

APPLICAT-PRAZAN

Press release

On the occasion of its participation in

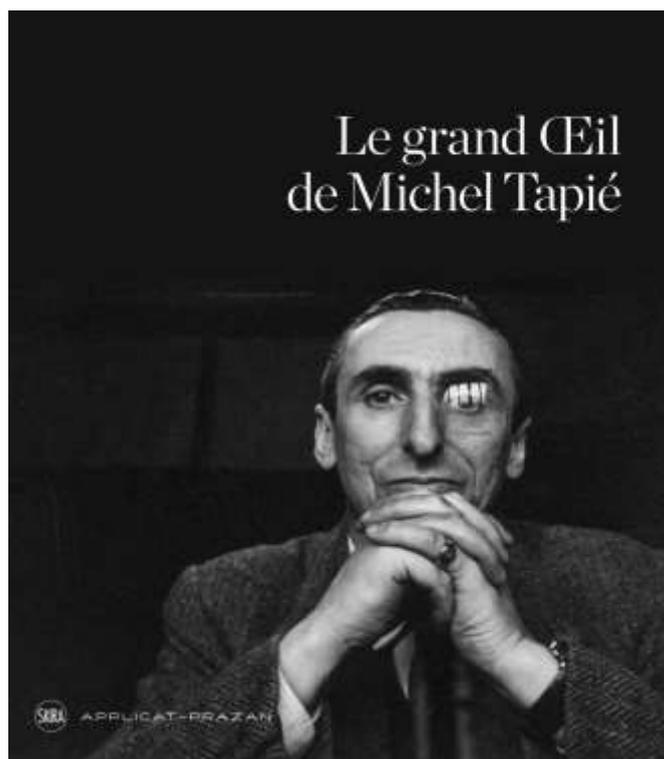


18 - 21 October 2018

then Galerie Rive gauche
27 October - 22 December 2018

Applicat-Prazan
presents

The Great Eye of Michel Tapié



« As a perfect impresario or director, he exhibited the paintings all together, confident in the exercise of his eye and of that 'something' that we call instinct, shying away from imposing too much control. »

Baptiste Brun

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In my view, the contemporary art market was invented by two principal protagonists, between whom the exceptional gallery owner René Drouin was the subliminal link. In reality, the direct relations between Leo Castelli and Michel Tapié – the two people in question – were but few and far between.

Castelli, who was briefly an associate of Drouin's, contributed considerably to the hegemonic expansion of the United States, where he arrived as a refugee at the beginning of the Second World War.

Having for a time been Drouin's artistic adviser, Tapié, for his part, laid the groundwork for a commercial system which prevailed as long as it remained at the service of artists – that is to say, until fairly recently when, by a sort of premature inversion of the norms, certain artists decided to put themselves at the service of the system.

Tapié's publication *Un art autre*, written in advance of the 1952 exhibition of the same name at the Studio Facchetti, will for all time be the manifesto of this system.

Over and above the notion of 'informel' that he theorises and which should no doubt be defined (even questioned, if we were art historians – which at the gallery we are not!), Tapié progressively a set of rules that we would today call 'marketing' - first with Drouin, then at Facchetti (Studio Facchetti), Larcade (Rive Droite Gallery) and Stadler (Stadler Gallery).

By these rules, art was destined to the international scene, where the curator was supposed to guide tastes and forge links between artists, dealers, collectors and institutions, and where publicity and public relations (underpinned by the publication of catalogues-cum-art books) and exhibition design, as well as the propagation of press articles would also serve as tools for the essentialisation of the role of the criticism as the cornerstone of the objectification of creativity revealed and therefore destined to posterity.

Objectification? I might as well confess that it was neither Tapié's critical apparatus nor his literary style that led me to foresee the project of this exhibition.

Posterity? Of the 180-strong artists said to belong to 'Tapié's stable' and identified by Juliette Evezard for her thesis,¹ many have been lost to memory. More or less than usual? I can't tell.

As for Tapié's capacity for having identified and sometimes made famous a few of the most important visual artists of the twentieth century, it seems to me that he had very few alter egos.

It is to this Tapié, to this 'Great Eye' if ever there was one, that through this (hopefully rigorous) selection of works by artists dear to us – a painter per painting – we desired to pay homage.

Franck Prazan

¹ Juliette Evezard, 'Un art autre: Le rêve de Michel Tapié de Céleyran, il profeta de l'art informel (1937–1987): Une nouvelle forme du système marchand – critique', thesis defended 16 January 2015, supervised by Th. Dufrêne, Université Paris-Ouest-Nanterre-La Défense, forthcoming.

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The man posing under the gaze of Arnold Newman in 1954, hands crossed, signet ring on finger, is an aristocrat. He is looking at the photographer, on his left eye he is wearing an eyeglass. And what an eye.....the Great Eye, that of Michel Tapié.

"Michel Tapié inspired no uncertain admiration of artists starting out on their careers, of collectors and art dealers in the early stages of their trade. It is this aura that emanated from him that led many of them to grant his 'eye' a determining power in their careers. ... » writes Juliette Evezard.

At this edition of FIAC, from the 18th to the 21st October 2018, Applicat-Prazan presents 12 historical paintings by artists who belonged to Michel Tapié's 'stable'. The exhibition will subsequently be shown at the Left Bank gallery from the 27th October through to the 22nd December 2018. This remarkable art critic was amongst the very first to spot this Art-form that was called "Autre" or different and which goes from Informal art to Gutaï.

Co-edited with Skira, the catalogue will accompany the exhibition and pays tribute to this discoverer of genius. By means of this refined selection that includes works by Appel, Wols, Dubuffet, Fautrier and Shiraga, various specialists evoke the life and choices of Michel Tapié. These include unpublished contributions by Juliette Evezard, Doctor in History of Art and well-known specialist of Tapié, Baptiste Brun, Doctor in History of Art, researcher and teacher of the history of Contemporary Art at the University of Rouen 2 and Edouard Lombard, Director of the Comité Mathieu.

Born in 1909 at the Château de Mauriac in the Tarn, Michel Tapié de Céleyran was a man of many talents. He was an art critic, a musician, a painter, sculptor, organizer of exhibitions and art theoretician. He was the instigator of a vast number of exhibitions and a valued consultant to many avant-garde galleries such as René Drouin, Nina Dausset, Paul Facchetti, Jean Larcade or Rodolphe Stadler. It was thanks to him that artists from France such as Dubuffet, Mathieu, Fautrier, Hartung, Michaux, Riopelle, Francis, Wols and artists from abroad such as Pollock, De Kooning and Hofmann came to be recognized. An authentic "discoverer", he by no means limited himself exclusively to the Parisian art scene. As early as 1957, he turned his attention to creation in other parts of the world such as Japan where he met Gutaï. There he discovered a radical form of expression that touched him profoundly. His incessant quest for new territories of art-form took him to Spain and the work of Tapiés, Italy and the work of Fontana, Burri and Accardi, and to push back the frontiers of "classicism" by dedicating a series of exhibitions to Asian and Iranian artists in the 1970's. Michel Tapié died in Paris in 1987.

In December 1952, Michel Tapié published a book or manifesto entitled *Un art autre* on the occasion of an exhibition held at the Studio Facchetti. In this publication, which remains to date a reference of Art History, Tapié presents Georges Mathieu together with Pollock, Sam Francis, Dubuffet, Soulages, Hartung, Wols, Michaux, Riopelle, Fautrier and Appel.

We have not considered the year 1952 to be a goal to reach in our gathering but rather a pivotal year. Each work selected illustrates the creative zenith of each artist.

A work by Wols dated 1946-1947 opens the selection. This oil on canvas *Untitled* (known as *Tête rouge et blanc* or *Lazard*) comes from the Galerie Edouard Loeb - Jacques Lazard in Paris. The father of what is known as Tachisme in France, the better part of Wols' production was concentrated between 1946 and 1951. Georges Mathieu who visited the first exhibition of Wols in May 1947 at the Galerie Drouin later wrote to what extent he was profoundly overwhelmed at the sight of these works. In this painting the red highlights are particularly spectacular. Wols went on to abandon dreamt images for an informal and hitherto absolutely unknown realm of painting.

Composition (Limbe), 1948 by Georges Mathieu is quite typical of the early creations of the Artist who declared: *"The world in general sees only the appearance of things, deliberately ignoring*

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criteria of authenticity, and finds itself entirely incapable of distinguishing between art and non-art."

Without resorting to conceptual, formal or meaningful art, Mathieu discovers a new artistic form which leads him to *abstraction lyrique*: « *Freedom is the void* » wrote Mathieu in the HWPSMTB exhibition catalogue. This exhibition presented in 1948 at the galerie Colette Allendy marked the official beginning of the informal art movement.

A matter-painting on canvas by Jean Dubuffet called *Mirobolus blanc*, 1945-46 is striking by its sheer matter and audacity. Shown for the first time at the exhibition entitled *Mirobolus, Macadam et Cie, Hautes Pâtes*, presented in Paris in 1946, this work was reproduced in the catalogue of the time written by Michel Tapié. « *His quest for violent power, detached from any effect of colour, rapidly led him to do violence to the material itself, to the usual habits in relation to material; the use of unusual materials, whose provocative appearance which, beneath a sordid mask, yielded up to those who know how to go beyond and to see the reality and the secrets of a skilful elaboration in which the most concentrated power in no way excludes an extremely profound refinement, results in this stupefying series of hautes-pâtes.*»

An outstanding *Tête d'otage* dated 1944 by Jean Fautrier is a centrepiece of the exhibition. In 1945 the galerie René Drouin presented the *Otages* series which were a violent indictment of the massacres and crimes of the Germans during the Second World War. The works reveal a reality beyond simple appearances. Michel Tapié wrote "It is impossible to remain indifferent before these paintings charged with the highest incantatory tragedy and the least decipherable but the most endless expressivity. And yet here, there is no longer any problem with drawing, composition, agreements of tone, or any other of the accepted pictorial certainties: people in the trade were sceptical..."

Painted in 1952, the year of Michel Tapié's manifesto on informal painting, *L'enfant au cheval de bois* is a key work which illustrates Appel's virtuosity at its culmination. "The first stage, red and yellow is always beautiful... This is when I try to control the validity that a cruel dialectic opens up. Doubt is born from antagonism. A painting is not the result of systematic research but of an experience full of anxiety" Karel Appel resumed.

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Images available



Wols (Alfred Otto Wolfgang Schulze) (1913 - 1951)

Untitled (known as Tête rouge et blanc or Lazard), 1946-1947

Oil on canvas

Signed bottom to the right

41 x 33 cm

Provenance:

Galerie Edouard Loeb - Jacques Lazard, Paris

Galerie Rudolf Zwirner, Cologne

Private European Collection (acquired from previous owner in 1982)

Exhibited:

London, Institute of Contemporary Arts, Wols, 23 June – 13 July 1957, cat. n° 37

Frankfurt am Main, Frankfurter Kunstverein Steinernes Haus, Wols, Gemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen, Fotos , 20 Nov. 1965 – 2 Jan. 1966, cat. n° 7, ill.

Berlin, Nationalgalerie, Staatlich Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Wols, Gemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen, 13 Sep. – 5 Nov. 1973, cat. n° 1, ill. p. 96, p. 45

Cologne, Galerie Karsten Greve, Wols, 24 Apr. – 27 June 1998, cat., ill. p. 36-37

London, Royal Academy of Arts, 26 Jan. – 19 Apr. 2002; Bilbao, Guggenheim Museum, 21 May – 3 Sept. 2002; Paris: Capital of the Arts 1900 – 1968, cat. n° 169, ill. f/p. col. p. 276

Literature:

Claire van Damme, Wols: biografische documenten, Vol. 1, Drukkerij Goff, 1985, n° 404

Hans-Joachim Petersen, Wols, das Werkverzeichnis der Gemälde, 2010, n° 17

Wols, Das große Mysterium, Wiesbaden, Museum Wiesbaden, 17 Oct. 2013 – 26 Jan. 2014, ill. p. 77

Certificate of Dr. Ewald Rathke, dated 23 May 2017



Georges MATHIEU (1921 - 2012)

Composition (Limbe), 1948

Oil on canvas

Signed lower right

96 x 96 cm

Provenance:

Former collection Beracasa, Caracas

This work will be included in the forthcoming catalogue raisonné of the artist's work being prepared by Mr Édouard Lombard

Certificate of the Comité Georges Mathieu, no. GM40002 dated 21 September 2015

"At the time, nobody in Paris had yet heard the name Pollock nor of De Kooning or Tobey. I was the first person to mention them to Estienne, Jaguar, Guilly and Tapié. Parisian critical circles, which were a long way away from being aware of the existence of new trends of painting in France, did not of course suspect for a moment that their equivalents existed in America where, for the first time in 300 years, we were witnessing the birth of a truly autonomous American art.

So at the beginning of August [1948], I wrote to various New York galleries asking them to send by air, drawings and gouaches. The exhibition was to take place at the Galerie du Montparnasse, a bookshop which had just been transformed into a gallery and was run by a woman, Gilberte Sollacaro. When the list was drawn up, it consisted of Bryen, De Kooning, Gorky, Hartung, Mathieu, Picabia, Pollock, Reinhardt, Rothko, Russel, Sauer, Tobey, and Wols."

Georges Mathieu



Jean DUBUFFET (1901 - 1985)

Mirobolus blanc, 1945-46
Haute-pâte on canvas
Signed and dated on the reverse
46 x 38 cm

Provenance:

Galerie René Drouin, Paris
Collection Alfonso Ossorio and Edward Dragon, East Hampton
The Pace Gallery, New York
Collection John N. and Dodie Rosekrans, San Francisco

Exhibited:

Paris, Galerie René Drouin, *Mirobolus*, Macadam & Cie, Hautes Pâtes de Jean Dubuffet, May - June 1946, cat. n° 29, ill. p. 2
Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, *Jean Dubuffet 1942 - 1960*, Dec. 1960 - Feb. 1961, cat. n° 26
New York, The Pace Gallery, *Jean Dubuffet: A Retrospective*, Apr. - May 1987
Washington, D.C., Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, *Jean Dubuffet 1943 - 1963: Paintings, Sculptures, Assemblages*, June - Sept. 1993, cat. n° 14, ill. col. p. 57

Literature:

Michel Tapié, *Mirobolus*, Macadam et Cie, Hautes Pâtes, Paris, 1946, ill. p. 33
Max Loreau, *Catalogue des travaux de Jean Dubuffet*, fascicule II: *Mirobolus*, Macadam & Cie, Jean-Jacques Pauvert Editeur, 1966, n° 96, ill. p. 66
Mildred Glimcher, *Jean Dubuffet: towards an alternative reality*, New York, 1987, ill. col. p. 61
Munich, Villa Stuck, *Am Anfang war das Bild*, 1990, cat., ill. p. 166



Jean FAUTRIER (1898 - 1964)

Tête d'otage n° 4, 1944
Oil on paper mounted on canvas
Signed and dated lower right
45,7 x 55,4 cm

Exhibited:

Paris, Galerie René Drouin, *Les Otages, Peintures et Sculptures de Jean Fautrier*, 26 Oct. - 17 Nov. 1945, n° 4
Martigny, Fondation Pierre Gianadda, *Jean Fautrier*, 17 Dec. 2004 - 13 March 2005, cat., ill. col. p. 99 n° 43
Paris, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, *Jean Fautrier, Matière et Lumière*, 26 Jan. - 20 May 2018, cat n° 68, ill. f/p. col. p. 128

Literature:

Palma Bucarelli, *Jean Fautrier*, *Catalogo delle Opere*, Milan, 1960, ill. p. 316 n° 156
Yves Peyré, *Fautrier ou les outrages de l'impossible*, Editions du

Regard, Paris, 1990, ill. f/p. col. p.177

Connaissance des Arts, Hors-série n° 793 devoted to the exhibition Jean Fautrier, Matière et Lumière at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 26 Jan. – 20 May 2018, Jan. 2018, ill. on the cover

Etienne David, La représentation des traumatismes de la Seconde Guerre mondiale à travers le cycle « Nous ne sommes pas les derniers » de Zoran Music et la série « Otages » de Jean Fautrier, Thèse de doctorat under the direction of Mr. Pascal Bonafoux, Professeur émérite d'esthétique et d'histoire de l'art, Université Paris VIII, Vincennes-Saint-Denis, Ecole Doctorale Esthétique, Sciences et Technologie des Arts, Vol. II, Recueil Jean Fautrier, Otages, n° 62, rep. p. 39

Three prints were executed after this work, including L'Otage aux mains I, etching, aquatint and colour embossing on old Japanese paper, 208 x 293 mm, Engelberts 1944/8, ill. n° 251 II p. 125, in Rainer Michael Mason, Jean Fautrier, Les estampes, Cabinet des Estampes, Tendances Gallery, Geneva/Paris 1986.

This painting will be included in the forthcoming catalogue raisonné of the artist's work being prepared by Mrs. Marie-José Lefort.

The proof numbered XI/XXV in the bottom left margin, signed in the bottom right margin, provides a graceful accompaniment to this painting.



Karel APPEL (1921 - 2006)

L'enfant au cheval de bois, 1952

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated lower right

130 x 115 cm

Provenance :

Private Collection, Switzerland

Literature:

Peter Bellew, Karel Appel, Le Grandi Monografie, Pittori d'Oggi, Fratelli Fabbri Editori, Milan 1968, p. 69 (entitled La cavalière)

Michel Ragon, Karel Appel, Peinture 1937 – 1957, éditions Galilée, Paris 1988, n° 689, ill. f/p. col. p. 387

Certificate from the Karel Appel Foundation number 1701X52 dated 6 February 2017.

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APPLICAT-PRAZAN: History

Bernard Prazan, an art-collector of long standing, founded his first gallery in 1989. Since its inception Applicat-Prazan specialises exclusively in top quality paintings by:

Jean-Michel Atlan, Karel Appel, Jean Dubuffet, Maurice Estève, Jean Fautrier, Hans Hartung, Auguste Herbin, Jean Hélion, Asger Jorn, Wifredo Lam, André Lansky, Alberto Magnelli, Alfred Manessier, André Masson, Georges Mathieu, Serge Poliakoff, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Gérard Schneider, Pierre Soulages, Nicolas de Staël, Victor Vasarely, Bram van Velde, Geer van Velde, Maria Elena Vieira da Silva, Wols, or Zao Wou-Ki.

In 2004 Bernard's son, Franck Prazan, took over the management of the gallery. Franck was formerly Managing Director of Christie's and was responsible for its move to Avenue Matignon in Paris, overseeing its development from a simple representative office to a fully-fledged auction house.

Applicat-Prazan's philosophy is as follows:

- **Hyper-specialization** which has led the gallery to concentrate uniquely on European Post-war and on the most significant Artists of this period
- **Hyper-selectivity** – confining the gallery's choice of paintings to those we judge to be the most qualitative
- A policy specifically adapted to the **private collector** who by definition takes a **long term view** of things, smoothing out the effects of speculation.

Certain paintings are particularly worthy of note these last few years. For example:



Nicolas de Staël
La Table de l'Artiste, 1954
89 x 116 cm
Biennale 2008



Jean-Paul Riopelle
Hommage à Robert le Diabolique
1953, 200 x 282 cm
Tefaf 2010



Hans Hartung
T 1938-11, 1938
102 x 80 cm
Fiac 2010



Pierre Soulages
Peinture 195 x 130 cm,
1^{er} sept. 1957
Fiac 2009



Nicolas de Staël
Agrigente, 1954
60 x 81 cm
Tefaf 2015



Jean Dubuffet
Epoux en visite, 1964
200 x 150 cm
Biennale 2010

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The "Schneider, Oeuvres majeures autour d'un tableau d'exception" exhibition, shown at the FIAC in 2006 enjoyed great success. In May 2007 Applicat-Prazan showed at the gallery "Mes Années 50, Collection Alain Delon". The subtle palette of a great artist, Geer van Velde, was on display in September 2007 at "Presence, silences, hommage à Geer van Velde". In April-May 2008 the *Poliakoff* exhibition marked a milestone for the artist's career in the international art market, as was the *Atlan* exhibition organised from October to December 2008 concurrently with an exhibition at the Centre Pompidou of a gift to the nation of works by the same artist. *Dialogues I Autour de Pierre Soulages*, October to December 2009, marked an important chapter in the life of the gallery. The monographic exhibitions *Pincemin* and *Fautrier* in October 2010, followed by *Alfred Manessier: Tours, Favellas and other monumental works*, in 2012 certainly made a deep impression. Still in 2012, our exhibition of *Masson, 1934 - 1944* at Art Basel revealed a fresh interpretation of the talent of this great surrealist, the key to all post-war abstract expressionism. In 2013, our *Tribute to Maurice Estève* attracted many collectors at the Salon du Dessin in Paris. In 2013 the *Serge Poliakoff* exhibition at the FIAC was a resounding success, and the 2014 FIAC saw the opening of our exhibition of 16 major works in *Georges Mathieu - Peintures 1948-1959* which met with great interest and approval from the public and the media. At Fiac 2015, the gallery exhibited a selection of 24 paintings by Maurice Estève from 1929 to 1994. In 2016, the gallery showed two series of works by Zoran Music: « *We are not the last* » and large self-portraits of the 1990's.

Applicat-Prazan exhibits at **Tefaf Maastricht, Art Basel Hong Kong, Tefaf New York Spring, Art Basel (Basel), Frieze Masters, FIAC** and **Art Basel Miami Beach**.

In 2017, Applicat-Prazan had the honour of being appointed by **MoMA** to accompany the Museum in the de-accessioning of 2 paintings.

Applicat-Prazan is located on the Left Bank at 16 Rue de Seine in the very heart of the art gallery district of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. The end of 2010 saw the opening of a second address strategic to the Paris art market on the Right Bank at 14 Avenue Matignon.

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