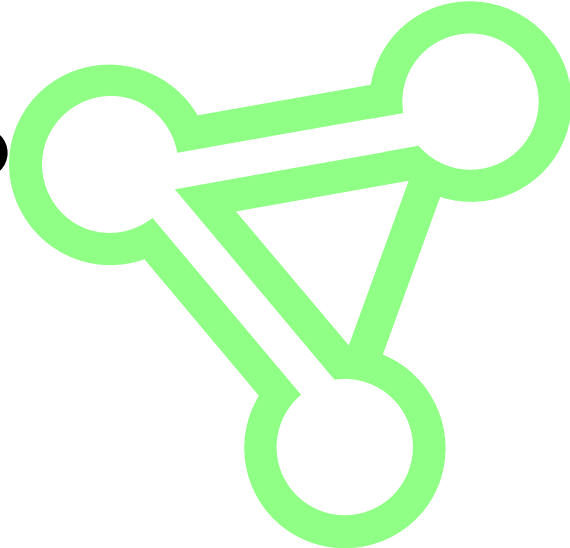


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In partnership with



UNIVERSITÉ
CÔTE D'AZUR

Exhibition

Point, ligne, surface de lumière



09.06.24 → 05.01.2025

Espace de l'Art Concret
Centre d'art contemporain

d'intérêt national

Donation Albers-Honegger

Château de Mouans

06370 Mouans-Sartoux

+33 (0)4 93 75 71 50

espacedelartconcret.fr

press release

eac. Dot, Line, Surface and Light

09 June 2024 • 05 January 2025

Preview Sunday 09 June at 11 am

Curator: **Pierre Coulet**, Université Côte d'Azur Emeritus Professor at the Nice Institute of Physics INPHYNI (Université Côte d'Azur, CNRS)

donation Albers-Honegger

Artists: **Jean-Philippe Roubaud, Victor Vasarely, Edmond Vernassa**

In partnership with the Université Côte d'Azur (UniCA) and the University of Chile (UCHILE)

This exhibition has been awarded the **2023-2024 Year of Physics' label**.

Organised by Pierre Coulet, physicist and Emeritus Professor at Université Côte d'Azur, this exhibition in the Albers-Honegger Donation Level -1 rooms aims to re-establish science in a context of culture, and of art and the history of civilisations in particular.

Its theme of 'Art and Geometry' is explored through optical devices and paintings which illustrate how light becomes uniquely concentrated when reflected onto curved mirrors or refracted by being shone through dioptries (transparent volumes, water, glass, etc.).

As well as highlighting the aesthetics of 'light's unique structures', the aim is also to offer a cultural and educational overview of the geometry of optics which creates a natural bridge between 'Art and Sciences'. Key to this exhibition is the history of science and of geometrical optics in particular.

This project would never have seen the light of day had it not been for a meeting with Edmond Vernassa, a Nice-based artist. Among the many works he left behind are his *Ciné-Optiques* (Cine-Optics), moving light devices where intermittent light sources are observed through a patterned sheet of Plexiglas, illustrating the physical phenomena which the exhibition examines.

Also exhibited are the works of two other artists, Jean-Philippe Roubaud and Victor Vasarely, who also focus on these unique aspects of light.

Jean-Philippe Roubaud's work focuses on drawing in black and white, working with pencil and graphite powder. He takes this technique to its limits, allowing it to break free of its traditional two-dimensional framework so that it spreads into space and merges with other media (ceramics, sculpture, performance, etc.). For this exhibition, Roubaud has produced a specific installation which looks at the phenomenon of anamorphosis.

Recognised as the leading proponent of Op Art in France, Victor Vasarely developed his own model of geometric abstract art based on the use of vibrant shapes and colours. The tapestry shown in the exhibition is part of his Vega series, which examines optical distortions. The shading of the colours accentuates the effect of the shapes' expanded volume and appears to bring the sphere to the surface.

In cover:

Edmond Vernassa

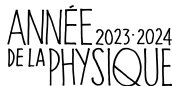
Appareil cinéoptique – caustiques de couleurs roses et blanches, 1968

coffre en bois peint noir, moteur électrique, tubes lumineux et trames en plexiglas

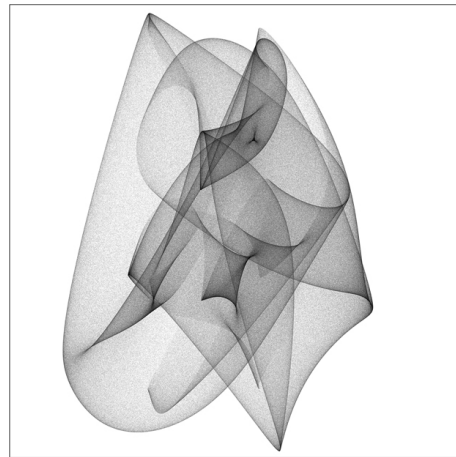
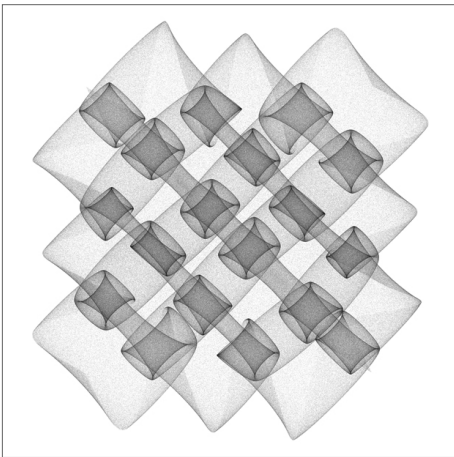
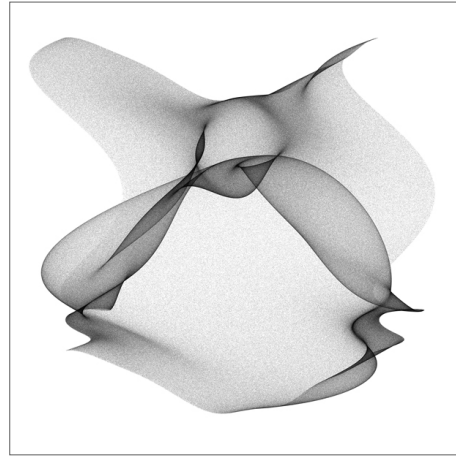
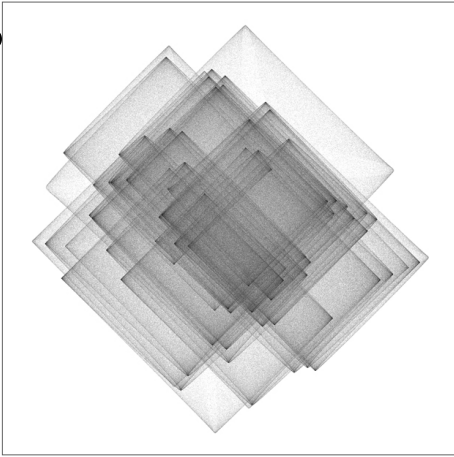
H 43 x L 43 x P 22 cm

Collection Sylviane Vernassa

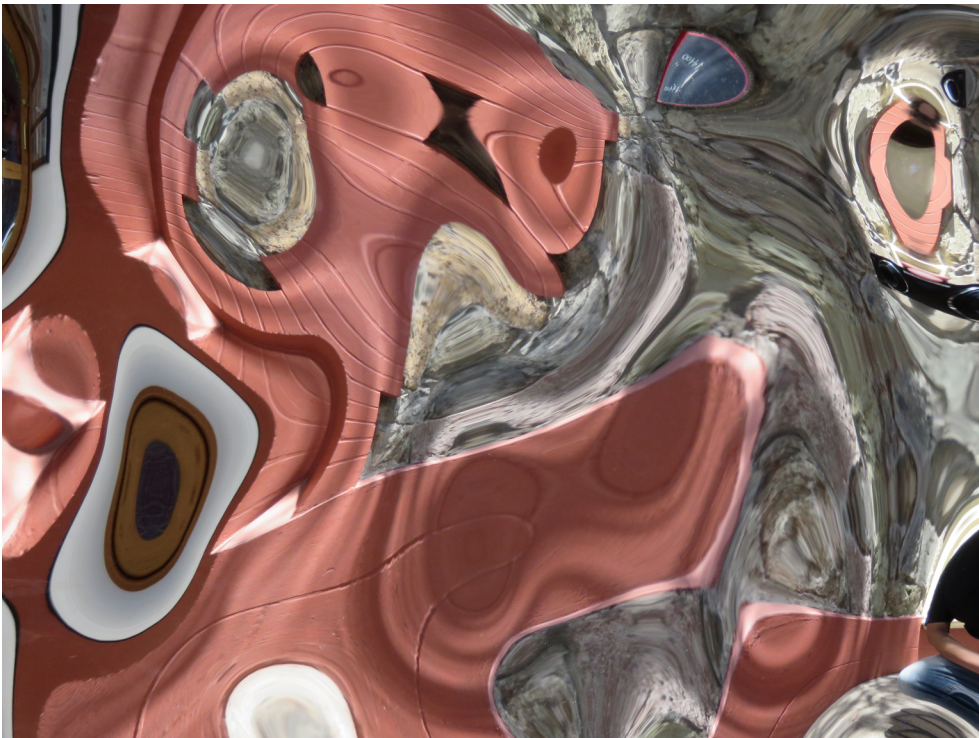
© crédit photo Bruno Gros



eac.



Caustiques — Images générées par ordinateur par Pierre Coulet
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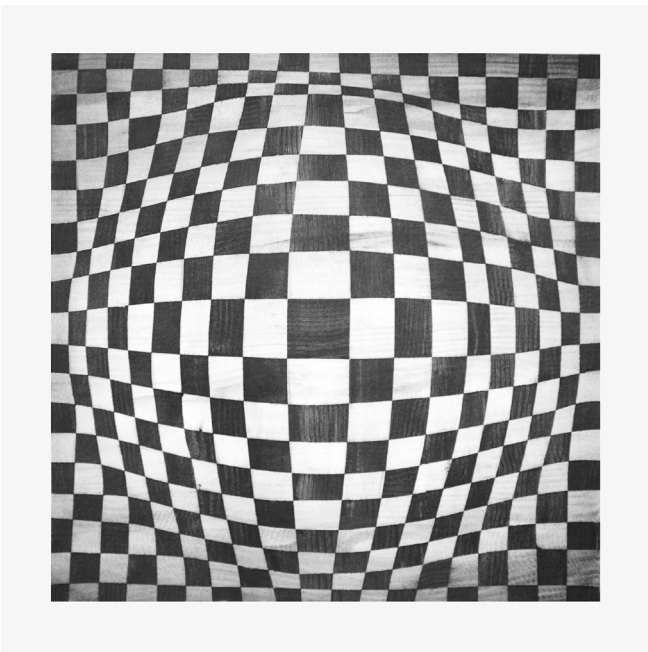


Anamorphose — Image générée par ordinateur par Pierre Coulet
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Jean-Philippe Roubaud, *Plaquage - Kandinsky*, 2018

Graphite sur papier
40 x 40 cm
Courtesy de l'artiste © Adagp, Paris 2024



Jean-Philippe Roubaud, *Plaquage - Vasarely*, 2018

Graphite sur papier
40 x 40 cm
Courtesy de l'artiste © Adagp, Paris 2024

Jean-Philippe ROUBAUD

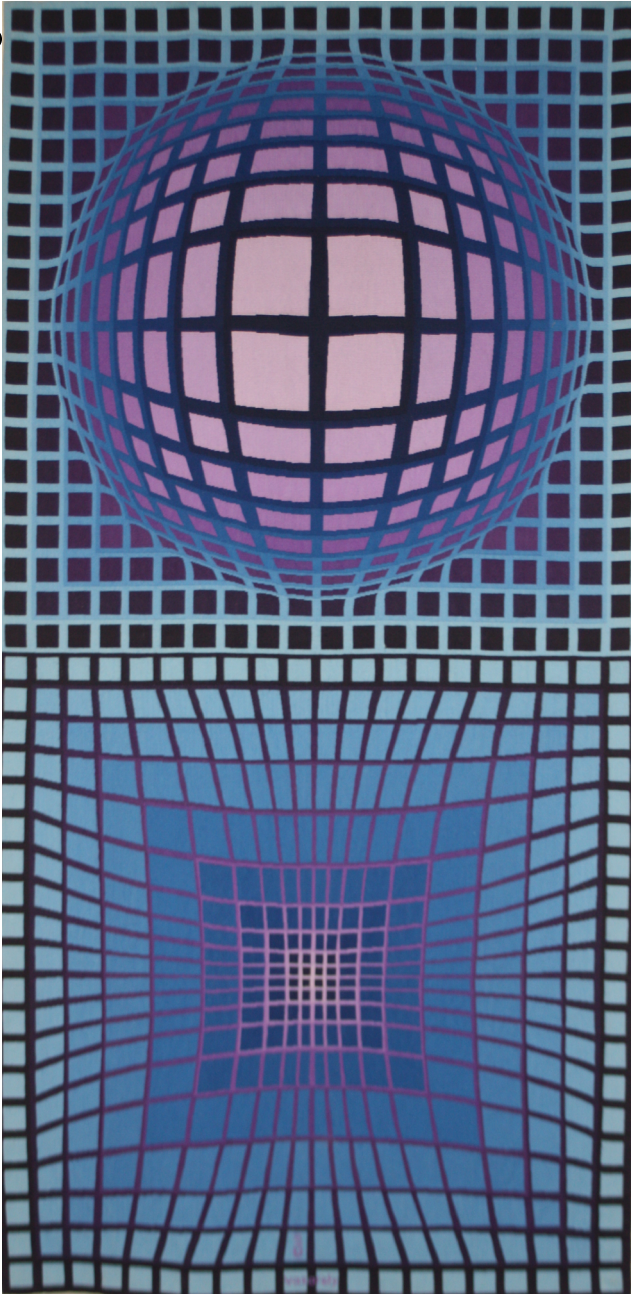
1973, Cannes (France)
Lives and works in Le Cannet (France)

Well-known on the Nice art scene for 15 years as part of a duo, since 2015 Jean-Philippe Roubaud has completely transformed his practice. Using pencils or brushes but always graphite, Roubaud paints drawings and draws paintings.

Everything begins with the intertwining of the drawing and the painting process. Roubaud forces himself to limit the tools used in the process, reducing the size of his work to its smallest appliance so that only the essential is left. This encounter takes place on the paper's surface which shows the presence of water, the first element as substance and shape. The second element, graphite powder, defines the materialization of language. Paper, the traditional medium for drawing, becomes in turn plane and volume, trompe-l'œil and

abstraction. Roubaud's painted drawings are based on quotations, taken from scientific works or the memory of simple phenomena. By using this archaic technique, Roubaud examines and evokes architecture, sculpture, photography and the trajectory of bodies. He constantly questions the role of drawing and its foundation place in the history of art as a discipline in its own right.

"Drawing on walls with graphite allows me to pay tribute to cave art and to fresco painting. It becomes a trace, then in turn an imprint, lampblack and the resurgence of a Florentine palace", J-P Roubaud. J-P Roubaud.



Victor Vasarely, VR 108, 1968

Tapissierie de laine d'Aubusson, tissée par les ateliers de Tabard frères et sœurs
 H 296 x L 148 cm
 Fondation Vasarely, Aix-en-Provence
 © Adagp, Paris 2024

Victor VASARELY

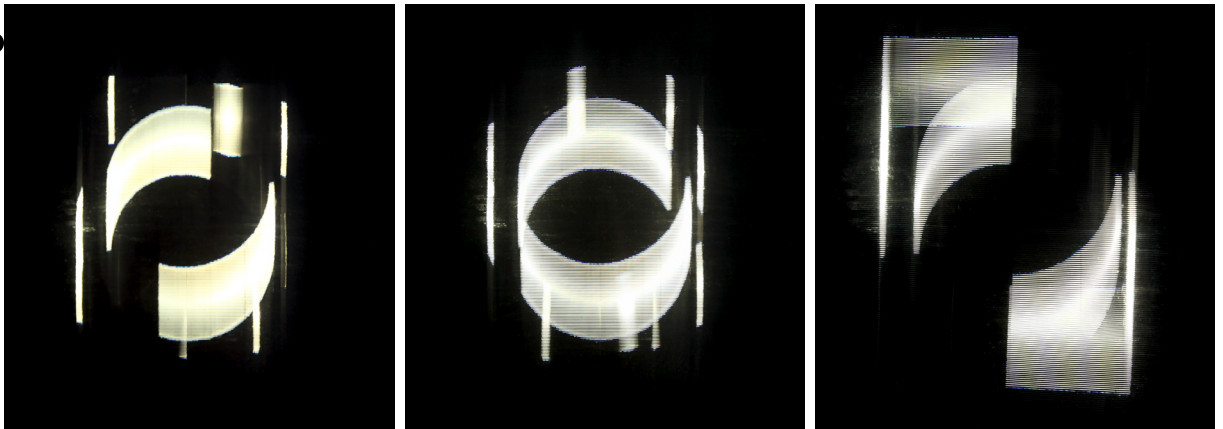
1906, Pécs (Hungary) – 1997, Paris (France)

Victor Vasarely stands out as a unique artist in the history of twentieth-century art. During his lifetime he acquired fame and made a name for himself in contemporary art by creating a new trend - optical art. From the development of his graphic art to his determination to promote social art accessible to everyone, Vasarely's work is extremely coherent. Born in Pécs, Hungary, in 1906, after he passed his baccalaureate in 1925, Victor Vasarely briefly studied medicine at the University of Budapest, but dropped out after two years.

Vasarely retained from this period a need for method and objectivity, a thirst for knowledge... to be close to the world of science.

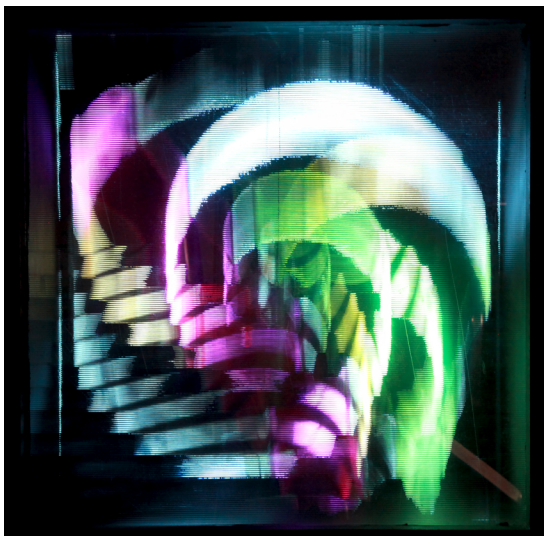
Victor Vasarely became a French citizen in 1959, which was when he was preparing to create a production system worthy of industrial mass production, in the Bauhaus and Mühely style, and which was meant to spread his great graphic themes everywhere, both to household objects and to city walls. That same year, he patented the 'Unité plastique' (Visual Unit), which became the basis for the principle of his small circles and small squares. This laid the foundations for his *Visual Alphabet*.

From 1968 onwards, working with the distortion of lines, Vasarely defined his 'Universal Structures'. He then embarked on the famous Vega period when distortion of the constituent elements produces an expansion resulting in shapes which break free from their plane. The artist sought to evoke the elusive universe of galaxies, cosmic pulsations and the biological mutation of cells. (source: www.fondationvasarely.org)



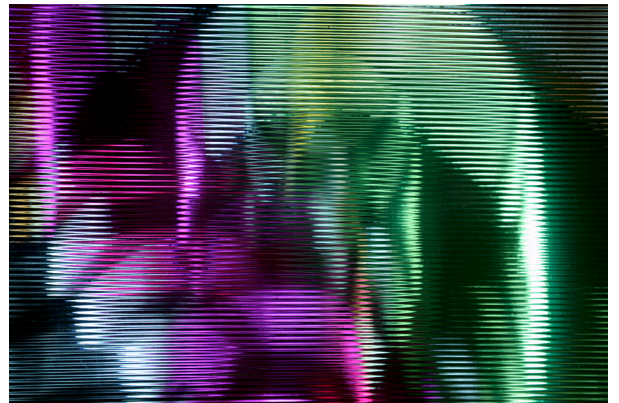
Edmond Vernassa, *Quadrature du cercle*, 1969

Photographies à partir d'un appareil cinéoptique, cadre en bois, moteur électrique, tubes lumineux, coffre bois peint en noir
H 66 x L 68 x P 32,5 cm
Collection Sylviane Vernassa
© crédit photo Bruno Gros



Edmond Vernassa, *Appareil cinéoptique - spirales en rotation (rose/vert/violet)*, 1969

boîtier de bois peint en noir, moteur électrique, tubes lumineux et trames en plexiglas
H 55 x L 55 x P 40 cm
Collection Sylviane Vernassa
© crédit photo Bruno Gros



Edmond VERNASSA

1926 – 2010, Nice (France)

Edmond Vernassa began to draw and sculpt from an early age. He qualified as an electrician and at the age of 14 started working with his father. After spending the day on building sites, he studied at the Decorative Arts School. Here he was awarded the *Grand Prix du Ministre* for drawing (Minister's Main Prize), a first for an evening school student.

In 1950, he took over a plastics processing workshop and came across a new material: Plexiglass. Figurative painting was popular in the 1960s and then graphic design which moved towards the psychedelic and abstract. It was also at this time that Vernassa began to be fascinated by perpetual movement which he transformed into light effects which led him to create *Ciné-optic* devices, spirals and kinetic objects which move in space.

During the 1970s, developing out of his study of perpetual motion, Vernassa became interested in distorting stressed materials so as to capture them at a particular stage. In the 1980s and 1990s, he went a step further, no longer just distorting materials but breaking them. In the 2000s he returned to Plexiglass helicoids, both mobile and stable, and to producing coloured graphics and materials with a crumpled background.

A member of the Nice School, Vernassa also worked with many artists, in particular Maeght Foundation artists including Miró, Calder, Giacometti, Adami and so on. César, Arman, Farhi and others produced works in his plastics processing workshop.

In his final years he spent time working with scientists from Nice University, including his friend the physicist Pierre Couillet, who produced mathematical models of his works. There is a permanent exhibition space dedicated to him at Saint-Jean d'Angély University in Nice.

eac. The Donation Albers-Honegger



The Donation Albers-Honegger, a collection unique in France, is classified as a National Treasure. More than 800 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.

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



© Bruno Gros

+ 25 000 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**, through mediations in exhibitions and artistic practice workshops.

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.

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
- Art Foundation Cruz-Diez, 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

- Collection Lambert, musée d'art contemporain, Avignon
- Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain, Strasbourg
- Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Saint-Etienne
- Musée Soulages, Rodez
- Musée des Beaux-arts, Rennes
- Musées de Marseille
- Musée Fabre, Montpellier
- 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

Institutions muséales à l'étranger

- Mamco, Genève (Suisse)
- Haus Konstruktiv de Zurich (Suisse)
- Musée des Beaux-Arts de La Chaux-de-Fonds (Suisse)
- Musée Vasarely de Budapest (Hongrie)
- Musée d'art de la province de Hainaut (Belgique)
- Museo Francisco Sobrino (Espagne)
- Musée Guggenheim, Bilbao (Espagne)

- 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 (Belgique)
- Musée Sztuki, Lodz (Pologne)
- Museum Kampa, Prague (République Tchèque)
- Wilhem Mack Museum, Ludwigshafen am Rhein (Allemagne)

Mécènes et institutions privées

- Fondation Vasarely, Aix-en-Provence
- 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)
- Total S.A. (France)
- Caisse d'Épargne Côte d'Azur (France)
- Eeckman, art & insurance (Belgique et France)
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- Wallonie Bruxelles International, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, Paris (France)
- Mécènes du Sud, Marseille (France)

L'Espace de l'Art Concret — centre d'art contemporain d'intérêt national

Soutenu
par



L'Espace de l'Art Concret, un centre d'art doté d'une collection unique en France, la Donation Albers-Honegger inscrite sur l'inventaire du



et déposée à l'Espace de l'Art Concret.

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Reduced price: 5€

- Teachers and students (not part of Nice academie)
- Price "inter-exposition"
- Groups (of 10 or more people)

Free (with proof): under 18 years of age, residents of Mouans- Sartoux, teachers and students of Académie Nice (06, 83), those with unemployment or welfare benefits, the disabled and accompanying persons, Maison des Artistes, journalists, the Ministry of Culture, PACA Regional Council, the Department of Alpes Maritimes, members of ICOM and CEA

Guided visits : 9€ (for 7 or more people)
everyday by appointment

Contact: Amandine Briand
briand@espacedelartconcret.fr
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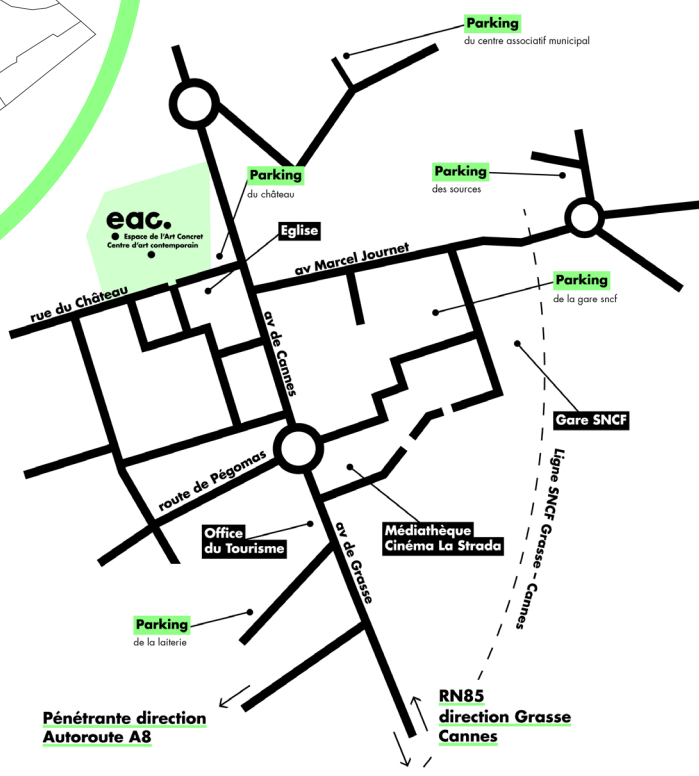
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By train

Ligne Cannes-Grasse, Arrêt Gare Mouans-Sartoux
(15 mn de la gare de Cannes)

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