



ACADÉMIE  
DES BEAUX-ARTS  
INSTITUT DE FRANCE

# PERSPECTIVES ON THE ACADEMIE

LA LETTRE DE L'ACADÉMIE  
NUMBER 91



**Editorial** | As we were editing this special issue of the *Lettre de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts* presenting our Compagnie's activities and heritage, the Wednesday 15 January 2020 election of Catherine Meurisse to the Painting section further broadened the spectrum of disciplines it embraces.

This young artist, elected at the age of 39, became the youngest member not only of our Académie but of the entire Institut de France. With her, we welcome comics – often referred to as the Ninth Art – as well the art of press cartooning. Sixty years thus separate Catherine Meurisse from our beloved oldest member, Pierre-Yves Trémois.

This election is yet another demonstration the extraordinary diversity of aesthetics and means of expression found within each section of the Académie de Beaux-Arts.

Catherine Meurisse, an artist whose path has been rich and open to life, but also tragic, knows that she will join women and men committed to supporting creation and defending our artistic heritage.

As you will see in the following pages, our Compagnie makes full use of the means available to encourage the emergence of new talent while affording an ever wider public access to the magnificent works and sites in its care.

And to salute the election of our young colleague, a future issue of the *Lettre de l'Académie* will be devoted to the teeming world of comics. Need one still say that it is an art in its own right, with its techniques and codes, its major trends and collectors and a considerable public: an art that has been shown in major exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou and elsewhere? It would be as ridiculous as wanting to engage in a defence and illustration of cinema. In the nineteenth century, the Académie would never have elected Gavarni – what would have been thought of the *Charivari* arriving at Quai de Conti? – nor Daumier, despite his brilliant paintings and sculptures. In the twentieth century, academicians did not even consider electing Jean de Brunhoff, the inventor of a very popular hero in a green suit, nor Claire Bretécher, despite the Grand Prix awarded to her at the Angoulême Festival as early as 1982. Catherine Meurisse is their heiress, and she wanted to be one of us. She is now in her rightful place in this Académie which, faithful to its purpose, is constantly adapting to change.

**Laurent Petitgirard**

Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts





# number 91 winter 2019-2020

Access the following Internet address to download *La Lettre - Académie des Beaux-Arts* and to visit the thematic *Dossier* mini-website:  
[www.academiedesbeauxarts.fr/actualites/lettre-academie.php](http://www.academiedesbeauxarts.fr/actualites/lettre-academie.php)

Publication Director: Laurent Petitgirard

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General design, writing and coordination: Nadine Eghels

Graphic design, production: Claude-Matthieu Pezon

Printing: Impresor-Ariane - ISSN 1265-3810

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Cover: the Coupole of the Palais de l'Institut de France and a detail of Coline Serreau's academic dress.

Pictures by Juliette Agnel



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On Wednesday 12 June 2019, Bruno Mantovani, elected as a member of the Musical Composition Section on 17 May 2017, in the Seat previously occupied by Jean Prodromidès (1927-2016), was welcomed to the Académie des Beaux-Arts by his colleague Patrick de Carolis under the Coupole of the Palais de l'Institut de France.

**B**runo Mantovani, born in 1974, is a versatile musician: a composer, conductor, radio producer, musicologist and more. He was trained at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, where he won five prizes, before embarking on an international career. His works have been performed in halls such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Barbican Centre in London, the Scala in Milan, the Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York, the Philharmonie de Paris and the Musikverein in Vienna. He has always been faithful to his favourite performers and has worked with prestigious soloists (Renaud and Gautier Capuçon, Tabea Zimmermann), conductors (Alain Altinoglu, Pierre Boulez, Riccardo Chailly, Peter Eötvös, Christoph Eschenbach, Daniele Gatti, Philippe Jordan, Susanna Mälkki, Yannick Nézet Seguin, François-Xavier Roth, Tugan Sokhiev), ensembles (Accentus, Ensemble Intercontemporain) and orchestras (Amsterdam Radio, Bamberg Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Leipzig Gewandhaus, BBC London, Scala Milan, Münchner Philharmoniker, New York Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, Opéra de Paris, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, etc.).

Bruno Mantovani was a resident at the Académie de France in Rome – Villa Médicis in 2004-2005, at the Besançon Festival from 2006 to 2008, with the Lille National Orchestra from 2008 to 2011, then with the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse from 2010, and finally with the Orchestre National de Lyon in 2014-2016. The *Musica* festival, of which he has been a special guest since 2001, programmed an exclusive musical portrait of his oeuvre in 2006. He was appointed director of the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse in 2010. In the same year, he embarked on regular collaboration with the Opéra National de Paris, creating the ballet *Siddharta* for his first season, an opera on the life of the poet Anna Akhmatova in March 2011, and a violin concerto for Renaud Capuçon and Philippe Jordan in March 2012.

Bruno Mantovani is passionate about the relationship between music and other forms of artistic expression, and his work often explores the history of Western music (Bach, Gesualdo, Rameau, Schubert, Schumann) and popular repertoires (jazz, oriental music).

Top: Bruno Mantovani with, to his left, Édith Canat de Chizy, the Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard, and Régis Campo, all of whom are members of the Musical Composition section.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

installations  
under the Coupole



As a conductor, he regularly leads contemporary music ensembles (Accentus, Ensemble Intercontemporain), and he will take up his position as Music Director of the Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain in January 2020.

Bruno Mantovani has received several distinctions in international competitions and numerous awards (the Sacem Grand Prix in 2000, 2005 and 2009, the Institute's André Caplet Prize in 2005, the SCAD New Talent Prize in 2007, the Victoire de la Musique award for “composer of the year” in 2009, the Berlin Philharmonic's Claudio Abbado Prize and the International Music Press Prize in 2010).

The following is an excerpt from Patrick de Carolis' speech:

“How can one sum up, in just a few minutes, the prolific career of a composer who, by the age of 45, is already the author of 27 orchestral works, 34 chamber works, 32 vocal and choral works and 2 operas? (...)

What matters to you is renewal, depth, aesthetic affirmation. In short, ceaselessly finding oneself. You say: “To end this quest is to risk repeating myself”. Is your ambition not to go beyond the limits of forms, genres, instruments and performers? You're not afraid of novelty. You admire the audacity of sound imbalances.” ■



# GÉRARD GAROUSTE

On Wednesday 23 October, Laurent Petitgirard, Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, appointed his colleague Gérard Garouste to the Seat previously held by Georges Mathieu (1921-2012). Gérard Garouste had been elected to the Painting section on 13 December 2017.

Gérard Garouste, one of the most popular French artists of his generation, holds a special place on the international art scene. Born in 1946, he lived and worked in Normandy and Paris. He began his training at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris in 1965, where he worked until 1972 in Gustave Singier's studio. He was the author, director and stage designer of *Le Classique et l'Indien* performed in 1977 at Le Palace, where he worked until 1982 as a stage designer and painter. In 1980 he exhibited at the Durand-Dessert gallery for the first time, with a figurative, mythological and allegorical painting. Thus began his national and then international recognition.

Represented by the great US art dealer Leo Castelli in the 1980s, Gérard Garouste's work has been exhibited all over the world (United States, Japan, Germany, Latin America, Italy) and features in the greatest public collections, including those of the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, and the Museum Ludwig in Vienna.

In 1991, he created the non-profit organization La Source, a place of creation to support disadvantaged children and young people through artistic expression, in which he is still very much involved.

Gérard Garouste's work has been exhibited multiple times across the world, including in several retrospectives, notably at the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Centre Georges Pompidou (1988), the Städtisches Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (1989), the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (1989), the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien in Vienna (1992), the Villa Médicis (2009), the Fondation Maeght (2015), and the Musée des Beaux Arts in Mons (2016).



Gérard Garouste has produced works for the Élysée Palace (paintings), the Évry Cathedral (sculptures), the Namur theatre (ceiling), the wedding hall of the beautiful gothic townhall in Mons (fresco), and the Église Notre-Dame de Talant (stained-glass windows). In 1989 he designed the stage curtain of the Théâtre du Châtelet. He has also illustrated many books on art and bibliophilism.

As a major figure in French painting, Gérard Garouste is fascinated with the roots of our culture, the legacy of the old masters, and myths. His own story is at the core of his work "dismantling images and words", and of his concern with questions surrounding origins, time, and transmission. His canvases, built around associations of ideas, alternate between disturbing and joyful, populated with animals, sometimes fantastical, and different characters. It draws from the Bible, popular culture and great works, from Cervantes to Rabelais. He is represented by the Galerie Templon (Paris, Brussels).

## Excerpt from Laurent Petitgirard's speech:

“With you, the idea of justice is constant. You are guided not by a search for beauty, but by the desire to understand how men get themselves into downward spirals that drive them to commit the worst atrocities. The force and even violence one finds in your paintings are there only to create ties and compel men and women to examine their inability to communicate. [...] Above all, there is a passion for interpretation in your work. What matters is not the primary idea of the subject you choose, but how you are able to interpret it. Myths, dreams, sacred or real characters, starting with yourself, everything is merely matter for transformation, transcendence, and sublimation.”

Top: members of the Painting section Pierre Carron, Jean-Marc Bustamante and Yves Millecamps welcoming their colleague Gérard Garouste.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel



# COLINE SERREAU

On Wednesday, 11 December 2019, Coline Serreau, who was elected on 25 April 2018 in the Artistic Creations in Cinema and Audiovisual Arts section to the Seat previously occupied by Pierre Schoendoerffer (1928-2012), joined her colleagues of the Académie de Beaux-Arts. She was welcomed by Hugues R. Gall of the Free Members Section.

Coline Serreau, born in 1947, studied literature and attended Norbert Dufourcq's and Marcel Beaufils' music history and aesthetics classes at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris. She also studied organ, first with Micheline Lagache and later, at the Schola Cantorum, with Jean Langlais. She was drawn to theatre and entered as an apprentice actress at the Centre National de la Rue Blanche in 1968. As a trainee at the Comédie Française in 1969, she worked with Romain Bouteille and Coluche, before turning to writing for film and theatre and directing plays, films and operas.

Her first screenplay *On s'est trompé d'histoire d'amour* (1973), in which she played the female role, was directed by Jean-Louis Bertuccelli. In 1975 she directed her first film, *Mais qu'est-ce qu'elles veulent?*, which drew the critics' attention. *Pourquoi pas!* (1977), *Grand-mères de l'islam* (1980) and *Qu'est-ce qu'on attend pour être heureux!* (1981) followed.

In 1985 she met with unprecedented success with *Trois hommes et un couffin*, starring Roland Giraud, Michel Boujenah and André Dussollier. She then directed films of which she always wrote the screenplays, including *Romuald et Juliette* (1989), *La crise* (1992), which was awarded a César for best screenplay, *La belle verte* (1996), *Chaos* (2001) and *Saint-Jacques... La Mecque* (2005). In 2012 she directed *Tout est permis*, a documentary on car driving habits in France and, in 2015, *Pierre Brosolette*, on the occasion of his entry into the Pantheon.

Coline Serreau has starred, among other plays, in *Lapin Lapin*, *Quisaitout et Grobêta* (which was awarded five Molières), *Le salon d'été*, and Bertolt Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. In 2006 she played Arnolphe in Molière's *L'école des femmes*, which she directed.

She has also directed Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermauss* (2000), Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* (2001) and Jules Massenet's *Manon* (2012) at the Opéra Bastille. In 2018, with her son Samuel Tasinaje, she adapted and directed *Trois hommes et un couffin* at the Théâtre du Gymnase in Paris. Also with Samuel Tasinaje, she is preparing a play adapted from her film *La crise*, to be performed in 2020.



Coline Serreau was President of the Académie Fratellini, the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts du Cirque et Centre d'Art, and President of the Association des Réalisateur Producteurs for two years.

She was awarded the SACD Grand Prix in 2004. She composed the music for her films *La Belle Verte* and *18 ans après*, and has directed the Paris-based Delta Choir since 2007. Her latest book *#ColineSerreau* was recently published by Actes Sud.

## The following is an excerpt from Hugues R. Gall's speech:

“Every Pythia needs a god. You discovered this god, your Apollo, who dictated to you so many of the predictions you later made on stage, in writing, in music, on film, in conducting choruses; you discovered this hidden god as a child, or almost, when you avidly devoured the works of Sigmund Freud, Groddeck, and Ferenczi, at an age when others – of which I am one – were reading *La semaine de Suzette*. And your mother, Geneviève Serreau, was a writer, editor of *Bataille*, *Barthes*, *Sarraute* and *Miller* among others, and a translator of Gombrowicz and Brecht, who collaborated with Maurice Nadeau at *Lettres Nouvelles*... Ah! It seems oh so distant now, the time when little girls read the *Comtesse de Ségur*, *Les malheurs de Sophie*, and the beautiful tales in the *Bibliothèque Rose* which, reflected in the mirror of psychoanalysis, turned out to be more than fantasy, ripe with delicious complexes. You were seven years old and already your mother was taking you to the dress rehearsal of every play. Nothing fascinated you more than the acting, the staging, the lights, the sets, the writing! The profession was taking a hold of you!”

Top: Architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, Hugues R. Gall, from the Unattached Members section, and Coline Serreau.

Coline Serreau, engraver Astrid de la Forest, Muriel Mayette-Holtz, from the Free Members section, sculptor Brigitte Terziev and composer Édith Canat de Chizy.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

Palais de l'Institut de France

# FORMAL SESSION OF THE ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS

A year ago Paul Andreu, a member of our Compagnie's Architecture section, passed away. On this occasion, a tribute was paid to him in China, at the Beijing Opera - National Centre for the Performing Arts, and at the French Embassy in Beijing. The Permanent Secretary paid tribute to Paul Andreu, the man, and his oeuvre in his speech, of which the following is an excerpt:

“Those who have been fortunate enough to visit this magnificent edifice or, even better, to attend a performance in one of its three halls, have been fascinated by the sense of completeness, perfection and balance that emanates from this visionary and perfectly functional work. This sense of marvel is even stronger among the artists who have had the privilege of performing on one or several of this Art Centre's stages. [...] What is crucial in Paul Andreu's work is the balance between the profoundly poetic aesthetics of this construction and the perfect functionality of its four halls and all the adjoining spaces. Unlike the famous Sidney Opera House, which is as impressive on the outside as it is impractical on the inside, and whose 2,800-seat main hall was taken over by the symphony orchestra from the outset, the Beijing Opera House combines beauty and originality in its architecture, which is perfectly designed to meet the requirements of the disciplines practised in each of the four halls.

From the official opening of the Opera House at the end of 2007, it became a true place of worship. Apart from its musical use, the Opera is open to the public for a day tour, with a modestly priced ticket at, currently, 5 euros. It immediately became the most visited modern site in Beijing, as it is often an essential stopover for tourists visiting the Forbidden City, a must-see located just a stone's throw away from it.

Functionally, the Opera House built by Paul Andreu is a real success story, praised by both the New York Times and the Financial Times. The latter emphasized the fact that the National Centre for the Performing Arts had managed to set up a complete system of productions in such a short time. [...]

Paul Andreu's work, twelve years after its inauguration, is therefore fully assimilated and appreciated by the people of Beijing, who even take pride in it, while also meeting its artistic objectives.

Paul Andreu was an inspired man, one of great moral rigour and a particularly endearing personality. His soft but firm voice demanded silence, and the contrast between his slender, almost frail body and the majestic power of this extraordinary construction was striking.

For our Compagnie, he set an example of passion, moral rigour and high-mindedness that has enriched our lives.”

Credit Photo Opéra de Pékin : Bruno Barbey



**Prizes and contests.** In 2019, the Académie thus distributed 38 prizes from its own funds, from the funds of the Institut de France at its suggestion, and from patrons. These prizes were awarded to artists of all ages, some of whom are well recognized, while others are at the dawn of their career in drawing, painting, sculpture, engraving, architecture, musical composition, photography or art works. In thus encouraging artistic creation in all its forms, it participates in the renewal of generations of artists and positions itself as a major player in patronage and French cultural influence.

In 2019, for instance: 38 prizes were awarded, amounting to EUR526,000, while EUR640,000 were distributed in grants and incentives, and EUR225,000 in subsidies.

The complete and detailed roll of prizes and competitions can be found at [www.academiedesbeauxarts.fr](http://www.academiedesbeauxarts.fr).



The formal session of the Académie des Beaux-Arts was held on 27 November under the Institut de France's Coupole. After President Pierre Carron paid tribute to the deceased members of our Compagnie, Vice-President Jean Anguera announced the 2019 list of fifty prize-winning artists, some of whom are well recognized while others are at the dawn of their career in drawing, painting, sculpture, engraving, architecture, musical composition, photography or art works.

By thus encouraging artistic creation in all its forms, the Académie participates in the renewal of generations of artists and positions itself as a major player in patronage and in France's cultural influence.

During this session, which was interspersed with musical performances by the Maîtrise de l'Opéra de Lyon, conducted by Karine Locatelli and winner of the Liliane Bettencourt prize for choral singing, and by the Orchestre de Picardie, which was exceptionally conducted by Laurent Petitgirard, a tribute was paid to the fellows our Compagnie who passed away in 2019.

Finally, the Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Laurent Petitgirard, devoted his closing speech to Paul Andreu's opera house in Beijing (see left-hand page). ■

Top left: the session was paced with music by the Orchestre de Picardie, conducted by Laurent Petitgirard, and the choir of the Maîtrise de l'Opéra de Lyon, conducted by Karine Locatelli.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel



Palais de l'Institut de France

## ANNUAL PUBLIC SESSION OF THE FIVE ACADEMIES

Every year, the five Académies that make up the Institut de France meet under the Coupole for a solemn autumn opening session. This event is an opportunity for the Institute, “where all the efforts of the human mind come together, as though they were one” (Ernest Renan), to reaffirm its values and its role in the development and dissemination of knowledge. Through the prism of their respective specialities, delegates from each of the five Académies deliver a talk on a theme jointly chosen by all five of them. On 21 October 2019, the theme was “Chaos”.

The following talks were delivered: “How do our societies create chaos by constantly disrupting established order?” by Jacques de Larosière, delegate of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques; “Chaos in the Solar System” by Jacques Laskar, delegate of the Académie des Sciences; “Chaos: a History of the Word” by Charles de Lamberterie, delegate of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres; and “An Art of Living in Times of Disaster” by Dany Laferrière, delegate of the Académie Française.

The Académie des Beaux-Arts was represented by **Dominique Perrault**, member of the Architecture section, with a contribution entitled: “Chaos, our nature’s nature”, of which the following is an excerpt:

Top: under the Coupole of the Institut de France, during a presentation by architect and delegate of the Académie des Beaux-Arts Dominique Perrault.

Photo credit: Institut de France

“If, among the creative arts, there were only one that from all points of view seemed opposed to chaos, it would perhaps be architecture – the one to keep chaos at bay, erected as fortifications until it could no longer withstand it, consumed in tall flames, collapsing under assault or yielding to the convulsions of unstable ground. As a brutal and violent end, a dreaded unknown, chaos could be more broadly defined as the ‘other’ of architecture. That is, at least, the way it has been conceived of. In our recent history this ‘other’ would be nature, grasped close up, of which Le Corbusier wrote that its accidental aspect impedes our fundamental principles and functional practice of order. The other could thus be thought of as the disorder that “offends our dignity” – as the master of modern architecture also put it – and, ultimately, as the absence of constituent constants of our determinism, which underpin the necessary sense of security. The disorder of large cities, which inspired the modern architect’s reflection on urban planning almost a century ago, has by no means decreased since; on the contrary. The tremors of the earth and of humans are now adding to it, topped by the deluge of data. Our world is clearly complex and complicated. While some are petrified by the disorder that we call chaos, others believe they recognize a form of the sublime in it. Whether it appears to us in the guise of the catastrophic or of the extraordinary, its dramatic charge mobilizes us as much as it freezes us. Here we are, fascinated and feverish, facing effects that far exceed anything our anthropocentrism would have allowed us to predict.” ■



## CREATION OF THE ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS - WILLIAM KLEIN PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE

The Académie des Beaux-Arts recently created the William Klein Photography Prize, with support from the Chengdu Contemporary Image Museum and its founder Zhong Weixing, as a tribute to the work of photographer, painter, visual artist, graphic designer and director of documentary, advertising and fiction films William Klein.

This consecration prize of 120,000 euros is intended to reward a photographer of any age or nationality for his or her entire career in and commitment to photography. The prize is awarded every two years, alternating with the Académie des Beaux-Arts – Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière Photography Prize, and is coupled with an exhibition at the Palais de l’Institut de France.

The idea of creating an award in honour of William Klein was not new. It finally materialized during a meeting between Jean-Luc Monterosso, Jean-François Camp, director of the Central Dupon Images photography laboratory, and the photographer. Sebastião Salgado was consulted, and proposed that the



Above: At the opening of the exhibition dedicated to him, Indian photographer Raghu Rai, winner of the first edition of the Académie des Beaux-Arts - William Klein Photography Prize, presented their portraits to the Permanent Secretary, the members and correspondents of the Photography Section, and his confrère William Klein, here in the centre. Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

Centre: Raghu Rai receives his award from patron Zhong Weixing. Photo credit: Patrick Rimond

Académie des Beaux-Arts sponsor the event. The photography prize was thus born, associating the Académie des Beaux-Arts’ name with that of the least academic of photographers. Zhong Weixing, the patron of this prize, is above all a photographer. His works have been exhibited internationally, including at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie in 2018.

For this first edition in 2019, the jury of the Prize was composed of the Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard and Zhong

Weixing as co-chairpersons, William Klein as honorary member, members of the Photography section Yann Arthus-Bertrand, Bruno Barbey, Jean Gaumy and Sebastião Salgado, the artistic director of the Chengdu Contemporary Image Museum, Jean-Luc Monterosso and Bernard Perrine, both correspondents of the Photography section, along with two invited personalities: Alessandra Mauro, curator, and Alberto Anaut, president of PhotoEspaña and director of La Fábrica. The jury chose the Indian photographer Raghu Rai as the first winner (see following pages). This recognition allowed the French public to rediscover his work, since his last Parisian exhibition, at the Delpire gallery, dates back to 1971. ■

Pavillon Comtesse de Caen - Palais de l'Institut de France

# RAGHU RAI, THE JOURNEY OF A MOMENT IN TIME

Académie des Beaux-Arts –  
William Klein Photography Prize

With the exhibition "The journey of a moment in time", at the Pavillon Comtesse de Caen, Palais de l'Institut de France, from 27 November 2019 to 5 January 2020, the Académie des Beaux-Arts hosted the work of Raghu Rai, the winner of the first edition of the Académie des Beaux-Arts – William Klein Photography Prize.

Raghu Rai was born in 1942 in Jhang (British India, now Pakistan), and became a photographer at the age of 23. The following year, he joined the editorial staff of *The Statesman* as chief photographer (1966-1976), and later served as editor-in-chief of the photography department of the Calcutta weekly news magazine *Sunday* (1977-1980). In 1971, following his exhibition on Pakistani refugees from Bengal at the Galerie Delpire in Paris, Henri Cartier-Bresson offered him a position at Magnum Photos, of which he is still an associate to this day. In 1982, Raghu Rai became director of photography for *India Today*, India's leading news magazine. He collaborated on special issues, contributing innovative photographic essays on the social, political and cultural issues of the decade (1982-1991). For the past eighteen years, Raghu Rai has devoted his work exclusively to India. He is the author of about fifty books on the events and figures of his country: Delhi, the Sikhs, Calcutta, the Taj Mahal, Mother Teresa, and so on. His in-depth reporting on the Bhopal disaster in 1984, as part of a Greenpeace International mission, resulted in a book and a series of three exhibitions between 2002 and 2005.

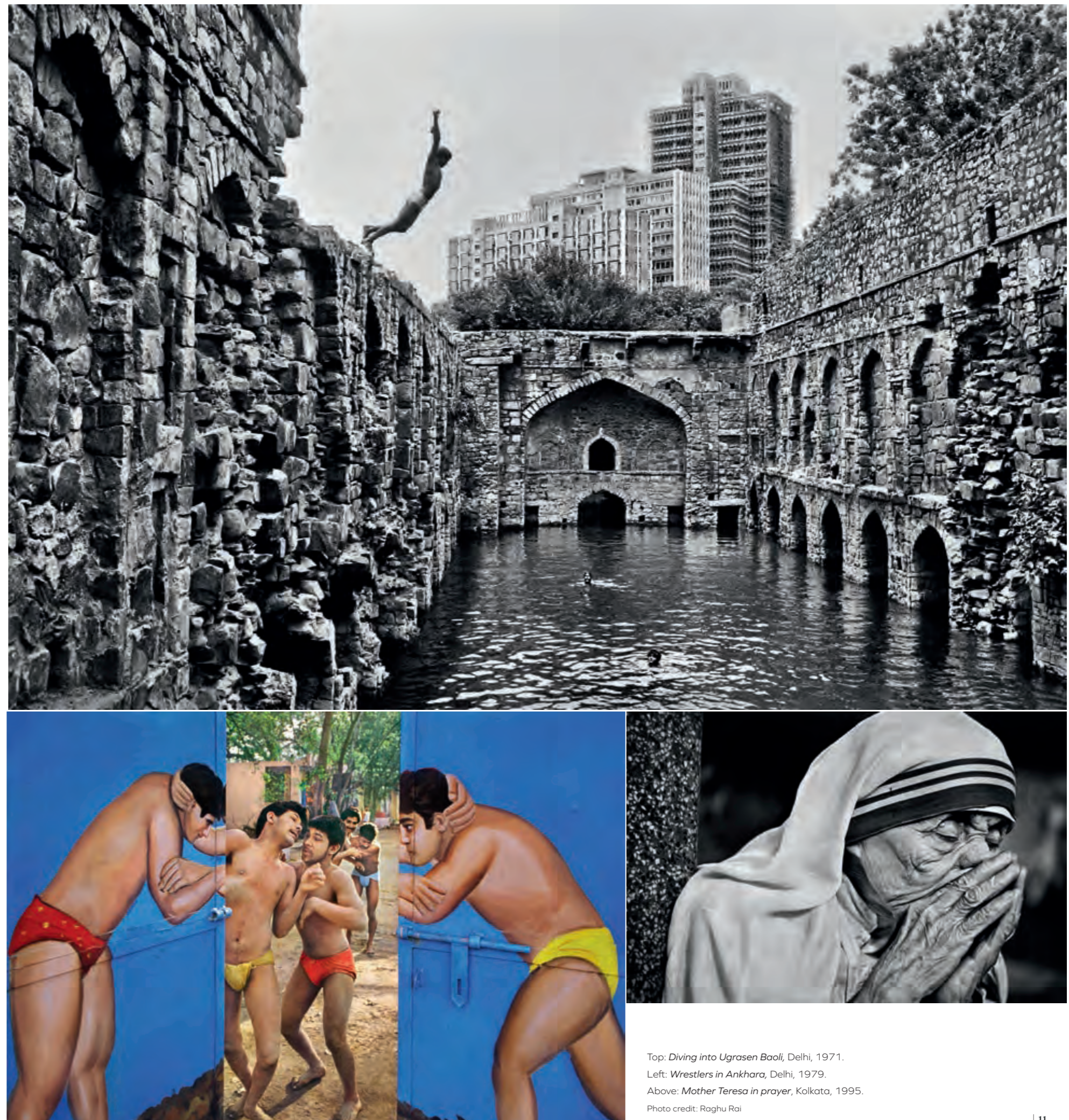
Many exhibitions have been dedicated to his work throughout the world, including retrospectives at the Rencontres de la photographie d'Arles in 2007, at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi in 2008, and at the Aicon Gallery in London in 2011.

He was awarded the *Padma shree* in 1972, one of India's highest civilian distinctions, for all his work on the Bangladesh war of liberation and its refugees.

In 1992, Raghu Rai was named "Photographer of the Year" by the United States for his work on the human management of wildlife in India, published in *National Geographic*. In 2009, he was appointed Officer of Arts and Letters by the French government. In 2018 he received the Lucie Award for Achievement in photojournalism from the Lucie Foundation in New York. His photographic reports have been published in many magazines and newspapers around the world. In 2012, he created the Raghu Rai Center for Photography, a place for sharing and teaching photography to the younger generation.

Raghu Rai currently lives in New Delhi and is working on his 57<sup>th</sup> book. ■

Curators of the exhibition: Jean-Luc Monterosso and Bernard Perrine, correspondents of the Photography section.



Top: *Diving into Ugrasen Baoli*, Delhi, 1971.

Left: *Wrestlers in Ankhara*, Delhi, 1979.

Above: *Mother Teresa in prayer*, Kolkata, 1995.

Photo credit: Raghu Rai



Mediterranean nature and light, which link the *Montagne Sainte-Victoire* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay) and the outline of the Monts Albains that Francisque Millet placed in his *Paysage classique* (Marseille, Musée des Beaux-Arts).

Above: Paul Cézanne, *La Montagne Sainte-Victoire*, ca. 1890, oil on canvas, 65 x 95.2 cm. Paris, Musée d'Orsay, donation from the granddaughter of Auguste Pellerin, 1969 © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée d'Orsay) / Hervé Lewandowski.

Right: Jean-François Millet, aka Francisque Millet, *Classical Landscape*, 17<sup>th</sup> century, oil on canvas, 96 x 128 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, temporarily at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Marseille. © City of Marseille, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Jean Bernard.



Musée Marmottan Monet

## "CÉZANNE AND THE MASTER PAINTERS. A DREAM OF ITALY"

The Musée Marmottan Monet is currently holding an exhibition titled "*Cézanne and the Master painters. A dream of Italy*". For the first time, Cézanne's work is exhibited alongside the great Italian masterpieces of the 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

A remarkable selection of Cézanne's paintings, including the iconic *Montagne Sainte-Victoire* and of course *Pastoral*, as well as several still lifes, are exhibited alongside a rare collection of paintings by much older masters, including Tintoretto, Bassano, El Greco, Giordano, Poussin, Rosa and Munari, as well as more modern ones such as Boccioni, Carrà, Rosai, Sironi, Soffici, Pirandello and Morandi. [...] These works from across the world highlight the importance of Latin culture in Cézanne's art and the way in which this painter from Aix-en-Provence drew on the example of his illustrious predecessors to establish a "new" way of painting. They also illustrate the influence that the French artist exerted, in turn, on the artists of the Novecento.

The first part of the exhibition focuses on Cézanne's lifelong dialogue with the Italian 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century masters. A reader of Virgil, Ovid and Lucretia, and a tireless visitor to the Louvre and to Aix-en-Provence's museums, Cézanne – who never actually went to Italy – turned to the masters of that country from an early age.

The influence of Venice was decisive. His homage to Titian's most famous student, El Greco, whose *Lady in Ermine* (private collection) he reinterpreted, is a reference to Venetian art. However, Cézanne was never one to simply copy others; on the contrary, he assimilated the art exhibited in museums, extracting and modernizing its spirit, to create a style of his own. He studied the touch of Venetian painters: the *Portrait of Antonio da Ponte* after Bassano (Paris, Musée du Louvre) and his *Head of an Old Man* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay) reflect the same approach to colour. In Venice as in Aix, it is the key element from which form, volume and light emerge simultaneously; the cornerstone of their art. In this sense, colour takes precedence over lines; it contains them. Cézanne also captures the emphasis or even the tragedy of Tintoretto. His most violent paintings, from early in his career, follow this example. The Neapolitan model also inspired him. These paintings are quieter, infused with mystery. This is clearly apparent from the proximity between the *Prophet reading bust* by the Master of the Annunciation to the Shepherds (Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts), and Cézanne's *Portrait of the Artist's Mother* (Saint Louis Art Museum) in this exhibition. It was however through the Roman model and the influence of Nicolas Poussin that Cézanne's work would truly mature. [...] The second part of the visit is dedicated to Cézanne's influence on the painters of the Novecento. Soffici, Carrà, Boccioni, Morandi, and Pirandello discovered Cézanne's work either in Paris at the posthumous retrospective of 1907, or else in Italy where it was exhibited from 1908 and sought after by amateurs Egisto Paolo Fabbri and Charles Loeser, who had settled in Florence. They all saw in Cézanne the bearer of a certain classical idea, a painter of permanence, and established a link between the solidity of the Italian primitives and that of Cézanne. The Italians made a definitive break with the elders' religious or mythological painting; they favoured the simplicity and bareness of Cézanne's themes: landscapes, figures and still lifes. ■

Curators: Marianne Mathieu, art historian, scientific director in charge of collections and communication, and Alain Tapié, chief curator, honorary curator of the Musées de France.

27 February to 5 July 2020 | [www.marmottan.fr](http://www.marmottan.fr)

# PERSPECTIVES ON THE ACADEMIE

The Académie des Beaux-Arts has shown undeniable vitality over the past three years in the numerous and significant actions it has carried out and projects it has undertaken.

This "Dossier", which will soon be complemented with a special issue of the *Lettre de l'Académie*, reviews this evolution by describing the Institution in detail, with its structure and functioning, in three parts:

- a reminder of its "MISSIONS" and a presentation of its "AMBITIONS",
- an exploration of its "HERITAGE" and that with which it is associated,
- an exploration of its actions to "SUPPORT ARTISTIC CREATION".

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

# A TRADITION THAT CARRIES US INTO THE FUTURE

Interview with **LAURENT PETITGIRARD**,  
Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts

**Since its inception, the Académie des Beaux-Arts has taken on missions that it strives to fulfil and to steer so that they evolve in step with the contemporary artistic and cultural scene. Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard defines its course of action and sets new goals for the Académie to stay perfectly in tune with the times.**

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

**Nadine Eghels: What are the missions of the Académie des Beaux-Arts and more particularly those that you have given yourself as Permanent Secretary?**

Laurent Petitgirard: Here, I would like to state our fundamental mission again: it is to establish a link in a sense, between the past and the future through the role we play as consultants for the public authorities and even as whistle-blowers. The Académie has been somewhat removed from this role in recent years, and I have made it a personal goal of mine to revive it. This advice and vigilance concerns heritage, support for creation, and training of contemporary artists. Today, access for all to art and culture is understood only from the perspective of democratization. This is where our vigilance comes into play: whatever means are used to facilitate access to art and culture for the greatest number of people, they should never entail a lowering of the standards of the artistic or cultural offer. This monitoring aspect is essential; it is one of my main goals and it is therefore crucial that the Académie regain influence in decision-making bodies.

This requires a very high level of recruitment for Academicians: for each section, the aim is to elect masters in their discipline, independently of the kind of aesthetic criteria that the world of art critics would sometimes like to impose on us. The worst kind of academism would indeed be to lean towards a style by following only one aesthetic line. When very different approaches to art are brought together, they share the same demand for quality, knowledge, hindsight and tolerance.

**N.E.: There are also the Académie's foundations**

L.P.: One of our missions is of course to manage major foundations and museums such as Giverny and Marmottan, and other lesser known ones, such as the Fondation Dufraine, for which we have an ambitious renovation project, the Bibliothèque Marmottan – whose management was formerly delegated to the city of Boulogne-Billancourt but which we have taken over and will turn into a museum and a residence for musicians – and, last but not least, the Villa Ephrussi. My wish is to develop artist residencies, at the Fondation Dufraine, of course, but also at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris where we are going to rehabilitate four large workshops on the Montmartre site. It will be an open residency for French and foreign artists, who will be selected by the Académie in partnership with the Cité Internationale des Arts, and who will receive grants in addition to accommodation and a place to work. All of this aims to put the Académie back at the centre of young contemporary creation.

**N.E. : What about prizes and awards?**

L.P.: Our support for artistic creation is also reflected in the many prizes we award, consecration prizes such as the latest one, the William Klein Prize (awarded alternately with the Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière Photography Prize, which supports a project) or the Grand Prix Del Duca (which rewards a painter one year, a sculptor the next, and an engraver the next, all of whom are experienced and recognized artists,



The public present in the Institut de France's Grande Salle des Séances for Sebastião Salgado's presentation, "Amazonia, an initiative for the Amazonian forest of Brazil", in January 2018.

Photo credit: Cmp

while incentive prizes are awarded on other years in the three sections concerned). Among musicians, this prize is divided between a commission for a piece that will then be played under the Coupole of the Palais de l'Institut de France and a prize awarded to pay homage to a performer's career. The Pierre David-Weill Drawing Prize and the Mario Avati Engraving Prize are also important awards. Finally, there are a number of awards for young artists, such as the Pierre Cardin Prizes, for example.

As far as awards are concerned, I would like to stress that we will henceforth accept only endowed awards, financed with a blocked sum to ensure continuity for at least 50 years, because these prizes must be stable.

Another essential part of this system is that we offer aid to artists in difficulty, which we allocate with extreme rigour in order to support them effectively without being a substitute for social services.

Finally, let's not forget the "encouragement" aspect: for instance, we offer help to young artists to create their first exhibition, publish a catalogue or complete a project.

#### **N.E.: What are the other roles of the Académie des Beaux-Arts?**

L.P.: You mean the Académie's daily operations. There are public lectures, which I would like to articulate around annual themes. And then there are communications to Academicians

and correspondents, which enable us to explore more precisely a particular issue that concerns us. For example, when the Académie looked into the question of returning African heritage, we received people who were involved and competent, who informed us so that we could carry out our advisory mission with full knowledge of the facts.

Although it is less visible than prizes, competitions and foundations, the daily work of the Académie is important, which is why we are committed to electing new members who will be there to undertake it with us: great artists for sure, but above all great artists who show up! Instead of a media star, we will always prefer a quality artist who will be engaged, attend our sessions and share the life of our Compagnie. We are fundamentally a cenacle. Apart from our academic work, the widely diverse artists who make up our Compagnie meet, exchange ideas, go to exhibitions and enrich their knowledge in highly favourable conditions. All this helps to bind the group together, to give it more strength. On many subjects, the Académie issues opinions almost unanimously, which is surprising in view of the diversity of its members. Beyond careers, sensitivities and so on, our minds meet in the name of common values – a demanding ethos centred on quality – rather than limiting ourselves to our particular aesthetics. This is how, in the Painting section, we were able to elect both Gérard Garouste and Fabrice Hyber, two completely different artists, yet who hold each other in great esteem.

#### **“To increase our influence and the scope of our competences”**

for this, and I now want to optimize our Compagnie's operations. As we develop activities, as we take a stand in multiple respects, we have to develop communication, to take up topics as soon as they are on the table. We now want to be informed of what is happening in the sectors that concern us, before votes in Parliament or the transposition of European directives, so that we can exert influence, or at least attempt to do so. We must react upstream and not downstream, and give ourselves the means to do so. Through our contacts with public authorities, major decision-makers, managers and financiers, we must be informed so that we can exercise our very real competences. For, we must not forget, we are immortal...

#### **N.E. : Can you be more specific?**

L.P.: Since I was elected at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, thirteen successive Ministers of Culture have been appointed. [By contrast, here] we are elected for life, we have no deadlines, we have nothing to prove, and we are at times in our careers when things are established – so we're not looking for anything for ourselves, which allows us to give opinions that will remain

relevant over time. I am determined to organize our operations differently, so as to increase our influence and the scope of our competences. Our two major museums/foundations are in the hands of excellent managers: Giverny's was the director of the Opéra National de Paris, and the Fondation Marmottan's used to head France-Television. That is what makes our Unattached Members section an asset: it allows us to recruit people who are particularly qualified to manage all aspects of artistic professions and practices – a skill that artists generally do not have, except perhaps architects.

Another objective of mine is to strengthen the position of correspondents: they are not "sub-academicians" but associate members of the Compagnie, who are very committed to our work and whose opinion is essential.

#### **N.E.: How do you intend to increase the Académie's external visibility?**

L.P.: We are going to develop our exhibition spaces. It is in this spirit that we have completely refurbished the Pavillon Comtesse de Caen, which has become a permanent exhibition space. But we're not here to advertise ourselves.

In this spirit of openness to the public, we are also expanding the Marmottan library and opening new places of residence, while being extremely rigorous in their management in order to strengthen our means of intervention.

There is also this *Lettre de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts*, our new website and our presence on social media: all valuable tools for communication and dissemination of the current spirit of our Compagnie.

#### **N.E.: What are the relations between the Académie and the Institut de France, and how do you see them in the future?**

L.P.: There are six permanent secretaries within the Institut (the Académie des Sciences has two), who all have equal status. The Institut brings together all five academies and its Chancellor is the director of the general services and of the site, while the Académies remain completely autonomous. The current Chancellor, Xavier Darcos, has brought in an extremely beneficial breath of fresh air. As an experienced organist, he is close to the arts and very attentive to our work.

#### **N.E.: Could you summarize the foundations and implications of your action?**

L.P.: In a nutshell, I would like to broaden the Académie's field of action, and to do so, strengthen its structure; to move forwards while always respecting the law and our ethics; to decentralize, by organizing sessions in the regions of France, as we have done in Versailles, Marseille and Avignon, in order to open the house and meet other artists and cultural facilitators.

I also think that there wasn't enough interaction between the different sections; I wanted to bring more conviviality to the Académie, to cultivate the pleasure of working, exchanging and being together; also, to strengthen our collaboration with other Académies. This year we worked with the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques in a joint session where I spoke of the influence of French art in the world (see box, next page). We also worked with the Académie des Sciences on heritage and its preservation. And another subject that is dear to me is the



## French Arts Abroad

evolution of moral law. We are going to devote a large dossier to this, in which all the other Académies will participate.

Finally, it is essential that our Académie be open to the world. We can see that art academies lag far behind science academies, which are used to collaborating, but we will create links through our exhibition venues and our international awards. While individual artists exchange on an international level nowadays, the collective interactions of a Compagnie like ours have to be organized. With some countries, such as China, things move fast because there is a real desire on both sides. This generates a lot of interaction, but we remain very demanding in terms of the partners we work with, for instance our partnership with the Chengdu Image Museum for the new William Klein Photography Prize.

We are fortunate to work in an extraordinary setting that reflects the permanence of our institution. The beautiful symbolism in the robes and swords of each Académie should not make us forget the essence of our action, which is resolutely turned towards the future. ■

**The Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques organized a scholarly discussion on 14 October on the theme of “The artistic influence of France”, to which it invited several members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. This event was followed by a talk by Laurent Petitgirard, titled “French Arts Abroad: Influence and Disparities”, summarized here:**

“While disparities between the arts are very significant and therefore call for various types of support, the success of French artists around the world depends first and foremost on their ability to attract, interest and convince influential foreign partners in their field of expression. But while our leaders often highlight the importance of French artists in the speeches, their decisions should more adequately reflect that consideration.

This should begin with closer attention in the selection of the leaders of our major cultural institutions, by ensuring that they are open and free of any form of sectarianism.

Public support for artistic creation is too often reduced to a cold analysis of the figures in the culture budget, when the emotional dimension is in fact essential.

The Académie des Beaux-Arts will take the initiative of establishing relations with the most representative foreign academies, of developing its artists’ residencies which are always open to creators of all nationalities, of embellishing its current exhibition venues and opening new ones, and of firmly supporting initiatives aimed at exporting the works of French creators.

Its members, who are happy to belong to an institution where all fields of art are in constant dialogue, know that creation is in constant flow and is enriched by discovery and sharing with artists from across the world.

All of us here are determined to act together to help our country see bigger, go further, and have confidence in its ability to amaze the world.”

Above: at the rostrum, during the Séance Solennelle of 27 November. The 2019 Board of the Académie was composed of the Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard, President Pierre Carron and Vice-President Jean Anguera.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel



# MAKING THINGS HAPPEN AND MAKING THINGS KNOWN

By **CYRIL BARTHALOIS**, General Secretary of  
the Académie des Beaux-Arts

Three years ago, the members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts made the judicious choice of electing a composer and conductor as their Permanent Secretary. I don’t know whether Laurent Petitgirard considers the functions of General Secretary to be closest to those of an assistant, a first violin or a stage manager, but probably a combination of all three. If I may express a personal feeling here, this versatility and diversity are actually what I like most about the position that he has granted me the honour of entrusting to me.

With its three museum-foundations welcoming more than a million visitors every year, nearly 140 enthusiastic members of permanent staff, 30 plenary sessions, ten public solemn sessions under the Coupole and more than 50 prizes awarded annually, in addition to symposia and conferences, concerts, the newly renovated exhibition hall now open to visitors free of charge, film screenings, a real estate portfolio, artists’ residences, financial investments, and more, the Académie is a small corporation, albeit one that is entirely focused on its statutory missions.

Rather than being supervised by a ministry, the Académie is placed under the “protection” of the President of the Republic and is therefore autonomous with regard to the other academies and the Institut de France. While this unquestionably constitutes a form of “comfort” in the daily life of our public institution, it also requires us to be particularly rigorous in managing the Académie’s heritage. Largely constituted through the generosity of patrons, our heritage allows us to support artistic creation, which is the Compagnie’s first and main mission.

This obligation requires us to put in place the most appropriate tools and means, to change our statutes when needed or to create new sections, such as the Choreography section created in 2019, and to run in-depth legal studies of the terms of legacies and donations, some of which we received over a century ago, to ensure that the will of donors is compatible with our new needs. It also involves commitment from the Académie’s multiple departments, be it the staff of our foundation-museums or the teams at the Palais de l’Institut, in charge of communication, prizes, arranging meetings, secretarial work, finance, human

resources, public contracts, daily operations at the Comtesse de Caen Pavilion, and so on, whose professionalism I wish to applaud here.

I firmly believe in the usefulness of institutions which, like the Académie, have deep roots running through the history of art and the history of France alike. This longstanding tradition should however not cause us to be static or closed to the outside world, but instead allow us to open up to artistic life, to interact with other players in the field of culture and to reach out to as many people as possible. That is why I am delighted to see the energy that our Permanent Secretary, academics and correspondents are investing to this end, thus adding momentum to the dynamic in which Chancellor Xavier Darcos set the Institut de France.

While this openness leads to “making things happen”, we should not stop short of “making things known”. The efforts we have recently undertaken with the support and within the framework of the Académie’s administrative commission and its various commissions and committees include modernizing our website, streamlining our graphic charter and enhancing our presence on traditional and social media. The months and years to come will also witness other endeavours.

A look at a map of Paris shows the Institut and its academies right in the geographical centre of the capital, between the Louvre, the École des Beaux-Arts, the Monnaie de Paris and the Musée d’Orsay, on the banks of the Seine, with its booksellers, in the literary and artistic 6<sup>th</sup> arrondissement.

The wealth of talent and the diversity of the Académie’s members and of its heritage, which enable it to carry out projects and to encourage creation, are currently enabling it to resume the central position it can and must occupy. It is thus both a landmark that offers a form of permanence, oriented towards the general interest, and a lantern that can enlighten public policy and decision makers. ■

Above: Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard and General Secretary Cyril Barthalois. Photo credit: CmP

Laurent Petitgirard, Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, asked me how the Chancellor of the Institut de France sees this Académie’s role within the Institut. There are of course the most evident formal aspects – boards of directors, award juries, official ceremonies, the operations of services at the Quai de Conti – but that is obviously not of the essence. I would like to borrow from our literary history and answer the question in a more personal way.

# THE SHIELD OF TELEMACHUS

By **XAVIER DARCOS**, Chancellor of the Institut de France

The key to this topic can be found in the 13<sup>th</sup> book of the *Adventures of Telemachus*. There, Fénelon describes a shield forged by Vulcan “in the smoking caves of Mount Etna” at Minerva’s request, and offered by Mentor to Ulysses’ son. At first sight, there is nothing unconventional about this description: the author follows the tradition of Homer’s by describing Achilles’ shield, and of Virgil for that of Aeneas. But Fénelon goes far beyond simply imitating a classical *ekphrasis*, for on this shield “as bright as the sun’s rays”, many things happen. Here we see Neptune striking the earth with his trident, from which “a fiery horse is seen to emerge”; there, Minerva gives men the olive tree, whose branch “represents sweet peace with abundance, preferable to the troubles of war, of which this horse is the image”. Further on, lambs are frightened by “the brutal rages of Mars, which ravage everything”. Elsewhere, we again find Minerva, “who in the war of the giants serves as an adviser to Jupiter himself, and supports all the other astonished gods”. In another part, this plate shows the goddess Ceres in the fertile countryside, “gathering the scattered peoples”. We then see “golden harvests”, “nymphs crowned with flowers” on a river’s banks, shepherds playing the flute and, of course, Bacchus. After the evocation of war and of the history of mankind comes an evocation of peace, progress and a Virgilian and Christian “Eden”. Everyone is there: the gods of war and the gods of peace, those who sow discord and those who sow for the harvest. In short, on this shield, which is as much a summary of civilization as a symbol of its defence, “one can see *Minerva assembling all the fine arts around her* [...]”. There you have it: Fénelon was answering Laurent Petitgirard’s question in advance. Minerva, the allegory of wisdom; Minerva, of whom Telemachus’ master, Mentor, is a patient metamorphosis; Minerva, the symbol of the Institut de France, who brings together all knowledge and talents.

Minerva, who embodies not a soft or contemplative wisdom but a determined one with a fighting spirit; who protects intellectual life, certainly, but also the hard work of all craftsmen. Ovid, in the *Fasti*, says of her that she is “the goddess of a thousand labours” and that without her every worker would be “like armless”.

Admit that you had to some extent forgotten about that shield, which Mentor gave to Telemachus. Yet everything is there: history, politics, economics, world observation, poetry, and of course the

« What is true of a civilization is also true of an individual »

arts. The same is true of the Institut de France, conceived of as a unique institution by its founders – as they put it in the Constitution of the Year III: “There is, for the whole Republic, *one* National Institute...”. Unique, as was the *Encyclopedia*, in which the Enlightenment claimed to embrace all the knowledge of man and *about* man. Telemachus’ shield prefigures our mission: it represents humanity with all of its skills and hopes. Only a work of art can achieve this, for that is where passions and violence, aspirations and deep desires are expressed. Would we understand our Middle Ages without Gothic cathedrals? What is true of a civilization is also true of an individual. Everyone knows it: there is a part of the human soul that the most learned anthropologists will never be able to verbalize, and that artistic creation alone reveals to us. At the Institut, fine arts not only allow us to know and express the world, society and mankind, in all completeness; they also serve when it comes to inventing the world to come, especially through architecture.

Just as Minerva equips and advises Telemachus – and “serves as an advisor to Jupiter”, Fénelon tells us – so too the Institut’s mission is to enlighten public authorities and to provide them with weapons. Just as Minerva fulfils her mission solely by virtue of her



independence, so too the Institut’s five Académies enjoy a unique situation that guarantees their freedom: they are public without being governmental, and independent without being private. In France, it is not the role of the State to exercise direct and exclusive supervision over the activities of the mind, including in the field of fine arts. The Académies of the Institut are keepers of this vital principle, thanks to their independence, their legitimacy, their permanence, and their practice of free debate with respect for different opinions.

More than any other, the Académie des Beaux-Arts reflects this ideal. It is comparable to an orchestra, where everyone, each with their own knowledge, talent and identity, contributes to the fruitful cohesion of all. The metaphor is even more enlightening when it comes to the Institut de France, whose five very different Académies embrace the entire horizon of science, literature and the arts. It is a symphony, *sun-phonia*, in the primary sense, a collection of diverse voices that respond and coordinate in unison. In this respect, the Institut can count on the expertise of the Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts: a conductor, literally and figuratively speaking, who is attentive to diversity, is a reliable mind and a generous friend. ■

Top: the Chancellor of the Institut de France, Xavier Darcos (left), congratulates filmmaker Coline Serreau (see page 5), as composer Régis Campo and architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte look on.  
Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

Opposite: *Télémaque aux Enfers*, engraving by Simon Fokke from the *Adventures of Télémaque*, by François de Salignac de la Motte, known as Fénelon, published by E. van Harrefelt, Amsterdam, in 1775.

# BEING PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS

By **JEAN ANGUERA**, member of the Sculpture section,  
President of the Académie des Beaux-Arts for the year 2020

**B**asically, the President's role in meetings is to hand over the floor. He should therefore not put himself forward, but rather ensure that all those who wish to speak on the subject at hand are able to do so. He must endeavour to be impartial, that is, free of preconceived ideas, ready to welcome and even to encourage all points of view. This means being attentive to others, careful that no one monopolizes the floor or remains silent.

When I ran for the vice-presidency, I announced that I had no ideas – by which I meant no preconceived ideas –, so as to remain available, curious and open to diversity. This is important for me because I feel that I have very little assured knowledge and no absolute certainty. After all, what is this reality in which we are immersed and try to intervene through our artistic talents? The sketches we draw, the forms with which we experiment and the explanations by which we work go out of fashion. Therefore, “grasping reality”, grasping necessity or want in all fields of art, means combining all possible forces, all our knowledge, all our experiences, our diverse sensitivities, and so on – combining or putting them face to face when they seem contradictory. It means not rejecting them definitively because what is not appropriate at one moment may become essential at another. Manet's *Le déjeuner sur l'Herbe* was perceived as heresy at the time of its creation, yet now it is seen as a turning point in art. And Van Gogh, who never sold a single painting during his lifetime, now occupies an essential place in the history of art. Another example: the 1977 law on architecture, which required that all major construction projects be supervised by an architect, has had a tremendously positive impact on urban landscapes and has considerably changed the way we view our living environment. What debates did this law provoke and was its true value acknowledged in its own times?

The President's second task concerns the agenda, which is drawn up in consultation with the Permanent Secretary and the Vice-President, and which includes suggestions from members of the Académie. Part of this agenda consists of current cultural events;



“Our efforts are focused on promoting projects that aim to place – or re-place – the Academy truly at the centre of contemporary artistic creation.”

but only part of it because current events should not inform all of our efforts and reflection. There are also the Académie's own current events: the progress of its projects which aim to place – or re-place – the Académie truly at the centre of contemporary artistic creation. For example, fitting out the Comtesse de Caen Pavilion to make it a more adequate and permanent exhibition space, and creating a new, more accessible and abundant website to more accurately reflect the activities of the Académie and the academicians. These are only two examples among many others.

The agenda also addresses fundamental issues that require time and must be linked together coherently. Be it individually or in groups, academicians themselves must develop this reflection and plan its dissemination.



Finally, the President must choose which personalities to invite to inform the Académie's internal debates with their talks.

There is therefore underlying reflection and the President, who sits for a year only, must follow it and at times revive or steer it, but he is not in control in the long term. This time frame belongs to the authorities above him.

The election of a new President takes place every year. Candidates are designated in advance by each artistic section in turn: painters, then sculptors, then architects, and so on, so that no discipline takes precedence over the others and none of them feels disadvantaged. This year, it is the Sculpture section's turn for the presidency. If there are subjects that are particularly relevant to this discipline and are new or need to be brought back to light, I will ensure that they are on the agenda – in agreement with the Permanent Secretary and the Vice-President, as always. In any case, no issue is completely irrelevant to the other sections. Each art resonates with the others and has an impact on them. What happens in one will have an influence on the others as a signal of an overall change, of a general phenomenon that will gradually spread to all forms of expression.

Coherence and consistency are at the heart of my concerns, from a perspective that is necessarily personal but which must be in line with the longer-term vision of the Permanent Secretary, who has the final say in all decisions and without whom nothing is done. ■

Above and left: last November, during the solemn session of the Académie, Jean Anguera, then Vice-President, stood at the rostrum alongside the President and the Permanent Secretary. In keeping with tradition, awards were presented to the winners during this ceremony. Here, Laurence Egloff, hands over the Paul-Louis Weiller Painting Prize.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

# THE FONDATION PAUL MARMOTTAN: PRESERVING THE PAST, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

By **PATRICK DE CAROLIS**, of the Free Members Section, Director of the Musée Marmottan Monet

**The Fondation Paul Marmottan was established in 1934, thanks to a man who paved the way for an artistic history of trust and commitment that is over eighty-five years old today.**

## Paul Marmottan: historian, collector and philanthropist

Paul Marmottan was born in Paris on 26 August 1856, into a family of prominent industrialists and intellectuals in the North of France.

His father, Jules Marmottan, born in 1829 in Valenciennes, studied law before taking over the management of the Bruay coal company in 1862. Under his leadership it became one of the leading mining companies in the Pas-de-Calais. During his lifetime, he was a director of several French energy and transport companies.

Jules Marmottan was also an art lover and collector. He acquired about forty paintings of Italian, Flemish and German Primitives, through an art dealer in Lille, Antoine Brasseur, who lived in Cologne from 1847 to 1887. Among the works in his collection are a rare *Descent from the Cross* by Hans Muelich, a series of three tapestries depicting the hunt for Saint Suzanna (*Chasse de Sainte Suzanne*) and statuettes from Mechlen, which bear witness to his preference for Renaissance and High Renaissance art.

Jules Marmottan's love of art never waned, throughout his life. When he died on 10 March 1883 at the age of 53, he passed on a considerable fortune and a rich artistic heritage to his only son, Paul.

Free of want, Paul Marmottan gave up his career as a senior civil servant at the age of 27 to devote himself to the study of art history, from 1789 to 1830.

To this end, he travelled to Belgium, Holland, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and Italy. These journeys allowed him to develop his sense of critique and to collect abundant documentation that he would later use in his many publications, including *L'Ecole Française*

*de peinture (1789-1830)* and *Le Style Empire*. During his research in France and abroad as a historian he added to his acquisitions as an amateur who, following in his father's footsteps, undertook to build up his own collection.

He soon became known as a specialist in the Consulate and the Empire. Through his numerous writings and purchases, he contributed in rehabilitating the art of this period, which remains relatively unknown to this day.

One of his residences, a house located in Boulogne, which he acquired in 1921, accommodated his collection of books on the period between 1799 and 1814, and became his library. The paintings, sculptures, furniture and objets d'art were kept in the mansion on rue Louis Boilly in Paris, which his father had acquired a year before he died. There, Paul Marmottan displayed landscapes by Jean Victor Bertin and Louis Gauffier, portraits by Louis Léopold Boilly, and pieces from the Empire period such as the *Lustre aux Musiciennes* and the exceptional *Geographic Clock*, made of Sèvres porcelain.

Paul Marmottan thus turned the library and the mansion on rue Louis Boilly into masterpieces of a lifetime.

Upon his death in 1932, Paul Marmottan, who had no descendants, entrusted the totality of his capital to several institutions, such as the Assistance Publique and the museums of Versailles, Carnavalet and Compiègne, among others throughout France. He also passed on part of his legacy to institutions that promote French art abroad, such as the Villa Médicis and the Casa de Velázquez. Other bequests were made to the various societies to which he belonged, but the Académie des Beaux-Arts was the main beneficiary, as it inherited the residence in Boulogne as well as the mansion on rue Raphaël in Paris. As some of the institution's finest assets, they were united in a foundation that bears their donor's name.



## The Marmottan Library

Paul Marmottan became a collector through his taste for research and writing. The house in Boulogne, a former folly fitted out by its owner essentially in an Empire style, became a specialized library and is now registered in the inventory of historical monuments in the category "Maisons des Illustres". The library, which is designed as an organic unit where the books and the decor complement one another in an essential way, also houses a gallery known as the Prints Gallery. The presentation structure, an eight-metre long wooden piece of furniture divided into 14 compartments, is a true museographic invention of Paul Marmottan, that contains his rich collection of prints. In addition, his unique documentation on Paris and the Napoleonic epic in Italy now constitutes one of the world's largest collections on the First Empire and the Napoleonic period.

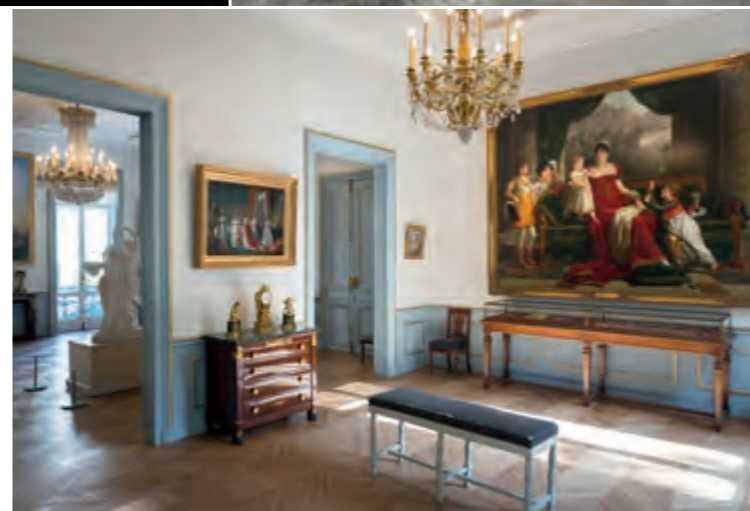
The Marmottan Library, which was studied until 1968 by Fleuriot de Langle, who drew up the first catalogue of the collection, has been managed jointly by the Académie des Beaux-Arts and the city of Boulogne since 1996. Ever since, in parallel with its primary purpose, it has presented exhibitions focused mainly on the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. An auditorium was also built to host concerts in particular but not exclusively, thus completing the opening of the venue to all forms of art.

Since 2018 the library has once again been administered solely by the Académie des Beaux-Arts. It is currently undergoing renovations and will reopen shortly.

## The Musée Marmottan Monet

It is also to comply with Paul Marmottan's wishes that, on 21 June 1934, the Académie des Beaux-Arts transformed the mansion on rue Louis Boilly, its Empire salons and its old paintings gallery, into a museum. The private spaces were thus rearranged to welcome the public, but the décor has remained intact.

The aura of the Académie des Beaux-Arts is quickly attracting new donations and legacies. The museum is enriching its collections and embarking on a new chapter in its history. In 1940, it opened its doors to Impressionism. Victorine Donop de Monchy entrusted it with *Impression, Sunrise* and the Impressionist collection of her father, Dr George Bellio's Michel Monet made the Musée Marmottan his universal legatee and therefore Claude Monet's heir and the custodian of the world's largest collection of the artist's work. Upon Michel's



Top, from left to right:

The west facade of the Musée Marmottan Monet, rue Louis Boilly, Paris.

Portrait of Paul Marmottan at his office, circa 1899, by Johan Georg Otto von Rosen (1843-1923).

The Empire style decor of the Bibliothèque Marmottan, place Denfert Rochereau in Boulogne-Billancourt (92).

Above: view of the remarkable collections of antique works and furniture in the Empire salons of the Musée Marmottan Monet.

Photo credit: Musée Marmottan Monet and H&K



death in 1966, about a hundred of the painter's works, including a unique series of large *Water Lilies*, entered the foundation's collections. With this prestigious legacy, the museum entered a new phase of its history and became known as a leader of Impressionism.

The museum's collection was gradually enriched and transformed. Paul Marmottan's home became a "collectors' house". Several other descendants of artists followed Michel Monet's lead. In 1985, Nelly Sergeant-Duhem, the adopted daughter of Post-Impressionist painter Henri Duhem, contributed many works, including Monet's *Promenade near Argenteuil* and Paul Gauguin's *Bouquet of Flowers*.

The descendants of Berthe Morisot showed similar generosity. Thanks to the Fondation Denis and Annie Rouart and the bequest of Thérèse Rouart, the museum houses the first collection of their ancestor's paintings, as well as pieces by Manet, Edgar Degas, and Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot, among others.

In less than a century, the museum has doubled its collection and added major new pieces. The legacy of Daniel Wildenstein, a member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, is just as exceptional.

Top and centre: the vast space created specially to house the largest collection of Monet's works in the world, some one hundred masterpieces including the iconic *Impression, sunrise*, and a unique collection of *Water Lilies* and views of the Giverny garden.

Opposite: the Hall of Swords, bequeathed to the museum by members of the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

Photo credit: Musée Marmottan Monet



The historian offered the museum the collection of illuminations that his father had started at the age of sixteen. These three hundred and twenty-two miniatures from the French, Italian, Flemish and English schools dating from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance constitute one of the finest collections of illuminations in France.

After Paul Marmottan, over thirty art lovers donated cherished works to the museum.

The Musée Marmottan is also gradually becoming the guardian of our academicians' swords. Sixteen of them are exhibited, to make visitors aware of the links between the Fondation Marmottan and the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

#### Temporary exhibitions

In 2013, the museum initiated an exhibition policy with a view to bringing its collections to life by remaining in constant touch with their history and identity.

Two annual exhibitions are organized on site. They are defined along three axes: "collection" exhibitions that pay tribute to amateurs sharing the same passion as the founders of the Musée Marmottan; scientific exhibitions dedicated to Impressionism, in connection with the Claude Monet and Berthe Morisot collections; and thematic and transversal exhibitions to echo the richness and diversity of the permanent collections.

The enhancement of the collections has also led the museum to open up to contemporary art. The Musée Marmottan Monet has started inviting a contemporary artist twice a year to produce works based on a piece from the collection. The result has been new ideas and creations, presented in an exhibition and publication titled *Les Dialogues inattendus* ("Unexpected Dialogues").

In parallel with these on-site exhibitions, the museum's scientific team is developing international off-site projects bringing together masterpieces from several collections. These major partnership events presented in Oceania, Asia, North America and Europe draw very large numbers of people and enhance the Museum's international renown.

With their passion for art and their generosity, private amateurs have written the history of the museum and of the library and have contributed to the influence of the Fondation Paul Marmottan. Under the aegis of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, the foundation has been able to preserve, enrich and disseminate its library and museum collections for two purposes: to celebrate the memory of its donors; and to make the wealth of a common heritage available to the public. In 2018, an average of 850,000 visitors attended exhibitions of the Musée Marmottan Monet collections, both in Paris and abroad. The institution's national and international renown, which has been widely amplified in recent years, has led it to embark on new challenging projects. An extension to the mansion on rue Louis Boilly has been designed to make the premises commensurate with its many activities, and the upcoming reopening of the library in Boulogne Billancourt will once again provide the public with the opportunity to benefit from this exceptional heritage. Supported by our Beaux-Arts academicians, the Fondation Paul Marmottan pursues its mission of safeguarding its past and opening to the future. ■

[www.marmottan.fr](http://www.marmottan.fr)

Claude Monet was always fascinated by the play of light and the reflections of clouds on the water. The pond that he created on his property "Le Clos Normand" became the "water garden", which can now be seen on the walls of the world's greatest museums, most notably in the series of Water Lilies, which he began to paint in 1897.

Photo credit: Élias Agruss

# THE FONDATION CLAUDE MONET IN GIVERNY

By HUGUES R. GALL, of the Free Members Section, Director of the Fondation Claude Monet

When Michel Monet, who passed away in 1966, bequeathed the family home in Giverny to the Académie des Beaux-Arts, he wanted to protect his father's memories and to create a place that welcomed admirers of the artist. People had already been visiting Giverny as a sort of pilgrimage during Claude Monet's lifetime, from as far away as Japan and the United States.

For our Academy, to accept this gift was to affirm that it was also inheriting the whole anti-academic tradition of which Claude Monet, the eternal outcast, was the most famous embodiment. The bohemians, the cursed, the revolted, the revolutionaries, who had for so long opposed the "dear masters" of the Quai de Conti, thus entered the circle formed by the shadows of Poussin, David and Ingres. It is likely that there was some mischievousness in Michel Monet's intention when he wrote his will, as he chose not to offer this precious heritage to the administration of the Musées de France – perhaps because his father's last works, so far removed from the prettiness of Impressionist style, with their explosions of pure colours and their non-figurative audacity, could not at that time have found their rightful place in the Louvre or the Jeu de Paume. This was before the opening of the Musée d'Orsay, which was a game changer. The paintings from the Michel Monet bequest were thus hung on the picture rails of the Musée Marmottan, under the supervision of the same Academy, and the uninhabited house, which had been the artist's home from 1883 until his death in 1926, was at first left empty. Since the death of Blanche Hoschedé-Monet, Claude's daughter-in-law, in 1947, it seemed to have lost its soul, and the gardens were abandoned.

It was not until Gérard Van der Kemp succeeded the architect Jacques Carlu in 1977 in the strange position of director-curator of Giverny that patrons took interest in the site and restoration could begin. This led to it reopening to the public in 1980, when the Fondation Claude Monet was created. Gérard Van der Kemp, admirably assisted by his wife, Florence, herself a correspondent of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, had learned as the director of Versailles how to scientifically restore the former state of a historical residence, and especially how to "restore" a garden. Since 2008 I have had the joy of carrying on Gérard and Florence Van der Kemp's work. I have become particularly attached to interiors and evoking what they were in the times of the Monet-Hoschedé family. Visitors come in ever-growing numbers and, for all the teams who work here, the fact that 600,000 of them visit Giverny every year is the greatest of rewards.



Today, Giverny remains a popular but fragile place. The gardeners, volunteers, administrative staff, security and reception officers who work there throughout the year are, I believe, united by a deep love of this place, of the village and the poetry that emanates from this little piece of the countryside. Working with them to open the Fondation Claude Monet to the public in the best conditions possible is a very exciting task. Our gardeners, whose tasks are built upon what Gilbert Vahé had recreated in the time of Gérard Van der Kemp, are all aesthetes and scientists, who know both museums and botany, and throughout the year we welcome friends of gardens from all over the world. Giverny also functions as a laboratory of conservation and creation. To walk under these trees and in these alleys is to encounter the memory of Georges Clemenceau or Sacha Guitry, in a world where knowledge of nature and love of art are a source of joy every day. This does not mean living in the past: the Académie des Beaux-Arts welcomes artists in residence here; painters, photographers and writers, who contribute to the vitality of the

dialogue that Monet initiated, until the end of his life, with the young creators of his time.

Giverny should therefore now be seen as something other than a decor, a sanctuary, a frozen "place of memory". These places shaped by Monet are an essential work of art, miraculously preserved and kept alive, and essential to an understanding of our modernity. ■

Top: view of Claude Monet's garden and house, "Le Clos normand". Photo credit: Claude Monet Foundation

Left: An extraordinary "autochrome", first colour photos on glass plate, showing Claude Monet in front of his house in 1921, Musée d'Orsay, unknown author. His living room-studio, preserved in identical conditions. Photo credit: Éliás Agruss

# THE FONDATION BÉATRICE EPHRUSSI DE ROTHSCHILD

By **LAURE BARTHÉLEMY-LABEEUW**, Head of Collections at the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild,  
with **ALAIN-CHARLES PERROT**, member of the Architecture Section

**It appears just after a bend in the cliff road, majestic, set on its rock, between sea and sky on the Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat peninsula. Terraferma's Palladian Villas come to mind with this sweet nostalgia of *luxe, calme et volupté*: this is the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, known as "Île-de-France".**

**B**eatrice Ephrussi, born Rothschild (1859-1934) had known this *Riviera* since her childhood. Her grandmother owned a villa in Cannes and she herself spent the winter season in Nice, where she was a regular customer of Monaco's casinos. In 1905, she discovered the mule track of Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, fell madly in love with the site and bought 7 hectares in the area known as *La Colle Blanche*. Major works took place there between 1907 and 1912, which started off by levelling the ridge with dynamite. There was water to route, gardens to design, and a villa to build. Béatrice was not an easy client, according to the memoirs of her architect Albert Laprade (1928). Prix de Rome laureates, who were accustomed to designing buildings in whatever way they pleased for rich clients, found themselves faced with a learned, determined and independent woman who had no qualms about destroying whatever was not to her liking, or asking for life-size models made of wood and canvas for the facade decorations and for the proportions of the gardens. She exhausted four architects like this. Marcel Auburtin (1872-1926), 1898 Prix de Rome laureate, drew up the general plans

with the layout and location of the apartments, and in particular the skilful layout of the patio, shifted the dining room back to the courtyard side and setting the rhythm of the facades. But without the intervention of the executing architect Aaron Messiah (1858-1940), Béatrice de Rothschild would have kept neither Auburtin nor his plans. Messiah knew how to listen to his client. While Auburtin prudently stuck to copying eighteenth-century Parisian mansions with apses and niches, Messiah opened windows and lightened the structures. Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild wanted her home to be modern, with all the amenities available at the time: electricity, central heating, lift, and telephone. She requested modern construction materials that allowed for short construction times, such as the reinforced cement used for the facade decorations. A particular process was used for the patio's canopy: a metal frame and a suspended ceiling made of plaster-covered wood, attached to the beams by thousands of wires. Beatrice designed the interiors and their decorations from the very beginning, and to create a delicate and cheerful atmosphere she acquired woodwork from multiple sources: a Louis XVI door from the folie Beaujon, Tiepolo ceilings, and woodwork from Parisian mansions destroyed to make way for Haussmannian buildings. Everything was done to open the gaze, to create perspective in a game of transparency from the inside out. The variety in its means of construction set this villa apart in the landscape of Nice. Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild paid

Left and bottom : The Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild's southern and north façades.

Right : View from the main garden perspective, tempietto at the top of the waterfall.

Photos Victor Point / H&K



close attention to the design of the façades and her mastery of the references of Italian architecture truly show in them: Florentine Renaissance urban palaces on the eastern façade and a mixture of Florentine Renaissance and Venetian influences on the northern façade. The west façade borrows from both the Porta della Carta of the Doge's Palace in Venice and the Casino Farnese in Caprarola. Finally, the most successful design is that of the south facade overlooking the garden, which is beautifully balanced from all points of view and distances. It is perfectly symmetrical with a deep loggia on the first floor. Archive photographs show that there were tests for a tower in the Villa Medici style, but the Venetian influence prevailed with the lightness of the orthogonal and rigorous geometric network playing on the polychromy of the marbles. As their original colour scheme has been inverted, these facades and their decorations have become complicated to read. Originally, the backgrounds were lighter than the decorations, which took up the pink of the Verona marble columns.

The villa, which was listed as a Historic Monument in 1993, will have work done on its façades this winter. The polychromatic effects intended by Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild will then be restored. Along with it, the villa's gardens are also classified. Extending from the south façade there is a classical garden which is now said to be French but which, through the search for perspective, with canals and waterfalls, is clearly influenced

« The enchanting charm of the place has remained, and the Baroness' dream vessel still harbours an extraordinary collection, to say the least »

to reflect the sea and create the illusion that the *tempietto* was floating. All that remains of the original gardens today are the terraces, the lapidaries garden, some trees that Beatrice had acclimatized and the fountain system. The gardens have been redesigned three times since the bequest. The Spanish, Japanese and Mexican gardens have been restored, and the rose garden is home to new varieties. But the enchanting charm of the place has remained, and the Baroness' dream vessel still harbours an extraordinary collection, to say the least.

In 1934, when Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild bequeathed the Villa Île-de-France and the gardens to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in memory of her father Alphonse, who was a member, she added all of her collections: those in her Parisian mansion at 19 Avenue Foch and in her two villas in Monte Carlo, *Soleil* and *Rose de France*, as well as those she already had in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat. In total, she bequeathed no fewer than 5,000 works of art. She was thus following in the footsteps of her ancestors, also

dossier

"heritage of  
the Académie"





benefactors of the arts. These widely diverse collections include, among other things, soft and hard porcelain of exceptional quality, furniture, art objects, paintings, sculptures and drawings from the eighteenth century, a rare collection of works from the fifteenth and sixteenth Italian and Spanish centuries on both stone and wood, tapestries from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, precious fabrics from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and a collection of Asian objects consisting of painted silks, lacquers and roof tiles mainly from the eighteenth century. Gustave Moreau, Renoir, Monet and Sisley are all present in her collections.

Pauline Prévost-Marcilhacy initiated the study of these collections for the ambitious publication *Les Rothschild, une dynastie de mécènes en France*, Paris, 2016. Parts of the in-depth study of the porcelains by Guillaume Séret, and of the sculptures and lapidaries by Philippe Malgouyres, have been published in this collective volume. Although the rest of these works and collections are examined in this publication, they certainly warrant further research.

In some respects, Beatrice's collections were conventional for her time. This is true of the eighteenth-century furniture – in true Rothschild tradition – and her taste for Asian arts, which certainly has to do with Charles Ephrussi, who was the director of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*. Most noteworthy among Enlightenment-era items are the set of chairs signed by Parmentier – a carpenter from Lyon who worked under Louis XVI –, on which the Baroness had a silk pattern specially sown at Prella's, called "à la Bouquetière", taken directly from her own collection of precious fabrics. She acquired – and unfortunately historical sources are missing here – works of great quality and rarity, such as the wax marquetry pedestal table with inlaid feathers and butterfly wings signed by Weisweiler, circa 1788, very similar in its execution to Louis XVI's *medallion* in Versailles. Her taste also drew her towards the delicacy of a Riesener bonheur du jour and of a Dubois game table with children in grisaille according to Sauvage's drawings. Less conventional was her interest in Italian furniture such as the Bolgie commode (1769-1825) or



the directoire commode in painted wood. Her collection of clocks and pendulums is also remarkable. To cite only two, she had a parquet regulator, signed Duchêne, and an André-Charles Boulle barometer.

Beatrice knew that a wealthy residence should have carpets of high quality: carpets from the Savonnerie for the rostrum of the Versailles chapel with the arms of Louis XV, and Gobelins tapestries after the cartoons of Coypel, Boucher and other early painters of the king. However, this collection of eighteenth-century items is less rococo than one might think. Her taste for wood panelling and decorations in grisaille drew her more towards a neo-classical eighteenth century, with subjects or stylistic sources marked by antiquity, such as the directoire wood panelling of one of the rooms on the first floor, where one can feel the Pompeian influence. The grisailles of Jean-Siméon Rousseau, known as Rousseau de la Rottière (1747-1822), decorate several areas of the Villa and thus create a fantasized antiquity with Renaissance accents, as does, for instance, the frieze in the Baroness' boudoir's antechamber, in which the cavalcade is reminiscent of Polidoro da Caravaggio.

She had inherited her father's taste for porcelain, and her collection is one of the richest of her time: Meissen, Vincennes, and Sèvres. While her French contemporaries were growing weary of this discipline and only the Anglo-Saxons continued to acquire fine pieces, Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild considerably enriched her collection by taking advantage of the major sales of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Chappey and Beurdeley's sales for example). Her father's legacy completed this collection. Exceptional pieces included vases said to be "des âges", 1779, soft Sèvres porcelain and, from the manufacture of Vincennes, a pair of "Dutch" vases. She was passionate about Meissen porcelain, whose humour she loved, and she acquired, for example, an orchestra of musical monkeys and a pair of dogs on pedestals, as witnesses to her legendary eccentricity.

The German occupation during the Second World War caused terrible loss to the Villa Île-de-France, as it did to many other collections. In addition to the loss of certain works, the archives disappeared, which has made it difficult to establish the precise history of the works.

In Beatrice's collections of both European and Asian furniture and objets d'art from the Enlightenment era – for example, she had a remarkable door from the Imperial Palace in Beijing and a twelve-leaf Coromandel screen from the Qing Dynasty – painting seems almost to have been side-lined. Although Venetian painting is well represented with Tiepolo or Pellegrini ceilings, the French school is only "modestly" represented by Boucher (*De trois choses en ferez-vous une ?*) and Fragonard (*La défense de l'Amour*), among others. Where are the paintings of the Nordic school she inherited from her father? Sold! They were probably not to her taste. That was when her collection of painted woods from the Italian and Spanish fourteenth to eighteenth centuries took on a certain value, for how could a cultured woman be so enthusiastic about "old-fashioned" objects with a primitive style? This was Beatrice's singularity. Of course, she loved the eighteenth century and was passionate about all its forms, but flamboyant Gothic and the very early Renaissance echoed her own aesthetics: singular and surprising like the sad and grave gazes of the Madonnas

and the silent prayers of martyrs. She seems to have composed this collection towards the end of her life and exclusively for the patio of the Villa Île-de-France. Rather than including any great masterpieces – although the triptych by the master of Cesi, which is now in the Marmottan Museum, is worth mentioning –, it is a set where grace and elegance are mirrored by the Spanish alabaster that she acquired at the same time and had installed in the patio and on the east façade, at the official entrance. The desired effect must surely have been a monastic calm in this vast space, thus delaying the passage from the gardens to the precious salons. This collection warrants in-depth study and conservation and restoration treatment.

The Villa Île-de-France is now called Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild and receives an average of 160,000 visitors a year, which is actually a source of problems. Culture Espaces has managed the site since 1992, maintaining the gardens (with seven gardeners) and privatizing the place for large parties, like a distant echo to the Baroness's evening receptions.

Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild's collections are now recognized and over 1,000 items are being entered in the Monuments Historiques inventory. As we launch preventive conservation and major restoration efforts, we hope that her spirit and her wishes – to make this place a museum while keeping its salon spirit – will endure. ■



Left : View from the Salon Louis XV to the Salon Louis XVI, with the Don Quixote tapestry.

Center : View of the patio, the Villa's central element.

Bottom : The Salon Louis XVI.

Photos Victor Point / H&K

Top : Béatrice Ephrussi, born Rothschild (1864-1934).

**The Fondation Jean et Simone Lurçat, the youngest of the Académie des Beaux-Arts' foundations, was an initiative of Simone Lurçat, the widow of painter Jean Lurçat (1892-1966). Here we look at the origins and purposes of this new Foundation, which celebrates its tenth anniversary this year.**

The story starts under German Occupation. In the wake of the 11 November 1942 invasion, a young schoolteacher from Toulouse, Simone Selves, decided to join the Resistance. Some time later, having become a liaison agent in the maquis of the Lot département, she was called upon to drive around "a personality" named Jean Bruyères. She had unknowingly crossed paths with Jean Lurçat, who had chosen his name as a resistance fighter in memory of the small town in the Vosges where he was born.

Lurçat later confided: "I remember, she had a leather jacket, or something like that. She reminded me of women in the Republican Army's militia in Spain. She was driving around in her car with grenades under the back seat..."

Both played leading roles in the liberation committee of the Lot. Once the war was over, they went their separate ways.

Towards the end of her life, as she wanted a place in Paris to bear witness to Lurçat's presence, and grew concerned about the future of his studio-house in the 14<sup>th</sup> arrondissement with its collections and archives, Simone Lurçat approached the Académie des Beaux-Arts, which had hosted the artist in February 1964. She met Marcel Landowski, then Chancellor of the Institut de France, who enthusiastically welcomed the donation project.

The first donation to the Académie des Beaux-Arts, in 2001, was to be followed by a magnificent bequest. It led to an exhibition at the Institut de France's Pavillon Comtesse de Caen, which subsequently travelled to Moscow, Riga and Poland as part of a European project.

While several bequests were made to the museums of Aubusson, Saint-Céré, Angers and Eppelborn (Germany) upon her death in 2009, Simone Lurçat bequeathed the studio-house, along with the economic and moral rights attached to the artist's work, to the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Finally, the Académie's determination led to the creation of the Jean and Simone Lurçat Foundation in 2010. Jean Lurçat's studio-house, a Parisian masterpiece of the Modern movement, was built in 1925 by his brother André Lurçat



# THE FONDATION JEAN ET SIMONE LURÇAT

By **XAVIER HERMEL**, administrator of the Foundation



Simone Selves took part in the repatriation of prisoners and was sent to Baden-Baden, which became the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces in Germany. Lurçat settled in the Lot, in his new workshop at the Château des Tours-Saint-Laurent, which he found to be the ideal setting to compose his monumental tapestries.

They were to meet again ten years later, in Paris. In 1956, Lurçat, then a widower, married Simone, who provided him with valuable support in his work at a time when orders were pouring in and he was exhibiting his works in more and more venues throughout the world. When the artist died in 1966, Simone Lurçat worked tirelessly to defend the monumental oeuvre left behind by the artist, and to safeguard it for posterity. Although a few acquisitions by the State had anchored his work in the French heritage, his widow's generosity is the main reason why its presence has endured in the French provinces. She gave the City of Angers the tapestry *Le Chant du monde*, a testamentary work, which now hangs on the walls of the Hôpital Saint-Jean. In 1986, she chose to donate Tours-Saint-Laurent, the artist's centre of creation, to the Conseil Général du Lot.



(1894-1970). It was the first of eight houses built for artists in the Impasse de la Villa Seurat, one of three urban ensembles built in Paris in the 1920s. Having been maintained in its original state, with its decorations and furniture designed by André Lurçat, Pierre Chareau and Matégot, it was classified in 2018 as a Historical Monument.

The restoration project aims to highlight André Lurçat's innovative architecture and to restore Jean's world, preserving its authenticity and making it a true place of memory. The house will gradually be opened to the public and will offer researchers and students in architecture an exceptional field for architectural, technical and social research.

The first phase of the major works programme, carried out as part of a subscription project launched under the aegis of the Fondation du Patrimoine and with the support of the Drac Île-de-France, has already enabled the roof to be fixed and the entire building to be made watertight again.

The artist's personal collections, which are kept by the Foundation, are a valuable heritage that helps us to understand his work in its full diversity: paintings, tapestries, ceramics, illustrated books as well as a collection of more than a thousand drawings, most of which remain unpublished to this day.

A major inventory and review is underway and the artist's archives – a rare collection maintained in its original setting – are undergoing classification. These will offer new avenues for researchers to explore. To this end, and in keeping with Simone Lurçat's wish, an archive and documentation centre dedicated to Jean Lurçat and his brother André will soon open in a venue adjacent to the historic house, which has been fitted out appropriately thanks to generous patronage.

In 2016, the exhibition "Jean Lurçat, au seul bruit du soleil" at the Galerie des Gobelins, which was organized by the Foundation in partnership with the Mobilier National and was magnificently staged by Jean-Michel Wilmotte, put the artist's oeuvre in the public eye in all of its dimensions, and most prominently as

**"The Foundation's ambition is to become a relay for all those interested in Lurçat"**

a major representative of twentieth-century decorative arts. In the summer of 2020, at the Institut de France's Pavillon Comtesse de

Caen, an exhibition of previously unpublished drawings will reveal a lesser-known aspect of his work.

The Foundation's ambition is to become a relay for all those interested in Lurçat and his intellectual, social and artistic environment. Its goals will be to work in collaboration with organizations linked to the artist, to establish the necessary partnerships to hold exhibitions in France and abroad, to renew international contacts to which Jean Lurçat was very attached, and to keep the collection alive by constantly renewing exhibitions.

The Fondation also wishes to complete its collections, not only with works, but also with the writings that Lurçat, a tireless letter writer, left us.

Jean Lurçat passionately embraced his time. He experienced and conceived of a rapidly changing world; it is up to us to keep this spirit alive. ■

[www.fondation-lurcat.fr](http://www.fondation-lurcat.fr)

Public subscription for the restoration of Jean Lurçat's studio-house: [www.fondation-patrimoine.org/32581](http://www.fondation-patrimoine.org/32581)

Left page :

Simone Lurçat and Jean Lurçat in Cologne at the inauguration of the tapestry *Vin, musique et poésie* in 1962. Photo credit: DR

Jean Lurçat's studio-house, designed by his brother, architect André Lurçat André Lurçat, Villa Seurat in Paris, around 1926. Photo credit: DR

Upstairs: the living room of the studio-house. Photo Françoise Huguier

# LE PAVILLON COMTESSE DE CAEN, PALAIS DE L'INSTITUT DE FRANCE

By **JEAN-MICHEL WILMOTTE**, member of the Architecture Section

The Institut de France's former Salle Comtesse de Caen, which has been exclusively devoted to the Académie des Beaux-Arts since 1872, has undergone profound interior renovation. The design of the new interior, with adapted museography and lighting, was kindly offered free of charge by architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte. It is now open to the public under the new name "Pavillon Comtesse de Caen", and offers a remarkable exhibition space.

Top: the exhibition space, which was entirely renovated by architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte in 2019.

Opposite: the portrait of Anne-Sophie Marchoux, Countess of Caen (1809-1870), by Adolphe Yvon (1817-1893).

Right: the Pavillon Comtesse de Caen, the right wing of the Palais de l'Institut de France, the outside of which was recently restored.

Photo credit: CMP



Anne-Sophie Marchoux, Countess of Caen, born in Paris in 1809, was a passionate patron of the arts. Her father Louis-Auguste Marchoux was an honourable Parisian notary, and her mother Marie-Sophie Vernier was related to the influential Le Quinquet de Soissons family.

Anne-Sophie Marchoux was flamboyant and luminous, having grown up a curious, passionate, imaginative girl at the epicentre of Parisian excitement. Her father, a well-known figure, commissioned the building of the Vivienne gallery, which was completed in 1826 by the winner of the 1779 Grand Prix de Rome, architect François-Jacques Delannoy. Anne-Sophie owed her title to her marriage to Camille-Maximilien, Count of Caen. She had no children and indulged instead in her two passions throughout her life.

The first of those was art. She produced many works herself, which are now exhibited in museums: paintings, sculptures, tapestries, crochet. Among other things, she created the Vivienne gallery's caryatids. Her second passion was for nature, which inspired her artistic creations and was an essential part of her artistic process. Throughout her life she went on numerous retreats at her Bellevue home and later at the Saint George priory which her cousin Louise Alexandrine Rollet bequeathed to her.

It is said of her that her beauty charmed and her mind seduced. She was charitable and devoted, and loved to tend to the sick, to take care of folk in need, to share her resources with the most destitute. A free spirit, she was entirely dedicated to the causes

to benefit from a sum of money after leaving the Villa Medici, to help them resettle in Paris.

Following her death, Henriquel Dupont said in the Académie des Beaux-Arts' annual session that *"The most considerable bequest is that of Madame la Comtesse de Caen, who left most of her fortune, not only for the creation of a museum, but for the payment of an allowance of forty thousand francs for three years to painters, sculptors and architects returning from the École de Rome"*.

The only obligation in exchange was to produce a work of their choice, to decorate the museum. This was a nod to the government, which often commissioned a project from artists leaving their residency in Rome with an imposed subject – a hindrance to genius, according to her.

By a decree dated 24 June 1872, the Académie was authorized to accept the bequest. The Pavillon des Arts, a wing of the Palais de l'Institut, was henceforth assigned to the Académie to present the works of painters, sculptors and other artists upon their return from the Académie de France in Rome. Over time, this room came to host many other events in the life of the Académie: exhibitions of Grand Prix d'Architecture laureates, of Paul-Louis Weiller Portrait Prize laureates (a prize of international renown created by patron Paul-Louis Weiller, who was elected as a member of our Compagnie in 1965), the annual statutory exhibitions of the Casa de Velázquez, which present the work produced by its residents during their stay in Madrid, the exhibitions of the Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière Prize-winning photographers or, more recently, of the artists who won the Avati Prize.

A century and a half later, here we are, gathered in the Académie des Beaux-Arts, a Mecca for the preservation of art and knowledge, for support of creation, and for patronage; right here where many illustrious figures have been awarded their academician's sword or a decoration: Jean Dewasne, Maurice Béjart, André Wogenscky, Guy de Rougemont, Gérard Oury, Jean Balladur, Henri Verneuil, Jeanne Moreau, Paul Andreu, Laurent Petitgirard, Francis Girod, Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière, Vladimir Velickovic, Lucien Clergue, Brigitte Terziev, Yann Arthus Bertrand, Prince Karim Aga Kha, Jacques Rougerie, Sheikha Mozah, William Christie, Patrick de Carolis, Jean-Jacques Annaud, Ousmane Sow, Philippe Montebello, and Sebastião Salgado, among many others.

Therefore, in keeping with the Countess of Caen's support and love for art, we are inaugurating a new, completely renovated exhibition room, and have renamed the Pavillon after her. Clad in Volga and ceremonial lights, we have made this space a highly scenographic, modular showcase dedicated to exhibitions, where we have chosen to control the lighting so as to create a specific atmosphere for each exhibition and thus to best reach the public. By keeping the original ceiling paintings and parquet flooring, we have also chosen to maintain the spirit of the room.

For this inaugural exhibition, we have the honour of welcoming the photographer Raghu Rai, winner of the first edition of the Académie des Beaux-Arts' William Klein Photography Prize, an exceptional event since the artist has not shown his work in France for the past fifty years (see pages 9 to 11). ■

that were close to her heart, far from the preoccupations of fashion or the conventions of her time.

Upon her death, she bequeathed part of her fortune to the priory and another part to the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Her will was drawn up in favour of young artists, winners of the Grand Prix de Rome, in order to alleviate some of the material concerns that may hinder their artistic creation. Thus, her bequest allowed them



Built on the "parcelle de l'An IV", a plot of almost 1500 square metres located along Philippe Auguste's wall and on the site of Charles V's former moat, the André and Liliane Bettencourt auditorium consists of a 350-seat auditorium and annexes (foyer, meeting rooms, offices and logistics areas). The Institut de France and the five Academies thus finally have a space that is essential to their expanding sphere of influence, which welcomes the public and meets the requirements for hosting international events.

Right: Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard and Marc Barani at the inauguration.

Photo credit: Serge Demailly, Ben Dauchez/H&K, Atelier Barani

**"Architecture is the science of subtle correspondences". This definition, which comes from the Hindu tradition, could serve as a guideline to understand the extraordinary quality of the Palais de l'Institut and steer its evolution.**

The skilled craftsmanship with which the plane was shifted to one side so that the building opens symmetrically onto the Seine, the precision of the harmonious lines, the beauty of the materials, and the treatment of the facades that vary from pomp to rigour from front to back, resonate with the activities of the academicians, sealing a living concord between the Institut de France, the Palais and its location in the city.

The dense history of the site offers a second base from which to design the project: the idea of the site as a palimpsest.

The successive cycles of destruction and construction have imprinted lines of force in the place, thus preserving the trace of each phase.

This is particularly true of the *parcelle de l'An IV*, where the layout of Philippe Auguste's enclosure, the "director's garden" and the "new workshops" remain and retain significance as structural elements.

## THE AUDITORIUM OF THE INSTITUT DE FRANCE: BETWEEN TRADITION AND INVENTION

By **MARC BARANI**, member of the Architecture Section

Considered in relation to courtyard 3 and the buildings surrounding it, these intertwined elements draw the project's main axes.

All forms of construction within the courtyard have been removed, to regain the full width of the garden that was formerly there.

The courtyard can then expand up to the wall of Philippe Auguste's enclosure, restoring meaning to the site's real backbone so as to offer a clear space, an amplification of the ground to match the prestigious facilities it hosts. The preserved hall thus becomes a filter that restores the courtyard's age-old limits without constraining its newly acquired visual breadth.

The task of sorting and superimposing significant strata can then be continued, with the offices and meeting rooms leaning against the Hôtel de la Monnaie's gable and suspended above the foyer. The auditorium is placed at the back of the plot, based on the alignment of the Longitudes building, which it extends precisely with a slab of stone in the foyer. The three entities – hall, offices and auditorium – remain distinct, both separated and linked by slits of light that define their perimeter. The ambiance created by the soft and pleasant lighting further accentuates the lightness of the volumes above the floor – here, a solid base.

As for the auditorium, it will have to put in place a set of connections with the Coupole and the large Salle des Séances in order to maintain its position as the third strong and symbolic place in the life of the Palais.

Both a place of performance and a place of work, it will borrow stone from the Coupole and wood from the large Salle des Séances.

The stone base also evokes the excavation on the site, while the wood, which is developed in a honeycomb structure on the walls, turns onto a horizontal plane in the form of a coffered ceiling through which natural light flows.

The panel infill, which is adapted to the acoustics of the room, offers a contemporary and high-performance version of this type of ceiling, which is also found elsewhere in the Institute.

These broad outlines of the design mean that the project ultimately proposes, as a founding principle, to delve into the complex web of interrelationships that bind the Palais' various elements, to assess their historical value, and to reveal the most structuring of them in order to make the new development resonate with the Institute's tradition and future. ■

# RISKING MASTERPIECES, THE CHALLENGE OF AN ARTISTS' RESIDENCY

By **MURIEL MAYETTE-HOLTZ**, of the Unattached Members Section,  
Director of the Fondation Dufraine

The Fondation Dufraine's "Villa les Pinsons", owned by the Académie des Beaux-Arts, is home every year to about fifteen artists in residence. It is located in Chars, in the Val d'Oise, between forests and fields.

This yearlong retreat allows artists to have not only a roof over their heads, but also a workshop and a modest grant that covers their daily needs. Apart from this rudimentary comfort, the residence offers companionship among members of diverse schools, as well as an environment in which artists cannot escape from work or, above all, from the need to feel legitimate in this great family – in other words, the need to prove to themselves that they deserve this retreat as much as their illustrious predecessors did. This aspect is undoubtedly the project's most important goal!

Mr. Louis Dufraine, who died on 17 February 1937, loved artists with a passion. In his will he therefore left a former orphanage in Chars, called the "Villa des Pinsons", to the Académie des Beaux-Arts for the purpose of converting it into an artists' residence. This materialized in the 1950s, when a second floor was added to the original building and a new thirteen-metre high building was erected on the property, which could accommodate about fifty people. The rooms were furnished and the residents, poor artists, came to finish their careers in this residence. The architect, our colleague Marc Saltet, had beautiful workshops built there with glass roofs, which are still enjoyed today by the residents. The property also has a wooded plot and a large garden, as well as a vegetable garden and chickens, donkeys and goats, all of which enhance the quality of the residents' daily life. The town of Chars is a little far from Paris, but it is not completely isolated either and it has nature to offer!

The initial project consisted in offering free board and lodging to old artists – architects, sculptors, artists who mainly drew, painters or engravers –, either alone or as couples. The idea was to shelter artists of a certain age, to allow them to continue developing their art, with no clearly defined time limit, which in a way basically made the residence an artists' retirement home, although the facilities were never adapted to this use. Our fellow Academician Jean Cardot was the director of this foundation for many years, with the help and support of Philippe and Christine Delafosse, a couple who live on site and have always tended to its residents' well-being. Gradually, the ups and downs of contemporary life meant that artists in the prime of their lives found themselves in difficult financial conditions more often, so the residency evolved with the times, with its time, and generations mingled. Recruitment was based on proposals from the president, himself a sculptor, and thanks to him, great names in the art world have been residents.

Above: view of the Villa des Pinsons' equipped workshops, which are made available to artists in residence.

Photos Victor Point / H&K and DR



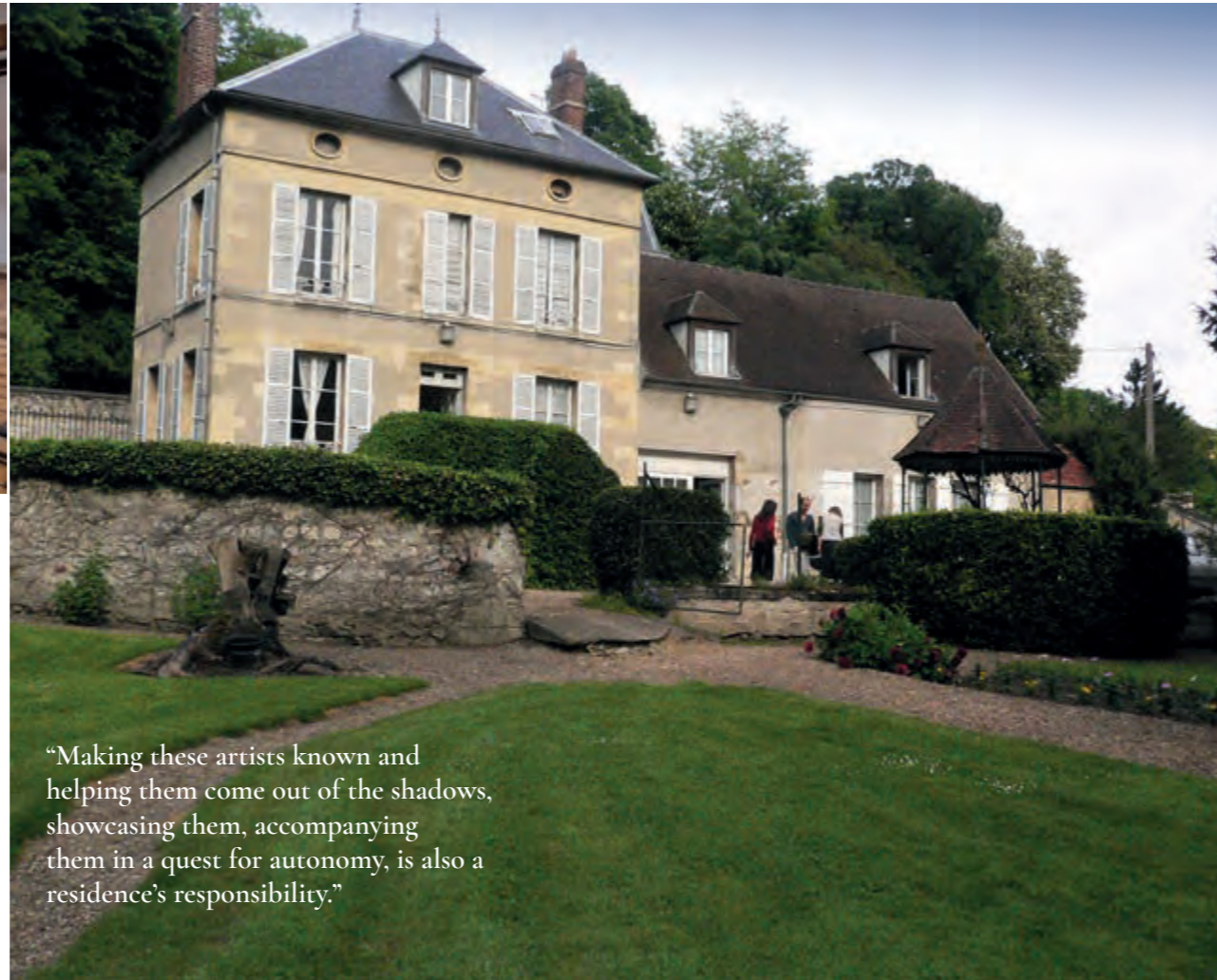
Today, the rhythms have changed, residents are welcomed for periods of between one and two years, from September to June. On the advice of our colleagues, a pre-selection jury has been set up and I would like to thank Astrid de la Forêt and Pierre Collin, among others, for their sound advice. The foundation takes about fifteen artists under its wing, to allow them to carry out a project, to find new pathways, to study new subjects, to lose and find their way, to grow, to ponder... This year, our artists are of five different nationalities, three of them are political refugees, and all are from very different generations and disciplines: painters, sculptors, engravers, and researchers in musicology (in the future we could moreover broaden the range of disciplines by welcoming composers, writers, photographers, etc.). The mix of disciplines also makes the project more interesting because the arts nowadays are displaying porosity. Their different languages are influencing one another, and visual artists often claim to have several complementary practices. We therefore need to give thought to the workshops' equipment, which is much more sophisticated than it was in the last century. Digital technology is an important basis in artists' work, so they are asking us first and foremost for efficient internet access, for example. While preserving the beauty of the workshops, renovation work is planned at Chars in the next season to make these workspaces more suitable and to organize larger and more pleasant common areas. It will also be necessary to maintain and equip the main building, which has noise pollution issues due its proximity to the train tracks, to equip some workshops with a piano if we want to welcome musicians, and to carry on with our ecologically responsible approach.

As in the past, Mr Dufraine's humanism is still watching over the artists, as the residence's guests all have interesting personalities and indisputable artistic ability. Many of them have seized this opportunity to prepare their applications for residencies abroad, at the Casa de Velázquez or the Villa Médicis (residencies which are also supported by the Académie des Beaux-Arts), while others have prepared exhibitions; all of them leave with a new project. Everyone I have met recognizes the importance of this protected period in their work.



There is also an important psychological dimension in any residence. The fact of no longer being alone and, in a sense, belonging to a group helps to develop greater self-confidence and somewhat alleviates the loneliness and the doubt. There are discussions between artists of course, and sometimes there are arguments or even conflicts, but the possibility of belonging to a group of creators gives one a kind of natural legitimacy and reinforces one's ability to overcome doubt. One could call it the "laboratory" effect of a type of peer group. It is therefore important to build unavoidable meeting and crossing points, the main one of which is the kitchen. There is also the garden, the library and common workshops, all of which help to unite the group. At the Villa Medici, I witnessed how the establishment of a private restaurant to replace the artists' canteen deteriorated the project and, in a way, encouraged a gentrification of attitudes. Little by little, residents started cooking in their apartments, choosing whether or not to mingle with the others; then they began to have their meals delivered individually "at home"; and then they demanded that the restaurant give them discounts, and so on. Eventually the fundamental debates between artists were lost in private spaces. Even the absence of criticism such as Berlioz's or Hervé Guibert's when they were in residence at the Villa Medici, or enthusiasm like Bizet's, started to be felt. Debates were held on social media and the dialogue was lost. Being and living together contributes to the importance of experiencing a residency.

We have to pay attention to the working conditions that are offered to an artist, and this is of paramount importance because we gradually have to adapt to the evolution of the arts. Mixing generations is an important dimension that should not be neglected if the time spent together in residency is to be fertile. The diversity of points of view, schools, origins, personal histories and maturities makes new readings of the world and shared growth possible. When building a residency with fifteen or so artists, care must be taken to ensure that the criteria of sympathy and complementarity are met; talent, strangely enough, must not be the only goal. On the other hand, one should not hesitate to "risk masterpieces", by which I mean instinctively follow a choice that is not necessarily reasonable, because crossing paths with others can absolutely transform an artist and allow the most



"Making these artists known and helping them come out of the shadows, showcasing them, accompanying them in a quest for autonomy, is also a residence's responsibility."

modest and the most fragile to reveal themselves. In a residency, artists seek, among other things, to be cut off from the real world and entirely focused and dedicated to their art. So there is a considerable responsibility that comes with hosting them because if we don't pay attention to them, if we remain deaf and indifferent to their work, their situation when their residency ends and they absolutely must go back to the real world may be much more precarious than when they arrived. Sometimes comfort can be a trap if no one helps creators to build for the future. This period must not be just a temporary situation before reverting to material and spiritual precariousness. Making these artists known and helping them come out of the shadows, showcasing them, accompanying them in a quest for autonomy, is also a residence's responsibility. With this in mind, we are considering the possibility of a regular exhibition of the artists in residence at Chars, or the possibility of joining the "iViva Villa!" project, which brings together the French residences abroad – the Casa de Velázquez, Villa Médicis and Villa Kujoyama – for an annual thematic exhibition of the artists they have hosted during the year. Like a photograph of contemporary creation, this association also offers artists the opportunity to belong to a larger network that will serve them better for their future. Our intention is to build the future.



like France. If it is to secure the best artists for the future, a State that is interested in culture and understands the need for it must absolutely make welcoming spaces available for creators, without any binding obligation for them to produce results. They alone will go down in history to bear witness to the strength of a nation. The role of selection juries is therefore crucial in building powerful generations of artists. This means that they cannot yield to the pull of fashion or of cronyism, or to interest, and cannot welcome only those who have to be welcomed. That pressure can be disastrous. Aside from which, specialists are not always the best judges! It takes a great deal of instinct to discover genius. We have to take the risk of making a mistake. Finally, it is important not to look only for the best, because it is the group, rather than each of its individual members, that must perform and be useful. An artist is such an important and fragile being... There are the demanding types, the activists, those who remain locked in doubt, those who work like crazy, those who waste time, those who wander around, those who talk too much and those who remain silent; there are the friendly ones and the solitary cantankerous ones, the bon vivants and the hermits. But whatever their attitude, at the end of the road there are inventors of dreams, builders of beauty; there is a gesture, a word, a music that will move us and travel down the stream of time. So, for each pioneering genius, for each great artist, we can admit so many lesser ones, so many mistakes, because if a residency houses a Mozart every ten years, it will truly have earned its legitimacy. ■

Finally, artists are not obliged to show any results, which is something we must accept and even defend. First of all because hitting a painter on the head won't make them paint – and I don't know of an artist who doesn't secretly dream of producing a masterpiece – but also because the time for inspiration should be taken into account as an essential part of artistic work. One has to take a lot in before starting to produce, and to train and make mistakes before reaching a balance in one's creative work which, in the meanwhile, generates no income! Although this time is not lost, it does not earn a living for artists, which is why a residency can also be so helpful.

There is furthermore the question of works produced in residence that belong to the artist. Sometimes a resident may wish to leave a work of art on the premises at the end of their stay, and these gifts have made it possible to build up a small collection at Chars. The paintings can be admired in the small lounge; they are precious memories that tell a piece of our history. But there are sometimes huge works that must be maintained over time and that pile up in the reserves. These works may be questionable or ephemeral, yet the Foundation is responsible for them. This is why I do not think it is appropriate to formalize or encourage this practice.

Establishing artists' residences is a necessary luxury for a country

The workshops and common areas are occupied by the artists and are places where "mixing generations is an important dimension that should not be neglected [...], because the diversity of points of view, schools, origins, personal histories and maturities makes new readings of the world and shared growth possible"

Photos Victor Point / H&K and DR

The Casa de Velázquez, built within the University City of Madrid, facing the Sierra de Guadarrama. Legend has it that Velázquez liked to set up his easel on this site. The first buildings, which were inaugurated in 1928, were bombed and partially destroyed in the Battle of Madrid in November 1936, during the Spanish Civil War. In 1959, after four years of reconstruction, the institution returned to its original site.

Photo credit: Casa de Velázquez

# CASA DE VELÁZQUEZ, ACADÉMIE DE FRANCE À MADRID

By **JEAN ANGUERA**, member of the Sculpture Section

**The Casa de Velázquez is a scientific, cultural and professional public institution that promotes creative activities and research related to the arts, languages, literatures and societies of Iberian, Latin-American and Maghreb countries. Its mission is also to contribute to the training of artists, researchers and teachers, and to the development of artistic and scientific exchanges between France and these countries.**

"France is going to build a new temple where friends of art will draw new strength from the environment and from the admiration of a school where realism was raised to the peak of its ideal." These were the words of the Spanish sovereign, King Alfonso XIII, when, on 18 December 1917, he officially donated a piece of land on the Moncloa plateau to the Académie des Beaux-arts. In return, France undertook to build what would become the Casa de Velázquez, a residence for French artists to study Spanish art and the realism of which the king spoke, of which Velázquez's oeuvre provides some of the most shining

examples. The site, on the outskirts of central Madrid, is splendid. It overlooks the Rio Manzanares, with a view stretching across a wooded plain for about 50 kilometres, all the way to the foot of the 2,400-metre high Sierra Guadarrama. For most of the year the snowy peaks are visible from the residence, built from 1920 on and inaugurated in 1928 to welcome the first of its residents, who had come from France to find nourishment in Spanish art. Scientific research on the Iberian world has since been added to artistic studies. Two distinct entities, administered by a single institution, are thus hosted by the Casa de Velázquez: the École des Hautes Études Hispaniques et Ibériques (EHEHI), for research in the human and social sciences, and the Académie de France à Madrid (AFM), which brings together resident artists recruited within the framework of a close partnership with the Académie des Beaux-arts.

The institution, which now falls under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation as part of



Madrid and passes through Paris and the Académie des Beaux-Arts, to end in Nantes. The "¡Viva Villa!" festival, which brings together the three French public Residences abroad, namely the Casa de Velázquez, the Villa Kujoyama in Kyoto, and the Villa Medici in Rome, is the flagship event that marks the end of the residency in Madrid. This event, which was created jointly by the three residences in 2016 and to which Muriel Mayette-Holz, then director of the Villa Médicis, gave a decisive impetus, is now in its fourth edition and is an unfailing annual success. The last one, an impeccable presentation, was held from 10 October to 10 November 2019 in the prestigious Collection Lambert in Avignon. We could not conclude this article without paying tribute to the tireless enthusiasm of the director of the Casa de Velázquez, Michel Bertrand, and his entire team. The quality of the resources and facilities offered, and of the work carried out at the Casa owes them a great deal. ■

[www.casadevelazquez.org](http://www.casadevelazquez.org)

its network of five French schools abroad, welcomes researchers and artists who are free to establish connections with each other's work at any time.

During their stay, artists share their experiences and develop a research orientation through reflection on their profession and on their aesthetic inclinations. The Académie de France à Madrid encourages experimentation, welcomes the most varied individual expressions without prejudice and participates in promoting its members' works.

Over an academic year, from September to July, the Casa de Velázquez provides artists with spacious and quiet workshops in the vast, sloping gardens, as well as rooms and studios for composers or filmmakers, plus a number of facilities available for group workshops. By offering an environment conducive to the development of their creativity, the institution has fulfilled the intention behind its creation. With major museums such as the Prado, the Reina Sofia Museum, the Thyssen Bornemiza Museum and the splendid collections of the Real Academia San Fernando not far from the villa, artists can fully open up to Iberian culture, especially since the Spanish capital is located in the geographical and political centre of Spain.

Every year thirteen artists are recruited from among some 250 candidates who appear before a commission of about twenty personalities from the art world, half of whom are members

**"We must insist on  
the need for a  
very demanding  
commission with  
impeccable ethics".**

commission to be most likely to benefit from a stay at the Casa de Velázquez present their work before the jury.

This recruitment is very broadly open to candidates from across the world and to the most varied modes of expression: painting, sculpture, engraving and drawing, architecture, musical composition, photography, video and cinema. Significantly, many artists practice and mix several techniques or disciplines, without this hindering their chances of being admitted in any way. While the perspectives of commission members may be informed by a particular mode of expression, they all adopt a broader point of view. However, mixing techniques does not necessarily entail mastering them, which is why it was agreed that they should remain distinct in the institution.

It is important to emphasize the need for a very demanding commission with impeccable ethical standards, because the essential role that the Casa can play depends on the choice of its future residents. It is crucial to keep in mind candidates' commitment and the deep artistic motivation behind their application when assessing them, for, while the benefit they will derive from their stay is evidently theirs to keep, it will nonetheless have an impact on the institution's reputation and the meaning of its existence.

An artist's stay at the Casa should in no way represent a break with their art or their previous professional opportunities. This is

of the Académie des Beaux-Arts (from among these, the Chairperson of the Artistic Commission is appointed for a three-year mandate). The selection is a two-stage process: first online, after which the candidates considered by the



why a director of studies supervises the residents during their stay and programmes various events, concerts, exhibitions, film screenings, participation in international contemporary art fairs, visits to workshops and the publication of catalogues to promote their work in Paris, Madrid and various Spanish and French cities. They are thus periodically called upon to show the evolution of their research, which is surely the best way to encourage them. Halfway through the residency, an "Open Day" is held to confirm the validity of artistic projects. They are very popular with the public in Madrid and the Académie des Beaux-Arts' delegation often expresses enthusiasm with regard to the residents' creative vitality.

Residents are also involved in yet other events, such as Photo-España or Itinéranca – a series of exhibitions that begins in

To the left and above: exhibition opening in the galleries overlooking the terrace and the belvedere, facing the Sierra de Guadarrama.

Centre: the library, which is made available to the residents.

Above: the patio, the tree-lined heart of the establishment.

Photo credit: Casa de Velázquez / Amando Gómez

# THE MARC LADREIT DE LACHARRIÈRE PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ACADEMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS

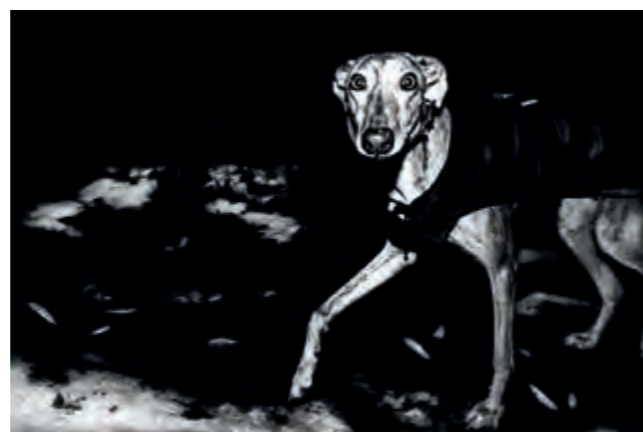
By **MARC LADREIT DE LACHARRIÈRE**, of the Free Members Section

The first Photography Prize of the Académie des Beaux-Arts was created in 2007 at the initiative of Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière and the patronage of his firm Fimalac. This partnership has been rewarding personal and original photographic projects for more than twelve years.

In 2005, I was honoured to be welcomed by my confreres among them. I naturally wanted to become actively involved in our Compagnie and support its missions, especially in the field of artistic creation. This is why, on the occasion of the official entry of photography into the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 2006, I wished to create a prize dedicated to the discipline. Hence, this Photography Prize simultaneously serves to mark the opening of this new section within the Académie and to support and encourage photographic creation in France.

The aim was not for this first Photography Prize of the Académie – which is under the patronage of my firm Fimalac – simply to pay tribute to a photographer's work with a grant. The prize's particularity lies above all in the accompaniment and support it offers artists in the realization of a personal and unique project. Presented as a call for projects, it encourages young talent and recognized photographers alike. The format of this prize, which imposes no theme and offers total freedom, is designed to contribute to the enhancement of the French photographic repertoire.

The notions of accompaniment and support for creation are the very essence of this prize, and it is thanks to this common desire that the jury and I had the joy of presenting achievements in which quality and singularity prevail. Once their project is completed, the prize winners are given the opportunity to exhibit it at the Palais de l'Institut in November, the most favourable period for photography, during which the international Paris Photo fair and the Photo Saint-Germain tour take place. In addition, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, a partner of the Prize,



"In each of its editions since 2007, the Prize has distinguished an original and unique vision by a talented photographer".

distinguished an original and unique vision from a talented photographer, and I am delighted by its success and the recognition it has garnered. The endowment was made biennial in 2018, allowing the winner more time to complete their project and expand its scope. In this spirit, we will have the joy in the autumn of 2020 of discovering the work that our last laureate, the photographer Flore, will have carried out during her two years, for her project *L'odeur de la nuit était celle du jasmin*, in the footsteps of Marguerite Duras, between Vietnam and Cambodia. The exceptional artists who previously received the prize have already offered us magnificent journeys, truly making us wander between continents. Our artistic journey began in Africa with Malik Nejmi and his poignant account of disabled children's condition. A few years later Katharine Cooper unveiled an inside portrait of white people of South Africa. In France, Thibaut Cuisset made us rediscover the countryside, from the Lozère

devotes a special issue every year to the winning project and participates in promoting the artist's work.

In each of its editions since 2007, the Prize has

to the Yonne; and Marion Poussier immersed us in the heart of subtle family ties. Jean-François Spricigo travelled across France to reveal a singular bestiary. In Asia, Françoise Huguier showed us the middle classes of Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Bangkok behind closed doors. Catherine Henriette told us her Chinese fables, under the sun and in the snow. Then Klavdij Sluban took us to Japan, in the footsteps of haiku master Matsuo Bâsho. Across the Atlantic, Eric Pillot subjected us to the gaze of animals in North American zoos; and at the "borders" of Europe, Bruno Fert took us into the intimacy of the shelters of migrant and refugee men, women and children. Finally, Claudine Doury took us on her odyssey along the Amur River, to meet the minorities of far-eastern Siberia.

The richness and diversity of the projects that won the Prize mirror the exceptional character of its jury members. Nothing would have been possible without them. Composed since its inception of my confrères and chaired by our Permanent Secretary, this jury brings together talented artists from a variety of disciplines. Music with Laurent Petitgirard, painting with Gérard Garouste, engraving with Erik Desmazières, sculpture with Jean Cardot, cinema with Régis Wargnier, and of course photography with Yann Arthus-Bertrand, Jean Gaumy, Sebastião Salgado and Bruno Barbey. But also the precious help of Patrick de Carolis

and the correspondents of the photography section, Agnès de Gouvion Saint-Cyr, Jean-Luc Monterosso, Bernard Perrine, as well as the Honorary Permanent Secretary of the Académie des Sciences, Jean-François Bach. This jury's particularity is therefore that it ensures the quality and singularity of this Prize: a real prize awarded by artists to artists.

Just like our Académie, it was very important to me that this prize, which is now acclaimed and recognized by artists and critics alike, should be perpetuated. This is why, twelve years after its first edition, I have chosen to create a foundation housed at the Académie des Beaux-Arts and dedicated to funding the Photography Prize, which will thus be able to sustain its unfailing support to the creation and broadcasting of photography. ■

Left: image taken from the "anima" report by Jean-François Spricigo, winner of the 2008 edition.

Top: *Le fleuve Amour à Nergen*, 2018, was one of the photos in the project of 2017 laureate Claudine Doury, titled "Une odyssée sibérienne".

# THE ACADEMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS MARIO AVATI ENGRAVING PRIZE

By **ÉRIK DESMAZIÈRES**, member of the Engraving section

In 2015 the winner was an American national but a long-time resident of Paris, Devorah Boxer, born in 1935 in Troy, USA. Devorah Boxer's very black-and-white world is filled with unusual objects that she collects: pigging brushes, tubes, burettes, bottle brushes, punches, and vices, to which her prints, etchings, drypoints, aquatints, and woodcuts, confer nobility and grandeur. The prize's 2016 awardee was Agathe May, born in 1956, a graduate of the Ecole des Arts Décoratifs de Paris and a former resident of the Villa Medicis. Agathe May engraves large woodcuts, with which she makes each print a new chromatic

papers. Her graphic world is filled with grandiose imaginary architectural structures.

At the end of this seventh edition we can clearly see that the Avati Prize has entirely fulfilled its promise by rewarding five foreign artists out of the seven winners, who were moreover generally little known here and have been discovered by the French public thanks to this prize.

We are also pleased to note that a variety of techniques have been represented: lithography, xylography, linocut, etching, drypoint, etc.

Through the predominance of very large formats, the prize reflects a current trend in contemporary printmaking. Works of two laureates, Christiane Baumgartner and Agathe May, were shown at the exhibition "La gravure XXL", which was held at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Caen during the summer of 2019.

In addition to the members of the Académie's Engraving section, the jury also includes curators of the Prints and Photography Departments of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Maxime Préaud and Cécile Pocheau-Lestevin; foreign personalities: Juan-Manuel Bonett, a great connoisseur of printmaking who was director of the Instituto Cervantes in Paris, Catherine de Braekeeler, director of the Centre de l'Image Imprimée in La Louvière in Belgium, Christian Rümelin, curator of the Cabinet d'Arts Graphiques at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva, Stephen Coppel, curator in charge of contemporary prints at the British Museum, and Ger Luijten, director of the Custodia Foundation in Paris.

The jury meets every fall. After pre-selecting application files, members base their final choice on original works. In 2019, the jury received about a hundred applications, from which it selected twenty.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the Avati family's donation of almost all of the artist's engravings to the Institut's library, as well as the first prize-winner, Jean-Baptiste Sécheret, who recently added more than twenty prints to the collection. ■

Centre: portrait of engraver Mario Avati. Photo DR

Above: *Winters Light, Hunters Point*, 2018, 198 x 86.5 cm, lithograph, by Jenny Robinson, winner of the prize in 2019.



In 2013, thanks to Mario Avati and his wife Helen, contemporary engraving was graced with a new award. This prize, granted annually by the Engraving section of the Académie, has afforded contemporary engraving with new visibility.

**M**ario Avati was a strange artist. Born in 1921 in the Principality of Monaco, he first studied at the École des Arts Décoratifs in Nice before enrolling at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. From the mid-fifties onwards, he devoted his work exclusively to the very particular *mezzotint* technique. What is strange is the regularity with which he worked – a regularity that mirrored his clockwork life in which, when I met him in the early eighties, he invariably produced one engraving per month. He met with success around the world, and particularly in Italy, Japan and the United States. Mario was married to Helen Stern, a brilliant American economic journalist.

After Mario's death in 2009, Helen told me of her desire to create an award for engravers with a remarkable career and to place this award under the aegis of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. It was then decided that an exhibition would be held to mark the award. Here, we must mention the instrumental role played by Michel Euvrard, executor of Helen and Mario Avati's estate, in setting up the Prize.

Helen Avati left us free to draw up the rules of the Prize, with the only condition being that it be international with regard to its scope, to the jury's composition and, of course, to its openness to artists of all nationalities.



The first prize was awarded in 2013 to painter and engraver Jean-Baptiste Sécheret. Born in 1957, a graduate of the Beaux-Arts de Paris and a former student of Pierre Carron's studio, Jean-Baptiste Sécheret is first and foremost a painter, but he also practices the art of printmaking in all its forms. A remarkable lithographer, he has never shied away from working on large formats. His figurative themes are inspired by the periods he spent on the coast of Normandy and by his travels in Italy, Spain and the United States.

In 2014 the German artist Christiane Baumgartner was awarded the prize. Born in Leipzig in 1967, she graduated from the Hochschule für Graphik und Buchkunst in her hometown. She mainly produces *baren* woodcutting prints – the printing technique used by Japanese xylographers –, often on beautiful thin oriental papers. Her prints, which are sometimes of monumental dimensions, represent subjects that are seemingly banal – the sky, the sea, a forest – or are drawn from modern life, such as views of highways or buildings. One of her most emblematic works represents a military airport with Transall planes – an original subject for an engraving, without a doubt.

Above: *Netherland, Central Park et le Pierre*, 2017, 37.5 x 55.2 cm, lithograph by Jean-Baptiste Sécheret, the first awardee of the Académie des Beaux-arts – Mario Avati Engraving Prize, in 2013.

# ELECTIONS

On 23 October, the Académie des Beaux-Arts elected Georg Baselitz as a Foreign Associate member, in the seat previously occupied by Andrzej Wajda (1926-2016). On 20 November, Pierre-Antoine Gatier was elected to the seat previously occupied by Paul Andreu (1938-2018) in the Architecture section, and on 15 January, Catherine Meurisse was elected to the seat previously occupied by Arnaud d'Hauterives (1933-2018) in the Painting section.



Hans-Georg Bruno Kern was born in 1938 in Deutschbaselitz, Germany. He was admitted to the School of Visual and Applied Arts in East Berlin in 1956. Four years later, he produced his first works with the Rayski-Head series. In 1961, he adopted the pseudonym

**Georg Baselitz** in reference to his hometown and, along with his friend Eugen Schönebeck, wrote a first manifesto, the *First Pandemonium*, followed by a second one in 1962. His first solo exhibition was held in 1963 at the Werner and Katz Gallery in Berlin. Two of the works he exhibited – one of which was *Die Große Nacht im Eimer* (*The Big Night Down the Drain*, Ludwig Museum, Cologne) – were banned for indecent exposure. Around this time, he started gradually diversifying his work to include painting, drawing, engraving and sculpture. In 1969, Baselitz began his work on pattern inversion, starting with the painting *Der Wald auf dem Kopf* (*Forest on its Head*). There, all the subjects of his personal repertoire – characters, trees, houses, etc. – were turned upside down to affirm the primacy of gaze over subject. The tension thus created between figuration and abstraction was striking. His oeuvre borrows from both German Expressionism and American painting (Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning). Baselitz's works, which echo the traumas of German history – be it in the series of Heroes, his finger paintings, the fracture-paintings or his Russian paintings – can be found in the most prestigious public collections. Since 2006, with his series of remixed paintings, he has reworked and reinterpreted his own iconography. He took part in the 1975 São Paulo Biennale in Brazil and represented Germany at the 1980 Venice Biennale. He had his first major retrospective in the United States in 1995. In 2004, he was awarded the *Praemium Imperiale* in painting in Tokyo. His works will soon be on display in a major retrospective exhibition in Paris. Photo Charles Duprat ■

The Académie des Beaux-Arts recently elected correspondents **Dominique Frétyard** and **Didier Deschamps** in the Choreography section, and **Christine Gozlan** in the section of Artistic creation in cinema and the audio-visual fields.



The architect **Pierre-Antoine Gatier**, born in 1959, graduated in museology from the École du Louvre in 1983 and the École de Chaillot in 1987. He won the chief architect competition for historical monuments in 1990 and created his agency the following year. He began his career in the departments of Marne and Haute-Marne. He drafted the preliminary study on the Halles de Reims (1929), a vast reinforced cement structure which awakened his interest for the conservation of 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture and of the most recent heritage. He continued this research in 1999 in the Alpes-Maritimes, where he was in charge of restoring emblematic works of villa architecture such as the Villa Kerylos or the Villa E-1027. He has proven his attachment to 20<sup>th</sup> century modern reinforced concrete constructions, which were characterized by experimentation and a constant evolution in methods of implementation that led, in turn, to a renewal in restoration practices. His agency has 20 employees who participate in elaborating restoration and enhancement projects for major monuments such as the Domaine de Chantilly, the Villa Medici in Rome, or the Bourse de Commerce and the Opéra Comique in Paris. He is eager to share his commitment to new heritages and gives talks in universities and at symposiums all over the world, in addition to carrying out missions abroad, as he did for the Ministry of Culture and Communication in 2005, for instance, when he travelled to New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Photo Jean-François Robert ■



**Catherine Meurisse**, born in 1980, is a press cartoonist, children's book illustrator and comic book author. After a course in literature, she studied first at the École Nationale Supérieure Estienne, and then at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Her first publication as a comic book illustrator, *Causerie sur Delacroix* (2005), was produced as part of her studies. In 2005 she joined *Charlie Hebdo*. She also draws for *Libération*, *Causette*, *Télérama*, and *L'Obs*, illustrates children's books (with publishers Bayard, Gallimard, Nathan, Sarbacane, and Phaidon) and draws for many children's magazines (e.g. *Okapi*, *DLire*, *Wapiti*, and *Eureka*). She has published several comic books, characterized by dialogue between the arts: *Mes Hommes de lettres*, *Le Pont des arts*, and *Moderne Olympia*, among others. Her comic book *La Légèreté* (Dargaud, 2016) tells the story of her return to daily life and to drawing after the attack on *Charlie Hebdo*. In 2017, as part of the Concorde festival, she and American choreographer DD Dorvillier created a play that explores the myth of the Niobids. Catherine Meurisse then published *Les Grands espaces* (2018) and *Drôles de femmes* (2019), a collection of portraits of women in show business that she created in collaboration with Julie Birmant. With *Delacroix* (Dargaud, 2019), she stepped back into the memories of Alexandre Dumas, to explore the friendship he forged with Eugène Delacroix and to offer her own very personal adaptation of it.

Catherine Meurisse is one of the sponsors of *BD 2020*, the Ministry of Culture's initiative making 2020 the year of comics.

Photo credit: DR ■



## The « Concerts d'un fauteuil »

After the composers in Seat no. 5, the Academy paid tribute to the successive holders of Seat no. 2, up to Gilbert Amy. Photo credit: Académie des Beaux-Arts

The concert of an academician-composer's "Seat" – or how to produce the illusion of historical and aesthetic continuity in the perpetual sequence of the different musicians who have been elected, over time, at the Académie des Beaux-Arts.

The idea is appealing. What a pleasure to discover – or rediscover – a particular "colleague" from past centuries whose work is sometimes unknown to us!

In concrete terms, this is a difficult and time-consuming exercise. First, because of the format, that is, the time and the number of participants. In order to "hold" the audience's attention, we must not exceed two hours. And, as far as instrumental and/or vocal nomenclature is concerned, we should not exceed a reasonable number of musical artists – reasonable, here, being around 6 to 8 soloists.

Then comes the choice of pieces, which naturally proves to be very open. These are often excerpts, as many of my 19<sup>th</sup>-century forerunners wrote almost only operas. Their chamber music is rarely significant.

This is why I unhesitatingly chose two vocal soloists, a soprano and a tenor, to "embody" a few pages of these French operas, drawing on the (abundant but often unknown) repertoire of my predecessors. In these cases, piano accompaniment is *de rigueur*. It is however out of the question to stop at just voices. I therefore tried to mix them with pure instrumental fragments by bringing in the French horn and the cello, in addition to the piano.

I found some nuggets: for example, Félicien David's *Caprice for cello and piano*, and Paul Dukas' brilliant *Villanelle*, well known to the horn students at the Conservatoires but less so to the general public.

All this meticulous research has taught me a great deal and given me a lot to think about!

**Gilbert Amy**



## The Académie des Beaux-Arts Grand Prix d'Architecture (Abella Prize)

Since its creation in 1975, the objectives and organization of the Académie des Beaux-Arts Grand Prix d'Architecture (the Abella Prize) have changed profoundly. The prize was originally intended to succeed the Grand Prix de Rome to which André Malraux had put an end in 1968. Then during the 2000s it was modified, primarily under the impetus of Claude Parent and Paul Andreu. The idea was to allow students to express, through personal projects, architectural and urban concerns and responses as evidenced in contemporary society.

Recently, the architecture section of the Académie des Beaux-Arts decided that this significant prize of €35,000 would be awarded every two years to an architect for their career, sources of interest, and the exemplary nature of their research and achievements.

It was awarded for the first time to **Alvaro Siza Vieira** at a solemn ceremony under the Coupole of the Institut de France, on 9 October 2019.

Another prize, specifically intended for architecture students, will be awarded every two years starting in 2020, on terms and conditions that are currently being defined. ■

Aymeric Zublena

Top: Alvaro Siza Vieira, on the left, was talking with the correspondent of the Architecture section François Chaslin, as he was awarded his prize under the Coupole of the Palais de l'Institut de France.

Photo credit: Patrice Maurin



## William Chattaway

William Chattaway passed away on 25 July 2019 at the age of 91. The sculptor, of British origin, had been living in France since the beginning of his career and was a Foreign Associate member of our Compagnie.

**W**illiam Chattaway was born in 1927 in Coventry (England). After studying sculpture at the Slade School of Art in London, he arrived in Paris in 1950 and set up his studio in Champigny-sur-Marne. For him, drawing was consubstantial with sculpture, and he used both forms of expression to grasp his truth. Planes opened up to spatiality as he analysed shapes through drawing, which set the contours that he obtained again in model creation. His approach is a *mise en abyme* of the ambiguity of sculpture today, between abstraction and reality. In 1953, he fortuitously tackled the theme of the skull, which became recurrent in his work. In realizing the simultaneity of an internal and an external shape, he pointed to the importance of the separation between hollowness and fullness, which he explored with objects (chair, jug) and fruit (quinces). He used polychrome resins and terracotta and plaster casts to make bronze sculptures. While structural lines are a signature of his – especially in his series of imaginary portraits of Chateaubriand (1973-76), Georges Bernanos (1989), Einstein and Russell, with which he revived the issues of monumentality and space –, mass and matter reflect solidity and fullness. Many of his works were commissioned by public institutions (in France and England) and he often exhibited at galleries and events. He was elected as a Foreign Associate member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 2004. He died in Waterloo on 25 July 2019. Photo credit: DR ■

Lydia Harambourg



## Vladimir Velickovic

Vladimir Velickovic was elected as a member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts' Painting section in 2005. He died on 29 August 2019 in Split, Croatia.

**V**ladimir Velickovic chose figurative painting; it was his life and was inseparable from his experience. Born on 11 August 1935 in Belgrade, he was marked for life by the events at the end of the Second World War, the horror of which he went through again during the civil war that tore his country apart. His memories of combat thus blended with the pictorial models of an emblematic martyrology, with wounded bodies, and of ritual torture, with people crucified and hanged. Yet his profound humanism informed a poetic art in line with the grand tradition of the masters. He made reality the core of a new representation of figures, where the dialectic of the body and its theatricalization calls into question desire and pain. His response to abstraction is materialized in his vertiginous spatial constructions, dedicated to a delivery of the body's traumas, and in a bestiary where crows, the last survivors in territories devastated by fire rats and dogs are caught up with by. For Velickovic, a graduate of the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade (1960), drawing was essential. It irrigates the flesh of his painting with voluptuousness and sensuality, against any death impulse.

Vladimir Velickovic arrived in Paris in 1963 with a scholarship, won the Biennale de Paris prize in 1965, and chose to settle here permanently with his family. His fruitful career afforded him a singular and unique place on the national and international scene. He was also a professor at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris from 1983 to 2000. He left us a retrospective at the Fonds Leclerc in Landerneau, which was inaugurated in December 2019. Photo credit: Juliette Agnel ■

Lydia Harambourg



## Roger Taillibert

The architect Roger Taillibert passed away on 3 October at the age of 93.

**W**e have lost an exceptional personality, a confrere of strong character. Roger Taillibert was elected in 1983 to the seat previously occupied by Eugène Beaudouin, and presided over our Académie twice, in 2004 and in 2010, the year during which he was also President of the Institut de France.

A brilliant student at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, he decided very early on to study architecture at the École du Louvre. Thanks to a number of scholarships, he worked for internationally renowned architectural firms before and after his graduation, and later perfected his technical knowledge at the University of Applied Sciences Stuttgart. There, he perfected his skills in the study of lightweight structures, which he later applied to the many sports facilities that he designed.

In his constant search for performance and innovation, he created works of remarkable boldness and structural and formal inventiveness, notably through the audacious use of lightweight concrete structural elements. For these achievements he was awarded numerous prizes and international recognition.

Among his many works are the beautiful Olympic swimming pool in Deauville, which was built in 1965, followed five years later by the Parc des Princes, then the stadium in Montreal, which hosted the 1976 Olympic Games, and the Kaifa Stadium in Qatar.

Like his colleagues Claude Parent and Paul Andreu, he was also called upon, over the course of his long career, to design the architecture of nuclear power plants.

As the Chief architect of the Bâtiments civils et Palais nationaux, he advised Ministers and the President of the Republic.

An architect of great talent and a painter in his own time, Roger Taillibert was also a man of courage and conviction who, during WWII, had joined the French Resistance at the very young age of sixteen. Photo credit: Brigitte Eymann ■

Aymeric Zublena

## Cultural relations with China



From 28 June to 9 July, as part of the 55th anniversary of Sino-French diplomatic relations, the National Art Museum of China (NAMOC) in Beijing exhibited 37 sculptures by Claude Abeille, Jean Anguera (photo), Jean Cardot, Antoine Poncet and Brigitte Terziev. In the words of NAMOC curator Wu Weishan, the exhibition, titled "Immortal Heritage", perpetuates "the exceptional essence and strength contained in French art and culture".

Photo credit: Jiang Dong / China Daily



On 13 November, at the Musée Marmottan Monet, our Permanent Secretary Laurent Petitgirard and our Director Patrick de Carolis had the honour of welcoming Mr. **Wang Qishan** (left-hand photo), Vice-President of the People's Republic of China. On 19 November the Académie des Beaux-Arts, represented by Laurent Petitgirard, received Chinese Vice-Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mr. **Li Qun**, at the Palais de l'Institut de France (right-hand photo).

Photo credit: Académie des Beaux-Arts

# TALKS IN THE GRANDE SALLE DES SÉANCES

As part of our academic work, public lectures on many topics pertaining to art and culture are regularly organized in the main hall (the Grande Salle des Séances) of the Palais de l'Institut de France. Here is a brief overview of the most recent ones.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

“In the workshop of sculptor Antoine Bourdelle, practitioner of Rodin, master of Alberto Giacometti, Germaine Richier and so many others”

By **AMÉLIE SIMIER**, Director of the Musée Bourdelle

*Hercules the Archer*, the most famous statue of Antoine Bourdelle (1861-1929), has become an icon of visual culture to the extent of eclipsing his other masterpieces, from the façade of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées to the *Dying Centaur*. Yet few people know that the artist was a great master who taught sculpture and drawing for forty years, with a personal approach to pedagogy and a very modern knack for memorable phrases. Among his students, some like Germaine Richier would later recognize Bourdelle's role, while others, like Alberto Giacometti, never mentioned him. This talk was an opportunity to look back on an original teaching and on some exemplary trajectories of artists who in turn “sang [their] own song”.

Wednesday, 24 April 2019

“Alexander von Humboldt's American trip”

By **CLAUDIA ISABEL NAVAS**, artist, writer

Claudia Isabel Navas' talk, illustrated with excerpts from *L'Herbier poétique*, was delivered on the occasion of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). *L'Herbier poétique*, which was written during the “Orchids of Colombia: In the Footsteps of Humboldt and Bonpland” mission to Colombia in 2017, is alive with history, travel and intimacy. The talk was enriched with historical facts on von Humboldt's American trip, as well as a selection of images from the “Humboldtian” collections kept at the Institut de France.

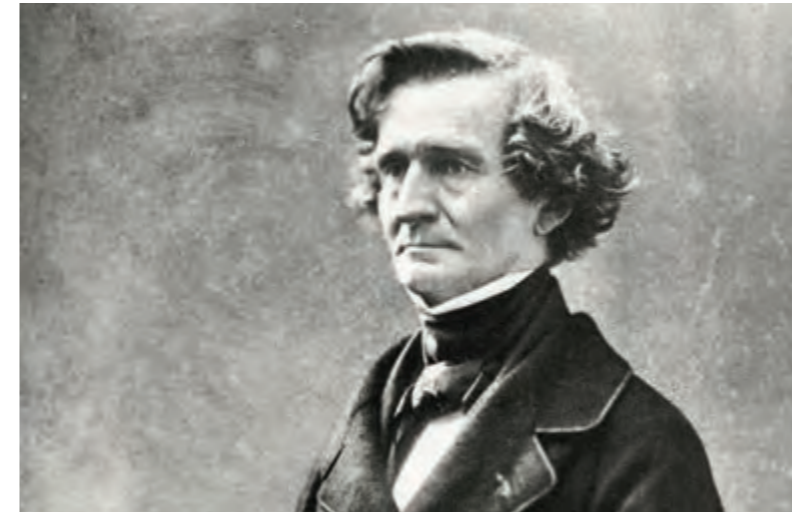
Wednesday, 9 October 2019

“Necropolitain promenades, from the ossicle rosary to the *chabotocopterus*”

By **ANDRÉ CHABOT**, visual artist, photographer, author

André Chabot, a necropolitain walker without borders who has visited about a thousand cemeteries, unveiled some of the fruits of this passion which, mixed with exorcism, binds him to death and its representations in graveyards. The first part of his talk was illustrated by a hundred or so images and took us on a journey, through *ossicle rosaries*, to discover theatrical and macabre elements of *transis* – medieval sculptures representing the deceased's body in decomposition – the ultimate avatars of the great triumphs of Baroque death, implacable agents of fate designed to remind us of the inescapable. The skull, charged with notifying humans of their mortal condition, is shown there, in the limelight, along with the scythe, the hourglass, the snake... and the laurels. The second part was devoted, again through the medium of images, to presenting some of his installations in galleries, museums and chapels, where we find, side by side, *Le dortoir des anges* and *Jardins héroïques*, or *Chronos mystifié* and *La mort d'un mannequin*, and where *Le cercueil téléguidé* rolls and *Le chabotocoptère* flies away.

Wednesday, 6 November 2019



## Berlioz and Paris (1803-2019) Symposium

The second day of the “Berlioz and Paris” international symposium took place on Wednesday 11 December in the Grande salle des séances of the Institut de France, in partnership with the Académie des Beaux-Arts, after an introduction by the Académie's Permanent Secretary and member of the Music Composition section, Laurent Petitgirard.



As part of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration of the death of Hector Berlioz (1803-1869), the École Pratique des Hautes Études put on a symposium – organized by Cécile Reynaud, with Hervé Audéon, Anastasiya Syreishchikova-Horn and Thomas Vernet – to study the role that Paris had played in the composer's training, career and reception by the critics. The period covered stretched from his youth at La Côte-Saint-André, and particularly from his arrival in the capital (in the autumn of 1821), to the present day.

Photo credit: Pierre Petit – Gallica.bnf.fr

Decentralized and public plenary session of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, in Avignon, as part of the “iViva Villa!” festival



“iViva Villa!”, the artist residences' festival initiated by the Villa Medici in Rome, the Villa Kujoyama in Kyoto and the Casa de Velázquez in Madrid, was held at the Collection Lambert in Avignon from 11 October to 10 November 2019.

This free annual event brought together the works of artists from the three prestigious residences, as well as that of many guest artists, on the theme of this fourth edition: “The End of Forests”. On this occasion and for the third time in its history, the Académie des Beaux-Arts, which has been a partner of the “iViva Villa!” festival since its inception, organized a decentralized plenary session that was open to the public. It was held on Wednesday, 16 October, at the Collection Lambert. The theme of the “debate” part of this session was the sixtieth birthday of the French Ministry of Culture.

[www.vivavilla.info](http://www.vivavilla.info)



Academicians and correspondents gathered together in the Grande salle des séances of the Palais de l'Institut de France for the 27 November solemn session "immortalized" this important event in the life of the Académie.

*Front row, top, left to right:* correspondent of the Painting section **Michèle Salmon**, correspondent of the Artistic Cinema and Audio-visual Creation section **Christine Gozlan**, painter **Philippe Garel**, correspondent of the Photography section **Jean-Luc Monterosso**, painter **Gérard Garouste**, correspondent of the Sculpture section **Didier Bernheim**, composer **Michaël Levinas**, Foreign Associate **Léonard Gianadda**, Unattached Member **Patrick de Carolis**, engraver **Pierre Collin**, composer **Thierry Escaich**, architect **Alain Charles Perrot**, Unattached member **Adrien Goetz**, photographer **Bruno Barbey**, engraver **Érik Desmazières**, correspondent of the Musical Composition section **Gilles Cantagrel**, architects **Alain Barani** and **Jean-Michel Wilmotte**, Unattached Member **Hugues R. Gall**, and correspondent of the Engraving section **Sylvie Patin**.

*Second row, blow:* filmmaker **Coline Serreau**, photographer **Sebastião Salgado**, correspondent of the Architecture section **Robert Werner**, sculptor **Brigitte Terzieff**, correspondent of the Engraving section **Jean-Claude-Darmon**, composers **François-Bernard Mâche** and **Régis Campo**, painter **Yves Millecamps**, sculptor **Jean Anguera**, composer and Permanent Secretary **Laurent Petitgirard**, composer **Édith Canat de Chizy**, architect **Jacques Rougerie**, photographer **Jean Gaumy**, painter **Pierre Carron**, correspondent of the Painting section **Lydia Harambourg**, correspondent of the Unattached Members section **Martine Kahane**, correspondent of the Painting section **Pat Andrea**, choreographer **Blanca Li** and correspondent of the Photography section **Bernard Perrine**.

Photo credit: Juliette Agnel

# L'Académie des beaux-arts

Permanent secretary: Laurent Petitgirard

## Bureau 2020 :

President : Jean Anguera

Vice-president : Alain Charles Perrot

### Section I - Painting

Pierre Carron	1990
Guy de Rougemont	1997
Yves Millecamps	2001
Philippe Garel	2015
Jean-Marc Bustamante	2017
Gérard Garouste	2017
Fabrice Hyber	2018
Catherine Meurisse	2020

### Section II - Sculpture

Jean Cardot	1983
Claude Abeille	1992
Antoine Poncet	1993
Brigitte Terziev	2007
Pierre-Édouard	2008
Jean Anguera	2013
Jean-Michel Othoniel	2018

### Section III - Architecture

Jacques Rougerie	2008
Aymeric Zublena	2008
Alain Charles Perrot	2013
Dominique Perrault	2015
Jean-Michel Wilmotte	2015
Marc Barani	2018
Bernard Desmoulin	2018
Pierre-Antoine Gatier	2019

### Section IV - Engraving

Trémois	1978
Érik Desmazières	2008
Astrid de la Forest	2016
Pierre Collin	2018

### Section V - Musical Composition

Laurent Petitgirard	2000
François-Bernard Mâche	2002
Édith Canat de Chizy	2005
Michaël Levinas	2009
Gilbert Amy	2013
Thierry Escaich	2013
Bruno Mantovani	2017
Régis Campo	2017

### Section VI - Unattached Members

Michel David-Weill	1982
Pierre Cardin	1992
Henri Loyrette	1997
François-Bernard Michel	2000
Hugues R. Gall	2002
Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière	2005
William Christie	2008
Patrick de Carolis	2010
Muriel Mayette-Holtz	2017
Adrien Goetz	2017

### Section VII - Artistic Creations in cinema and audiovisuel

Roman Polanski	1998
Régis Wargnier	2007
Jean-Jacques Annaud	2007
Jacques Perrin	2017
Coline Serreau	2018
Frédéric Mitterrand	2019

### Section VIII - Photography

Yann Arthus-Bertrand	2006
Bruno Barbey	2016
Jean Gaumy	2016
Sebastião Salgado	2016

### Section IX - Choreography

Thierry Malandain	2019
Blanca Li	2019
Angelin Preljocaj	2019

### Foreign Associates

S.M.I. Farah Pahlavi	1974
Leonard Gianadda	2001
Seiji Ozawa	2001
Woody Allen	2004
SA Karim Aga Khan IV	2007
SA Sheikha Mozah	2007
Sir Norman Foster	2007
Antonio López Garcia	2012
Philippe de Montebello	2012
Jiří Kylián	2018
Georg Baselitz	2019





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