

FONDATION VINCENT VAN GOGH ARLES

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EXHIBITIONS

21.04 – 28.10.2018

Press preview: Friday 20 April 2018 at 1pm

HOT SUN, LATE SUN



Vincent van Gogh, *Harvest in Provence*, June 1888
Oil on canvas, 51 x 60 cm
Israel Museum, Jerusalem

PAUL NASH SUNFLOWER RISES



Paul Nash, *Solstice of the Sunflower*, 1945
Oil on canvas, 71.3 x 91.4 cm
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

EDITORIAL

Since its inauguration in 2014, the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles has presented works by the great masters of painting—foremost among them being Vincent van Gogh, whose work underpins the direction of our program. However, while Vincent will be present once again, this upcoming exhibition is driven by the work of another great painter in modern art, Pablo Picasso.

Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh: an extraordinary dialogue delving into the major influence of the Dutch painter on Picasso, who considered him the “greatest of all”; just this would have sufficed. But *Hot Sun, Late Sun* is a thematic exhibition, weaving an intricate conversation highlighting the intersections between practices—between Pablo Picasso and Sigmar Polke for one, but also between Alexander Calder, Adolphe Monticelli, Giorgio de Chirico and Vincent van Gogh.

Hot Sun, Late Sun will feature a number of rare loans, which we are proud to present to the public over a six-month period.

In another major event, the Fondation will continue to explore ambiguous light in its retrospective exhibition, where suns appear as sunflowers, at times darkly foreboding. Following Alice Neel, we bring to the space the British artist Paul Nash (1889-1946), a major painter of the 20th century still under-recognized in France, whose works selected for this exhibition are imbued with a surrealist atmosphere and a sense of the finite, against a backdrop of death and war.

A vibrant season of extraordinary visuals awaits!

HOT SUN, LATE SUN

This thematic exhibition pursues a free exploration of light, understood as a metaphor illuminating the artists' respective relationships with the Mediterranean region, home to experimentation, and with modernism and postmodernism. It brings together outstanding loans of paintings by Vincent van Gogh, late paintings by Pablo Picasso, Giorgio de Chirico, Alexander Calder, as well as works by Sigmar Polke, Etel Adnan, Adolphe Monticelli and the musician Sun Ra. *Hot Sun, Late Sun* thereby seeks to outline a family of artists whose origins go back to Adolphe Monticelli – a member, alongside Jean-François Millet, of the pantheon of artists who inspired Vincent van Gogh.

The "hot sun" of the title symbolises a modernism at its blazing zenith, embodied in the work of Van Gogh as from February 1888, when the Dutch artist discovered Provence. The "late sun", belonging to the end of the day, is found in the works of Picasso's final years, where its last rays naturally reflect the artist's advanced age. Filled with a sense of urgency, Picasso turns to formal abbreviation, as witnessed by *The Old Man*, executed in 1970 at Mougins. A thick and fluid painting – qualified as a "daub" in former times, but more importantly liberated from the past – characterises the seven Picasso canvases presented in the exhibition. All were executed between 1970 and 1973, when Picasso was living at Notre-Dame-de-Vie in Mougins. *Head of a Man With Straw Hat* (1971) – a summer picture – explicitly evokes Van Gogh, who shares with Picasso the movement of and within painting that can be traced back to Monticelli. The late period in an artist's career is commonly associated with an art of synthesis. Thus Giorgio de Chirico likewise revisits earlier motifs, such as the representation of the sun on an easel. In parallel, he pursues his self-portraits in neo-Baroque disguise.

The light of postmodernism appears in the works of a different generation of artists, one to which Sigmar Polke belongs. His *Modern Art* (1968) is a young artist's ironic comment on the fathers of the modern art which he sees being progressively deleted. In his much later works, such as *Untitled (Lapis Lazuli II, 1994)*, Polke's use of a semi-precious stone as his medium allows him to invoke the history of the divinisation of its colour as well as the history of humanity and of minerals brought to Europe via the Silk Road. Omnipresent in Nature, the blue also represents the Mediterranean.

The other works in the exhibition lead us to the absolute sun, to the sun god and to the intense heat of a star, represented as a ball in the work of Alexander Calder. A major figure in modern art, Calder is famous for his mobiles. The Fondation presents a selection of his gouaches from the 1970s, whose primary colours and stylized forms reveal an organic, joyous and graphic continuity between Calder's sculpture and his works on paper. From San Francisco, Lebanese artist Etel Adnan reconnects – by pen and brush – with her native country, which she was forced to leave. The landscape is represented through Mount Tamalpais, a mountain which Adnan sees as the "chief of the human tribe", while the weight of the world manifests itself in a flattened sun in bold colours. The exhibition extends, naturally, to a cosmic sun as embodied by the singing and the vision of musician Sun Ra.

Picasso-Méditerranée, an initiative from Musée national Picasso-Paris:

"Picasso-Méditerranée" is an international cultural event which will be held from Spring 2017 through to Spring 2019. Over sixty cultural institutions have come together to conjure up a programme around the work « obstinément méditerranéenne » of Pablo Picasso. Initiated by the Musée national Picasso-Paris, this journey into the creation of the artist and across the places which inspired him, aims at strengthening ties between all the shores.

Curator: Bice Curiger

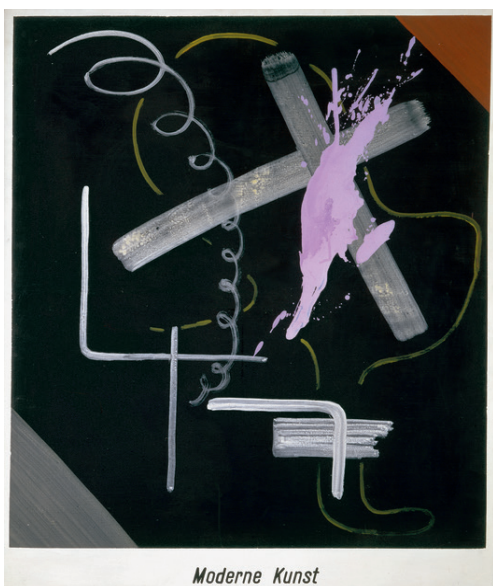
SELECTION OF ARTISTS ON SHOW: VINCENT VAN GOGH, PABLO PICASSO, ADOLPHE MONTICELLI, SIGMAR POLKE, ALEXANDER CALDER, GIORGIO DE CHIRICO, ETEL ADNAN, GERMAINE RICHIER, SUN RA.

A SELECTION OF IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED
IN HD FROM OUR WEBSITE:

www.fondation-vincentvangogh-arles.org

Section: Professionals — Press / Password: presse

SELECTION OF WORKS ON SHOW - HOT SUN, LATE SUN



SIGMAR POLKE
Moderne Kunst, 1968
Acrylic and lacquer on canvas, 150 x 125 cm
Froehlich Collection, Stuttgart



PABLO PICASSO
Paysage, Mougins, 31 March 1972
Oil on canevas, 130 x 162 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris



VINCENT VAN GOGH
Field with Stacks of Grain, July 1890
Oil on canevas, 50 x 100 cm
Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, Sammlung Beyeler

PAUL NASH. SUNFLOWER RISES

An English modernist, Paul Nash (1889-1946) combined a fascination for natural landscapes with his very personal vision of the real and imaginary worlds which surrounded him. This led him to create an extraordinary body of work, which sets him among the most important British artists of the 20th century.

Centred around Paul Nash's unique perspective - inspired by nature, transformed by the two world wars he lived through and influenced by an increasing awareness of his mortality - this exhibition on the second floor of the Fondation will feature over thirty works painted during the period from 1918 to 1946. Paul Nash's work bears the influence of a multidisciplinary approach, as well as the artist's interest in a wide range of subjects, from Christian Science to hot air ballooning, and the mystic poets through to archaeology, photography and design.

Presented in reverse chronological order, the exhibition begins with an impressive series of paintings made by Paul Nash during the final years of his life: the visual explosions of *Sunflower & Sun* (1942). Included will also be a series of landscapes and skyscapes painted in the Surrealist style, as well as his precocious melancholic landscapes created in the 1920s as a response to the First World War.

The exhibition will also feature other documents, including photographs and archives, which will shed light on a little-known aspect of this artist's life and work, that being the influence of the South of France and French painters (such as Paul Cézanne and Jean Lurçat), gleaned during Nash's various journeys to France in the 1920s and 1930s, including a short stay in Arles.

Curator: Simon Grant

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in London in 1889 and dying in Boscombe, United Kingdom, in 1946, Paul Nash was raised in Buckinghamshire, where he developed a keen love of landscapes. After failing his naval entrance examination, he chose to become an artist and focussed on landscape painting at the Slade School of Art. He enlisted in the army at the beginning of the First World War but, having been sent to a relatively quiet front in Belgium, he was able to continue painting and became an official war painter in 1917.

After the war he suffered post-traumatic stress and produced a number of melancholic landscapes. During his time spent in the south of France in the 1920s and 1930s, he encountered the painting of Paul Cézanne and Jean Lurçat, and then in Paris would discover Modernism, after which he became a champion of the European avant-garde in England. At the beginning of the Second World War, he was once again appointed an official war artist.

He died at the end of the war, succumbing to asthma.

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SELECTION OF WORKS ON SHOW - PAUL NASH. *SUNFLOWER RISES*



Dawn Flowers, 1944
Pencil and watercolour, 39 x 56 cm
Private collection

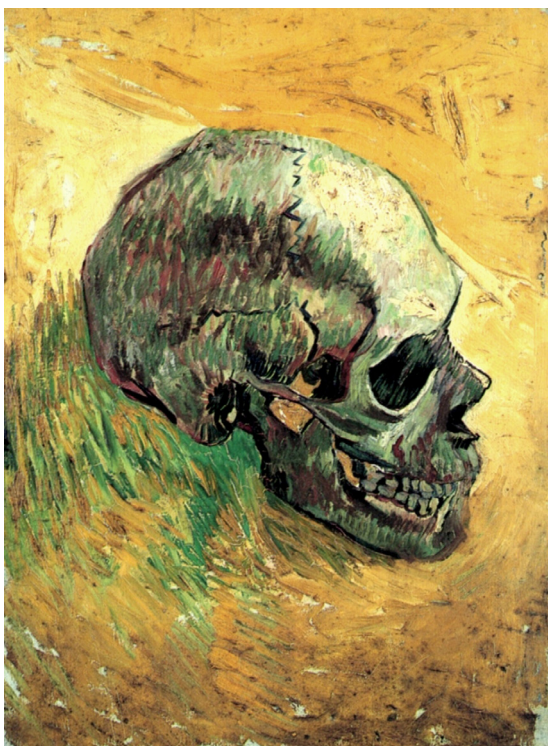


Circle of the Monoliths, ca. 1937-1938
Oil on canevas, 71 x 92cm
Private collection



Eclipse of the Sunflower, 1945
Oil on canevas, 71.1 x 91.4 cm
British Council Collection

ANNUAL LOAN FROM THE VAN GOGH MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM



Vincent van Gogh, *Skull*, Paris, May 1887
Oil on canvas, 42.4 × 30.4 cm
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam
(Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

VINCENT VAN GOGH, SKULL, 1887

Loan 2018-2019

In March 1886, Vincent van Gogh left Antwerp, where his professors at the Académie des beaux-arts deemed “he couldn’t draw”, to join his brother Theo in Paris. There, Vincent enrolled once again at art school, with the goal to improve his technique. He attended classes in anatomical painting, and would paint his *Skull* from life in the spring of 1887.

Several months later, disillusioned by its overly formal teachings, he quit the École des beaux-arts and left Paris for Arles, stating that “it seems to me almost impossible to be able to work in Paris, unless you have a refuge in which to recover and regain your peace of mind and self-composure. Without that, you’d be bound to get utterly numbed.”¹

Through non-naturalistic use of colour and animated backgrounds, which give a sense of vibration and movement, Vincent van Gogh distanced himself from the academicism of anatomy painting. This still life, which has the tenor of a *memento mori*, confirms his foremost position as an artistic innovator.

1. Letter from Vincent to Theo van Gogh, 21 February 1888, Arles.

THE FONDATION VINCENT VAN GOGH ARLES

FULFILLING VINCENT'S WISH

The Fondation offers a unique approach to Vincent van Gogh, namely by exploring, through the medium of temporary exhibitions, the resonance of his art and thinking with international artistic production today. Thanks to partnerships established with public and private collections, the Fondation presents one or more original canvases by Vincent van Gogh all year round, in company with a changing selection of works by contemporary artists such as Yan Pei-Ming, Roni Horn, David Hockney and Urs Fischer, among others.

It was in Arles, where Vincent lived and worked from February 1888 to May 1889, that his art reached its pinnacle. As from 1983, with the centenary of this stay in mind, Yolande Clergue invited contemporary artists to present a work in homage to Van Gogh. Thanks to patron Luc Hoffmann, in 2010 the Fondation Vincent van Gogh Arles was created as a public utility foundation. The City of Arles placed at its disposal the hôtel Léautaud-de-Donines, a prestigious residence dating back to the 15th century. Renovated and transformed by the architectural agency Fluor, the building was inaugurated in 2014 and offers over 1000 m² of exhibition space. The Fondation's resolutely contemporary bias is underscored by the integration within the museum complex of two permanent artworks by Raphael Hefti and Bertrand Lavier.

The Fondation also offers a wide range of in-house and extramural cultural events and activities: artist talks and podium discussions, symposia, film screenings, creative workshops and courses, performances and concerts, as well as guided tours and educational activities tailored to different publics. Our art education programme focuses in particular upon children and young people, with special tours of the exhibitions as well as workshops held in schools in Arles and the surrounding area.

The shop is conceived as a colourful link between the Fondation's historical and contemporary architecture. It offers exhibition catalogues, art books, limited-edition prints, fine-art reproductions, handcrafted products and other items, and also includes a children's section.

The Fondation fulfils the wish, cherished by one of the world's most famous painters, to create in Arles a place of reflection, fertile production and stimulating dialogue between artists.

"Then, as you well know, I love Arles so much, [...]"

Letter from Vincent to Theo van Gogh, 18 February 1889, Arles.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Press preview: Friday 20 April 2018 at 1pm
Public opening: Saturday 21 April 2018 at 11am

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ADMISSION

Full rate: €9

Reduced rate: €7

Free admission: children under 12, disabled visitors,
ICOM members, press card, tour guides, curators,
journalists

OPENING HOURS

From 21 April to 28 October 2018:

Fondation and bookshop open everyday from 11am
to 7pm, and from 10am to 7pm in July and August.

Last admission 45 minutes before closing.

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