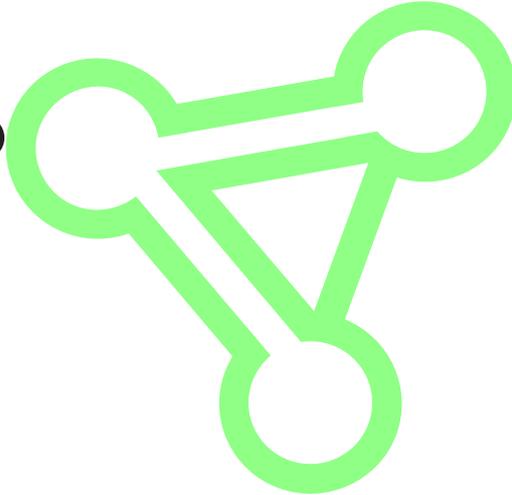
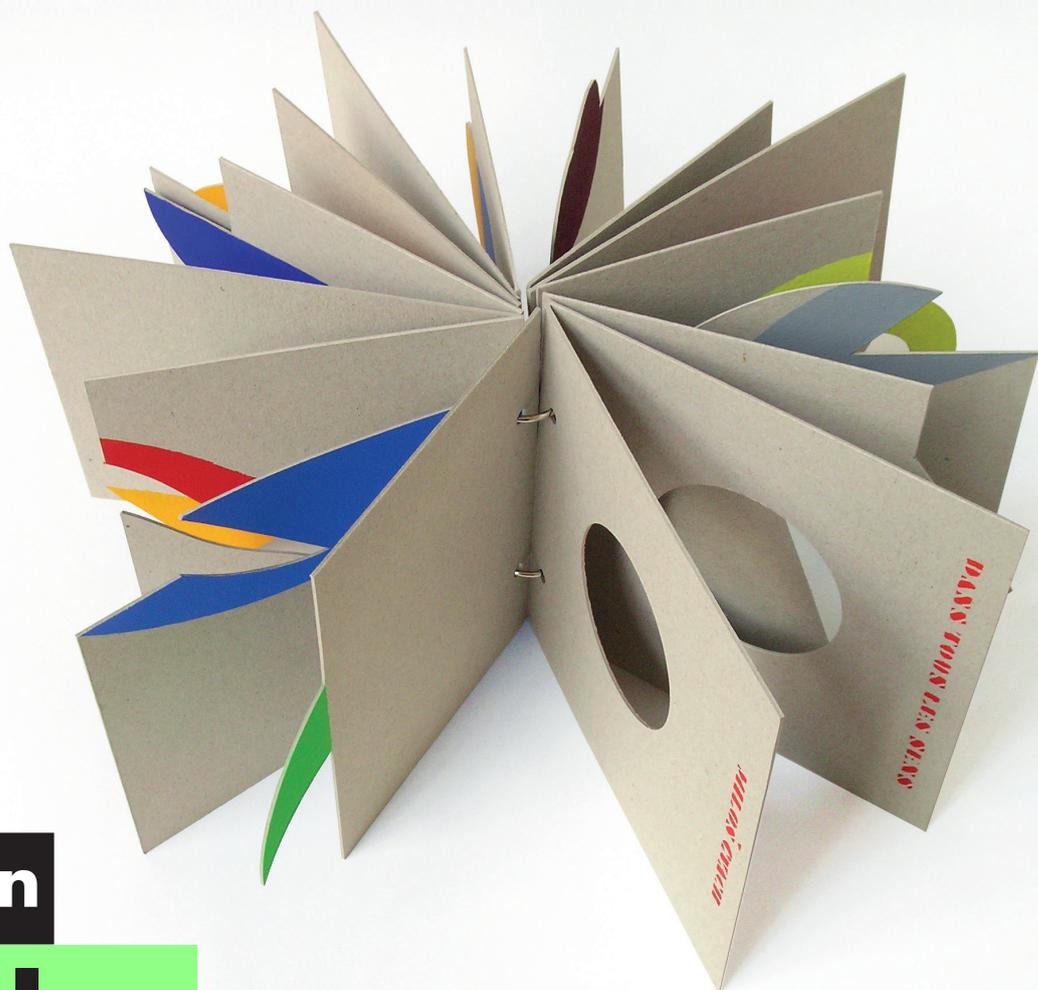


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 Centre national  
des arts plastiques



**Exhibition**

# Lucioles

Lire et jouer avec Les Trois Ourses dans la collection du Cnap

**30.09.2023 → 19.05.2024**

**Press release**

●  
Espace de l'Art Concret  
Centre d'art contemporain  
● d'intérêt national  
● Donation Albers-Honegger  
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●

## Lire et jouer avec les Trois Ourses dans la collection du Cnap

30 September 2023 • 19 May 2024  
preview Saturday 30 September at 11 am

Curator: **Sandra Cattini**, Head of the Cnap Design and Decorative Arts Collection and **Fabienne Grasser-Fulchéri**, Director of eac.

Exhibition design : **David des Moutis**

**Exhibition co-produced with the Centre national des arts plastiques**  
(National Centre for Visual Arts) Cnap, Paris

-1 Albers-Honegger Donation

Artistes : **Ianna Andréadis, Marion Bataille, Mauro Bellei, Remy Charlip, Paul Cox, Louise-Marie Cumont, Sophie Curtil, Milos Cvach, Sonia Delaunay, Dobroslav Foll, Keith Godard, Tana Hoban, Coline Irwin, Elisabeth Ivanovsky, Ronald King, Katsumi Komagata, Vladimir Lebedev, El Lissitzky, Julien Magnani, Enzo Mari, Fanette Mellier, Bruno Munari, Kazumasa Nagai, Nathalie Parain, Alexandre Rodtchenko, Pierre Sala, Kurt Schwitters, Luigi Veronesi**

***Lucioles (Fireflies)* is the second stage of the collaboration between the Centre national des arts plastiques (Cnap) and eac. Cnap has recently added to its collection important bodies of work relating to graphic design, and in particular these include the archives of the Association Les Trois Ourses (The Three She-bears Association), a not-for-profit organisation which promoted artistic books for children, as well as Jean Widmer's programme for tourism and culture signage on motorways. Building on the connections these two bodies of works have with concrete art, eac. invited Cnap to work together to design two exhibitions - two special events based on graphic artwork and on Cnap's graphic design collection.**

**Following on from the recent exhibition *Jean Widmer, From Concrete to Everyday*, it's now the turn of the Les Trois Ourses collection to be presented alongside works from Cnap's design collection.**

The main aim of the Association Les Trois Ourses (1988-2018) was to educate children in the arts by placing books at its heart. The works exhibited here show how inventive artists and graphic designers were in the way they approached the visual arts and explored the materiality of books.

Adopting this approach, books started to move and glow, brought alive sometimes by the line of the

drawing (Lissitzky, Cvach, Komagata, etc.), sometimes by the interplay of folds, different planes and even volume (Rodchenko, Bataille, Cox, Komagata, etc.), and sometimes by the rustling of the materials that make up their pages (Munari, Curtil, etc.). Because books have these material properties, they can affirm the cyclical nature of works which no longer have a beginning or an end. For example, they are simply bound by a ring (Mari, Cvach, Cox, etc.) or as with Mari's Leporello edition *L'Altalena* (The See-saw) the folds of the pages become the balancing point for animals see-sawing and so on.

Beyond words and letters, the book as an object is transformed as it opens up sensitive spaces through its composition (via colour, typography and drawing), but also through the qualities of the paper itself (its texture and weight and the apertures created by cut-outs and transparent layers, etc.), offering both children and adults many surprises.

The exhibition is designed so that it presents a selection of works from Les Trois Ourses collection which interact naturally with other works from the Cnap design collection, such as for example, Fanette Mellier's poster series *Dans la lune* (In the Moon), which like a frieze, reveals the glow of the moon as it waxes then wanes and which throws light on the whole exhibition.

*Lucioles* opens with the tutelary figure of Bruno Munari and in particular his *Libro Letto* (Bed Book) (1993), a book that can be read and be a bed,

between whose pages children can literally curl up and fall asleep. Munari features alongside other historical figures (Delaunay, Veronesi, Mari, Foll, Lissitzky, Remy Charlip, Hoban), as well as contemporary authors (Andréadis, Bellei, Cumont, Cvach, King, Irwin and so on.)

Showing the connection between play and learning, the aim is to get children to discover the world and language through books. Different types of books help do this and are on display, including counting books, picture books, alphabet books and books of animals.

Children's first attempts to make sense of the world are also developed by furniture, with ideas for pieces that children can make their own. So, for example, Bruno Munari's *Abitacolo* (Cockpit or Cabin) is at the same time a bed, a desk, a bookcase and a playhouse – but above all it is a child's safe retreat that can adapt to their needs and desires. Pierre Sala's *Bureau Clairefontaine* is a desk that takes a page out of the schoolchild's Clairefontaine notebook and traditional school desk as it encourages children to write and draw on its blank pages.

At the exhibition's centre is Komagata's *Line*, a game with cushions that have a black line running across them which children can use to create a labyrinth while playing with shapes and colours.

Snaking from page to wall and from wall to floor, the line frees itself, like a character whose adventures can be followed through Milos Cvach's abstract playlets. Each time, the succession of pages or their folds presents a new visual sequence where the narrative thread has no need of words or figuration - and where shapes and drawing take pride of place (Komagata, Cumont and Cvach).

In this way the works invite readers to imagine themselves involved in the snippets of scenarios that are sketched out and to invent their own stories. Around a workshop table, young readers are encouraged to read, to touch and to play with some of the books and games on display. The focus in this final room is on works that open up new possibilities.

A sensitive grasp of the world and its natural phenomena (the emergence of a shape, a tree, a being, the rising sun, clouds and so on) are all complex and abstract subjects capable of sparking children's imagination and nurturing their creativity.

Whether it's Tana Hoban's photographs of floors which sketch out abstract shapes inviting us to imagine a myriad of images as we do when we look at clouds, or Munari and Mari's games where children compose and invent their own stories - books are seen as a space for freedom, invention and the empowerment children need.

*The Espace de l'Art Concret (eac.) permanently houses the Albers-Honegger Donation which belongs to the Centre national des arts plastiques (Cnap) and is kept in Mouans-Sartoux.*

Coproduction with



In cover :

**Milos Cvach**

*Dans tous les sens*, 2007

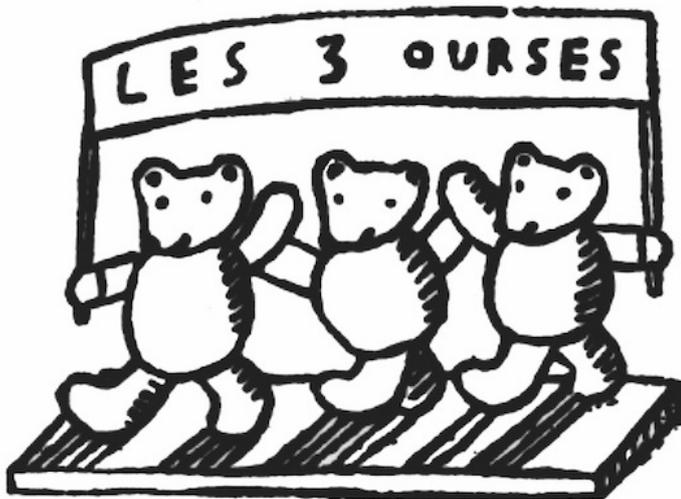
17 pages RV, reliées par deux anneaux métalliques

15,5 x 15,5 x 2 cm

Livre d'artiste

FNAC 2017-0135, Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Milos Cvach / Cnap © photo droits réservés



© Paul Cox

Les Trois Ourses was founded in 1988 by Odile Belkeddar, Elisabeth Lortic and Annie Mirabel with the association's main aim being to educate children in the arts by putting books at its heart.

For 30 years, Les Trois Ourses followed a path marked by art, books and children, and shaped by a rich dialogue with readers in libraries, schools and nurseries.

As the artist Bruno Munari explains in his writings, by looking for the "surprise" element which a book can offer and which instils an eagerness to then try other books, Les Trois Ourses has given many children their first taste of the world of art.

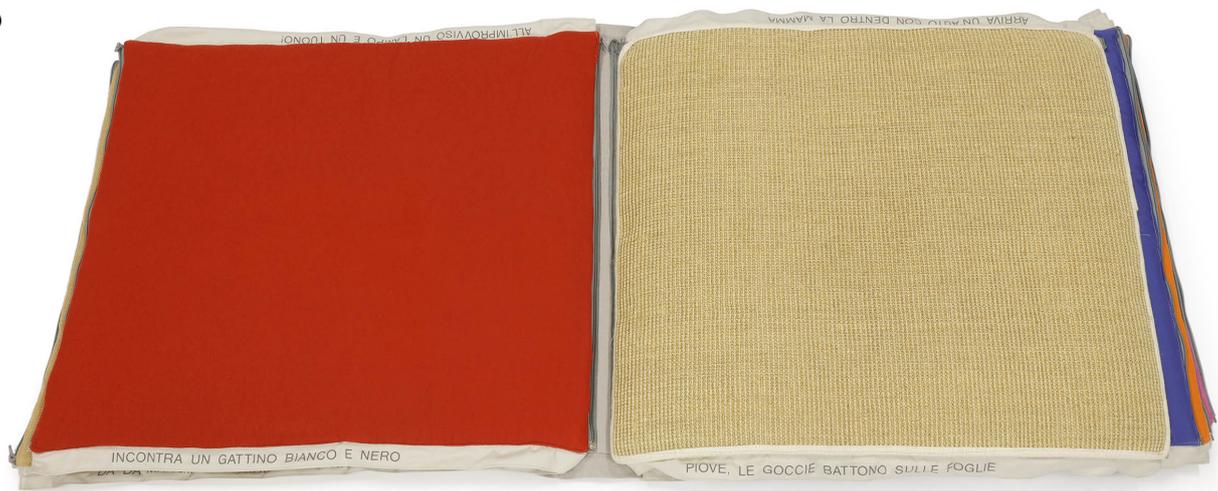
Curious and adventurous, the young Goldilocks visits the home of the Three Bears. She explores, experiments and chooses what is "just right" for her. And it's this expression which Les Trois Ourses made its own, by developing an appetite for encounters, for the enjoyment of working collectively and combining skills. What started off as a tiny group, quickly grew through its friendships to include graphic designers, artists, enthusiasts and others and so the association was born.

Responsible for exhibitions and workshops, conferences and training courses, Les Trois Ourses brought fresh ideas about how to promote books and establish relationships with both young and adult readers.

Year after year, with books both published and exhibited, Les Trois Ourses spun the threads that artists especially knew how to weave into childhood: the first of a long list are the Americans Remy Charlip and Keith Godard, the Italians Bruno Munari, Enzo Mari and Luigi Veronesi, as well as Katsumi Komagata from Japan and Paul Cox from France.

These artists and designers were able to show how, in their three dimensions, books involve the reader's body, and how the sound of turning pages can resonate within us like music: Swing into books!

The entire archive of the Les Trois Ourses association is now preserved at Cnap. The exhibition is based mainly on this archive and it offers an insight into the wonderfully creative imagination of this rich and diverse collection.



**Bruno Munari, Marco Ferreri**

Livre d'artiste *Libro Letto*, (*Livre Lit / Livre Lu*), 1993

6 capitons superposables, reliés comme les pages d'un livre par des fermetures éclair, ce qui permet des configurations diverses, dont celle du lit.  
Textes imprimés en bordure.

70 x 70 x 10 cm

Editeur : S.L. Interflex

FNAC 2020-0083, Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Bruno Munari/ Cnap © photo Fabrice Lindor





**Enzo Mari**

Jeu *Il gioco delle favole (Le jeu des fables)*, 1971/2015

Jeu imprimé sur carton plastifié.

15,5 x 31,5 x 1 cm

Editeur : Corraini Edizioni, Mantoue (Italie)

FNAC 2020-0209 (3), Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Enzo Mari / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle



**Enzo Mari**

Livre *L'Altalena (La balançoire)*, 2011

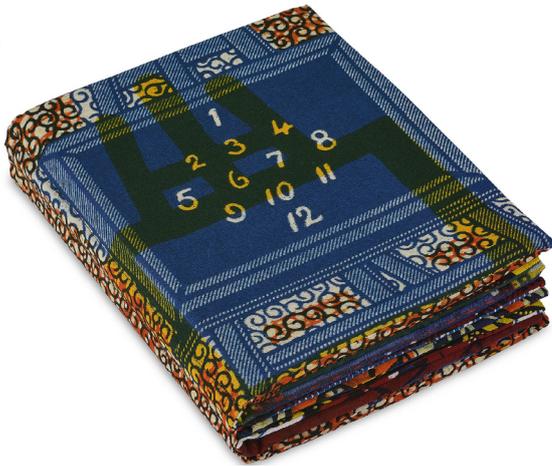
Leporello à couverture souple amovible.

24,3 x 16,9 cm

Editeur : Corraini Edizioni, Mantoue (Italie)

FNAC 2018-0145, Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Enzo Mari / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle



**Ianna Andréadis**

*Livre d'artiste Le livre à compter, 2002*

Livre en tissu (wax) réalisé à la main, avec 9 tissus différents (intérieur moussé).

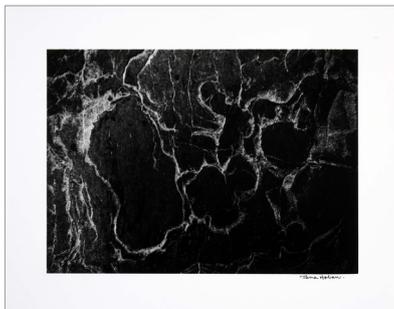
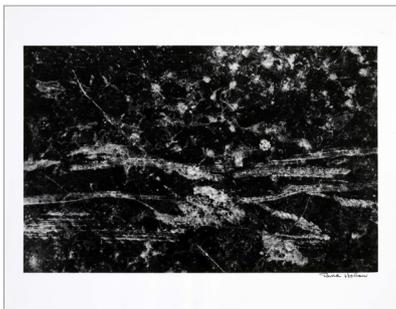
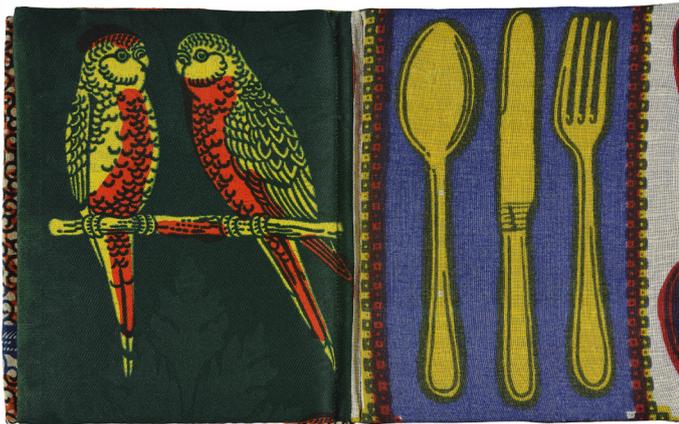
20,5 x 17 x 5,5 cm

Edition 1/18

Diffuseur : Les Trois Ourses, Paris (France)

FNAC 2019-0473, Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Ianna Andréadis / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle



...

**Tana Hoban**

*Traces d'ancêtres perdus, 1994 - 1995*

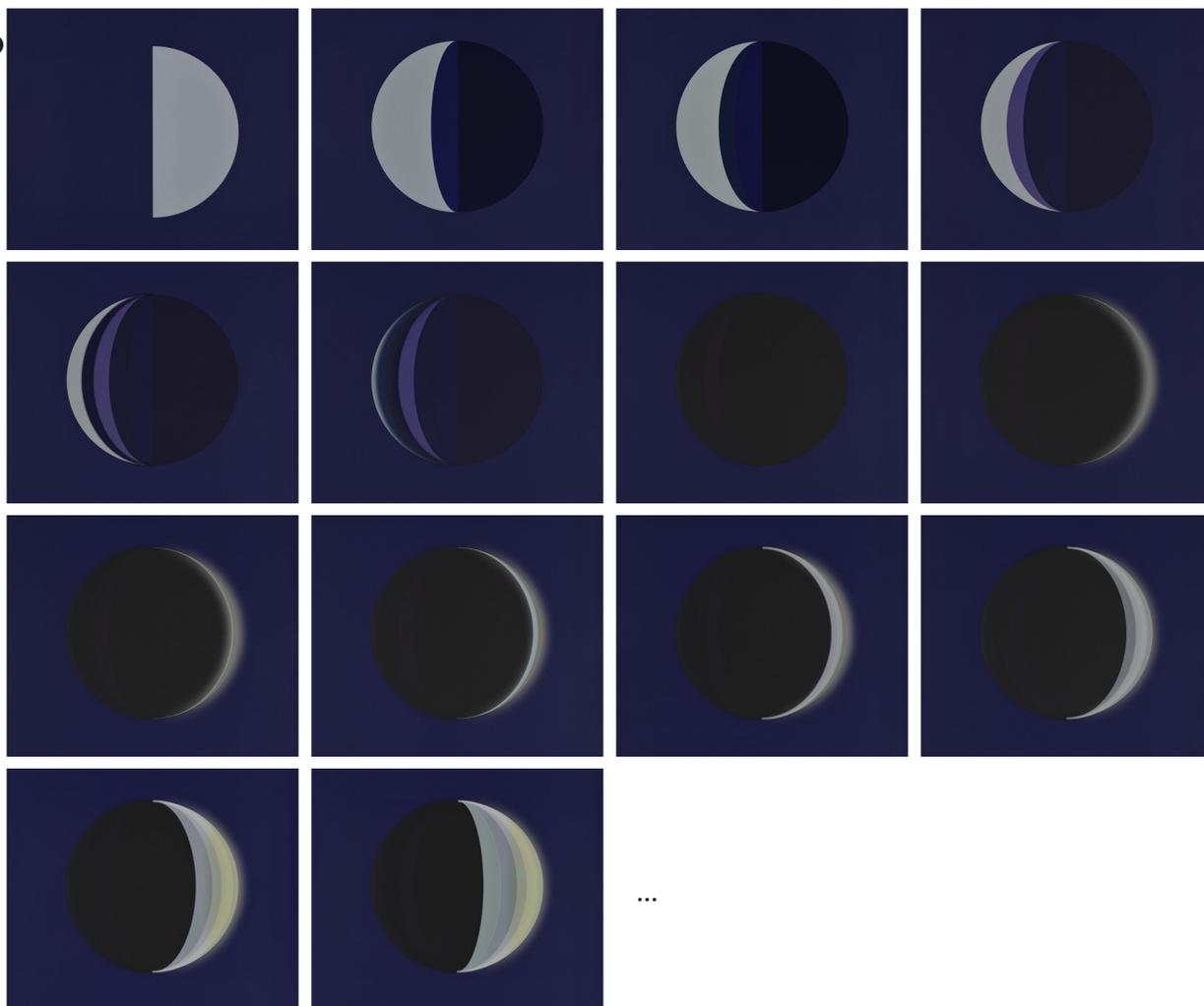
Tirages photographiques.

27 x 30 cm

FNAC 2020-0192, Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Tana Hoban / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle

**eac.**



**Fanette Mellier**

*Affiches Dans la lune, 2010*

Sérigraphie (encres variées).  
99,5 x 120 cm

Editeur : Centre Culturel, Centre de Créations pour l'Enfance, Tinquex (France)  
FNAC 2015-0462 (1 à 31), Centre national des arts plastiques  
© Fanette Mellier / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle



**Coline Irwin**

*Livre d'artiste Volume 1, 2014*

Pages en bois d'acajou perforé (découpe et gravure laser), avec reliure en toile adhésive noire et miroir incrusté.

Fabrication Atelier Figura/Sfondo

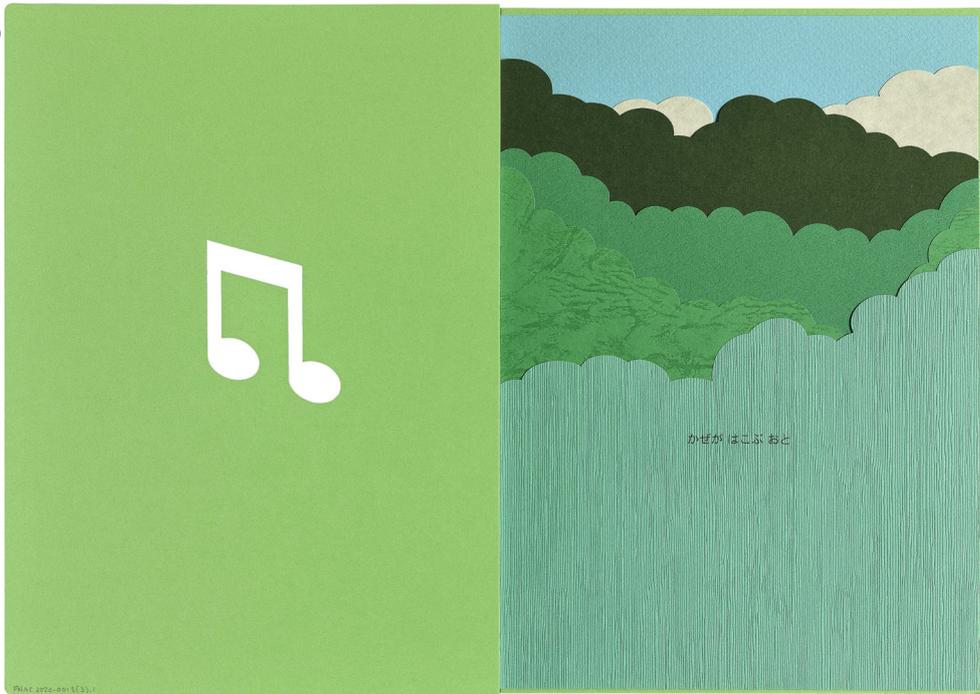
11 x 9,9 x 4,3 cm. - ed : 20

Diffuseur : Les Trois Ourses, Paris (France)

FNAC 2018-0126 (1), Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Coline Irwin/ Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle

eac.



**Katsumi Komagata**

Livre *Le bruit du vent*, 2012

Reliure japonaise, couverture cartonnée avec perforation en forme de note de musique, divers papiers japonais.

24,5 x 19 x 0,7 cm

Editeur : One Stroke

FNAC 2020-0018 (3), Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Katsumi Komagata / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle



**Katsumi Komagata**

Livre *Du jaune au rouge*, 2003

Reliure japonaise, couverture cartonnée avec perforations en forme de cercles, divers papiers japonais.

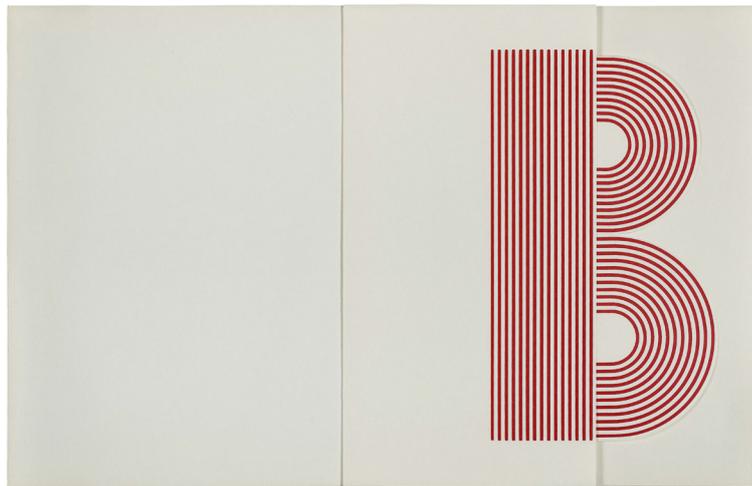
24,5 x 19 x 0,7 cm

Editeur : One Stroke

FNAC 2020-0010 (2), Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Katsumi Komagata / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle

**eac.**



**Marion Bataille**

*Livre Op-Up, 2006*

Livre animé de 18 double-pages, papier blanc sérigraphié en rouge, papier noir, calque, miroir, vinyle.

18 x 14 x 4,5 cm

Edition 1/30

Producteur : Les Trois Ourses, Paris (France)

FNAC 2019-0481 (1), Fonds Les Trois Ourses, Centre national des arts plastiques

© Marion Bataille / Cnap © photo Philippe Rolle



**Pierre Sala**

*Bureau Claire Fontaine, 1982*

Plateaux en MDF laqué, spirale inox, bloc papier rechargeable, piètement en bois.

89 x 77 x 74 cm

Editeur : Chambon International, France

FNAC 2750 (1 à 8), Centre national des arts plastiques

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## **Ianna ANDRÉADIS**

**1960, Greece**  
– lives and works in France

Born in Athens in 1960, Ianna Andréadis is both painter and photographer and studied at the *Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* (National School of Fine Arts) in Paris. Deeply inspired by her travels and discoveries, her work reflects a curiosity which is both temporal - *Le Bestiaire de la préhistoire* (A Bestiary of Prehistory) - and geographical - works in African fabrics. The artist has a very multi-faceted practice as she explores her cosmopolitan interests through photography, textiles, lithography and painting. One of the hallmarks of Ianna Andréadis's work with fabric books is her use of materials selected either for their patterns (the wax fabrics used to compile picture books, counting books, animal books, etc.), or for their colours, which she makes vibrate page after page, as in her *Livre des couleurs* (Book of Colours).

## **Marion BATAILLE**

**1963, France**  
– lives and works in France

By describing herself as "an author of children's books, a graphic designer, an illustrator and a paper engineer", Marion Bataille focuses on the ingredients that merge in her work. With pop-ups, rustling pages and her novel approach to presenting letters, etc. Bataille's books bear witness to her sensitivity to form and material. Connecting art and education, her books encourage children to learn through the wonder of handling books. Widely recognised both in France and abroad, Marion Bataille has worked with many different publishers and magazines. Her *ABC3D* alphabet book, made widely available in France by the publishers Albin Michel before enjoying international success, is the successor to the pop-up book *Op-Up*, the first version of which was published in a limited edition by Les Trois Ourses.

## **Mauro BELLEI**

**1959, Italy**  
– lives and works in Italy

Having trained as an architect, Mauro Bellei is a theatre set designer and author who has striven to develop an approach to his work which gives 'life' to objects and architecture through the interactions they develop with the people using them. This sense of space and play is reflected in his works which explore the mechanisms of creation and imagination. Photobooks, educational kits, play books - all his works generate surprise and wonder.

## **Remy CHARLIP**

**1929 – 2012, United States**

Although best known for his work as a choreographer and dancer, Remy Charlip was a multi-talented American artist, director, musician and teacher, as well as being an author and illustrator of children's literature in particular. While a student at Black Mountain College, Charlip worked with many avant-garde artists such as Merce Cunningham and John Cage and was fully involved with the lively American dance scene in the 50s and 60s. In addition to his own book creations, such as "Reading Dance", he also illustrated major children's authors such as Margaret Wise Brown and Ruth Krauss. His books are a joy to leaf through as they bring together his sense of rhythm and space. The author of 35 books for children and adults, Charlip draws on wordplays, riddles and nursery rhymes, constantly working with rhythm and notions of bodily movement. Les Trois Ourses produced a boxed set of two works - *On dirait qu'il neige* (It Looks Like Snow) (Charlip) and *Le chaperon blanc* (Little White Riding Hood) (Munari) – which came about through a long-distance and decades-apart exchange between the two authors.

**Paul COX**

**1959, France**  
– lives and works in France

After graduating in art history and literature, Paul Cox soon decided left teaching behind to instead pursue a multi-disciplinary arts practice. A self-taught graphic designer and illustrator, he has been in turn a painter, a children's book author, a set and costume designer and games publisher. As one of the major authors of his time, Paul Cox is prolific and inquisitive, gathering materials and ideas from his experiences which he then explores in his creations, producing an eclectic and playful body of work. The influence of the Constructivists and other avant-garde artists "who were making art on the side", and who inspired Cox can be clearly seen in his works which open many doors for playful readers to enjoy a fresh new relationship with books.

**Louise-Marie CUMONT**

**1957, France**  
– lives and works in France

Louise-Marie Cumont initially trained in sculpture and mosaics at the Fine Arts Schools in Paris and Carrara, but when her son was born she switched to textile arts. She then made her first fabric books, each one the result of carefully assembling materials selected for their feel and finish. Cumont's books are tales without words which use simple geometric shapes to sensitively explore everyday situations and life's big questions, forging a universal language with their readers.

**Sophie CURTIL**

**1949, France**  
– lives and works in France

Sophie Curtil is a visual artist, who has also worked extensively to develop new forms of artistic mediation: she spearheaded the introduction of special facilities for the disabled when working for the Centre Pompidou's Educational Action Department. This commit-

ment to making art accessible to all also runs through her collections of children's art books: *L'Art en jeu* (20th century artists) published by the Centre Pompidou and *Kitadi* (African arts) with the Musée Dapper in Paris. She also created her *Livres artistiques tactiles* (Tactile Art Books), a series of books to be read with fingertips which enable visually-impaired and blind children to discover art.

**Milos CVACH**

**1945, Czechoslovakia**  
– lives and works in France

Born in 1945 in Czechoslovakia, Milos Cvach studied sculpture and painting in Brno and Prague before moving to Paris in 1973 to complete his training. Split between sculpture, photography, engraving and painting, his art is permeated by his preoccupation with space and this is reflected in the books about artists which he designed. Shapes are not bound by the limits set by the page, this upturns reading habits and paves the way for books to be seen and handled differently and for the question of "what most preoccupies [the artist], namely the relationship between the moment and the duration".

**Sonia DELAUNAY**

**1885, Ukraine – 1979, France**

A key twentieth century figure, for the last fifteen years of her life Sonia Delaunay worked closely with the publisher and exhibition curator Jacques Damase. Entrusted with Sonia Delaunay's work, Jacques Damase produced albums, monographs and editions of engravings and lithographs which spanned her entire career. Among the works produced was an alphabet primer showing the artist's research into pure colour and movement in her work. This alphabet book consists of plates, each one dedicated to a letter in the alphabet, illustrated with a gouache by Sonia Delaunay and accompanied by a nursery rhyme written by Jacques Damase.

**Dobroslav FOLL**

**1922, Czechoslovakia  
– 1981, Czech Republic**

Born in Czechoslovakia, Dobroslav Foll studied at the School of Applied Arts in Prague and became artistic director for several publishing houses before devoting himself to his work as an author. He was a painter, graphic artist, sculptor and illustrator and worked across a wide range of fields. He produced children's books, film posters, paintings and mobiles. A founding member of the Radar group, with his characteristic humour and imagination, Foll played his part in reviving post-war Czech art.

**Keith GODARD**

**1938, United Kingdom  
– 2020, United States**

Keith Godard is an acclaimed graphic designer who trained in the United Kingdom and then the United States, and whose work is housed in institutions such as the Washington National Archives and the Bibliothèque nationale de France. He founded StudioWorks in 1986 to specialise in exhibition design, signage and public art. Alongside this, he set up Works Editions and published his own books. Godard showed that by using our senses, books can be revisited and comprehended differently. For example, "Glue-Glue" is a book that sticks together and has to be torn apart, and "Sounds" is a book with pages that make noises.

**Tana HOBAN**

**1917, United States – 2006, France**

An internationally acclaimed photographer specialising in children's portraits, Tana Hoban's work has been exhibited in museums as prestigious as the Museum of Modern Art in New York and she has worked with magazines such as Vogue and Time. Turning to publishing, Hoban was one of the first publishers to produce photography books for children and so introduce a new genre to children's literature. By publishing her photographic work in album form, she encouraged her young readers to

view the world around them and their everyday lives with a curious eye, helping them to learn to observe and develop their perception.

**Coline IRWIN**

**1983, France  
– lives and works in France**

Alongside her artistic practice as author and photographer, in 2011, Coline Irwin obtained her State Diploma in Early Childhood Education, thereby making official her dual role as artist and educator. A proponent of the Montessori method which she practised in a school for 5 years, Irwin founded the Peekaboo! association which develops creative workshops for "inventing, building and playing". Her books combine her teaching skills with her artistic process in order to produce, as she herself puts it, "art for toddlers".

**Elisabeth IVANOVSKY**

**1910, Russia – 2006, Belgium**

The Russian-born artist Élisabeth Ivanovsky trained in drawing at Kichineff Art School before studying illustration at the Ecole de la Cambre National Art School in Belgium in 1932. After graduating, she began a successful career illustrating children's books, a rapidly developing genre at the time. She helped create over 300 books, while also working on her own artistic experiments. Influenced by the theories of structuralism and constructivism, her pared-down style with its clean, accurate drawings and solid blocks printed in direct colour, is in turn an inspiration for a whole generation of children's authors today.

**Ronald KING**

**1932, United Kingdom  
– lives and works in the United Kingdom**

Born in 1932, Ronald King founded Circle Press in 1967 to bring together artists who were questioning the tradition surrounding books. The name Circle Press, expressed King's vision of a circle of artists all working

in the same spirit, a circle that grew to include over a hundred poets and artists, including Ian Tyson and Richard Price. In addition to his work as a publisher, Ronald King developed his artistic practice to explore books in all their facets, both their materials and how they are crafted.

### **Katsumi KOMAGATA**

**1953, Japan**  
— lives and works in Japan

Katsumi Komagata is a graphic designer who trained in the studio of the great poster artist Kazumasa Nagai. When his daughter was born in 1989 and deeply influenced by the work of Bruno Munari and Tana Hoban, he turned his attention to children's books and the world of childhood. In 1990, he created his first books, flash cards that would become the "Little Eyes" series.

Some thirty books followed, published by One Stroke, his graphic design agency, or through collaborating with others. For example, working with the associations *Les Doigts qui rêvent*, (The Dreaming Fingers) *Les Trois Ourses* and the Centre Pompidou, Komagata designed books for visually impaired children as part of the collection launched by Sophie Curtil. Devoted to art and children, his books and games play around with paper, cut-outs and textures that come to life, drawing readers into a lyrical world where all the senses come alive. Colours and textures are at the heart of a thought process which can now dispense with words.

### **Vladimir LEBEDEV**

**1891, Russia — 1967, URSS**

Born in 1891, Vladimir Lebedev was a leading children's literature theorist in the Soviet Union. After training at the Fine Arts School in St Petersburg, he worked as an illustrator and painter before the October Revolution and then continued his career under the Communist regime. At the height of the avant-garde period, Lebedev's interest was drawn to child-

ren's books, a neglected field and one which he helped to develop when he became artistic director of the state publishing house's first children's section. He produced almost 50 titles in a style inspired by the graphic language of Russian posters and popular art. The aim was no longer to decorate or adorn - each element had to be functional and help construct meaning through simplification and geometric shapes, solid areas of pure colour and the prominent use of white.

### **EI LISSITZKY**

**1890, Russia — 1941, URSS**

El Lissitzky trained as an architect and was a guiding figure for the 1920s avant-garde both in the USSR and the rest of Europe where he was associated with the artists of the Bauhaus and De Stijl. A leading figure in typography, photomontage and design, Lissitzky also worked both as painter and architect. Through his travels and numerous projects, he helped spread Suprematism and Constructivism throughout Europe, before returning to Russia. His children's book masterpiece published in 1922, "The Two Squares" bears witness to the power of his streamlined, abstract and geometric style.

### **Julien MAGNANI**

**1980, France**  
— lives and works in France

A graduate of the École Estienne (Paris School of Literary Graphic Art and Design), Julien Magnani worked as layout artist and typographer for several publishers before founding his own publishing house dedicated to illustrated books in 2011. An author himself, fascinated by typography and attached to the early 20th century modern movement, Magnani enjoys producing alphabets using simple, playful systems. An example is his particularly innovative and inspiring book-game: *Le Jouet* (The Toy), distributed by Les Trois Ourses.

**Enzo MARI****1932 – 2020, Italy**

Internationally renowned Italian designer Enzo Mari stands out as one of the pioneers of the Maker Movement, as demonstrated with his manifesto book *Proposta per un'autoprogettazione*, whose title can be translated as "Proposal for a Self-Design". A proponent of non-consumerist, eco-friendly design ahead of its time, Mari developed objects with a functional, pared-down design that were often modular. This approach is clearly seen in his work for children because the designer believed that: "Children should be given play structures, not games".

**Fanette MELLIER****1977, France  
– lives and works in France**

Born in 1977, in 2000 Fanette Mellier graduated from the *École supérieure des arts décoratifs* (Higher College of Decorative Arts) in Strasbourg. She continued her training by working for several years with the graphic designers Pierre Di Sciullo and Pierre Bernard at the *Atelier de création graphique*. A printed graphics specialist, she takes on often atypical cultural commissions which bring her up against a wide range of issues. Alongside this work, she is involved in experimental projects as part of residencies, carte blanche events and exhibitions. These specific projects, sometimes jointly undertaken with other creative artists (writers, musicians, scenographers, etc.), enable Mellier to freely question the fundamentals of graphic design such as typography, colour, production, relationship to the public space, and so on. Her approach can be defined as a poetic exploration of industrial printing techniques, echoing the intellectual, cultural and social context of each project.

**Bruno MUNARI****1907 – 1998, Italy**

An all-round artist, Bruno Munari was just as interested in graphic design, advertising, illustration and books as he was in art, design,

photography and film. A prolific author and part of the Concrete Art Movement, between 1929 and 1996, Munari designed no fewer than 180 titles. His works, published more or less privately, were brought to light again by the Corraini art gallery and publishing house in Italy, and in France in part by the publishers *Éditions du Seuil* at the instigation of Les Trois Ourses. A key medium for his artistic research, Munari's books introduced radical innovations designed to stimulate children's imagination through play.

By using lots of different materials, as well as layers of translucent paper, Munari focused on the tactile dimension of books, producing ideas that allow room for surprise and sparking his readers' imagination. Far from restricting himself to books, Munari's work focused on all components of a world where the child has agency, and in 1971, he created his emblematic *Abitacolo* (Cockpit or Cabin) at the same time a playhouse, a bed and a desk....

**Kazumasa NAGAI****1929, Japan  
– lives and works in Japan**

One of Japan's foremost graphic artists and poster designers, Kazumasa Nagai is renowned for the quality of his visual designs and timeless logos. Nagai is remarkable for his approach to his work which combines modernism and traditional Japanese style. Starting from an abstract style, his work became more figurative, and in the 1980s took shape around the representation of plants and animals.

**Nathalie PARAIN****1897, Ukraine – 1958, France**

Born in Kiev in 1897, Nathalie Parain trained at the Moscow State Workshops (Vkhutemas), where she was drawn to posters, education and children's books. After arriving in Paris in 1928, she illustrated her first book, *Mon Chat* (My Cat), which was published in 1930 by Éditions Gallimard in a style heavily inspired by constructivist theories. Through this book she met Paul Faucher at Flammarion, who at the time was looking for artists for a for-

thcoming collection of children's books, *Père Castor*. This marked the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration, with Nathalie Parain illustrating many of the books in this flagship collection.

### **Alexandre RODTCHENKO**

**1891, Russia – 1956, URSS**

A complete artist, Alexandre Rodtchenko was part of the avant-garde of the Soviet Revolution, which he supported through his art. One of the founders of Russian Constructivism, his work, and in particular his photography and graphics, has had a strong influence on generations of artists. Focusing on everyday objects and construction in volume, his works were intended to be accessible and create a new visual language which everyone could read in a Russia where illiteracy still existed. In 1926, he designed *Animaux à mimer* (Let's Play Animals), a play book that encouraged children not only to "turn themselves into pretend" animals but also to make their own animals out of paper. In Russia this project did not get beyond the drawing board, but the first French edition was published in *La Collection des Trois Ourses* by MeMo publishers.

### **Pierre SALA**

**1948 – 1989, France**

Pierre Sala was first a stage director and then theatre director before he turned to design - his works show the influence of their creator's first career. With original and free-spirited creations that set him apart, Sala became one of the key designers in the early 80s. Produced in small numbers and sometimes not advancing beyond the prototype stage, his furniture was always meant to provide a little entertainment inside the owner's home, as well as an opportunity to break with the usual laws of functionality and celebrate imagination, pleasure and play.

### **Kurt SCHWITTERS**

**1887, Germany – 1948, United Kingdom**

Kurt Schwitters was a German painter, sculptor and poet, associated with the Dada movement and with links to the Constructivists. In 1920 he founded the Merz movement, his aim being to unite all his practices into a total art form. Schwitters' work is rich and polymorphous, and has influenced generations of artists, including the Fluxus movement.

### **Luigi VERONESI**

**1908 – 1998, Italy**

An exact contemporary of Munari, Veronesi also explored a wide range of artistic fields, including painting, printmaking, photography, film and puppetry. From an early age, he was fascinated by the Bauhaus artists. Kandinsky would say of him: "He is the only abstract Italian".

An active member of Mac, the Concrete Art Movement founded in Milan after the Second World War, Veronesi practised rigorously geometric abstraction that was slightly modified by his great experimental curiosity. Like Munari, he sought to share his discoveries with the general public and he attached great importance to art education. He created two masterpieces for children (and left a draft of a third, *Les Fleurs* (Flowers)). *Les Couleurs* (Colours) and *Les Nombres* (Numbers) were published in 1945, then reissued in Italy by other publishers in 1978 and 1997. In 1997, they were made available for the first time in France by *Les Trois Ourses*.



## Centre national des arts plastiques

**The Centre national des arts plastiques (Cnap) is one of the main bodies to enact the Ministry of Culture's policy for contemporary visual art.**

Supporting artistic creation, promoting contemporary art and building the heritage of tomorrow: with its focus on these momentous goals, the collection managed by the Centre national des arts plastiques has grown over time to become a flagship collection. Commonly referred to as the national contemporary art fund, what sets the collection apart is not only its quality but also its wealth, with over 107,000 artworks.

As part of its work to promote the collection, Cnap brings together experts, and encourages dialogue and reflection on the latest developments in art today. Cnap supports the profession through grants and subsidies, it supports publishing and public outreach. Through everything it does, the Centre national des arts plastiques supports, disseminates, publicises and raises the profile of current creation, while constantly opening up new horizons.

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

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### **Focus on the design and decorative arts collection**

In 1981, a sector dedicated to decorative arts, industrial creation and crafts was established which made possible the creation of a collection of 10,000 pieces produced by more than 1,600 artists. This collection aims to reflect the developments in this vast field and its profusion and variety.

Far from a historical account, what the collection offers is a succession of visions and interpretations of what is happening now in the field of creation. Initially based around a historical core of a thousand works (Maurice Dufrene, Jean Dunand, Charlotte Perriand) commissioned by the State, this collection is now one of the main collections of contemporary design in Europe.

The collection focuses on many different areas: furniture, tableware, lighting, textiles, ceramics, fashion accessories, household appliances and new technologies, etc. This typological diversity is reflected in the wide range of production methods and circuits. Accordingly, unique pieces, handcrafted objects made using traditional or innovative processes, prototypes and industrial products reflect the diversity of practices and the importance of all the many different people involved such as designers, publishers, gallery owners, craftspeople and manufacturers.

Although the domestic landscape remains the collection's main focus, it has recently welcomed graphic design. Since 2010, the acquisition committee's remit has been extended to include graphic design thus enabling it to explore different typologies and add visual identities, typography and editorial design to the collection which now contains a number of significant works which have left their mark on the visual landscape.

The foundations were laid with important acquisitions (Visual Design Jean Widmer's pictograms created for tourism and culture signage on French motorways, Etienne Robial's donation of his pioneering work on Canal+ graphic presentation) to which have been added other bodies of work, remarkable for what they explored and contributed to the field of graphic design (Experimental Jetset, Vier5) and for upholding the link between graphic design, image and illustration (Paul Cox, Christophe Jacquet dit Toffe, Fanette Mellier, M/M, Pierre di Sciullo, 4 Taxis and also the Trois Ourses collection of artistic children's books which includes works by Enzo Mari, Bruno Munari, Tana Hoban, Katsumi Komagata and Louise-Marie Cumont).

# eac. La Donation Albers-Honegger



**The Donation Albers-Honegger, a collection unique in France, is classified as a National Treasure. More than 700 works from multiple currents of geometric abstraction are made available to the public.**

**This rich resource encourages a continual dialogue between works from many different horizons, between different theoretical propositions, and specific sociological and political contexts.**

The Donation Albers-Honegger brings together works given to the French state by Gottfried Honegger and Sybil Albers with the donations of Aurelie Nemours, Gilbert Brownstone, and a number of other artists. The entire collection is included in the inventory of the Centre National des Arts Plastiques and permanently housed at the Espace de l'Art Concret. While the heart of the collection is built around the works of renowned members of the Concret Art movement, both Swiss (Max Bill, Richard Paul Lohse, Camille Graeser, Gottfried Honegger) and French (Bernard Aubertin, Jean-François Dubreuil, François Morellet, Aurelie Nemours), the collectors situated the ensemble in the long history of European abstract art since 1900. Thus Art Concret is thus seen prefigured in the works of Augusto Giacometti and Georges Vantongerloo, or those of Sonia Delaunay and František Kupka. Faithful to the universal spirit of Art Concret, the collectors did not limit themselves to purely geometric works. They enlarged the scope of their collection by including remarkable and sometimes surprising works that can claim a link to this historical movement in a manner that makes it a work of art in and of itself.

It seems evident today that the important figures of Minimalism or Conceptual Art would be included in the permanent collection (Joseph Beuys, Daniel Buren, Alan Charlton, Richard Long, Helmut Federle, Imi Knoebel, Olivier Mosset, Bernard Venet, Franz Erhard Walther from Europe or Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Joseph Kosuth, Richard Serra from the United States). It is less evident that artists linked to Arte Povera (Manzoni), Support-Surface (Claude Viallat) or New Realism (Tinguely) should appear there also. It is testimony to the two collectors' visionary spirit that they chose to examine the rigorous principals of concrete art as they have been explored in the most radical movements of the twentieth century.

This independent, almost impertinent, vision underlies the entire collection. Its historical impact is enlarged by the unexpected new territories it explores. The collection is also the fruit of a story: that of Gottfried Honegger, a Swiss artist who himself set off to conquer the language of geometric abstraction at the beginning of the 1950s, and that of Sybil Albers, his companion. Zurich, Paris, and New York were the first steps along the way of this long journey. Encounters and friendships unfold discreetly as one discovers the collection.



The Campbell Soup can, dedicated by Andy Warhol, works by Sam Francis and Kimber Smith serve as reminders of Gottfried Honegger's unwavering bonds with the United States. Works by César and Yves Klein testify to privileged relationships with French artists. Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger were always receptive to contemporary work, collecting pieces by young artists and non-traditional art forms. Works by Raphaël Julliard and Dominique Dehais echo the serial aspect of Art Concret as well as the social implications of an artist's work. Cedric Tessière's « skin paintings » and paintings made with chewing gum by Dominique Figarella



demand consideration of an artist's use of materials and the pictorial gesture itself. Works by Laurent Saksik bring larger format works into the collection and consider art as installation.

Finally, Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger have brought together an exceptional ensemble of modern design, notably chairs (Paimo armchair by Alvar Aalto, Wassily armchair by Marcel Breuer, Wiggle side chair by Frank O. Gehry, Panton chair by Verner Panton...) which exemplifies the democratization of art so important to the founders of Art Concret, and to the collective and social implications of the movement.

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**A complete data base of all works in the Donation Albers-Honegger can be found on the website of the Centre national des Arts plastiques:**

**<http://www.cnap.fr/collection-en-ligne/>**  
(search words: Donation Albers-Honegger)

# eac. A unique site; an artistic and social project based on the encounter and dialogue with Art Concret, contemporary creation and the public



## + 20 000 visitors a year

**Founded in 1990, the Espace de l'Art Concret is a contemporary art center with a collection of abstract art unique in France, the Donation Albers-Honegger.**

The cultural and educational mission of eac. is threefold:

- **The conservation and valorization** of the Albers-Honegger collection ;
- **Research**, centered around temporary exhibitions and artist residencies which develop links between works in the collection and contemporary creation ;
- **Education**, with the goal of raising awareness about today's art through the action of the Pedagogical Studios.

The primary mission of the eac. is to make contemporary art accessible to the largest possible public. Art education has always been at the heart of the mission, and an entire building, is devoted to studios designed to welcome school groups, beginning with preschoolers. Because of the outstanding reputation of its educational program, eac. is recognized and supported by the Ministère de la Culture, the Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the city of Mouans-Sartoux, the Conseil Régional Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, and the Département des Alpes-Maritimes. En 2008 the eac. received the « Prix Européen du Projet Culturel » awarded by the Fondation Européenne de la Culture « Pro Europa », for its art education program.

**In 2020, l'Espace de l'Art Concret received the label « Contemporary art center of National Interest » by the Ministère de la culture.**

# **eac.** The Espace de l'Art Concret, a contemporary art center endowed with a collection of abstract art unique in France, the Donation Albers-Honegger

The eac. was born of an encounter between two collectors, Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger, and the mayor of Mouans-Sartoux, André Aschieri. Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger wanted to make their collection accessible to the public. At first they lent their collection to the city of Mouans-Sartoux.

In 2000, as the eac. celebrated its tenth anniversary, Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger donated their collection to the French state, with two conditions: first, that this unique ensemble be permanently shown in a building specifically built for it in the park surrounding the Château de Mouans, and secondly that a cohesive intellectual project around Art Concret and contemporary art be maintained.

Since then, other complementary donations have enriched Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger's original collection: those of Aurelie Nemours, and Gilbert and Catherine Brownstone.

The new building destined to house the permanent collection was designed by the Swiss architects Gigon and Guyer. It was inaugurated June 26, 2004.

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An excerpt from *Une utopie réalisée*, an interview with Gottfried Honegger by Dominique Boudou, *Pour un art concret*, Isthme Éditions/Centre national des Arts plastiques

**DB:** Why the name « Espace de l'Art Concret » ?

**GH:** [...] For us, it is a place of encounters, a place for discussion, a place where we have didactic exhibitions through which we try to help children, and adults as well, understand the art of our time. It is an active place, a place of Aufklärung (education, awareness raising), a diverse place, comprising a natural park, a fifteenth century castle, a building which houses the Donation Albers-Honegger, educational studios for children, and the Children's Préau where they can show their work. We want to invite today's world which is passive, silent, and resigned, to become active, responsible, and creative. à devenir actif, responsable et créatif.

**eac.** Since its creation in 1990, the eac. has collaborated with numerous museums and art spaces, and has received the support of numerous patrons and institutions.

The reputation of the Espace de l'Art Concret has made it possible to be recognized and supported by the Ministère de la Culture, the Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the city of Mouans-Sartoux, the Conseil Régional Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and the Département des Alpes-Maritimes. En 2008, the eac. received the « Prix européen du Projet Culturel » awarded by the Fondation Européenne de la Culture « Pro Europa », for its art education program.

#### **Institutions muséales Paris et sa région**

- Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris
- Centre Pompidou, Paris
- Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- Musée du Louvre, Paris
- Institut du monde arabe, Paris
- MAC/VAL, Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne
- Musée national Picasso-Paris

#### **Institutions muséales en région**

- Musée des Tissus – Musée des Arts décoratifs de Lyon
- Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain, Strasbourg
- Le Carré d'art, Nîmes
- Musée de Grenoble
- Le Consortium, Dijon
- FRAC Basse-Normandie
- FRAC Bourgogne
- FRAC Bretagne
- FRAC Franche-Comté
- FRAC Languedoc Roussillon
- FRAC Midi-Pyrénées
- FRAC PACA
- FRAC Poitou-Charente
- Musée Picasso, Antibes
- Musée National Fernand Léger, Biot
- MAMAC, Nice
- Villa Arson, Nice
- Musée des Arts Asiatiques, Nice
- Centre International d'Art Contemporain, Carros

#### **Institutions muséales à l'étranger**

- Mamco, Genève (Suisse)
- Musée d'art et d'histoire, Genève (Suisse)
- Fonds Municipal d'Art Contemporain, Genève (Suisse)
- Fonds Cantonal d'Art Contemporain, Genève (Suisse)

- Musée d'Ixelles, Ixelles (Belgique)
- La Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Direction du Patrimoine culturel, Pôle Valorisation (Belgique)
- Musée Sztuki, Lodz (Pologne)
- Museum Kampa, Prague (République Tchèque)
- Wilhem Mack Museum, Ludwigshafen am Rhein (Allemagne)

#### **Mécènes et institutions privées**

- Archives Klein, Paris (France)
- Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul de Vence (France)
- Fondation Gaston Bertrand, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Fondation Walter & Nicole Leblanc, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- La Callewaert-Vanlangendonck Collection, Anvers (Belgique)
- Proximus Art collection, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt am Main (Allemagne)
- Banque Cantonale Vaudoise, Lausanne (Suisse)
- Banque Cantonale de Genève (Suisse)
- Banque nationale de Belgique, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Fondation Pro-Helvetia pour la Culture (Suisse)
- Annenberg Foundation, Los Angeles (U.S.A.)
- Fondation Otten, Hohenems (Autriche)
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- Eeckman, art & insurance (Belgique et France)
- Institut français (France)
- British Council (Royaume-Uni)
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- Wallonie Bruxelles International, Bruxelles (Belgique)
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L'Espace de l'Art Concret — centre d'art contemporain d'intérêt national

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L'Espace de l'Art Concret, un centre d'art doté d'une collection  
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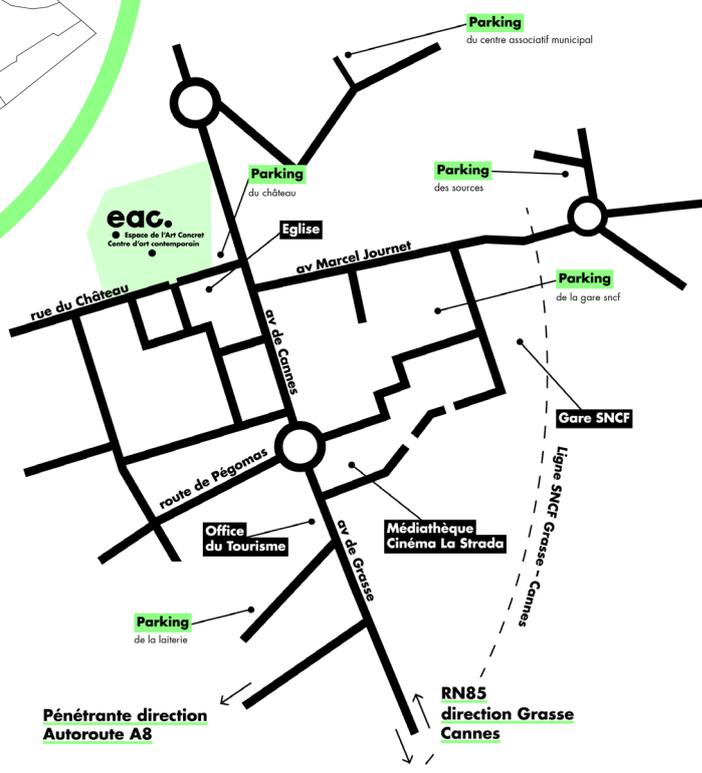
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