese artists, as it was for the Chinese artists Lin Fengmian and Sanyu.

Art Analytics

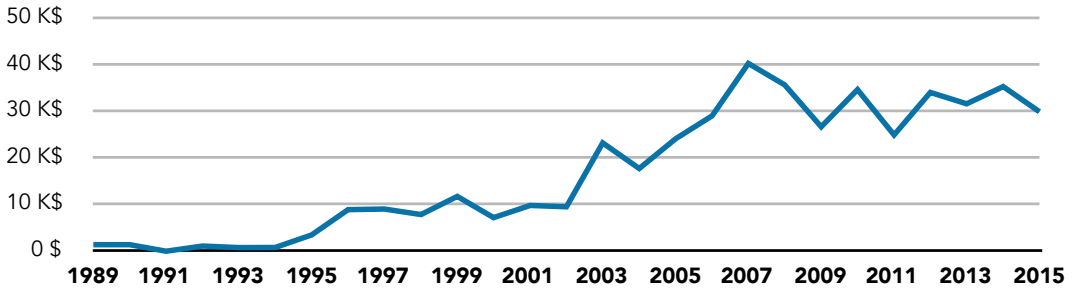
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## Lé Phò, a French passion

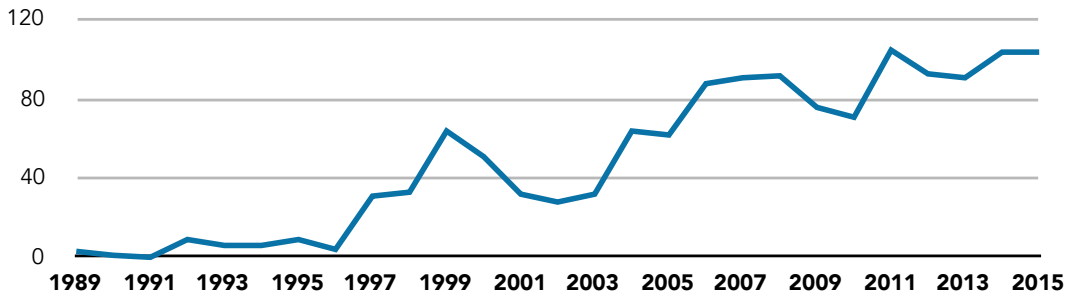
*In France, the Aguttes auction house is the leading seller of works by Lé Phò to date, with 47 lots presented (nearly 15%). With \$2,102,577 in total sales, it also boasts the best average price (\$65,705) and represents 38.06% of the French market. It is thus ahead of Piasa, which lies in second place with 6.87% of the turnover for the artist, with 12 lots presented and an average price of \$42,165. Sotheby's and Christie's are third and fourth with an average sale price of \$35,504 and \$9,026, respectively. The five top bids for Lé Phò in France are also due to Aguttes; they all went to works showing delicate young women holding a child, playing with a fan or drinking tea. It is worth noting that the only work painted in lacquer (far rarer in the market) fetched \$75,000 (hammer price) on 15 March 2010 with Gros & Delettrez. This was a five-panel screen that once belonged to Louis Marty, a top-ranking civil servant in Indochina who worked in the government of Albert Sarraut.*

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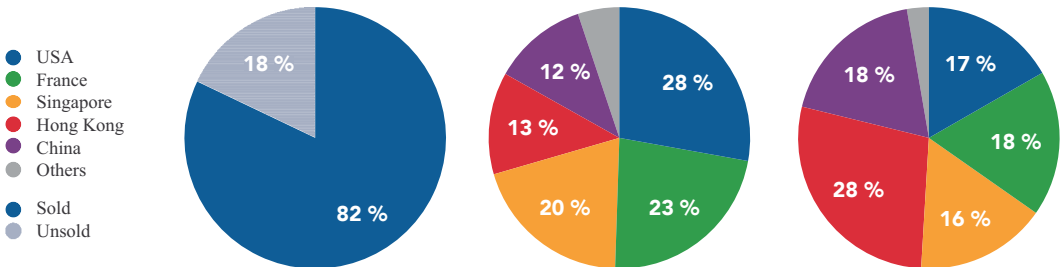




Variations in the average price per lot sold



Variations in the number of lots put up for sale



Unsold rate. Geographical breakdown of the number of lots proposed and turnover



HD



"Soundscapes - The Juilliard Experiment",  
until 11 February 2017,  
Patrick Derom Gallery, Brussels.  
[www.patrickderomgallery.com](http://www.patrickderomgallery.com)



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"Rhythms and Reflections",  
Waddington Custot, London,  
until 4 February 2017.  
[www.waddingtoncustot.com](http://www.waddingtoncustot.com)



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Fabienne Verdier  
© Atelier Fabienne Verdier

# Fabienne Verdier, poetic abstraction

A few kilometres from frenetic Paris, in a village with a touch of the English countryside, time seems to stop. The trees, decked out in their autumn colours, positively glow. This is where the French artist Fabienne Verdier decided to live and work on her return from China. A place that fits well with her painting: monumental. On the eve of her exhibition at the Waddington Custot gallery, not a canvas is in sight; only a few cases are still waiting to go to London. Half-studio, half-chapel, this ascetic space enables the artist to compose her huge paintings, many of which are now in leading collections, like those of François Pinault and Hubert Looser. Fabienne says she spends hours researching and thinking, surrounded by her books (she loves the poetry of Emily Dickinson and the writings of philosopher Gilles Deleuze) and objects that inspire her. In her library, you see a wealth of items placed meticulously on the desk, such as branches, small shells, scholar' rocks, various mosses and a Buddha. "They make up a kind of poetic inventory of the world's diverse forms," she says.

## Memories of China

Pinned to the wall is a photo evoking the years she spent at the Fine Arts Institute in Sichuan Province: years with little material comfort, but much spiritual experience. Fabienne is smiling as she poses alongside her Chinese friends. One is Zhang Xiaogang, now a painter whose works are worth millions. Fabienne was 22 when she decided to boldly uproot herself from France and go to China. The teaching at the École des Beaux-Arts in Toulouse no longer satisfied her, and she needed to confront a "radically different" pictorial approach. In the opposite direction to Zao Wou-Ki a few decades earlier, she set out for China in 1984 to seek a way of representing nature, inspired by an aesthetic and concepts thousands of years old, and light years from the West. In "The Dragon's Brush: A Journey to China in Search of a True Master", published in 2006 by Shambhala Publications, she looks back at her meeting with her master, Huang Yuan, who for nearly ten years guided her along the road to a new abstraction. She also learned from Wu Zuoren, Li Guoxiang and Lu Yanshao. Fabienne draws her strength and serenity from this long period in China.

She has learned to look at the world and take an interest in the infinitely small – the vein of a leaf – and the infinitely big – the breath of life imbuing everything. She perceives its tremblings and its powerful energy. And so she is always ready to tap into forces that become forms beneath her brush: the peaks of mountains whose immensity she loves; lightning flashes in the sky; the meandering branches of a tree; reflections in the water.

### The spirit of the form

On her return to France, Fabienne developed her own tools: large paintbrushes and oversized brushes whose weight, once impregnated with paint, forced her to think up a system of counterweights. Her work changed scale. This was when she and the architect Denis Valode designed her studio-chapel, at whose core hangs a monumental paintbrush ten metres up. Playing with the depths of gravity, it enables her to paint enormous canvases vertically. These brushes – some over a metre long – look like African masks with their long taffeta robes. We see them ritually laid down on their sides, awaiting the artist's dance... For Fabienne's painting has taken on a new rhythm in the last few years. Since she discovered the great American abstraction masters at the Fondation Hubert Looser in 2012 and the Flemish Primitive masterpieces at the Groeningemuseum in 2013, her work has changed, and so has the way we look at it. For a long time, it was seen through the prism of China alone. Now her works are found in great contemporary art museums. More recently, her experience at Juilliard in New York and her work with composers and musicians have opened up fresh perspectives: a sound space with its own rules, lines of counterpoint and harmony. "For me," she says, "the act of painting is a way of showing a world in transformation. A transformation made of energy in movement, as it becomes something else." After the "Rhythms and Reflections" inspired by her musical experience, the "Walking Paintings" continue her exploration of the energy of the line. For this series, she developed a new tool: a conical reservoir that enables her to modulate the flow of material according to her body movements, which resemble a journey over the canvas. The liquid ink delineates forms that spring up from the artist's very depths. Fabienne Verdier thus shows us the creative principle of the world, taming its apparent instability to help us inhabit it poetically.

Stéphanie Perris-Delmas



Fresco in the Palazzo Torlonia, "Opus I", 2010, acrylic paint and mixed media, 407 x 763 cm, Palazzo Torlonia collection, Rome.

Fabienne Verdier likes...

Agnes Martin for her subtle, imperceptible vibrations of light.

Jean Tinguely for his humour and limitless imagination.

Willem de Kooning for his incredible freedom.



