

GALERIE CATHERINE PUTMAN

NOIR ET BLANC

Pierre Alechinsky | Geneviève Asse | Georg Baselitz
Pierre Buraglio | Balthasar Burkhard | Alain Clément
Tony Cragg | Frédéric Malette | Agathe May
Henri Michaux | Georges Noël | A.R.Penck | Sophie Ristelhueber
Antonio Saura | Jean Tinguely | Gérard Traquandi

22 September – 27 October 2018



Gérard Traquandi "Untitled #1", 2013 (detail) - aquatint - 80 x 61 cm - 19 ex

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The Galerie Catherine Putman is pleased to present the exhibition ‘Noir et Blanc’ (‘Black and white’), which includes the works of various artists.

Specialising in works executed on paper, the gallery is naturally interested in this relation between colours: black, ink, and graphite, and the white of the paper. The exhibition focuses on the permanence of this irreplaceable combination of colours in drawing and engraving.

The emergence of printing in the mid fifteenth century led to the diffusion of printed works and engraved images, consisting of this association of black and white and the special status of these two colours. Black and white images predominated in the modern era. Hence, the origins of the use of black in art, evident in Palaeolithic cave paintings, is linked on the one hand to printing and, on the other, to the charcoal and graphite used for drawing. The exhibition focuses on the black used in lines, sketches, and printing ink, which is an essential and accepted form of expression on paper.

The exhibition brings together various works whose techniques underline the use of black and white, primarily in drawings. Graphite is the primary medium for drawing, whether it is in the form of pure and minimalist lines that are used to divide up space in Geneviève Asse’s work (*Horizontale lumière*, 1972), used freely to evoke ethnic symbols in Georges Noël’s work (*Cuzco*, 1984), used to construct space (*Rafistolage... contre-jour*, 2009) in Pierre Buraglio’s work, or, lastly, used to fully saturate areas of a drawing, creating contrasts between mass and empty spaces in the work of Frédéric Malette, who for a long time exclusively used black and white, as he only worked with graphite pencil.

Ink, and more specifically Indian ink, plays a central role in artistic practices, even in the West, as in the work of Henri Michaux, who developed a unique graphic oeuvre via the almost exclusive use of ink, applied freely with a brush. The density of black ink is also found in the work of the Spanish artist Antonio Saura in his work on paper. It is particularly prominent in *El Perro de Goya* (1981), in which nearly all the support is covered in black.

Ink is also used in printing and its various techniques: in lithography—it has been used in a majestic and graphic way in Pierre Alechinsky’s *Résumé*—, in serigraphy with works with blacked-out areas by Pierre Buraglio, and in dense and velvety aquatints by Gérard Traquandi and Alain Clément.

The modern aesthetics of printing, which have, to mention but two examples, been adopted by the traditional mediums of photography and the cinema, make it possible to combine gum bichromate and carbon prints by Gérard Traquandi, photogravures by Balthasar Burkhard, and the landscapes etched with soft varnish by Georg Baselitz or engraved on wood by Agathe May.

Embodying various symbolic meanings, depending on the culture and the period (visitors to the exhibition may wish to read the excellent book by Michel Pastoureau, *Noir, histoire d'une couleur*, Seuil, 2008), black and white remains a key combination on works on paper in artistic expression—a powerful and direct link with the graphic arts, whether abstract or figurative.

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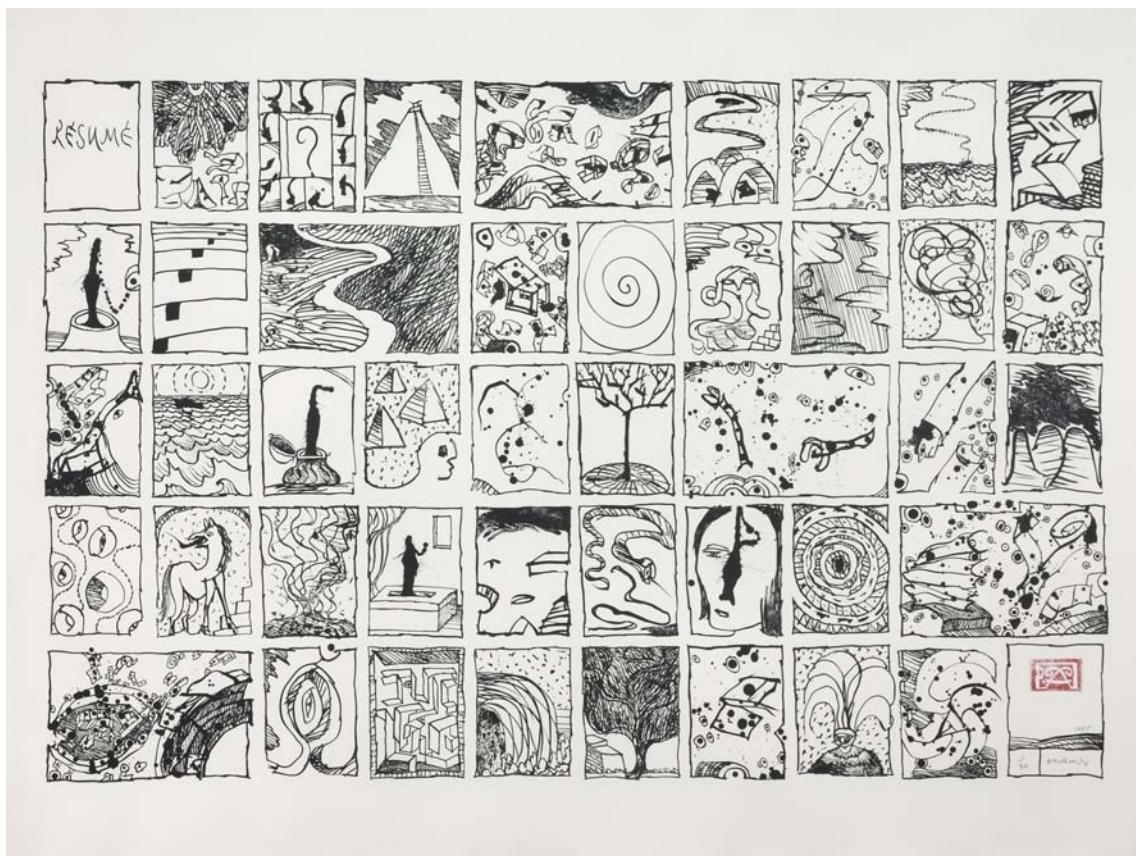
Geneviève Asse "Horizontale lumière", 1972 - charcoal on paper - 65 x 50 cm

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Frédéric Malette "Marqué au front un serpent dans le cœur" 2018 - charcoal on tracing paper - 100 x 70 cm

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Pierre Alechinsky "Résumé", 1995 - lithograph - 122 x 160 cm - 30 ex

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Agathe May "La forêt" (detail) - woodcut on Japanese paper - 131 x 252 cm - 5 ex