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A World of Threads

Tapestries of the Modern Age

MdbK

A Woven World

The act of spinning threads and interweaving them belongs among the earliest cultural techniques of humankind. Equally ancient is the use of textiles as a means of artistic expression. Particularly the tapestry – rich in color and monumental in presence – has long been esteemed for its representative character. Owing to the complexity of its production, it has always been regarded as a precious and highly valued art form. Tapestries, with their impressive scale, served a wide range of functions: they adorned large halls, churches, princely residences, public buildings, and bourgeois interiors alike. Despite their size, however, these so-called Gobelins are remarkably mobile. They can be rolled up, transported with relative ease, and displayed anew in different settings. The designs for such works – the so-called cartoons – were often commissioned from renowned artists, while their execution was entrusted to master weavers working in highly specialised manufactories. What surprising effects, then, arise when modernist classics are translated into this venerable textile medium? And what specific, perhaps even contentious, potentials does it open up for contemporary artistic production?

Contents / Quick Search

Seite Artist Image number

-1 Untergeschoss

11	Sonia Delaunay	1
14	Henri Matisse	2
17	Raoul Dufy	3
20	Fernand Léger	4
23	Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret)	5
26	Pablo Picasso	6 → 7
31	Eduardo Chillida	8
34	Brassaï (Gyula Halász)	9
37	Max Ernst	10
40	Henri Matisse	11
44	Victor Vasarely	12
47	Joan Miró	13 → 15
54	ORLAN (Mireille Porte)	16

Contents / Quick Search

Page	Artist	Image number
------	--------	--------------

-1 Basement

57	Louise Bourgeois	17
----	------------------	----

60	Alexander Calder	18
----	------------------	----

63	Wassily Kandinsky	19
----	-------------------	----

66	André Derain	20
----	--------------	----

71	Hans Hartung	21
----	--------------	----

74	Pierre Soulages	22
----	-----------------	----

77	André Borderie	23
----	----------------	----

80	Maria Helena Vieira da Silva	24
----	------------------------------	----

83	Alicia Penalba	25
----	----------------	----

86	Paris (auch: Velu) Viswanadhan	26
----	-----------------------------------	----

89	Monique Frydman	27
----	-----------------	----

Contents / Quick Search

Page	Artist	Image number
------	--------	--------------

1 First Floor

95	Charles Le Brun	28
----	-----------------	----

98	Amédée Couder	29
----	---------------	----

101	Francisco de Goya	30
-----	-------------------	----

104	Margret Eicher	31
-----	----------------	----

2 Second Floor

110	Unbekannte Manufaktur, südliche Niederlande	32
-----	--	----

113	Fanja Bouts	33
-----	-------------	----

3 Third Floor

121	Jean Lurçat	34
-----	-------------	----

124	Rosemarie Rataiczky / Werner Rataiczky	35
-----	---	----

127	Willi Sitte	36
-----	-------------	----

130	Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt	37
-----	---------------------------	----

Contents / Quick Search

Page	Artist	Image number
------	--------	--------------

3 Third Floor

133	Fern Liberty Kallenbach Campbell	38
-----	-------------------------------------	----

138	Tania Mouraud	39
-----	---------------	----

141	Roberto Antonio Sebastián Matta	40
-----	------------------------------------	----

144	Yi Ũng-No (auch: Lee Ungno)	41
-----	--------------------------------	----

147	Jana Sterbak	42
-----	--------------	----

150	Pierre Buraglio	43
-----	-----------------	----

153	David Boeno	44
-----	-------------	----

156	Allan Porter	45
-----	--------------	----

159	Jochen Gerz	46
-----	-------------	----

162	Antonia Artemis Torti	47
-----	-----------------------	----

165	François Boisrond	48
-----	-------------------	----

168	Pierre Alechinsky	49
-----	-------------------	----

Tour of the Exhibition

The exhibition presents a selection of approximately fifty tapestries of the Modern Age, alongside carefully chosen works from earlier periods. It highlights the remarkable aesthetic range of this world made of threads.

The tour of the exhibition spans all four floors of the MdbK:

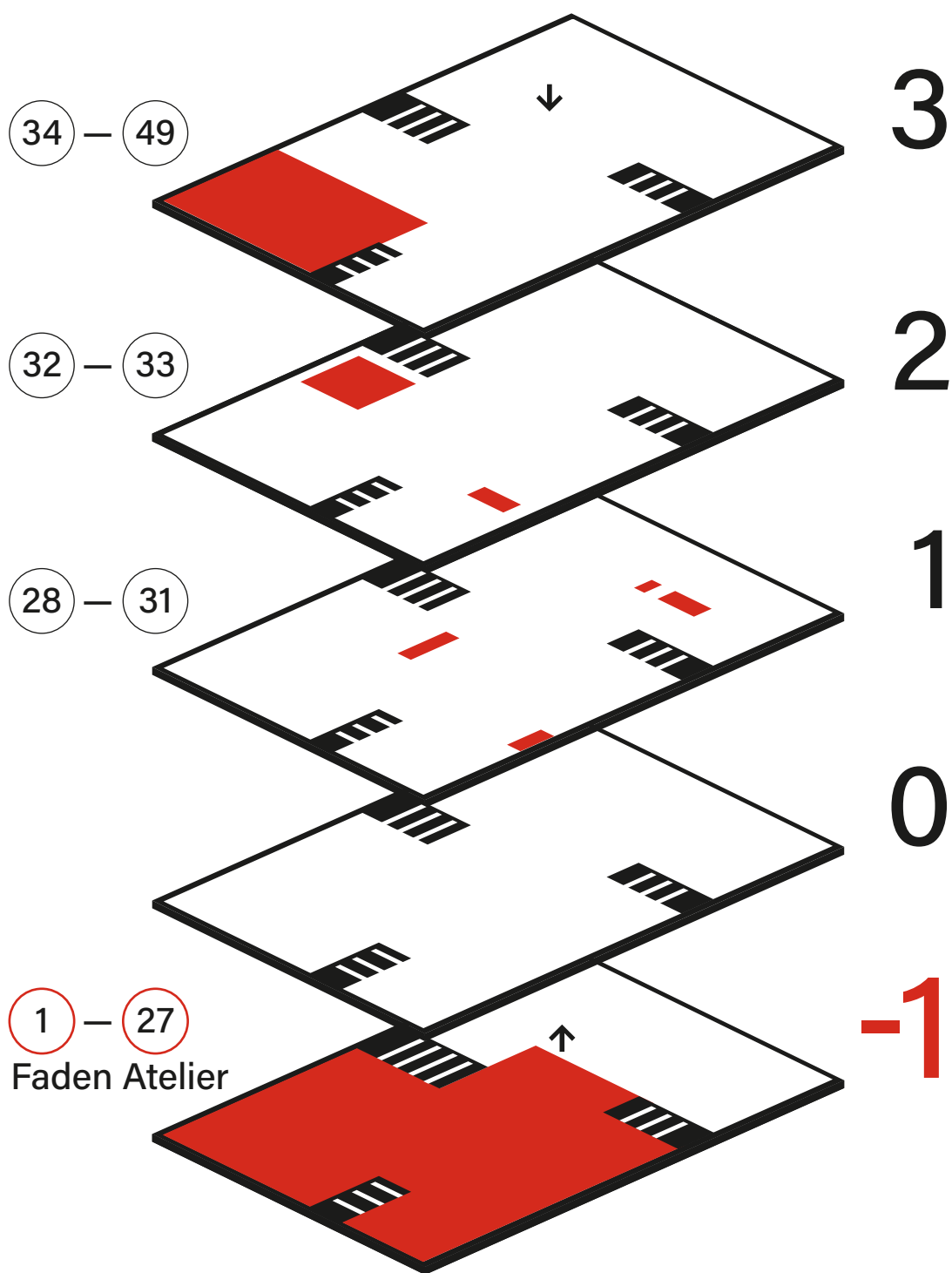
-1 It begins here in the basement with outstanding representatives of Classical Modernism. In the »Faden Atelier« you can sew, braid, weave, and crochet. Experience the great community project »Millefleurs. A part of me is sprouting«.

1 On the first floor, visitors can study the grandeur of royal tapestry manufacturers of the Baroque period, which is juxtaposed with Margret Eicher's provocative, female perspective from the twenty-first century.

2 The second floor continues the historical overview of the medium, featuring its medieval origins in the form of a Millefleurs tapestry. On the museum terrace, Fanja Bouts, a contemporary textile artist from the Netherlands, further envisions a map of the future.

3 On the third floor, the focus initially shifts to local tapestry production in Halle (Saale) during the GDR era, notably influenced by French models.

-1 Basement



Tapestries of the Modern Age

The exhibition opens with a presentation of major figures of Classical Modernism, including Sonia Delaunay, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger, and others. The textile works based on their designs illustrate both the universality and the expressive potential of the tapestry medium. Through the expertise of dyers and weavers, images were transposed into another material and scale, allowing motifs and compositions originally conceived as paintings, drawings, collages, or photographs to enter the realm of textile art.

A small gouache study by Sonia Delaunay provided the basis for a monumental tapestry that powerfully conveys the compositional and painterly qualities of the original. Similarly, a tapestry after a drawing by the sculptor Eduardo Chillida translates his sculptural ideas that otherwise took form in three dimensions. For a work nearly four meters in length, Brassai created a photographic collage of some twenty motifs. The tapestry »The Creation of the World« preserves the monumentality and dramatic contrasts of the original stage design.

Sonia Delaunay

(Hradysk 1885 — 1979 Paris)

Ukrainian-French painter and designer; trained in St. Petersburg and at the Women's Painting School in Karlsruhe (1904). A leading figure of the French avant-garde and an important exponent of so-called geometric abstraction. Her creative focus was based in Paris, where she pursued new forms of non-representational painting. She was strongly influenced by the color theory of the French chemist and first head of the dye workshop at the Manufacture des Gobelins, Michel Eugène Chevreul (known as Simultanism).



FR **Rythmes couleurs ou
Panneau F 1898**

EN **Color Rhythms or Panel
F 1898**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1975
(Design 1973 [GBA 117]: Gouache on Paper,
56 × 76 cm)
Wool, woven
260 × 343 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 270)

As a painter, Delaunay developed a novel synthesis of color values and geometry. She produced compositions in which shapes appear to interpenetrate. This carpet serves as a typical example of such work. The surface is divided both into rectangles and circular segments, while the interplay between color fields and linear patterns creates an impression of rhythmic movement. The tapestry effectively conveys the painterly quality of the small-scale gouache design through its fine weaving structure. Working with textile materials was of great importance to Sonia Delaunay; throughout her life, she designed patterns for fabrics, umbrellas, cushion covers, and theatrical costumes.

LITERATURE

Sonia Delaunays Welt der Kunst, hg. von Jutta Hülsewig-Johnen
(Ausst. Kat. Kunsthalle Bielefeld 2008), Bielefeld 2008, S. 9–47.

Henri Matisse

(Le Cateau-Cambrésis 1869 — 1954 Cimiez/Nizza)

Born into a middle-class family in northern France. 1887—89 studied law, then worked in a lawyer's office. Began painting in 1890. In 1895 entered the École des Beaux-Arts under Gustave Moreau. From 1905 co-founder of Fauvism. 1908—11 founded the Académie Matisse. Worked in oil painting, drawing, and printmaking; later also in the cut-out technique, known as gouaches découpées. His style is marked by expressive color, simplified forms, and clear, decorative composition. Like Picasso, regarded as a central pioneer of modern art.



FR **La femme au luth**
EN **Woman with a Lute**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1949
(based on a painting dated 1943)
Wool, woven
165 × 220 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 899)

Commissioned by the Mobilier national, Matisse was to select a painting as the model for this tapestry. He chose »The Lute«, one of his most recent works, completed in 1943. The theme of a woman with a musical instrument was a familiar one in traditional tapestry design. To adapt the painting for weaving, the composition was photographically enlarged to three times its original size and then carefully reworked by the artist: the wall and floor patterns were simplified and pared down, while he introduced a discreet border of interlacing, wave-like lines – a decorative motif that alludes to the tradition of tapestry art.

LITERATURE

John Klein, Matisse and Decoration, New Haven / London 2018.

Raoul Dufy

(Le Havre 1877 — 1953 Forcalquier)

French painter and designer from a middle-class background. First evening courses at the art school in Le Havre. 1895 city scholarship for the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. From 1900 fabric and ornament designs for Paul Poiret's fashion house. Also worked with ceramics. From the 1920s active as a painter. Initially influenced by Fauvism, later developed a visual language combining decorative elements with currents of modern painting. Renowned for his vibrant, life-affirming use of color. Major works include *La Fée Électricité* (The Electricity Fairy, 1937), a mural for the Paris World's Fair.



FR **Coquillages au bord
de la mer**
EN **Seashells by the Shore**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1966
(based on a painting dated 1925)
Wool and silk, woven
253 × 154 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 132)

The French artist and designer Raoul Dufy is regarded as a master of colorful lightness and a pioneer in the synthesis of painting and design. This tapestry, based on a 1925 painting, depicts the sea as its central motif, a recurring theme in his work. Clear blue sky, shimmering frothy waves, and sculptural shells suggest the sea as a vital, timeless force. The design recalls textile patterns and highlights Dufy's blend of painting and decorative art.

LITERATURE

Jean Forneris, Raoul Dufy 1877–1953 (Ausst. Kat. Kunsthaus Wien 1996), München 1996.

Fernand Léger

(Argentan 1881—1955 Gif-sur-Yvette)

Born into a farming family in Normandy. Studied architecture in Caen, 1897—99. Moved to Paris in 1900, worked in an architect's office, and attended courses at the École des Arts Décoratifs. Established himself as a painter at the age of 25. In 1909 joined Cubism, focusing on social and industrial themes. Served two years at the front during the First World War. In 1940 emigrated to the United States after the German occupation of Paris, teaching at Yale University, New Haven. Returned in 1945, joining the Communist Party. In 1946 commissioned to create a mosaic for the church of Notre-Dame de Toute Grâce (Plateau d'Assy). His work ranged from painting and ceramics to book illustration, theater, and film.



FR **La Création du monde**
EN **The Creation of the World**

Atelier Tabard, Aubusson, 1962

(Design 1923)

Wool, woven

285 × 396 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (FADT 21066)

This tapestry is based on a 1923 stage design by the French artist Fernand Léger for the ballet »La Création du monde« (»The Creation of the World«). The libretto was inspired by the creation myths of the Fang people. In the 1920s, the influence of African art in Paris reached its peak and shaped art, music, and design. The three deities Nazme, Medre, and N'kva are depicted in a composition of geometric forms that, characteristic of Léger's work, merge with natural elements. For his figures, the artist is thought to have drawn on several African sculptures as models.

LITERATURE

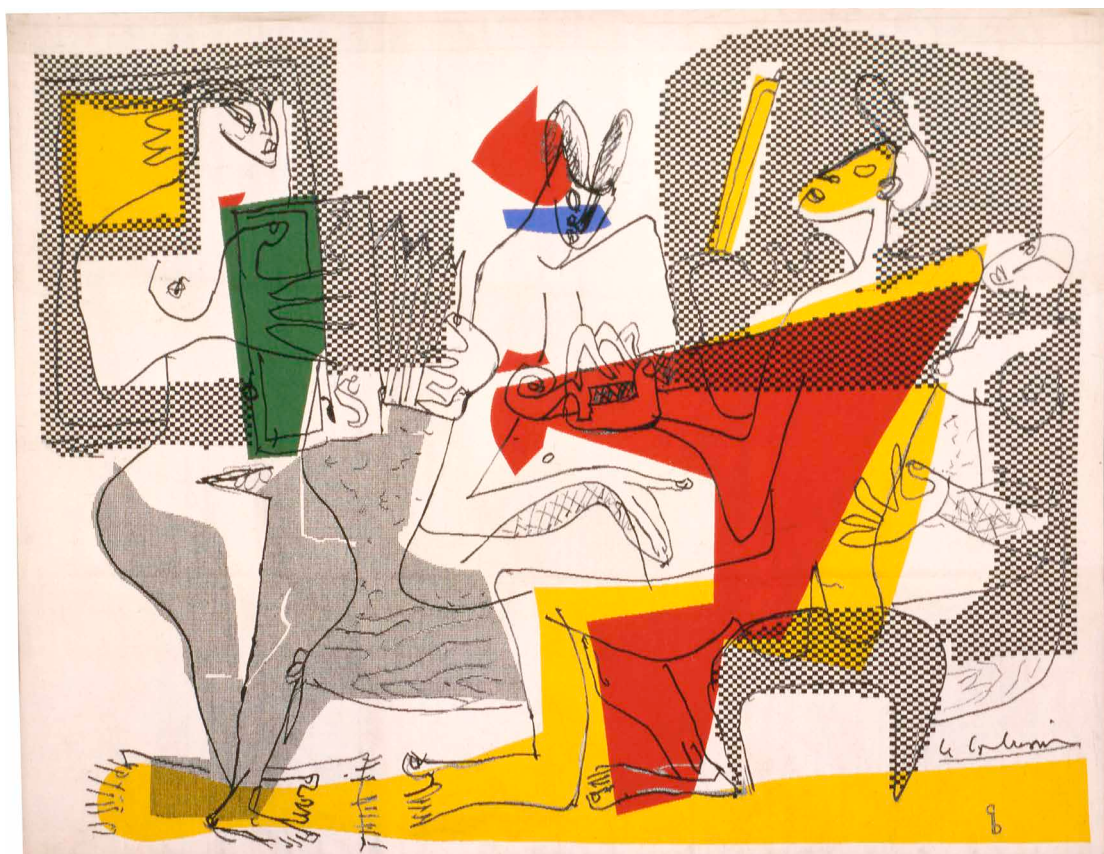
Katia Baudin, Fernand Léger: Malerei im Raum, München 2016.

Le Corbusier

(Charles-Édouard Jeanneret)

(La Chaux-de-Fonds 1887 —
1965 Roquebrune-Cap-Martin)

French architect, designer, and artist of Swiss origin. A pioneer of modernism and functionalism, yet controversial for his urban utopias and his association with the Vichy regime. From 1900 studied at the School of Applied Arts in La Chaux-de-Fonds. 1907 — 11 study trips across Europe. Settled in Paris in 1917, active worldwide as an urban planner from 1929. His visions included large-scale functional »living machines« and ambitious urban projects, such as the Plan Voisin (1925) for the redesign of central Paris. Religious buildings include the chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut in Ronchamp (1950 — 55) and the Dominican convent Sainte-Marie de La Tourette near Lyon (1956 — 60).



FR **Bogotá**
EN **Bogotá**

Atelier Brivet, 1968

(based on a collage dated 1950)

Wool, woven

192 × 253 cm

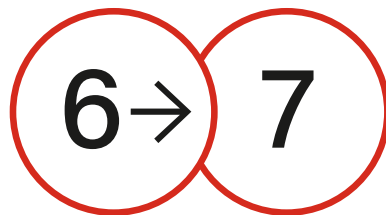
Mobilier national, Paris (GMTT 1016)

In the late 1940s, Le Corbusier was invited to design an urban development plan for Bogotá, the Colombian capital. While there, he produced numerous urban sketches, including a small-scale collage from 1950 titled »Boredom Rules Outside!« which served as the model for this tapestry.

The composition shows four figures – presumably musicians – sketched with fine lines over geometrically arranged areas of color. The clear structure on a white background lends the work a feeling of lightness and movement. From 1948 onward, Le Corbusier also developed the concept of the »Muralnomad«: tapestries that could be removed, rolled up, and easily reinstalled in another location.

LITERATURE

Le Corbusier Secret, hg. von Erika Billeter, Bern 1987.



Pablo Picasso

(Málaga 1881— 1973 Mougins)

At the age of seven, Picasso, the son of a painter, began painting under his father's guidance.

At fourteen admitted to the Academy of Fine Arts in Barcelona, later studied in Madrid. 1904 moved to Paris, where he spent most of his life. First gained recognition for his »Blue Period«, marked by melancholy figures in shades of blue, and his »Rose Period«, with circus motifs in pastel colors. Together with Georges Braque, he developed Cubism. Active in painting, sculpture, printmaking, and ceramics. Among his most famous works is »Guernica« (1937), a symbol of the horrors of war.



FR **Essai (noir et blanc) pour
»Femmes à leur toilette«**

EN **Woven Sample (Black
and White) for »Women
at Their Toilet«**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1969
(based on a collage dated 1937/38)
Wool, woven
110 × 110 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1183)

This woven sample is a fragment of the large-scale tapestry »Women at Their Toilette«. Its design is based on a paper collage created by Picasso in 1937/38 on commission from Marie Cuttoli for execution in tapestry technique. Between 1968 and 1977, a total of four versions were woven: two in color and two in black and white. The production of the large color version required 89 different colors of yarn, while 12 were used for the black-and-white variant. The depicted figure is believed to be Olga Khokhlova – Picasso's first wife, a dancer with Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, and the mother of his first son, Paulo.

LITERATURE

K. L. H. Wells, *Weaving Modernism. Postwar Tapestry Between Paris and New York*, New Haven/London 2019.



FR **Essai (en couleur) pour
»Femmes à leur toilette«**
EN **Woven Sample (in Color)
for »Women at Their
Toilet«**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1969

Wool, woven

58 × 60 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1297)

This fragment is also part of the large-scale tapestry »Women at Their Toilette«, completed in the 1970s. Its design is based on a cartoon that Picasso created in 1937/38 using the collage technique. The textile version reproduces the intricate details of the original collage with remarkable precision. The depicted head has been interpreted as a self-portrait of Picasso. He likely portrayed himself as a reflection, surrounded by three significant women in his life: Dora Maar, Marie-Thérèse Walter, and Olga Khokhlova.

LITERATURE

K. L. H. Wells, *Weaving Modernism. Postwar Tapestry Between Paris and New York*, New Haven/London 2019.

Eduardo Chillida

(San Sebastián 1924— 2002 San Sebastián)

Coming from a well-to-do background, Chillida received a broad education. In 1947, after abandoning his architectural studies, he turned to art. A stay in Paris in 1950 left a lasting impression, but it was only after his return to Spain that he developed his own artistic language. Through monumental sculptures in iron, steel, and stone, he explored space, emptiness, and mass. Also active as a printmaker and book illustrator, he is regarded as one of Europe's most important abstract sculptors in public space.



ES **Homenaje a Paris**
EN **Homage to Paris**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2001
(Design 1986 [GBA 308]: Gouache and ink
on Mexican paper, 24 × 41 cm)
Wool, woven
240 × 405 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 451)

The Spanish-Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida, renowned for his monumental works, uses this tapestry to investigate the creative possibilities of the medium for expressing his sculptural ideas. The black form appears to float, almost bodiless – interrupted by precise incisions that open the surface and extend it into space. Here, the tapestry is more than a support for an image; it becomes a spatial structure alive with tension. Chillida employs the medium to explore contrasts – between material and absence, line and plane, density and emptiness.

LITERATURE

Friedhelm Mennekes, Eduardo Chillida. Kreuz und Raum, München 2001.

Brassaï (Gyula Halász)

(Brassó 1899 — 1984 Beaulieu-sur-Mer)

Gyula Halász, later known as Brassaï, was born in Brassó (today Braşov, Romania; then part of Austria-Hungary). His father was a professor of French literature. After studying painting at the Academies of Fine Arts in Budapest and Berlin, he moved to Paris in 1924, working first as a journalist and later as a photographer. In 1932 he adopted the artist's name Brassaï. His first photobook, *Paris de Nuit*, was published in 1933. The nocturnal city – ranging from street scenes to intimate moments in its shadows – became the central theme of his work. He also produced renowned portraits of Picasso, Dalí, Matisse, and Giacometti.



FR Graffiti
EN Graffiti

Unknown manufactory, 1971

Wool, woven

204 × 381,5 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GMTT 1043)

By the mid-1950s, the Hungarian-born French photographer Brassai had spent years recording wall carvings and scribbles – so-called »graffiti« – encountered on his walks through Paris. This body of work became a visual archive of urban signs and symbols, capturing the anonymous imagery of city dwellers in its rawness and diversity. For a MoMA exhibition in 1956/57, Brassai organized the photographs into nine thematic groups, including »Language«, »Love«, and »Death«. For the tapestry shown here, he created a collage of some twenty motifs, placing at its center »Le Roi Soleil« (»The Sun King«) from the group »Images primitives«.

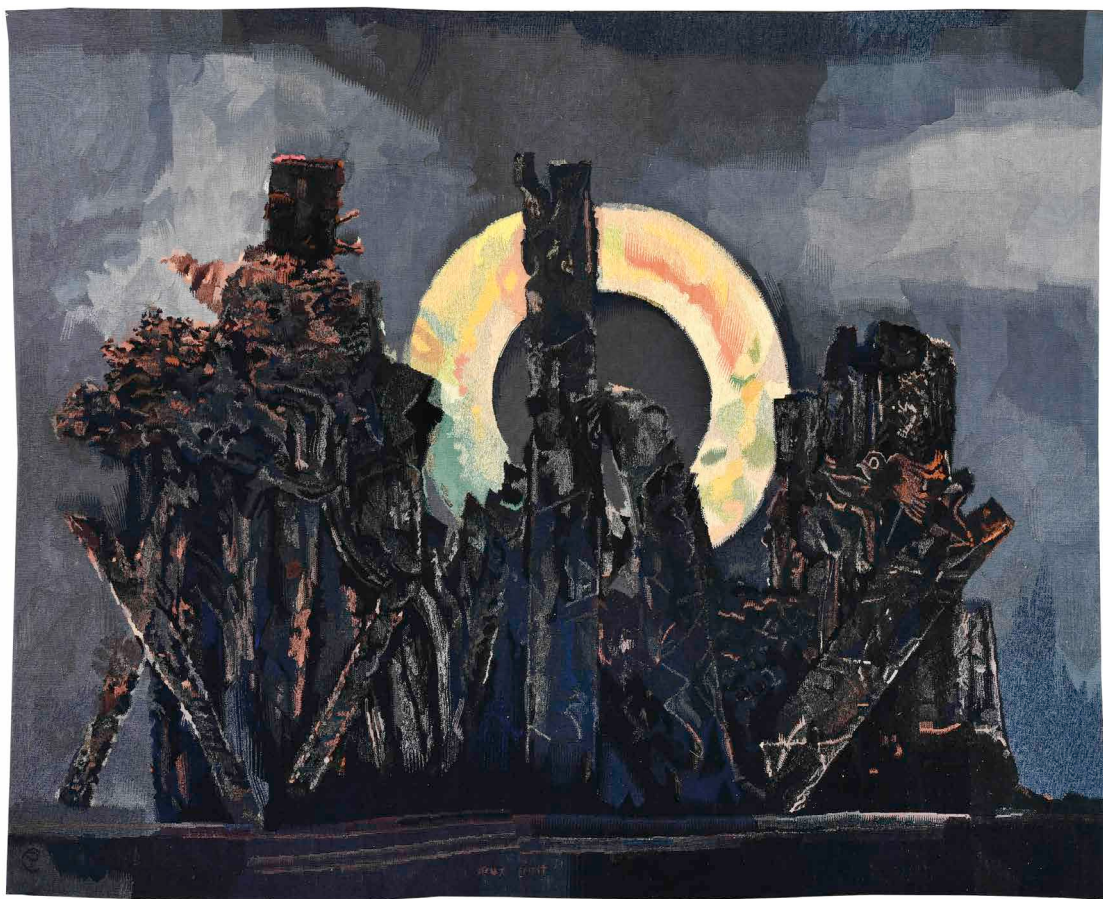
LITERATURE

Anne Wilkes Tucker, Brassai: The Eye of Paris, Houston 1998.

Max Ernst

(Brühl 1891— 1976 Paris)

The son of a teacher for the deaf, Max Ernst first studied philosophy, psychology, and art history in Bonn before turning to art as a self-taught artist. His experiences as a soldier in the First World War left a profound mark on his worldview and artistic practice. In 1919 he co-founded Cologne Dada, and from 1922 in Paris he became a central figure of Surrealism. He experimented with new techniques and unconventional materials. During the Second World War he emigrated to the United States, returning to France in 1953. His oeuvre – painting, collages, sculptures – combines dream and reality.



FR **La grande forêt**
EN **The Great Forest**

Unknown manufactory, 1976
(based on a painting from 1927)
Wool, woven
227 × 275 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (GMTT 1296)

The tapestry is based on Max Ernst's well-known 1927 work, created using Grattage-surrealist painting technique of his own invention, which involves laying a canvas prepared with a layer of oil paint over a textured object and then scraping the paint off to create an interesting and unexpected surface. During this period, the artist often explored the theme of the forest. The subject and composition remain largely unchanged: unusual trees stand closely together like a wall against the dark sky. Between the branches, the outlines of a bird can occasionally be seen, along with a glowing disc – perhaps moon, perhaps sun – perfectly round and still, suspended in the sky.

LITERATURE

William A. Camfield, Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism, München 1993.

Henri Matisse

(Le Cateau-Cambrésis 1869 — 1954 Cimiez)

Born into a middle-class family in northern France. 1887 — 89 studied law, then worked in a lawyer's office. Began painting in 1890. In 1895 entered the École des Beaux-Arts under Gustave Moreau. From 1905 co-founder of Fauvism. 1908 — 11 founded the Académie Matisse. Worked in oil painting, drawing, and printmaking; later also in the cut-out technique, known as gouaches découpées. His style is marked by expressive color, simplified forms, and clear, decorative composition. Like Picasso, regarded as a central pioneer of modern art.



FR **Polynésie: La mer**
EN **Polynesia: The Sea**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1972

(Design 1946)

Wool, woven

203 × 315 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (BV 226)

In the early 1940s, after major surgery and suffering from ill health, the established French artist Henri Matisse was no longer able to produce large-scale oil paintings. He turned instead to the cut-out technique, cutting forms from gouache-painted paper and, with the assistance of Lydia Delectorskaya, arranging them on similarly colored sheets. For the large-scale cutout that served as the model for the tapestry on view here, Matisse used paper purchased at a stationery store in two standard shades of blue, commonly employed by students for covering their books.

LITERATURE

John Klein, *Matisse and Decoration*, New Haven/London 2018.

Abstraction and Figuration

The engagement with the world – both spiritual and material – is expressed in varied ways within the large-format tapestries displayed in this space. André Derain's depiction of the Golden Age is particularly suited to the medium of tapestry, as it revives an ancient literary myth. Joan Miró, by contrast, translates well-known themes from art history into his own unique visual language.

Vasarely transforms meditative observations of nature into abstract structures. Wassily Kandinsky's complex compositions of form and color on a black background establish him as a pioneer of non-representational art. The sculptor Alexander Calder's composition evokes the dynamic spatial relationships of his famous mobiles, even within a flat surface.

The theme of the female body is addressed in drastic ways by the women artists Orlan and Louise Bourgeois: Orlan deconstructs – not only in her imagery – her own face and the Western gaze, while Bourgeois provocatively replaces a well-known male saint with a female martyr.

Victor Vasarely

(Pécs 1906 — 1977 Paris)

Painter, graphic artist, sculptor. Born in Pécs, Hungary, Vasarely is regarded as one of the founders of Op Art. 1925 — 27 studied medicine in Budapest, abandoning it in favor of artistic training at the private Podolini-Volkman Academy and the Bauhaus-oriented Műhely in Budapest. In 1930 moved to Paris, working as a commercial graphic artist. From 1944 devoted himself exclusively to painting, developing constructivist-geometric compositions that conveyed optical illusion and a sense of movement. Produced his first tapestries between 1947 and 1950.



FR **Zsolt**
EN **Zsolt**

Atelier Tabard, Aubusson, before 1964
(based on a painting from 1951 — 53)

Wool, woven

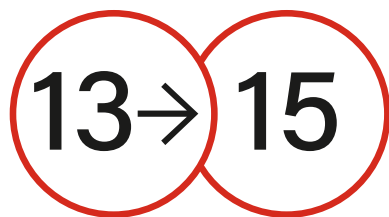
160 × 145 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (FADT 21033)

Numerous tapestries were created after designs by the Hungarian-French artist Victor Vasarely. For him, they served as a way to bring art into everyday life beyond the confines of the museum. The tapestry »Zsolt« is among the early examples and was probably made after the oil painting of the same name, produced between 1951 and 1953. That painting belonging to the Belle-Isle period (1947 — 58) was inspired by Vasarely's observations of nature on the island of the same name off the coast of Brittany: pebbles, shells, and water eddies gave rise to abstract forms of curves and rounded shapes.

LITERATURE

Richard W. Gassen, Vasarely. Erfinder der Op-Art, Ostfildern 1997.



Joan Miró

(Barcelona 1893 — 1983 Paris)

Catalan painter, draughtsman, printmaker, sculptor, and designer, and one of the most popular artists of classical modernism. From 1919 onward, he regularly lived in Paris, where he moved in artistic and intellectual circles and was associated with the Surrealist movement. Traveled to the United States in 1947. Since the 1950s, he has been based in Palma de Mallorca. Following experiments with various avant-garde styles, he developed a distinctive visual language characterized by a graphic, reduced style with playful and whimsical elements and expressive use of color.



FR **Composition n° 1,
Femme au miroir**
EN **Composition No. 1,
Woman at the Mirror**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1966

(Design 1965)

Wool, woven

306 × 455 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1135)

A well-known cliché of European art – the woman at the mirror – is translated by Miró with subtle wit into his own visual language. As an artist who frequently designed tapestries, he draws on classical compositional principles of the genre. The centrally placed image field, primed in blue, depicts the titular scene. Reduced to an ornament, the intricate figure stands before the mirror surface with its vivid red center. Surrounding this is a frame adorned with whimsical figurations, reminiscent of the grotesque borders found in Gobelin tapestries of earlier periods.

LITERATURE

Carina Kaminski, in: Die Fäden der Moderne, Matisse, Picasso, Miró ... und die französischen Gobelins (Ausst. Kat. Kunsthalle München), München 2019, S. 118–119, Kat. 28.



FR **Hirondelle Amour**
EN **Swallow Love**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1979
(based on a painting dated 1934)
Wool, woven
195 × 244 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1239)

The technically versatile Catalan artist had a particular interest in tapestries. He created his first designs for this medium as early as 1933, commissioned by the collector and patron Marie Cuttoli. She was committed to the revitalization of tapestry as a modern expressive medium, as Miró exemplifies here: set against a deep sky blue, hands, feet, faces, and beaks are woven into an ordered chaos. The composition is intersected by the flowing inscription »Swallow Love«, which functions as a visual poem. This inscription evokes associations with the flight path of a bird or an untangled ball of thread. Miró's painted original is now in the collection of the MoMA in New York.

LITERATURE

Miró. Malerei als Poesie, hg. von Michael Papiatt (Ausst. Kat. Bucerius Kunstforum, Hamburg / Kunstsammlung Nordrheinwestfalen, Düsseldorf), München 2015.



FR **Panneau d'essai**
EN **Weaving Sample**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1966

(Design 1959)

Wool, woven (condition: as taken from the loom)

106 × 73 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1138)

The small-scale sample was produced at the national French Gobelins Manufactory in Paris. The fabric still displays the long fringes of the warp threads, which were originally stretched on the loom and exceptionally left untrimmed in this case. After having executed four carpet designs in the 1930s commissioned by the patron Marie Cuttoli, Miró later worked regularly for the state manufactory. His tapestries were highly sought after as decorative elements in public buildings worldwide; for example, one of his pieces was installed in the World Trade Center.

LITERATURE

Yann Le Chevalier, *Tapisserie 1940–1970* (Ausst. Kat. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Carcassonne), Canens 2022, S. 75.

ORLAN (Mireille Porte)

(Saint-Étienne 1947)

Studied at the École des Beaux-Arts and the Conservatory of Performing Arts in Saint-Étienne, France. Since 1978, she has employed her own body as both medium and material, adopting an exceptionally radical approach – publicly undergoing cosmetic surgical procedures on herself, for example. Central to her practice is the exploration of Western-influenced ideals of beauty, as reflected in various artworks. She is a significant figure within the so-called Body Art movement and performative art.



FR **Défiguration-refiguration,
auto-hybridation
précolombienne n° 4**
EN **Disfiguration-Refiguration,
Proto-Colombian
Self-Hybridation No. 4**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2016

Wool, woven

340 × 221 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (BV 511)

This vividly colored work forms part of the artist's »Self-Hybridisations« series, in which Orlan uses digital technologies to transform her own image, creating a fusion of culturally distinct representational codes. In the »Proto-Colombian Self-Hybridisation«, she merges her facial features with elements derived from artefacts of the Olmec, Maya, and Aztec civilizations – transposing proto-Colombian visual formulae for the human figure onto her own body. The result is a disorienting form that challenges ingrained visual conventions and, by extension, interrogates the representational function of art itself.

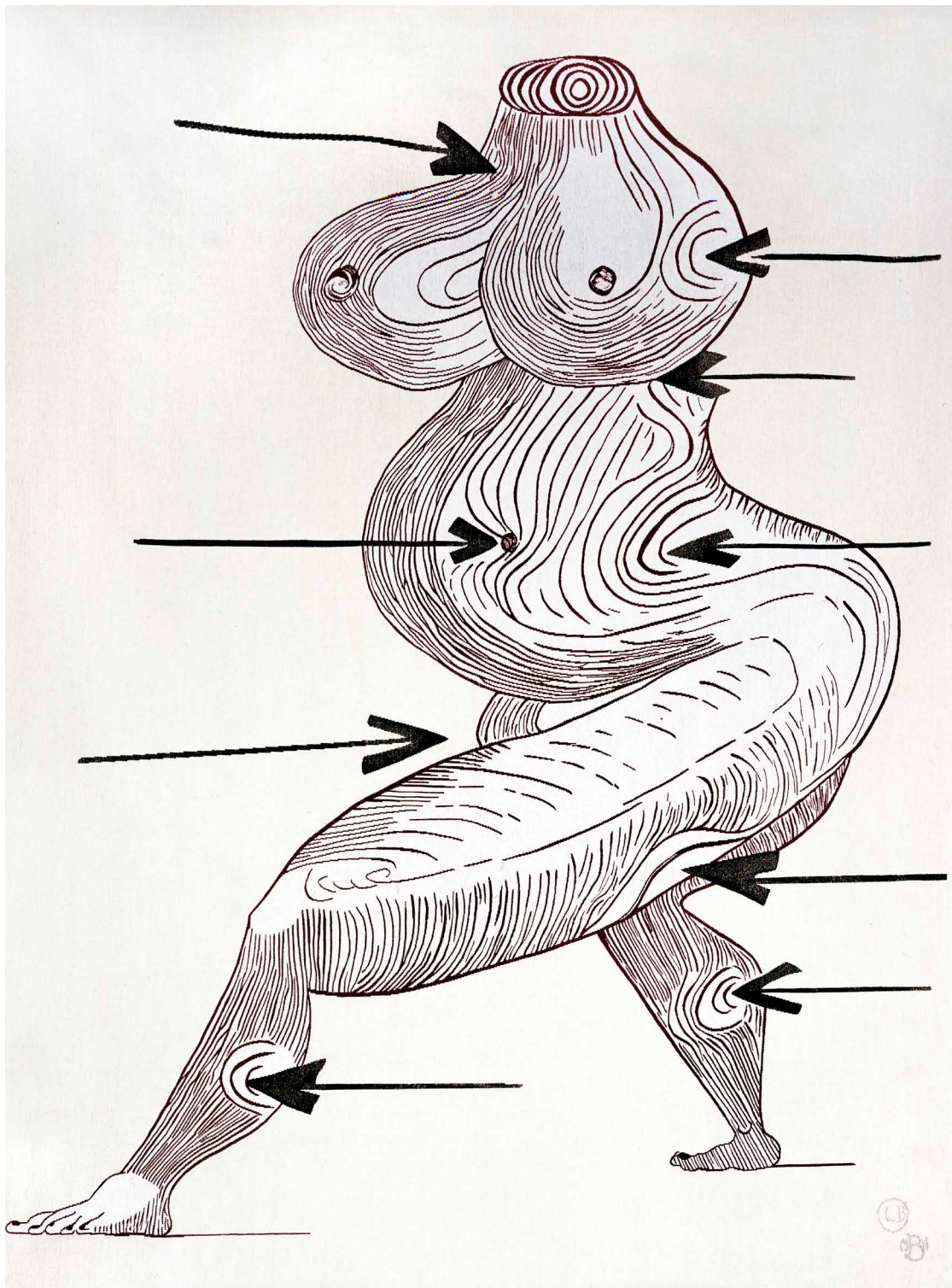
LITERATURE

Orlan, hg. von Caroline Cros, Vivian Rehberg, Laurent Le Bo (Publikation zeitgleich zur Ausst. im Centre National de la Photographie), Paris 2004, S. 166–181.

Louise Bourgeois

(Paris 1911 — 2010 New York)

Painter, draughtswoman, and sculptor. The Daughter of a family of carpet restorers, she first studied mathematics before training in the atelier of Fernand Léger. From 1938 onwards, she lived in New York. She is primarily regarded as one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century, notably for her immersive spatial installations. Her works explore human emotions in their raw intensity, drawing upon her own childhood traumas and her critical engagement with patriarchal oppression. Her monumental spider sculptures symbolically honor her mother, a weaver, in a positive and empowering sense.



FR **Sainte Sébastienne**
EN **Saint Sebastienne**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2006

(Design 1992 [GBA 283]: based on a fax copy,
revised in pencil 31 × 21, cm)

Wool, woven

340 × 238 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (BV 478)

The tapestry translates one of the most important Christian saints, St. Sebastian, into the feminine. Depictions of the youthful martyr pierced by arrows are common in medieval art. The artist creates a counter-image centered entirely on the mature female body. The chosen graphic devices – such as schematic linear patterns and conspicuous arrows – evoke scientific illustration. It is precisely this stark simplification that intensifies the sense of aggression and imminent threat. The artist and the weaver communicated through annotated faxes exchanged between Paris and New York.

LITERATURE

Lucile Montagne, in: Die Fäden der Moderne, Matisse, Picasso, Miró ... und die französischen Gobelins (Ausst. Kat. Kunsthalle München), München 2019, S. 174–175, Kat. 51.

Alexander Calder

(Lawton, Pennsylvania 1898 — 1976 New York)

Inventor of the mobile and a leading figure of kinetic art. Came from an artistic family: his father and grandfather were sculptors, his mother a portrait painter. 1915 — 16 studied at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey, graduating as a mechanical engineer. 1923 — 26 attended drawing and painting classes at the Art Students League in New York. In 1926 moved to Paris, studied at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, and began working with wire sculpture. Associated with the avant-garde. From 1930 created abstract moving mobiles and, in parallel, static metal sculptures known as stables. From 1950 focused on monumental sculpture. Also active in painting, printmaking, and jewelry design.



FR **Composition**
EN **Composition**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1966

(Design 1964)

Wool, woven

294 × 383 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1132)

Alexander Calder, creator of a miniature circus, achieved international fame with his moving sculptures, the legendary mobiles. Less well known is that from the 1960s until his death, he worked intensively with textiles and tapestries. More than fifty of his designs were realized as wall hangings in Aubusson. Closely related to his gouaches, these works surpass them in scale and complexity. The abstract design of this tapestry, in Calder's characteristic bright colors, recalls his three-dimensional sculptures. Monumental yet playful, the large shapes seem to float like elements of a mobile.

LITERATURE

Alexander Calder. *Avantgarde in Bewegung* (Ausst.-Kat. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen Düsseldorf), München 2013.

Wassily Kandinsky

(Moskau 1866 — 1944 Neuilly-sur-Seine)

Born in Moscow to a wealthy merchant family. Moved to Odessa in 1871, trained at the School of Art and Theater. Studied law in Moscow, 1885 — 93. At the age of 30 decided to pursue art; moved to Munich and, from 1900, studied at the Academy of Fine Arts. In 1911 co-founded »Der Blaue Reiter« with Franz Marc. Engaged deeply with color, line, and composition, creating his first abstract works. In 1912 published »Concerning the Spiritual in Art«, a foundational text of abstractionism. Worked in Russia from 1914 to 1921. From 1922 taught at the Bauhaus. Emigrated to Paris in 1933. His work laid the foundation for abstract painting.



FR **Sur un fond noir**
EN **On a Black Background**

Atelier Tabard, Aubusson, 1950s

(based on a gouache from 1940)

Wool, woven

258 × 154 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (FADT 21057)

The tapestry »On a Black Background« is based on a 1940 sketch by the Russian painter, printmaker, and art theorist Wassily Kandinsky, who had been living in Paris since 1933. His art from this period is characterised by a search for new forms of expression. Typical features are a dark background, complex color palettes with vibrating pastel tones, and biomorphic, curving forms reminiscent of microscopic structures. These figures float freely, seldom overlap, and sometimes connect – as in this work – with the geometry characteristic of Kandinsky's early phase.

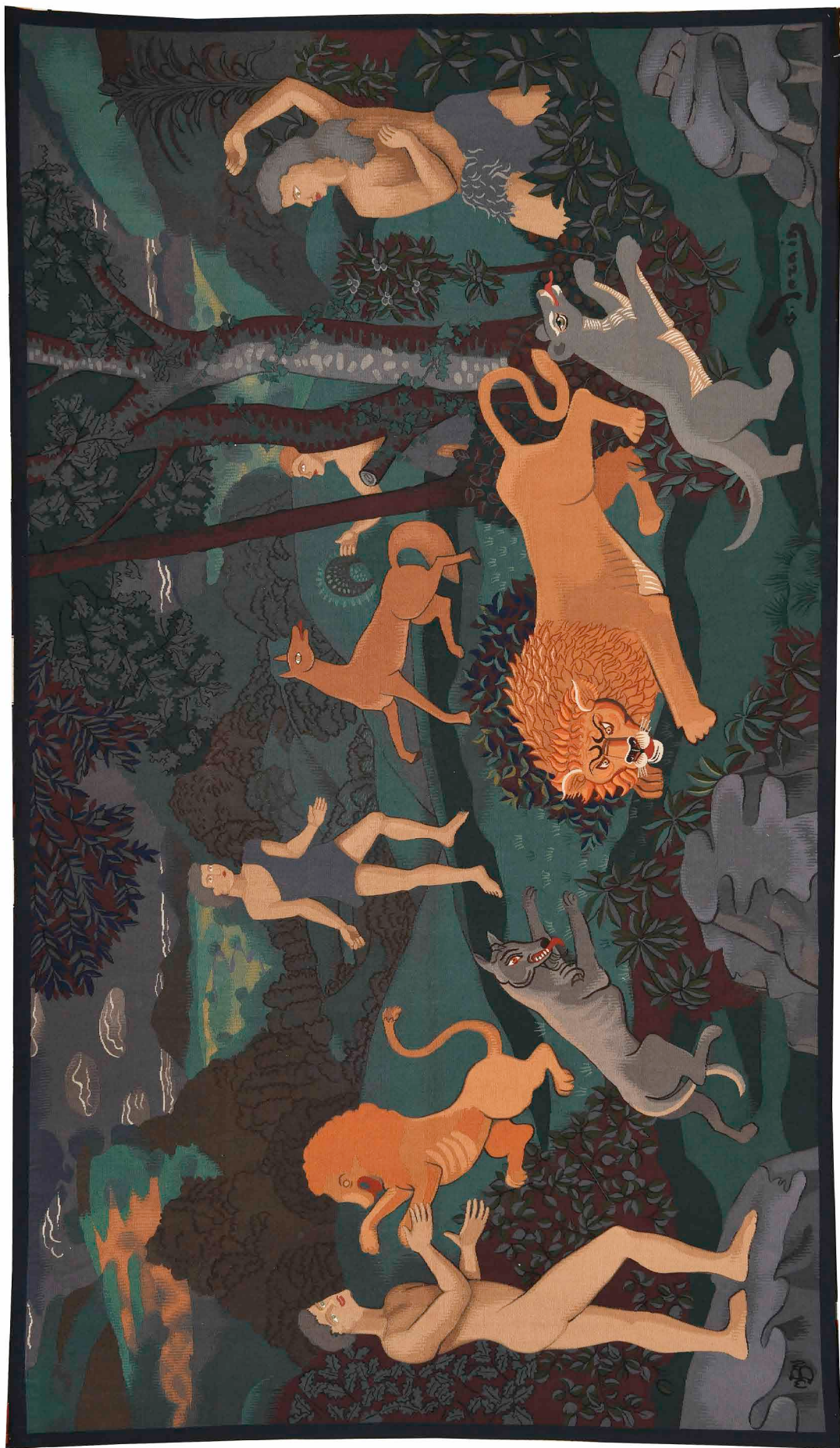
LITERATURE

Vivian Endicott Barnett, Kandinsky. Werkverzeichnis der Aquarelle, Bd. II: 1922–1944, München 1994.

André Derain

(Chatou 1880 — 1954 Garches)

Son of a wealthy pastry chef. Studied engineering in Paris, where he encountered artists and turned to painting. 1898 — 99 attended Eugène Carrière's art school. In 1905, together with Matisse and Vlaminck, founded Fauvism. Met Picasso in 1906 and was influenced by Cubism. Served at the front during World War I. Traveled to Rome in 1921 — 22, leading to a marked shift in style. In addition to painting, he worked in book illustration, stage design, sculpture, and ceramics. His career was marked by constant changes of style and a search for new forms of expression.



FR L'âge d'or
EN The Golden Age

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1966
(based on a painting from 1938—44)
Wool, woven
270 × 467 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 130)

This tapestry is based on a painting by André Derain, a major French painter, book illustrator, and stage designer. The painting was discovered in his studio only after his death and was probably created between 1938 and 1944. The term »Golden Age« comes from Greek mythology, in particular from Hesiod's poem »Works and Days«. In this myth, humanity declines through five successive ages. The Golden Age was the first, representing a time of peace, harmony, and stability – including harmony between humans and animals.

LITERATURE

André Derain (1880–1954). Paintings & Drawings (Ausst. Kat. Grosvenor Gallery), London 2001.

The Technique of Tapestry Weaving

A tapestry is a collective artwork created through intensive collaboration between artist and artisan. Before the weaving process begins, the artistic design must first be translated from the graphic to the textile dimension. The cartoon, a 1:1 scale template for the tapestry, defines the required color nuances of the yarns using a numerical system. The warp threads form the basic structure of every tapestry. They are stretched across the loom. In the end, they are no longer visible, as the weft yarn woven horizontally covers them (almost) completely. Two different techniques are used in the weaving workshops of the Mobilier national. The weavers at the Manufacture des Gobelins work on high looms (French: haute-lisse) and those at the Manufacture de Beauvais on flat looms (French: basse-lisse). The difference lies in the operation of the lisses. These are small loops that lift the warp yarns apart, allowing the weft thread to pass through. In the haute-lisse process, they are located at the top of the loom and are operated by hand. In the basse-lisse process, they are attached to pedals under the loom. The weavers sit at the back of the work and therefore only see the overall result after the tapestry has been removed from the loom (French: tombée de métier).

Art Informel and the New School of Paris

This gallery is characterized by non-figurative artistic approaches. Among the earliest works are those associated with Art Informel. The tapestry with the serial title »Panneau n°1« was created based on a small-format lithograph by Hans Hartung – a native of Leipzig who had been active in Paris since the 1930s.

At the center of the room, a painting by Pierre Soulages – one of the foremost representatives of the so-called New School of Paris – invites a comparison between painting and textile art. At the same time, it illustrates the painter's influence on contemporaries such as André Borderie.

This gallery also features a spatial-sculptural piece in the form of a triptych by sculptor Alicia Penalba.

The two tapestries based on recent designs by Velu (Paris) Viswanadhan and Monique Frydman each reflect, in their own distinct manner, the artists' engagement with the values of color, the materiality of the pictorial surface, and the spatial dimension of the image.

Hans Hartung

(Leipzig 1904 — 1989 Antibes)

Initially, he studied philosophy and art history in Leipzig, later pursuing fine arts at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig and the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. From 1935 onwards, he lived in Paris and fought for France against Germany during the Second World War. His non-representational works explore the relationship between chance and deliberation. Throughout his career, he engaged in intensive experimentation with partially self-made tools, materials, and artistic techniques. A leading figure of Lyrical Abstraction and Art Informel, he was a member of the artist group ZEN.



FR **Panneau n° 1**
EN **Panel No. 1**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1962
(Design 1961 [B 35]: lithography, 25 × 38 cm)
Wool, woven
200 × 300 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 78)

The striking impact of Hans Hartung's works stems from his artistic practice of scaling small-format drawings onto large canvases through a grid system. This method also informed the production of this tapestry, whose dimensions contrast with those of a lithograph Hartung created in 1961, measuring only 25 by 38 centimeters. Viewed from a distance, the tapestry appears as the drawing of a giant. In its meticulous enlargement, the image seems strangely still, yet simultaneously conveys the drawing and redrawing process – the shaping and searching with lines and colors – as a powerful human gesture.

LITERATURE

Hans Hartung, Gesten, Flecken, Lineaturen. Arbeiten auf Papier von 1962 bis 1985, hg. von Jörn Merkert (Ausst. Kat. Kunstforum GKB Berlin), Berlin 1999.

Pierre Soulages

(Rodez 1919 — 2022 Nîmes)

He studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris but left early, rejecting the academic, figurative tradition. From the 1940s, he produced his first abstract works within the context of the so-called Nouvelle École de Paris (New Paris School), and from the 1950s onward developed more complex compositions incorporating red. He gained international recognition, with major solo exhibitions in cities including Tokyo and New York. From 1986, he created the 111 stained-glass windows for the Abbey of Saint-Foy in Conques, regarded as his seminal work. He is considered one of the foremost pioneers of abstract art in postwar France.



FR **Sans titre (Peinture,
14 avril 1953)**

EN **Untitled (Painting,
April 14, 1953)**

1953

Oil on canvas

197,5 × 130 cm

Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Sammlung Ludwig
(LM 1992/50)

The non-representational (informal) art that characterizes this exhibition space is largely inspired by the abstract color field painting of the United States. Soulages assimilated these tendencies in France during the 1940s, subsequently influencing numerous artists, including Hans Hartung and André Borderie. Soulages' works are consistently thoughtfully composed, as evidenced here by the careful layering of ink-like tones over lighter black ochre, as well as the balanced relationship between dense color masses and the light ground surrounding them. The deliberately applied deep, dark reds impart an exceptionally sculptural spatial effect to the »figure«.

LITERATURE

Beate Reifenscheid u. a., Pierre Soulages. Noir – Lumière. Farbe und Geste in den 1950er Jahren, (Ausst. Kat. Koblenz, Ludwig Museum, 2018/2019), Mailand 2018.

André Borderie

(Vierzon 1923 — 1998 Paris)

Initially employed in telecommunications, from 1942 onwards he devoted himself exclusively to artistic practice, working both as a painter and as a sculptor. He lived in an artist colony in Bures-sur-Yvette near Paris and was a representative of the so-called Nouvelle École de Paris (New Paris School), which also included Pierre Soulages. He received commissions for large-scale public projects and murals, achieving success as an interior designer, where he experimented with ceramics, painting, and tapestry as media for interior decoration.



FR **Marcel Sembat**
DE **Marcel Sembat**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1959

Wool, woven

289 × 146 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (BV 48)

Broad brushstrokes, impressively translated into the textile medium, are plastically accentuated by bright interplay of light. The title »Marcel Sembat« invites the viewer to discern an anthropomorphic silhouette within the work. Sembat (1862—1922) was a French politician known for advocating social reforms, but above all, he was a collector and supporter of avant-garde art. Against this backdrop, Borderie succeeds in creating a pictorial homage that, precisely through its consciously abstracted form, appears as an embodiment of Sembat's personality and artistic preferences. The composition is based on a large-scale cartoon from 1959.

LITERATURE

Jean-Jacques Wattel, Bénédicte Wattel, André Borderie et la tapisserie d'Aubusson, (Ausst. Kat. Paris, Musée du Louvre, 2018), Paris 2018.

Maria Helena Vieira da Silva

(Lissabon 1908 — 1992 Paris)

Portuguese-French painter and graphic artist; initially studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lisbon, and from 1928 onward in Paris, where she studied under Fernand Léger. From the 1930s she took part in various independent salon exhibitions; emigrated to Brazil during the Second World War, returning to Paris in 1947 and achieving international success. Vieira da Silva began with a representational style, before turning increasingly toward abstraction, employing complex configurations of lines as the foundation for spatially evocative compositions; thematically, her work often engages with notions of the afterlife.



FR **Composition carton**
EN **Composition Cardboard**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1988
(Design 1964)
Wool, woven
289 × 142 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 374)

The vertical format is characterized by contrasts: broad color gradients transition into intricate and dense raster patterns, while warm ochre hues intersect with cool blue and white tones. Vieira da Silva's interest lies precisely in these overlays and condensations. The resulting forms do not adhere to any geometric or linear order but instead appear autonomous and vibrant. In this way, the materiality itself is elevated to the subject of the image. The work is based on a collage from 1964, in which the artist combined actual fabric pieces with oil paint on a two-by-one-meter cardboard support, embedding the oppositions already within the diverse materials.

LITERATURE

Gisela Rosenthal, Vieira da Silva 1908–1992. Auf der Suche nach dem unbekannten Raum, Köln 1998.

Alicia Penalba

(San Pedro bei Buenos Aires 1913 — 1982 Paris)

Grew up as the daughter of a railway worker in various places in Patagonia, both in Argentina and Chile. At 15 decided to become an artist. 1947 diploma in Buenos Aires as a teacher of drawing and painting. 1948 French government scholarship, leading to a stay in Paris. Studied at the École des Beaux-Arts and worked in the studio of Ossip Zadkine. 1951 first abstract sculpture. From 1970 monumental works for parks in Europe and the Americas. Also produced lithographs, collages, tapestries, and jewelry designs. She is regarded as one of the few women sculptors of the postwar period whose work received international recognition.



FR **Triptyque**
EN **Triptych**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1982—83

Wool, sisal, linen, velvet and raffia,
mounted on panel

Each 240 × 180 × 40 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (BV 348/001-003)

Although firmly committed to sculpture, from the 1970s onwards Alicia Penalba increasingly turned to media suited to reproduction – such as tapestries, jewelry, and porcelain. During this period, she created her first series of collages, made of cut or torn paper or fabric on Arches paper. In the triptych shown here, the connection between sculpture and collage becomes evident. The forms that she translated into tapestry technique were inspired by the landscapes of her childhood: the sea, the rocks of Patagonia, and the dunes along the Chilean coast. For her, landscapes were always more than nature – they embodied form, rhythm, and architectural volume.

LITERATURE

<https://penalba.com/en/home-en/>

Paris (auch: Velu)

Viswanadhan

(Thrikkadavoor 1940)

Painter, sculptor, and filmmaker. Studied at the Government College of Fine Arts, Chennai, under K.C.S. Paniker. Together with his mentor, he co-founded the artist village Cholamandal. Following his participation in the 1967 Paris Biennale, he relocated to Paris the following year. Initially engaging with the pictorial traditions of rural South India, he later developed a radical abstraction characterized by reduced, intense earth tones. He works with his own casein paints, and since the 1990s, his compositions have been constructed from broad brushstrokes.



FR **Sans titre**
EN **Untitled**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 2005
(Design 1995)
Wool, woven
310 × 450 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (GOBT 1354)

The tapestry is an example of the meticulous translation of a painting – based on subtle color effects – into a woven image. Viswanadhan, one of the most prominent Indian artists, works with casein paints, that he produces himself. In this design, as in others, he employs only warm earth tones and greens. Blue, which he considers to be based on an illusion, is absent. The technique allows for the application of color with a broad brush in overlapping layers. This creates a complex color structure of great intensity and remarkable depth, which has been emulated in the tapestry using the available color range of the wool threads.

LITERATUR

Dix années de création. 1997–2007, Tapisseries, tapis, mobilier,
hg. von Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée, Marie-Hélène Massé-Bersani,
(Ausst. Kat. Galerie des Gobelins), Paris 2007.
Werkverzeichnis: <https://ufe-experts.fr/experts/nadine-tarbouriech/>

Monique Frydman

(Nages 1943)

Painter and draughtswoman. Lives and works in Paris. Studied at the Écoles des Beaux-Arts in Toulouse and Paris. In the context of the student revolts between 1968 and 1972, initially abandoned painting. Engaged in the women's rights movement (MLF) and affiliated with the feminist artist collective Collectif Femmes/Art. From 1978 onwards, developed a tendency towards abstraction and ultimately moved away from the descriptive function of form and color. Since the 1990s, turned to frottage techniques, consciously incorporating chance into the artistic process.



FR **L'Ardente**
EN **The Ardent**

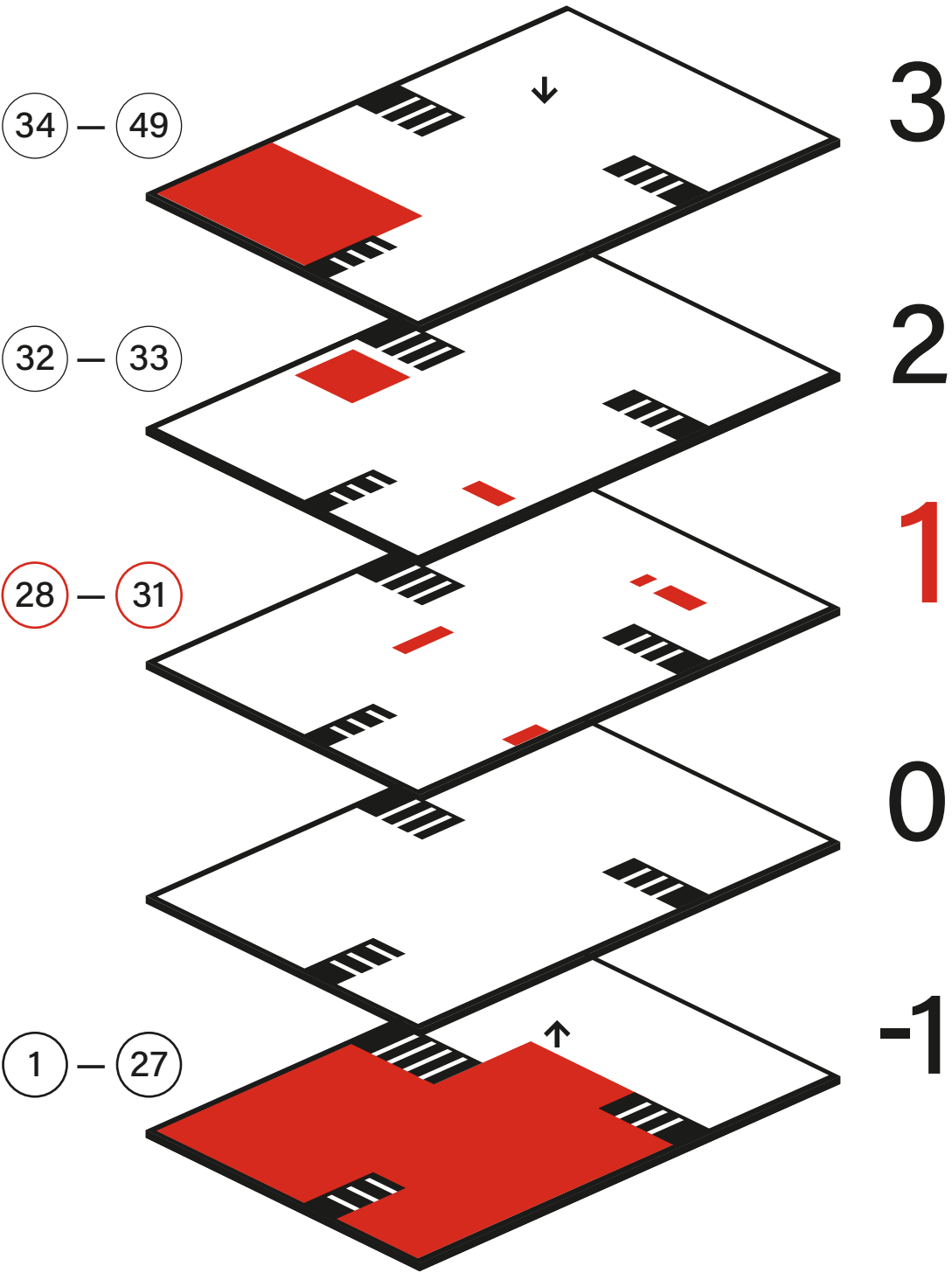
Manufacture de Beauvais, 2001
(Design 1996)
Wool, woven
263 × 242 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 454)

At the core of the artist's practice lie the processes and techniques of painting. Equally central is her concern with the physical immersion in color. The tapestry is based on a work created using the frottage technique: red pigment was applied to a damp canvas, on the reverse of which cords and ropes had been arranged. These chance forms transferred through the fabric, imprinting themselves onto the surface. In the weaving process, these traces of pigment – originally produced by threads themselves – are retraced using differently dyed yarns. For the artist, the act of viewing the resulting work remains, fundamentally, a transcendent experience.

LITERATURE

Monique Frydman, hg. von Ziba Ardalan (Ausst. Kat. Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art), London 2017.

1 First Floor





Royal Manufactory and State Representation

The Manufacture nationale des Gobelins was established in Paris in 1607 as a private enterprise by Flemish tapestry weavers. Its name derives from the Gobelin family, renowned for their work as dyers specializing in scarlet textiles. Under the reign of Louis XIV and the direction of his finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the workshop was transformed into a Royal Tapestry Manufactory. This move aimed to strengthen the economy and craftsmanship of the absolutist state while serving the king's desire for grandeur and visual self-representation. Under the artistic leadership of Charles Le Brun, the manufactory set new standards across Europe with its sumptuous tapestry series. It continues to operate today as part of the Mobilier national, producing works exclusively from designs by contemporary artists.

Charles Le Brun

(Paris 1619 — 1690 Paris)

Painter, printmaker and decorator. The son of a sculptor, he started out as a draftsman for copper engravings and spent the years 1642 — 45 in Rome. He later worked almost exclusively for Louis XIV as the »First Painter to the King«. He was a founding member of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, subsequently serving as its director. From 1663 onwards, he served as director of the Paris Gobelins Manufactory. His designs for extensive tapestry series, intended to furnish royal residences or serve as diplomatic gifts, were executed by a team of specialists.



FR L'Octobre: Les Tuileries
(Tenture des mois ou des
maisons royales)

EN October: The Tuileries
(from the Tapestry Series
of the Months or the Royal
Mansions)

Manufacture Royale des Gobelins,
ca. 1676 — 80 (Design ca. 1668)

Wool and silk, woven

394 × 638 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GMTT 108/010)

This monumental tapestry is part of a series dedicated to the twelve months of the year. Each piece features a backdrop depicting one of King Louis XIV's residences: in this case the later destroyed Tuileries Palace in Paris in October. Autumn fruits are displayed in the foreground as if on a stage. Several animals from the royal menagerie also make an appearance, including – alongside native species – a civet cat and two guinea pigs. In the background, the »Sun King« and his entourage can be seen taking a carriage ride through the park. The ostentatious display of splendour throughout the tapestry series is intended to suggest abundance all year round.

LITERATURE Jean Vittet und Arnould Brejon de Lavernée, *La Collection de tapisseries de Louis XIV*, Dijon 2010, S. 171–182.

Amédée Couder

(Paris 1797 — 1864 Paris)

Draftsman, designer, and architect. Little is known about Couder's training and professional background. As the head of his own studio, he specialized primarily in artistic designs for decorative objects intended for emerging mass production, a field in which he played something of a pioneering role. In addition, he worked on several (unrealized) architectural projects. He also produced numerous designs for the Manufacture des Gobelins, including tapestries, upholstery fabrics, and a planned Gobelin series dedicated to the patrons of the manufactory, of which the portrait of Le Brun forms a part.



FR **Portrait de Charles Le Brun**
EN **Portrait of Charles Le Brun**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1855

Silk, woven

148 × 120 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 51)

Le Brun was the most influential artist at the court of Louis XIV, not least because of his versatility. As director of the Royal Gobelins Manufactory in Paris, he played a decisive role in shaping both the institution and the medium of tapestry itself. This laurel-adorned portrait celebrates him in that role. The allegorical framing alludes to the arts practiced by Le Brun: two putti play with the tools of the architect (left) and sculptor (right), while brushes and palette, as well as balls of wool and the weaving edge, symbolize the colorful arts of painting and Gobelin tapestry weaving. The portrait medallion itself is based on a depiction of Le Brun by Nicolas de Largillière in the Uffizi Gallery.

LITERATURE

Maurice Fenaille, *Etat général des tapisseries de la Manufacture des Gobelins depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours, 1600–1900*, Bd. V, Paris 1903, S. 425–428.

Francisco de Goya

(Fuendetodos 1746 — 1828 Bordeaux)

Painter, draftsman, printmaker. The son of a goldsmith. He trained in a painter's workshop in Zaragoza and later studied under the Neoclassicist Francisco Bayeu. Following a trip to Italy, he worked as a cartoon painter at the Royal Tapestry Factory in Madrid from 1774 to 1795. As a successful court painter, he produced portraits of the royal family and aristocracy. His cheerful and humorous tapestry designs, which are still stylistically rooted in the Rococo, contrast sharply with the biting satires and disturbing fantasies of his later etching series (Caprichos and Desastres de la Guerra).



ES **Muchachos cogiendo fruta**
EN **Boys Picking Fruit**

Real Fábrica de Tapices de Santa Bárbara,
acquired in 1883 (Design 1778)

Wool, woven

155 × 115 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 164)

Goya's appointment as a cartoon painter at the Royal Tapestry Manufactory in Madrid was a pivotal step in his career. Among his numerous designs is this motif, originally intended for the dining room of the Spanish crown prince and princess. The underlying oil painting, executed with remarkable spontaneity, is preserved in the Museo del Prado in Madrid. The tapestry displayed here, however, was produced only in the nineteenth century, based on the original design. It depicts four boys engaged in the improvised theft of peaches – a cheerful, idyllic, and romanticized portrayal of rural life.

LITERATURE

Katja Schmitz-von Lebedur, Goya und die Tapisserie-Manufaktur in Madrid, in: Francisco de Goya (1746–1828). Prophet der Moderne (Ausst. Kat. Alte Nationalgalerie Berlin / Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien), Köln 2005, S. 61–67.

Margret Eicher

(Viersen 1955)

Conceptual artist and representative of Appropriation Art. Studied at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts, where she focused on drawing. Turned to Copy Art and, since the early 2000s, has been developing media tapestries. Based on digital montages, these are machine-made in Belgium, the historical center of European tapestry production, using the Jacquard weaving technique. In her exploration of the topoi of the genre, she processes both art-historical motifs and popular images from mass media, advertising, and the gaming sector.



EN The Judgement of Paris 2

2012

Media tapestry, digital montage,

Jacquard weaving

286 × 450 cm

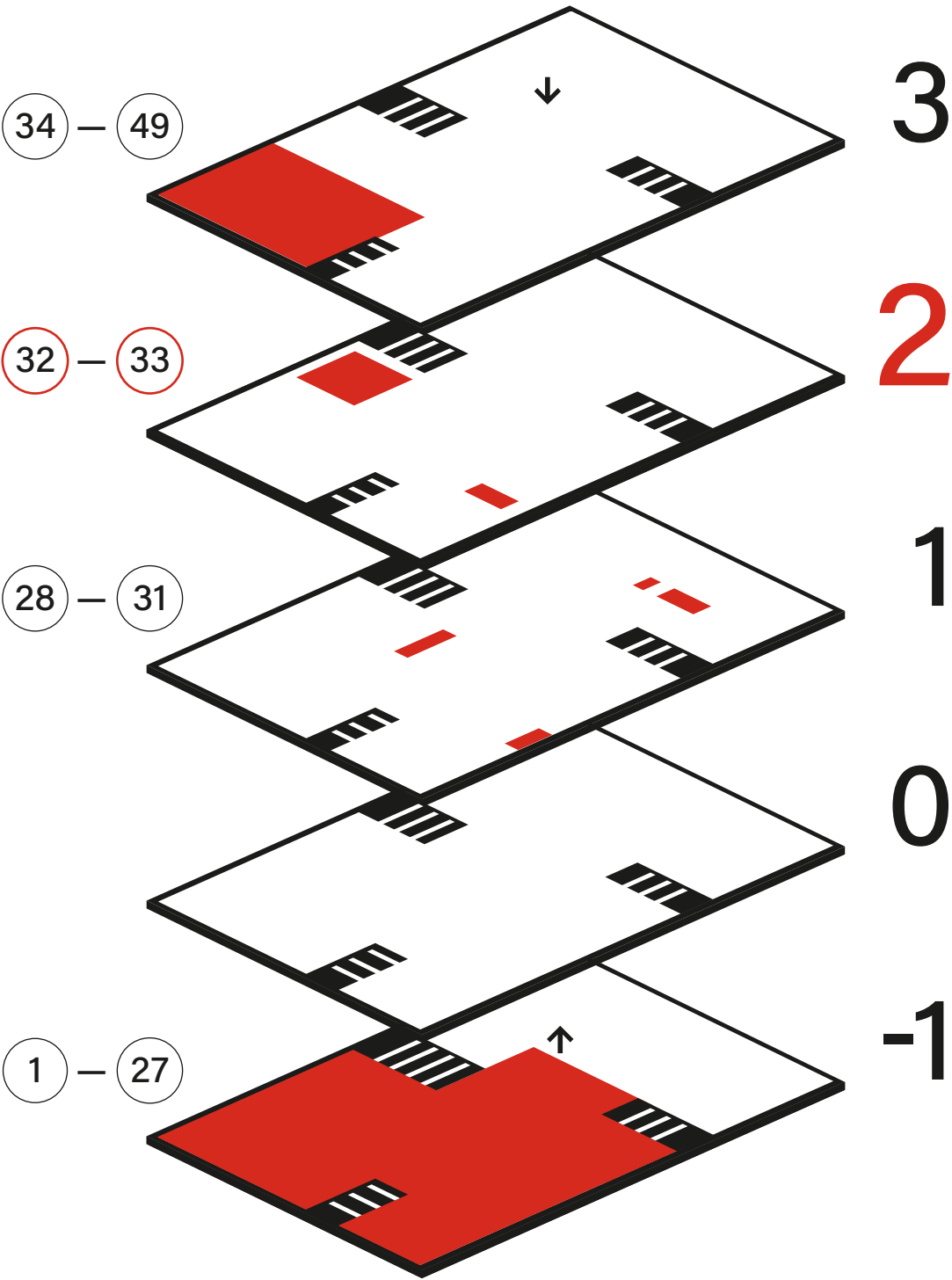
Courtesy Galerie Michael Janssen

The fateful decision of the shepherd Paris in the beauty contest between the goddesses Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite is one of the most frequently depicted scenes in ancient mythology. The MdbK displays a monumental interpretation by Max Klinger in the adjoining room. Desire, rivalry, and refusal also inspired the tapestry by Margret Eicher, which, however, should not be understood as a mere illustration to the narrative. The setting here is the well-known Berlin club Tacheles, where androgynous models from a Versace campaign encounter nudes by the Rococo painter François Boucher. The magnificent architecture with its columns is an ironic reminiscence of Baroque tapestries, while the menu bar of a computer game serves as a pedestal. Instead of personifications of virtue, pop divas like Madonna, Lady Gaga, and Angelina Jolie aka Lara Croft have taken over the reins.

LITERATURE

Wolfgang Ullrich, Margret Eicher. It's a digital world, Berlin 2025.

2 Second Floor





Fanja Bouts
1970

— Eine stark vereinfachte, dennoch überaus reichhaltige Darstellung der Welt, die in der Fanja Bouts (Fanja Bouts) dargestellt ist. Die Fanja Bouts ist eine Darstellung der Welt, die in der Fanja Bouts (Fanja Bouts) dargestellt ist. Die Fanja Bouts ist eine Darstellung der Welt, die in der Fanja Bouts (Fanja Bouts) dargestellt ist.

— A large, colorful and simplified representation of the world, as depicted in the Fanja Bouts (Fanja Bouts). The Fanja Bouts is a representation of the world, as depicted in the Fanja Bouts (Fanja Bouts). The Fanja Bouts is a representation of the world, as depicted in the Fanja Bouts (Fanja Bouts).

Centers of Tapestry Production Since the Middle Ages

The most important centers of tapestry weaving were located in the southern Netherlands and northern France, regions that had traditionally played a significant role in the European wool and cloth trade. While production was initially dominated by Paris and Arras in northern France – then synonymous with wall hangings – by the mid-15th century, important workshops and commercial hubs also emerged in Tournai, Brussels, Bruges, and Ghent. Weavers trained in these centers later worked throughout Europe as highly sought-after specialists.

32

Unknown manufacturer,
Southern Netherlands



FR **Les bergers**
EN **Shepherd and Shepherdess**

Unknown manufacturer, Southern Netherlands,
1500 — 10

Wool, woven

310 × 180 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 174)

Countless blossoms are the defining feature of the so-called millefleurs tapestries of the late Gothic period. These works were produced in Flanders, which was the leading European center for tapestry weaving at the time. The tapestry shown here was probably part of a larger series of similar scenes, two examples of which are preserved in New York and Detroit. Each tapestry depicts a shepherdess and a shepherd engaged in conversation that, according to the speech bubbles in archaic French, revolves around playful and often double-edged allusions to erotic themes. The coat of arms on the tree has not yet been identified.

LITERATURE

Adolfo Salvatore Cavallo, *Medieval Tapestries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York 1993, S. 487.

Fanja Bouts

(Nijmegen 1997)

Raised in the Netherlands, she studied Physics and Astronomy at the University of Amsterdam and Moving Image at the Rietveld Academy of Art and Design, Amsterdam. Her practice focuses on textile media, often experienced as spatial installations. Her themes frequently adopt a sociological perspective, with Bouts employing humor to address social issues. She represents contemporary tendencies that integrate science, digital technologies, and art and design, with a strong emphasis on sustainability.



EN **A Largely Distorted yet
Surprisingly Ordered Map
of Regular Irregularities:
A Dense Description of
the Present Day History
of the Future.**

2023

Wool and cotton, double cloth knitted tapestry
(edition of 3)

195 × 950 cm

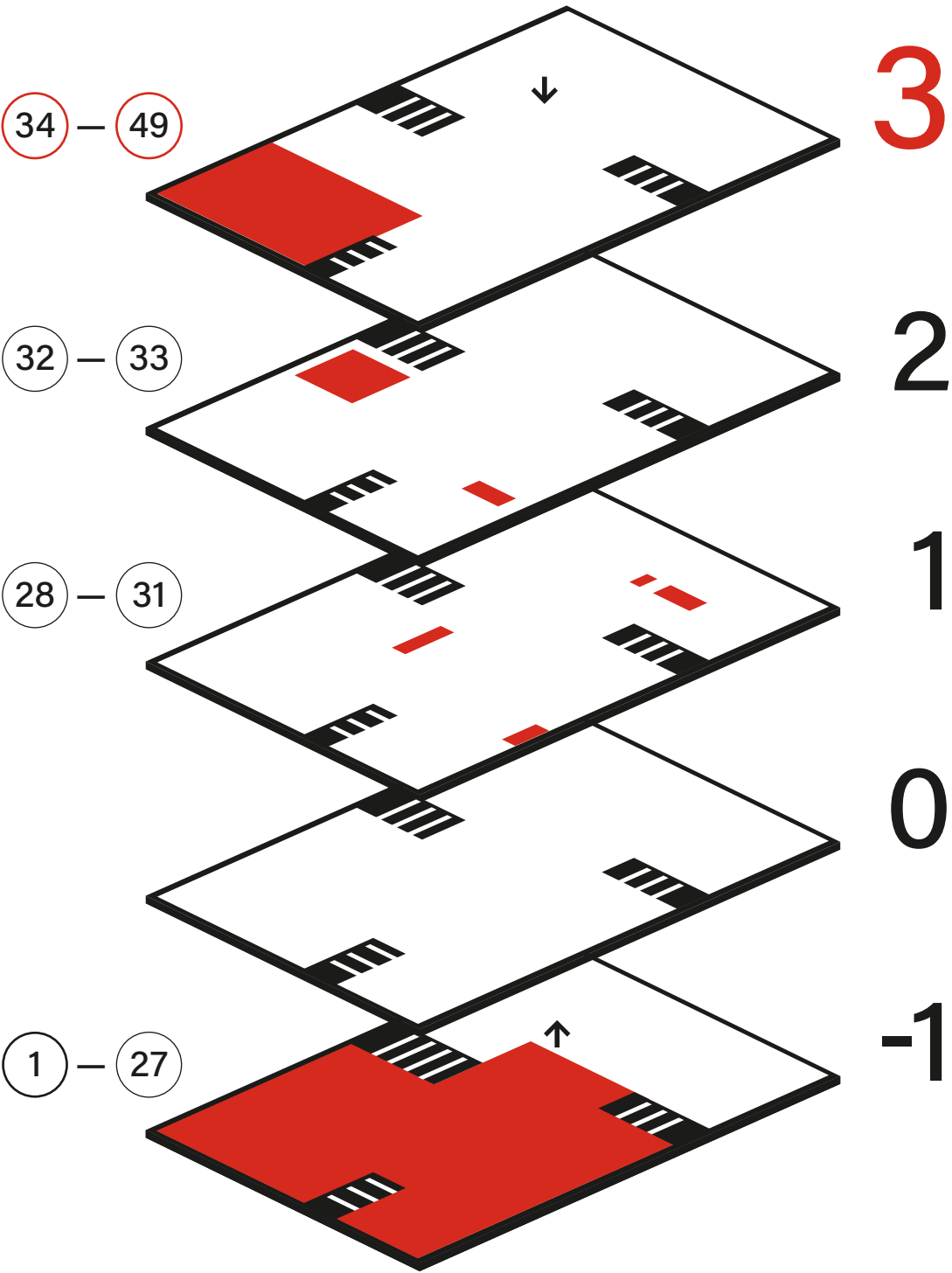
Courtesy Fanja Bouts; produced in
collaboration with TextielLab, TextielMuseum
Tilburg, project by Mathilde Vandenbussche

This vividly colored »visual world« evokes cosmological maps from the Middle Ages. Loosely arranged scenes form a critical and ironic commentary on the capitalist organization of the world. At the center of the composition unfolds a Big Bang of consumer-driven existence, from which problematic subsequent phenomena develop laterally, ranging from industrial animal farming to the search for new planets to be exploited in the future. While each of these systems follows its own internal logic, together they produce – not order, as the title might suggest – but chaos. The work was realized in various stages using digital designs and executed by a knitting machine.

LITERATURE

Willemijn de Jonge, Joy and satire coexists in Fanja Bouts' drawn universes, 2.7.2024, www.textillab.nl/en/news/joy-and-satire-coesxits-in-Fanja-Bouts-drawn-universes, abgerufen am 14.9.2025.

3 Third Floor





Halle and the Gobelin

By 1955 at the latest, textile artists of the French modernist movement had become well known in Halle, thanks to an exhibition dedicated to their work at the Pergamon Museum in East Berlin. Jean Lurçat, a key figure in the revival of tapestry art in the early 20th century, was especially influential. His limited color palette and imaginative, dreamlike scenes inspired local artists and laid the groundwork for the allegorical visual language found in Halle's tapestries. A clear example of this is the »Animal Tapestry« by Rosemarie and Werner Rataiczky, who opened a private Gobelin workshop on Talstraße in 1952.

At the same time, Willi Sitte, head of the textile department at Burg Giebichenstein University for Industrial Design, was working to revive tapestry making in Halle. These large-format works were ideal for representing the ideals of the new GDR. Sitte aimed to create a high-warp tapestry studio, modeled on those in Aubusson, France. This was achieved in 1961, when a new workshop opened and became part of the state-run textile factory VEB HAWEBA. The workshop took on commissions from across the GDR, including a tapestry completed in 1973 based on a design by Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt.

Since 2014, the textile workshop of Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design has been located on the university's Design Campus at Neuwerk. In the Textile Arts degree program, Gobelin weaving is still taught today. Fern Liberty Kallenbach Campbell's work »Fool« continues this tradition in a contemporary way.



Jean Lurçat

(Bruyères 1892 — 1966 Saint-Paul-de-Vence)

Painter, ceramist, tapestry maker. In 1911, he studied for a year in the studio of Victor Prouvé, founder of the École de Nancy. In 1912 he spent short periods studying at the École des Beaux-Arts and the Académie Colarossi in Paris. Since the 1920s, he has produced numerous tapestry designs and exhibited internationally. In 1939, he lived and worked in Aubusson, and from 1945 in Saint-Céret in the Château de Saint-Laurent-les-Tours, which he had purchased there. In 1947, he founded and became president of the Association des Peintres-Cartonniers de Tapisserie. In 1957, he held a lithography exhibition at the Galerie Eduard Henning in Halle (Saale).



FR **La petite peur**
EN **The Little Fear**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1966

Wool, woven

272 × 457 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1128)

»La petite Peur«, the first tapestry that Lurçat had woven at the Manufacture des Gobelins after the end of the Second World War, featured in numerous international exhibitions in the same year. Due to the success of the design, six more copies were produced by 1978. They adorned embassies and the European Court of Justice. Designed in the tradition of medieval bestiaries, the tapestry shows a teeming crowd of animals in a bright red architecture overgrown with vines. Only the concerned human observer and the giant rooster remain excluded from this harmony of flora and fauna.

LITERATURE

Jean Lurçat (1892–1966). *Au seul bruit du soleil*, hg. von Christiane Naffah-Bayle, Xavier Hermel, Thomas Bohl (Ausst. Kat. Galerie des Gobelins, Paris), Cinisello Balsamo, Mailand 2016.

Rosemarie Rataiczky / Werner Rataiczky

(Halle [Saale] 1930) /
(Eisleben 1921 — 2021 Halle [Saale])

Artist couple; focus on graphic design, painting, textile art. Rosemarie Rataiczky (born Rost) lives and works in Halle (Saale). From 1945, she trained as a technical draughtswoman. Werner Rataiczky trained as a commercial artist from 1936, served as a soldier and was a prisoner of war from 1939 to 1946. From 1947, both studied graphic design and painting at the Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design Halle, with professors Walter Funkat, Karl Rödel and Erwin Hahs. Married in 1952, they set up a joint tapestry workshop in Talstraße, Halle. From 1955, they produced large-format tapestries. Important public clients: Merseburg Technical University, Komische Oper Berlin, GDR Cultural Center, Paris.



DE **Tierteppich**
EN **Animal Tapestry**

1959 — 60

Cotton, worsted yarn, woven

220 × 500 cm

Private loan

Between 1959 and 1960, Werner and Rosemarie Rataiczky created this large-format animal tapestry, which was commissioned by the Sonderbaustab 10 (Special Construction Unit) for the artistic decoration of the Wandlitz forest settlement. From 1960 onwards, Wandlitz was home to the elite of the GDR government, including Walter Ulbricht, who had the tapestry removed in the same year he moved in. The tapestry, designed in bright, clearly defined colors, indicates an awareness of modern French tapestries, notably those of Jean Lurçat. The innocent flying doves and hungry predators represent the qualities of good and evil.

LITERATURE

Rataiczky. Bildteppiche, hg. von Rosemarie Rataiczky und Werner Rataiczky, Döbel 2004.

Willi Sitte

(Kratzau 1921 — 2013 Halle [Saale])

Culturally influential painter and graphic artist in the GDR. Vice-president of the Association of Visual Artists of the GDR and member of the Central Committee of the SED. 1936 — 40 trained as a pattern designer for the textile industry at the art school of the North Bohemian Museum in Reichenberg. Studied monumental painting at the Hermann Göring Meisterschule für Malerei (Master School of Painting) in Kronburg (Eifel) under Werner Peiner. 1941 — 44 Military service. 1945 — 46 Artistic work in Milan, Vicenza and Venice. Active member of the artists' group »Die Fähre« (The Ferry). From 1951 Lecturer at Burg Giebichenstein Halle, and soon afterwards head of the textile department. 1959 appointed professor.



DE Ikarus
EN Icarus

1957 — 58

Wool, woven

190 × 153 cm

Burg Giebichenstein Kunsthochschule Halle
(Saale)

In 1958, this first tapestry based on Sitte's design was created on the high loom at the Kornhaus of the Burg Giebichenstein (Giebichenstein castle) in Halle. As head of the textile department at the University for Industrial Design Halle, Sitte wanted to use it to illustrate the possibilities of tapestry weaving. Ilse Maria Krause was responsible for the craftsmanship. The director of the university, Walter Funkat, had the tapestry, which he greatly admired, hung in his office. The work depicts the fall of Icarus after his reckless flight. He serves as a cautionary example for a balloonist and a space engineer. Sitte's tapestry is thus a very early example of what would later become the most popular motif from ancient mythology in GDR art.

LITERATURE

Gewebte Träume. Der Bildteppich in Mitteldeutschland. Reflexionen auf Jean Lurçat, hg. von Matthias Rataiczky (Ausst. Kat. Kunstmuseum Moritzburg), Halle (Saale) 2016.

Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt

(Plauen 1926 — 2021 Leipzig)

Illustrator, graphic artist, author. 1943 — 45 forced labour in the armaments industry as the daughter of a half-Jewish father. 1946 — 48 studied at the Weimar College of Architecture, the Leipzig School of Applied Arts and the Academy of Visual Arts (HGB) in Leipzig. From 1950, guest student at Leipzig University (philosophy, art history, literature). Freelance work as an illustrator and graphic designer. 1960 — 64 Teaching position at the Evening Academy of the HGB. Received several awards for her book designs. In 2006, established a foundation with her husband Wolfgang Mattheuer (painter/sculptor).



DE **Hommage à Johannes
R. Becher (Schritt der
Jahrhundertmitte)**

EN **Homage to Johannes
R. Becher (Step of the
Mid-Century)**

1972 — 73

Wool, woven

300 × 196,5 cm

Art Collection of Leipzig University

The tapestry for Leipzig University (the City Hochschule) depicts social change in several scenes. The lower part of the picture shows suffering and the horrors of war. Workers' struggles and technological progress can overcome this past and, with the help of art and music, lead to a glorious socialist future. This vision is symbolised by the shining sun, birds flying freely and a cosmonaut reaching for the moon at the top of the picture. Becher can be seen writing his volume of poems »Schritt der Jahrhundertmitte« (Step of the Mid-Century), in which he describes the past and future mentioned above. Hedwig Petzold at VEB HAWEBA in Halle carried out the textile realisation.

LITERATURE

Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt. Rückblicke anlässlich des 85. Geburtstags, hg. von Claudia Rodegast und Ursula Mattheuer-Neustädt (Ausst. Kat. Galerie Schwind), Leipzig 2011.

Fern Liberty Kallenbach Campbell

(New York City 1995)

Textile artist. Lives and works in Hamburg. 2015 — 21 Bachelor's degree in Communication Design with Prof. Georg Barber, specialising in illustration, at Burg Giebichenstein Halle (Saale). Since 2019, textile work. 2023 Diploma, Textile Arts with Prof. Caroline Achaintre. 2021 Giebichenstein Design Prize, Best Idea/Best Concept. 2024 Art Prize of the Saalesparkasse Foundation and international working scholarship of the Saxony-Anhalt Arts Foundation in Los Angeles, USA, at Villa Aurora.



EN Fool
DE Narr

2023

Cotton, woven (ikat technique)

300 × 400 cm

Courtesy Fern Liberty Kallenbach Campbell

The colorful and bustling textile image »Fool« captures the climax of a wild party – the critical moment when the mood threatens to turn sour. While someone is secretly slipping a chicken leg to the dog, a fork lands in a greedily grasping hand and blood flows from the wound. Kallenbach Campbell's love of drawing comics shines through in her textile works. She tells entire stories in just one frame. The brightly colored and crude scenes depict an unvarnished world between ecstasy and collapse, creating perfect chaos.

LITERATURE

Schnuppe von Gwinner, Fern Liberty Kallenbach Campbell. A never ending story, in: Textilkunst International 2, 2024, S. 64–69.



Traditional Production and Contemporary Approaches

The French state tapestry manufactories have existed since the 17th century. Today, their workshops – now part of the Mobilier national – produce exclusively tapestries based on designs by contemporary artists. These works are still created entirely by hand using traditional, time-intensive weaving techniques: on low-warp looms at the Beauvais Manufactory, and on high-warp looms at the Manufacture des Gobelins in Paris.

Production typically spans several years and is preceded by extensive preparatory work, including the design process and the meticulous selection of colors. Nevertheless, each year approximately a dozen new tapestries leave the workshops. As templates for the skilled weavers, artists increasingly provide not only traditional drawings, prints, and paintings, but also analogue and digital photographs, video stills, or experimental works using diverse materials. In addition to commissioning French artists, the manufactories now also deliberately seek out global artistic perspectives for collaboration.

Tania Mouraud

(Paris 1942)

In 1960, stays in England and Germany (Düsseldorf). Inspiration from artist groups Zero and Fluxus as well as performances by Joseph Beuys. Work as a painter, first exhibitions. In 1969, destruction of all her works as part of a performance. Travels to India and exploration of psychosensory spatial experiences. 1970s: conceptual artworks in public spaces. From 1988 onwards, works with typography. Since 2001, exploration of video and sound, creation of installations, performances and film works.



EN Diary

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2018
(Design after 2006 [GBA 358]: Color print
on vellum paper, 118 × 117 cm)
Wool, woven
340 × 337 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 524)

The tapestry shows 80 video stills from 28 videos recorded by the artist on her mobile phone in 2006. These were taken during her travels through France, Europe, Asia, India and the USA and reflect fleeting impressions from her everyday life. The colorful snapshots, woven in 312 colors, seem to glow against the black background. The deliberate use of blurring allows them to flow together into a harmonious overall picture. The originally intended title, »Ballads«, is based on the double meaning of the word in English and French (walk/song).

LITERATURE

Tania Mouraud. Une rétrospective, hg. von Guénin Hélène (Ausst. Kat. Metz, Centre Pompidou), Metz 2015.

Roberto Antonio

Sebastián Matta

(Santiago 1911 — 2002 Civitavecchia)

He studied architecture in Chile and later became a writer and painter; he lived in Paris and New York, as well as in Italy after World War II. His artistic interest centers on the subconscious and the human psyche. An exponent of international Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism, Matta remained committed to socialist agendas throughout his life, which also informed his work. He worked with wet, water-soluble paints, often applied with a sponge. Matta left behind an extensive body of graphic prints.



FR **Composition**
EN **Composition**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2004
(Design 1995 [GBA 294]: Pastel and ink,
drawing in black ink, colored in blue, yellow,
and green, Japanese Paper mounted
on lightweight cardboard, 90 × 150,5 cm)
Wool and silk, woven
272 × 470 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 468)

This carpet resembles a vast sheet of paper and depicts a form oscillating between geometric and organic shapes. The spherical forms that dominate the composition were a frequent motif in Matta's late works of the 1990s. Yellowish accents create a sense of three-dimensionality, while swiftly applied, wet-brush strokes in transparent blues and turquoise impart dynamic movement to the piece. The wet ink and pastel technique of the original design is meticulously translated into the carpet's texture through subtle gradations. Consequently, the production of this large tapestry took nearly six years to complete.

LITERATURE

Tisser l'imaginaire, hg. von Fadelha Benammar-Koly u. a. (Ausst. Kat. Musée de Lodève 2024/25), Bozouls 2024, S. 61.

Yi Ŭng-No

(auch: Lee Ungno)

(Hongbuk-eup/Hongseong 1904 — 1989 Paris)

Initially trained in traditional Korean ink painting techniques, he began studying bamboo painting in Seoul from 1922. During the 1930s, while in Tokyo, he also engaged with Western art. Since 1960, he has been permanently based in Paris. In the interim, he endured several years of imprisonment in South Korea on false espionage charges. Following early calligraphic depictions of nature, from the 1980s onward he developed a series portraying crowds of people using traditional ink techniques on Hanji – handmade Korean paper crafted from tree bark.



FR **La foule**
EN **The Crowd**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 1990
(Design 1982 [GBA 184]: China-Ink on Hanji
Paper, 67 × 34,5 cm)
Wool, woven
336 × 175 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 398)

The tapestry was created after a calligraphic ink drawing on traditional Hanji paper, made from tree bark – a technique characteristic of the Korean artist. Only upon closer examination do the individual figures become discernible, applied with spontaneous flourish onto the original support, coalescing into a dynamic crowd. Pressed tightly together, they advance upward along a corridor or street. The tapestry serves as a striking example of the challenges inherent in translating a drawing technique predicated on demonstrative speed into an image painstakingly woven at a slow pace.

LITERATURE

Lee Ungno. *L'homme des foules* (Ausst. Kat. Musée Cernuschi), Paris 2017.

Jana Sterbak

(Prag 1955)

Multidisciplinary and conceptual artist (sculpture, photography, performance, video, installation). Artistic interest in the tension between freedom and restriction. Lives and works in Montréal and Barcelona. 1968 emigrated to Quebec with her parents. 1973—82 studies at the Vancouver School of Art, the University of British Columbia, Concordia University, Montréal, and the University of Toronto. Representing Canada at the Venice Biennale, 2003. 1998—2006 Residency at the Centre international de recherche sur le verre et les arts plastiques (Cirva), Marseille.



FR **En chemin vers Marseille**
EN **On the Way to Marseille**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 2015

(Design 2002 [GBA 331]: Digital print on glossy photo paper, 21 × 28 cm)

Silk and wool, woven

250 × 328 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOBT 1382)

The Gobelin shows a series of nine photographs with changing cloud formations. Blue, clear skies give way to dark storm clouds – a motif that opens up a wide range of associations. Only the power lines in the last two images interrupt the natural spectacle and point to the approaching city.

Gentle transitions between 23 shades of blue and 16 shades of grey lend harmony and depth to the fragmented overall picture. The artist has dispensed with a classic frame. The title reveals that the photographic template, created in 2002, depicts a trip to Marseille, where Sterbak was working as a guest artist at the time.

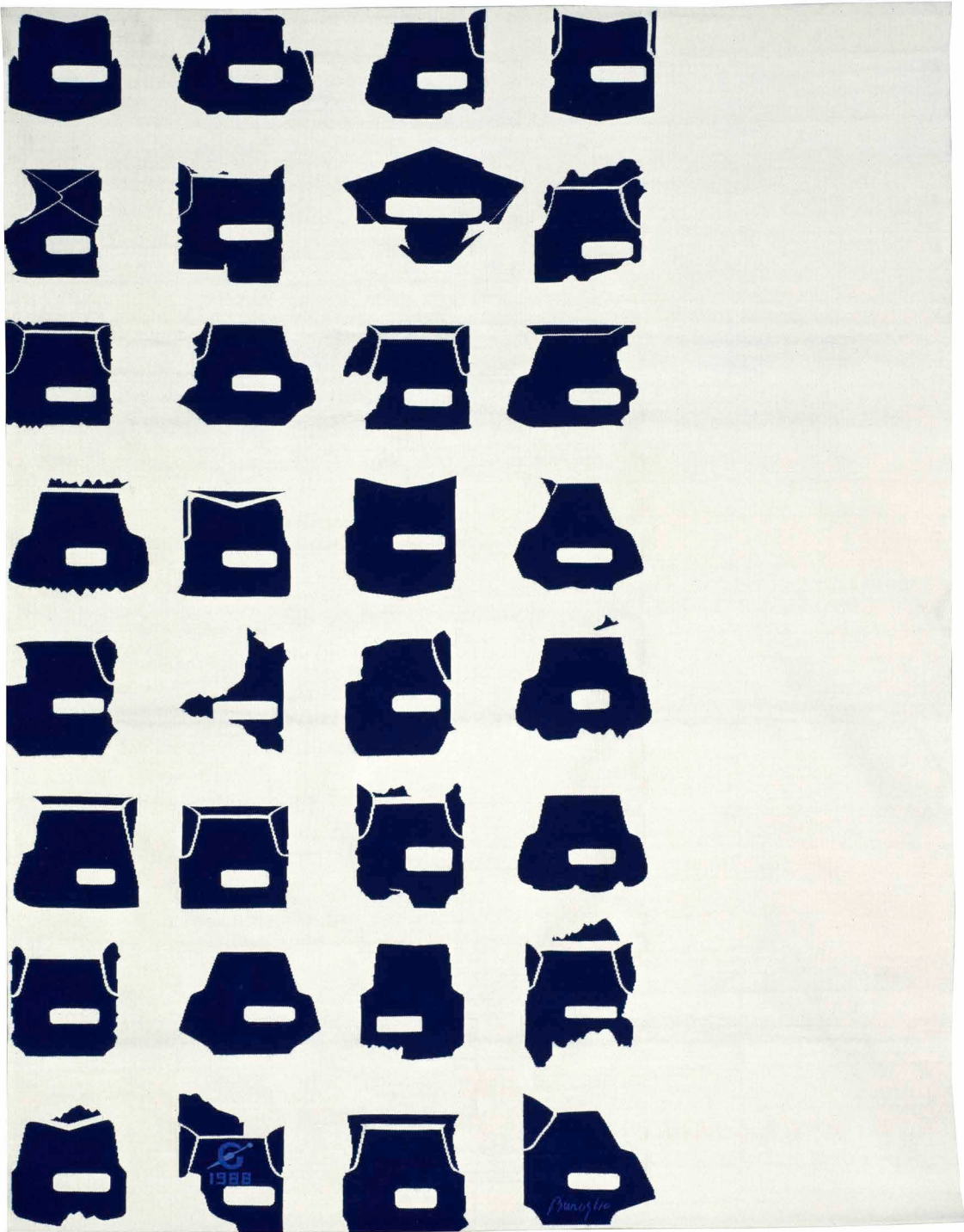
LITERATURE

Die Fäden der Moderne. Matisse, Picasso, Miró ... und die französischen Gobelins, hg. von Roger Diederer (Ausst. Kat. Kunsthalle München), München 2019.

Pierre Buraglio

(Charenton-le-Pont 1939)

Printmaker and object artist. Lives and works in Paris. Studied at the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Encounter with Pierre Soulages. Buraglio is deeply engaged with the techniques of assemblage and the concept of the ready-made – that is, the combination of diverse, often modest materials and the reuse of everyday objects, including printed matter, within new aesthetic contexts. He held a long-standing teaching position at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris.



FR **Dazibao**
EN **Dazibao**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1988

(Design 1985)

Wool, woven

261 × 200 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOB 1291)

The tapestry is characterized by the serial repetition of a slightly varied, enigmatic form. Rendered in ink blue, it appears arranged in eight rows and four columns against a light background, each unit featuring an elongated aperture or opening. The underlying motif is, in fact, based on a collage of 32 blue-dyed envelopes with viewing windows – each one torn open and unfolded in a distinct manner. The title »Dazibao« derives from Mandarin and refers to a poster wall or a hand-written wall newspaper, commonly used during the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

LITERATURE

<https://www.pierreburaglio.com/>

David Boeno

(Brest 1955)

Photographer and sculptor. Lives and works in Paris. A central focus of Boeno's oeuvre is the engagement with texts by classical authors, with particular interest in the visual form of the text as an image. Other works revolve around the themes of light and color.

Iliade,
Chant IV.140.

Un sang noir aussitôt
coule de la blessure.
Comme on voit une femme
de Troie en deuil se
teindre de poudre d'ivoire,
ainsi, Ménélas, se teignent
de sang tes cuisses vigoureuses,
tes jambes,
jusqu'à tes splendides chevilles.

1933

FR Iliade, chant IV. 140
EN Iliad, Book 4, Verse 140

Manufacture des Gobelins, 1994, signed 1993
(Design 1992)

Wool, woven

250 × 300 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOBT 1312)

The relationship between text and visual appearance constitutes the central theme of this tapestry.

At its core are several verses from Homer's Iliad.

This ancient Greek epic about the Trojan War is one of the oldest surviving poetic works. Here, it is presented in a modern French translation, rendered in the distinctive typographic style of a 1990s dot-matrix printer. The blood-red letters are knotted. The text vividly describes the dark blood flowing down the legs of the warrior Menelaus from an arrow wound. This is visually articulated in the carpet through a gradation of color, transitioning from deep red to a pale flesh tone.

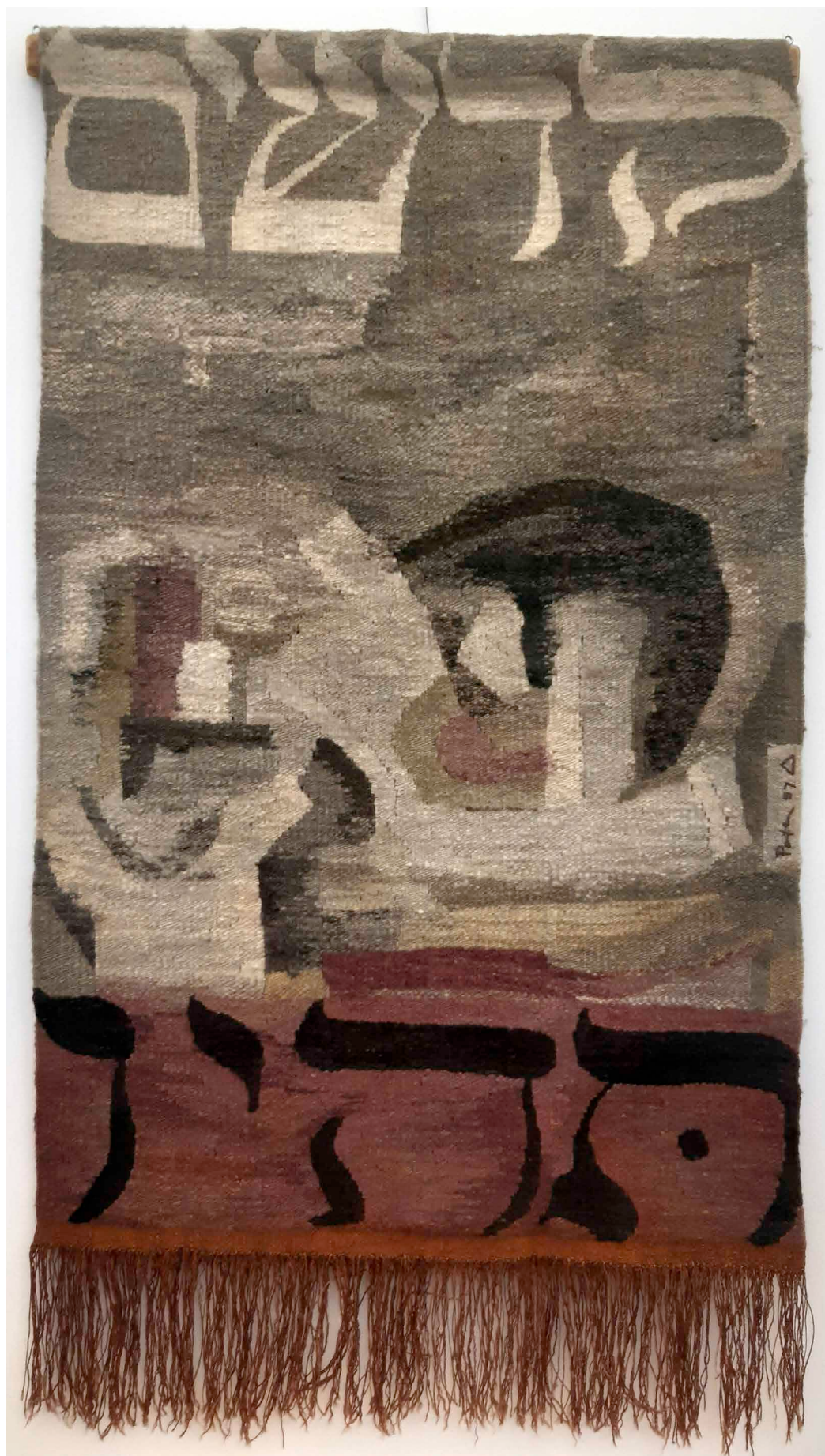
LITERATURE

Tapis, tapisseries d'artistes contemporains. Manufactures nationales des Gobelins, Beauvais, Savonnerie, 1960 à nos jours, hg. von Alberte Grynpas Nguyen, Marie-Hélène Massé Bersani, Paris 2006, S. 38–40.

Allan Porter

(Philadelphia 1934 — 2022 Luzern)

Photographer, journalist, graphic artist, and editor of various magazines. Son of a Russian-Jewish family. Studied, among other subjects, photography and art history in Philadelphia. In 1955, completed military service in Germany. Attended a typography course in Offenbach with the type designer Hans Schmidt, known for his typographic tapestry series. Several tapestries were created in collaboration with the tapestry workshop Mohrhardt and Richter in Offenbach. Since 1964, he has been based in Switzerland, where he worked for a graphic agency and served as editor-in-chief of the renowned photography magazine camera.



HEB **Kedoshem teehe**
EN **You Shall Be Holy**

Gobelinwerkstatt Gret Mohrhardt,
Ingeborg Richter, 1957

Wool, woven

122 × 73 cm

Klingspor Museum, Offenbach

Peter und Irene Ludwig Stiftung

The title of this small-scale tapestry derives from the two-line Hebrew inscription along the top and bottom edges of the piece. Enclosed within is an abstract-expressive configuration of forms that appears to have been painted with a broad brush. The inscription is a truncated verse from the Torah, the central religious text of Judaism. In full translation, it reads: »And the Lord spoke to Moses: ›Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy« (Leviticus 19:2). Thus, the tapestry serves as an exhortation to live in accordance with God and religious commandments.

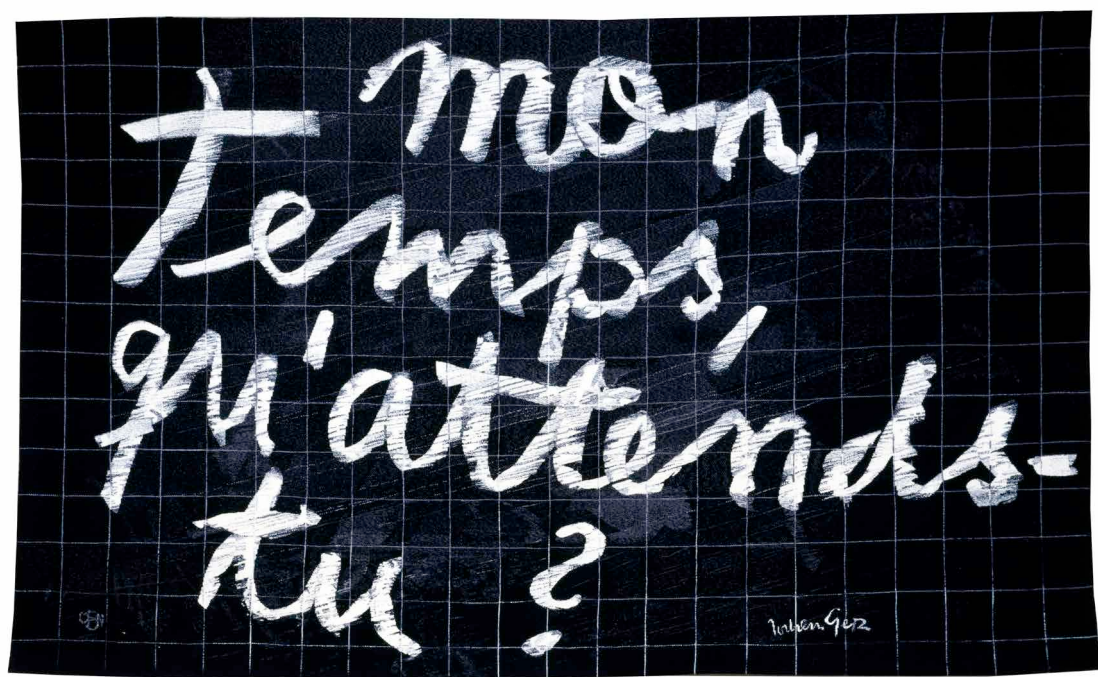
LITERATURE

Nadine Olonetzky, Ein Amerikaner in Luzern: Allan Porter und Camera – eine Biografie, Luzern 2007 (Kultur in der Zentralschweiz, Bd. 15).

Jochen Gerz

(Berlin 1940)

One of the most important conceptual artists of the present day, he has lived and worked in Paris since 1966 and in Dublin since 2008. Originally a writer, his early career included interactive performances, which later evolved into works of visual poetry combining photography and text, as well as spatial installations and video art. From the 1980s onward, he increasingly produced works in public spaces, including memorials against fascism and racism (Harburg, Saarbrücken) and commemorative projects (Coventry). A constant throughout his practice is the active involvement of the viewer in the artistic process.



FR **Mon temps**
EN **My Time**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2002
(Design 1998 [GBA 306]:
black-and-white-photography, 37 × 60 cm)
Wool, woven
152 × 245 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 457)

The poetic interplay between text and photography is emblematic of the conceptual artist's oeuvre. The tapestry is based on a photograph of a school blackboard, whose grid pattern remains distinctly visible in the woven rendition. Inscribed with deliberate emphasis and broad strokes of white chalk – possibly on a still damp surface – are the words »mon temps, qu'attends-tu?« (My time, what are you waiting for?). Beneath them, faint traces of a previously erased inscription can be discerned. This question addresses one's own (life) time, paradoxically critiqued for its passivity and hesitation.

LITERATURE

Jochen Gerz. Werkverzeichnis. Catalogue raisonné, hg. von Volker Rattemeyer u. a., 4 Bde, Nürnberg 1999–2011.

Antonia Artemis Torti

(Rom 1949)

From an early age, Torti was determined to become a painter. She studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome and worked in the studio of Giorgio de Chirico. Encounters with Pop Art led to her relocation to the United States, where she worked at Andy Warhol's Factory. She also designed stage sets for the Rolling Stones. Her artistic practice increasingly combines unconventional materials and printmaking techniques.



FR **Composition**
EN **Composition**

Manufacture des Gobelins, 2021

(Design 1984)

Wool, woven

270 × 200 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (GOBT 1394)

The challenge in translating the original design lay in imitating the accidental color gradations that had resulted from printing various stamped forms and textures onto vellum paper. This applies in particular to the brown areas with their internal structures created by the imprint of coarse wooden boards. An even more dynamic effect is achieved in the grey-blue zone, likely marbled with a brush or another tool, over which red stamped forms have been applied. Owing to the exceptionally detailed execution, the tapestry successfully creates the illusion of rich color impressed upon a likewise colored ground.

LITERATURE

<https://www.paris-art.com/antonia-artemis-torti/>

François Boisrond

(Boulogne-Billancourt 1959)

Studied at the École nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs in Paris (1978—81). Spent a period living in New York. Considered one of the central representatives of »Figuration Libre«, a movement that emerged in the 1980s and deliberately fused elements of subculture and popular culture with scenes from everyday life. 1999—2021 lecturer at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In his current works, he has moved away from the bold, comic-like style of his earlier years. Lives and works in Paris and Normandy.



FR **Le camp retranché**
EN **The Entrenched Camp**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2004

(Design 2001)

Wool, woven

250 × 250 cm

Mobilier national, Paris (BV 467)

Everyday scenes of urban life – such as the deserted construction site depicted here – are among Boisrond's preferred subjects. He is considered a co-founder of »Figuration libre«, a movement that emerged in the 1980s as a reaction against the intellectually charged conceptual art of the time. Instead, it turned toward the visual languages of popular culture, urban mobility, and the world of labor. Boisrond's deliberately bold style is influenced by subcultures, comics, and graffiti. At the center of the composition is a yellow construction compressor, whose tags and inscriptions receive more attention from the painter than the people in the background.

LITERATURE

Dix années de création. 1997–2007. Tapisseries, tapis, mobilier, hg. von Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée und Marie-Hélène Massé-Bersani (Ausst. Kat., Galerie des Gobelins), Paris 2007.

Pierre Alechinsky

(Brüssel 1927)

The son of Russian-Jewish immigrants, Alechinsky began studying book illustration and typography at the École nationale supérieure d'architecture et des arts décoratifs in Brussels in 1944. Since 1951, he has been based in Paris. Numerous travels abroad, including to Japan. He is one of the last surviving members of the international artists' group CoBrA. His work also reflects his engagement with East Asian painting techniques and calligraphy. He lives and works in Bougival near Paris.



FR **Entrées et sorties**
EN **Entries and Exits**

Manufacture de Beauvais, 2013
(Design 1992 [GBA 313]: Chinese ink and
acrylic on Xuan paper, 158 × 138 cm)
Wool, woven
274 × 239 cm
Mobilier national, Paris (BV 501)

The Belgian artist has produced several designs for tapestries. Typical of his art are two formal characteristics that correspond particularly well to the traditional structure of a tapestry: On the one hand, the framing of the central composition by a border with ornamental decoration. On the other hand, the division of the central pictorial field into smaller sub-units. Each of these contains variations on a labyrinth motif, with entrances and exits. The process of translating a swiftly executed drawing into the time-consuming technique of weaving can be effectively studied by comparing it with the original design in ink and acrylic on Xuan paper.

LITERATURE

Pierre Alechinsky. Werke aus fünf Jahrzehnten, hg. von Achim Sommer
(Ausst. Kat. Kunsthalle Emden), Ostfildern-Ruit 2005.



Millefleurs
mir spriest
outing

1. Der Titel Millefleurs (Tausend Blüten) bezieht sich auf einen französischen Begriff, der die Vielfalt der Natur beschreibt. In diesem Projekt haben wir versucht, diese Vielfalt in einer Art Millefleurs-Design wiederzugeben.

2. Der Titel Millefleurs (Tausend Blüten) bezieht sich auf einen französischen Begriff, der die Vielfalt der Natur beschreibt. In diesem Projekt haben wir versucht, diese Vielfalt in einer Art Millefleurs-Design wiederzugeben.

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12.03.



02.

19.01.



12.02.



05.02.



19.03.



26.03.



02.04.



15.01.



22.01.

29.01.



Faden Atelier

Part of the exhibition is the Faden Atelier, a mediation space offering a variety of activities for visitors.

Each week, on Thursdays throughout the exhibition, regional handicraft groups from very different backgrounds present themselves and invite visitors to participate and get in touch.

On a large action wall, participants and visitors create the continuously growing plant wall »Millefleurs. A part of me sprouts« using crochet yarns. A specially composed soundscape accompanies this collaborative work musically. After the exhibition, the wall greenery is going to be divided and handed over to the participating institutions and groups for further use.

At the Faden Atelier, visitors can braid bracelets, sew thread pictures, and weave papers. The city library, the MdbK library and lokaltextil network provide a small literature corner.

From the collaboration of two primary schools, from the small town of Groitzsch and the city of Leipzig, with the museum, publicly visible textile links were created at all three locations.

In the Connect! format, the children decorated the bicycle stands or fences of the three institutions, and both schools organise excursion days including exhibition visits.



Impressum

Welt aus Fäden

Bildteppiche der Moderne

A World of Threads

Tapestries of the Modern Age

11.12.2025 — 12.04.2026

MdbK Museum der
bildenden
Künste Leipzig

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