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The 8 Best Booths at TEFAF Maastricht, From a Rare Artemisia Gentileschi to a Two-Sided de Chirico

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TEFAF Maastricht.
COURTESY TEFAF MAASTRICHT

After its New York iteration, which took place in May, TEFAF is back in its hometown of Maastricht. It's the first time the fair in the Dutch city since 2020, when multiple exhibitors claimed they got Covid there. This time, about 242 dealers from 20 different countries have shown up at the Maastricht Exhibition & Conference Centre. The fair's format has slightly changed for this edition, the TEFAF's 35th in Maastricht—ceilings of the booths have been removed to enhance air circulation.

TEFAF, which is best known for featuring antiquities and Old Masters paintings, is welcoming six first-time exhibitors in the Showcase section, including five from France (Imperial Art, Galerie Mendes, Galerie Pavec, Royal Provenance, and Nicolas Bourriaud). “TEFAF is like the Holy Grail for antiques dealers. We are happy we could make it this year,” said Bourriaud on opening day this past Friday.

Below, a look at the best booths at this year’s marquee Dutch iteration of TEFAF, which runs through Thursday, June 30.

Giorgio de Chirico at Dickinson

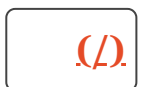


Photo : Courtesy Dickinson

Head or tails? Dickinson is showcasing both sides of a double-faced tempera on canvas by Giorgio de Chirico. (As it happens, it’s not the only two-sided painting at this fair—

by Giorgio de Chirico. (As it happens, it's not the only one: the other painting at the fair another, a small panel attributed to the Master of 1310 at New York's Salomon Arts Gallery, depicts the Virgin and her child on its front, and a decorative pattern of plaited ropes with frayed end on its reverse.) What is now considered the back of the de Chirico painting was made in 1920 for an exhibition in Milan and features a Renaissance-style Mercury, the most enigmatic god in Greek mythology. On the front is the second version of *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, commissioned by poet Paul Éluard and his wife Gala in 1924. This is one of the rare repurposed works by de Chirico who, when doing so, would always make sure to preserve the original composition instead of painting over it. The biblical theme may reference de Chirico's return to classical traditions after working in avant-garde modes as well as his decision to go back to Paris in 1924. What better piece to celebrate TEFAF's comeback to Maastricht?

Antoine-Louis Barye and Auguste Rodin at Galerie Nicolas Bourriaud



courtesy Galerie Nicolas Bourriaud

Gallery Nicolas Bourriaud, which specializes in 19th and 20th-century sculpture (and has no relation to the contemporary art curator of the same name), is presenting a splendid bronze by Romantic French sculptor Antoine-Louis Barye (1795–1875). It is the first version of a scene inspired by Ludovico Ariosto's 16th-century epic poem *Orlando Furioso*. In that scene, a man named Ruggiero frees Angelica from a sea monster which was supposed to devour her. The valiant knight is shown riding a hippogriff, a legendary half-eagle, half-horse creature. This masterpiece has three copies—the others are now held by two galleries—and was once owned by the Dieterle family, a dynasty of artists and merchants whom Barye was close to.

Nearby this work is a plaster sculpture of two hands that barely touch. It's one of five unsigned copies of Rodin's *Study for The Secret*, which is considered a companion piece to his *Cathedral*. It had been kept in a closet for years before making its way to TEFAF.

Artemisia Gentileschi at Jean-François Heim



Photo : Courtesy Jean-François Heim

Jean-François Heim has brought with him a ca. 1620 self-portrait of Artemisia Gentileschi as Cleopatra on her deathbed, clasping a viper. Gentileschi has gained a reputation as a proto-feminist artist—she frequently chose strong women as her subjects, and she spoke publicly about being raped by her mentor Agostino Tassi when she was 17 years old. Cleopatra, who is believed to have committed suicide by allowing herself to be bitten by an asp, marks another active female character in Gentileschi's oeuvre. This oil is full of surprises. A strip of painted canvas with a different weave pattern was later added to the left side. Several pentimenti are visible to the naked eye, in the rolled-up sleeve or the contours of the pillow. Gentileschi's arms were lowered, and the position of her knee and the red drapery on top of her leg were also modified, adding to the power and mystery of this compelling work.

Vincent van Gogh from Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen

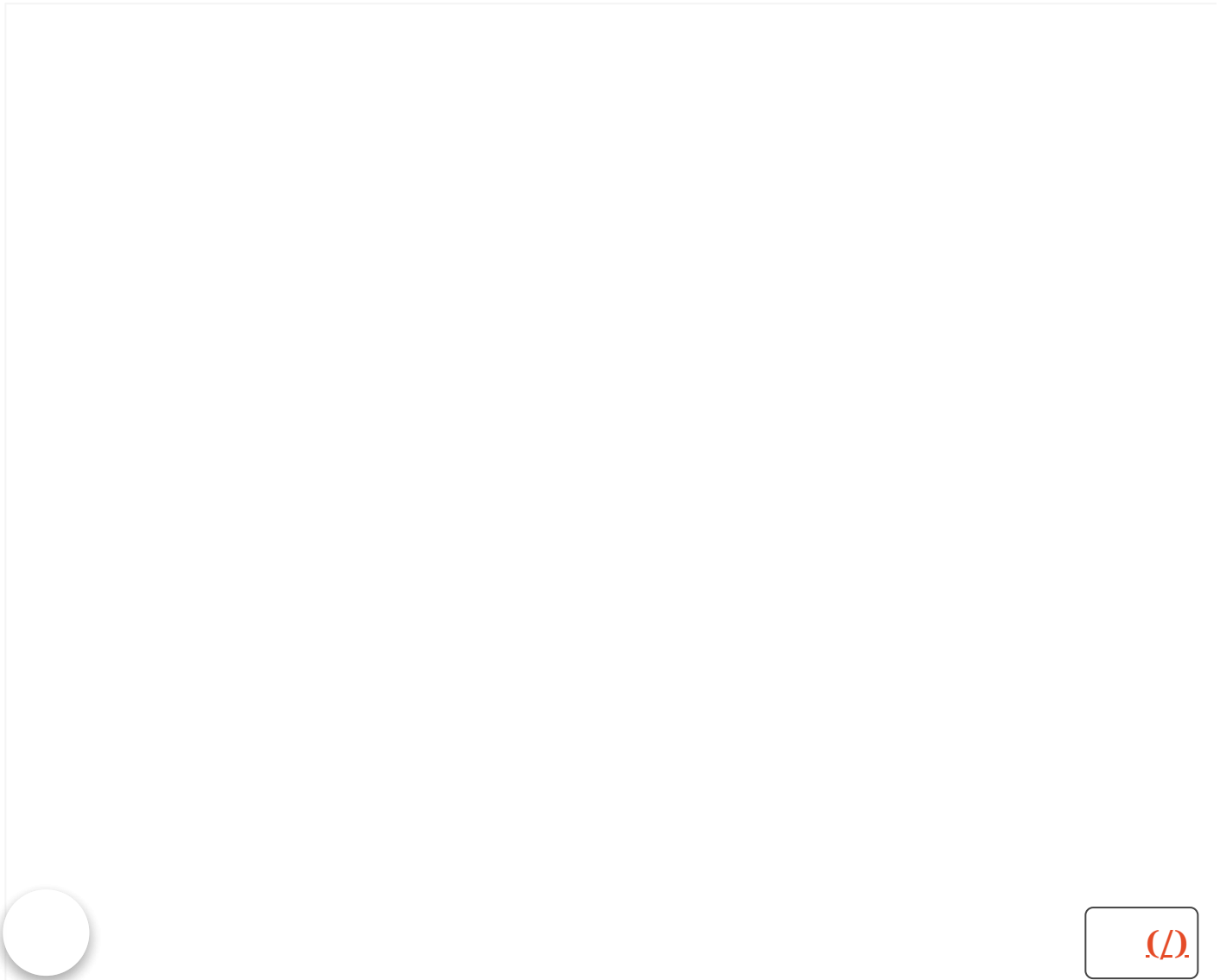


Photo : Photo Aad Hoogendoorn

Don't judge a painting by its cover. Under Vincent van Gogh's *Poplars near Nuenen* (1885) is an 1884 painting showing the Old Tower at Nuenen. This two-in-one piece traveled from Rotterdam to be viewed prior to its forthcoming restoration. Thanks to a €25,000 grant from the 10-year-old TEFAF Museum Restoration Fund, the Boijmans van Beuningen museum is, along with specialists from the Cultural Heritage Agency and the Van Gogh Museum, conducting extensive research to determine the most suitable methods to stabilize the paint surface and potentially also remove the varnish. Along the way, the team is hoping to gain new insights into van Gogh's stylistic transition between the periods when he worked in the Netherlands and France.

Georg Baselitz at White Cube



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“Exhibiting at TEFAF Maastricht is an exciting moment for the gallery and aligns with our goal to make the contemporary historic and the historic contemporary,” said Mathieu Paris, senior director at White Cube, who is showing at TEFAF Maastricht for the first time. White Cube’s presentation includes a decommissioned fire hose repurposed by Theaster Gates, a figurative neon wall installation by Bruce Nauman; a steel, iron, and sponge sculpture by Jannis Kounellis; and a rare 2004 sculpture by Georg Baselitz called *Römischer Gruß* (Roman Salute). This leg-shaped sculpture references the legacy of the Roman invasion in Germany as well as also the unearthing of Greek and Roman sculpture during the Renaissance period.

Joseph-André Motte at Demisch Danant

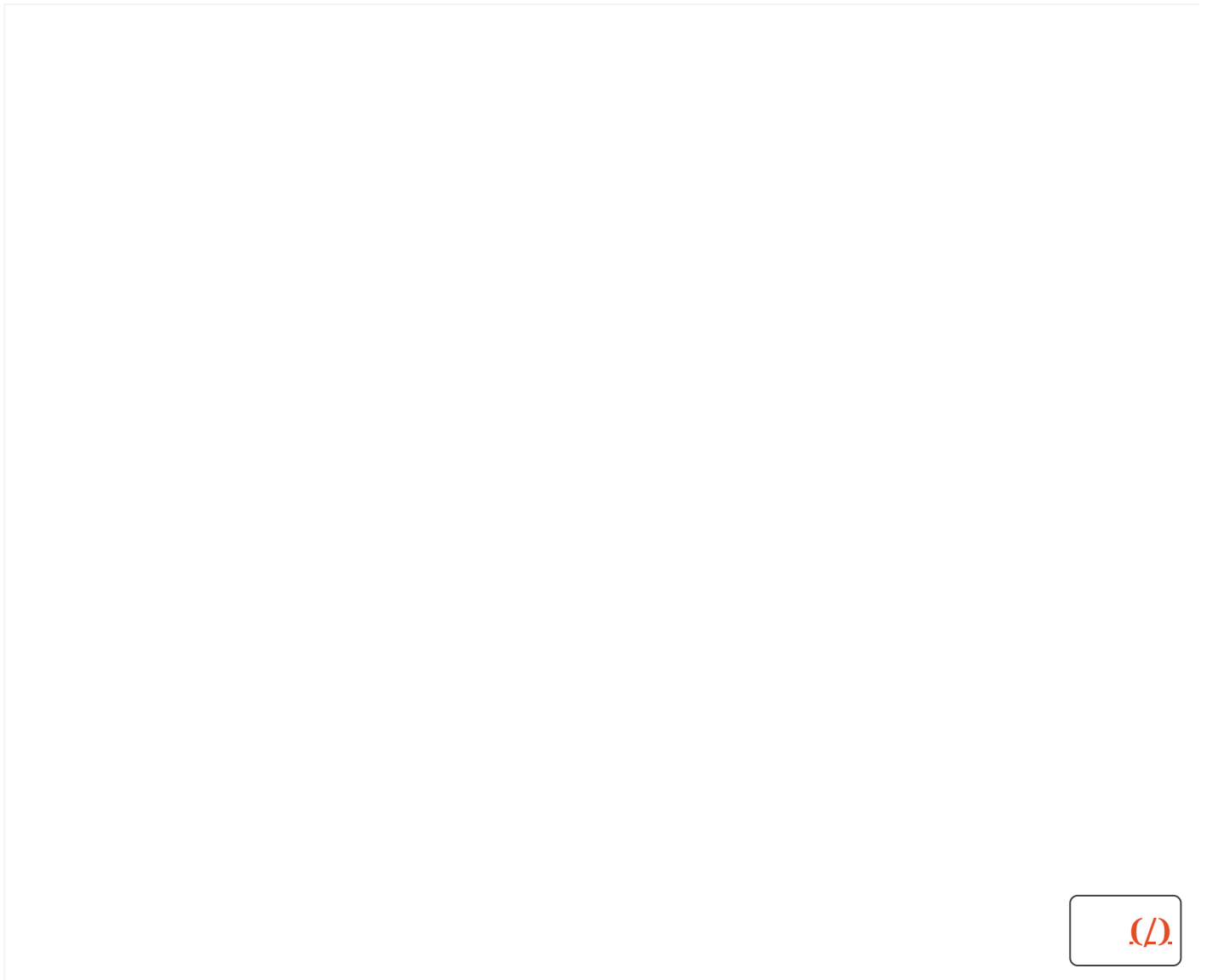


Photo: Courtesy Demisch Danant

Demisch Danant, which focuses on 20th-century design, is returning to TEFAF with a

selection of unique pieces by Joseph-André Motte (1925–2013), who would mostly offer his services to the industrial world. That makes his dining table with a bronze base, commissioned for the private home of the collecting couple the Stellins, so special. The work by Motte, who, like many of his 1960s counterparts, would incorporate glass in his designs, is here surrounded with pieces by his older friend and sometimes collaborator Maxime Old (1910–91) and paintings by French painter Eugène Leroy (1910–2000), who happens to be the subject of two retrospectives in France, at the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris and at MUba, the museum named after him in his hometown of Tourcoing. This is not the reason for his presence at TEFAF, however. Leroy is known within France for his paintings made during the 1980s, but Danant has been collecting works the artist made during the '50s and '60s for years. It is neither the first time he has put him forward at the fair, and it will probably not be the last either.

Black and White at Galería Sur

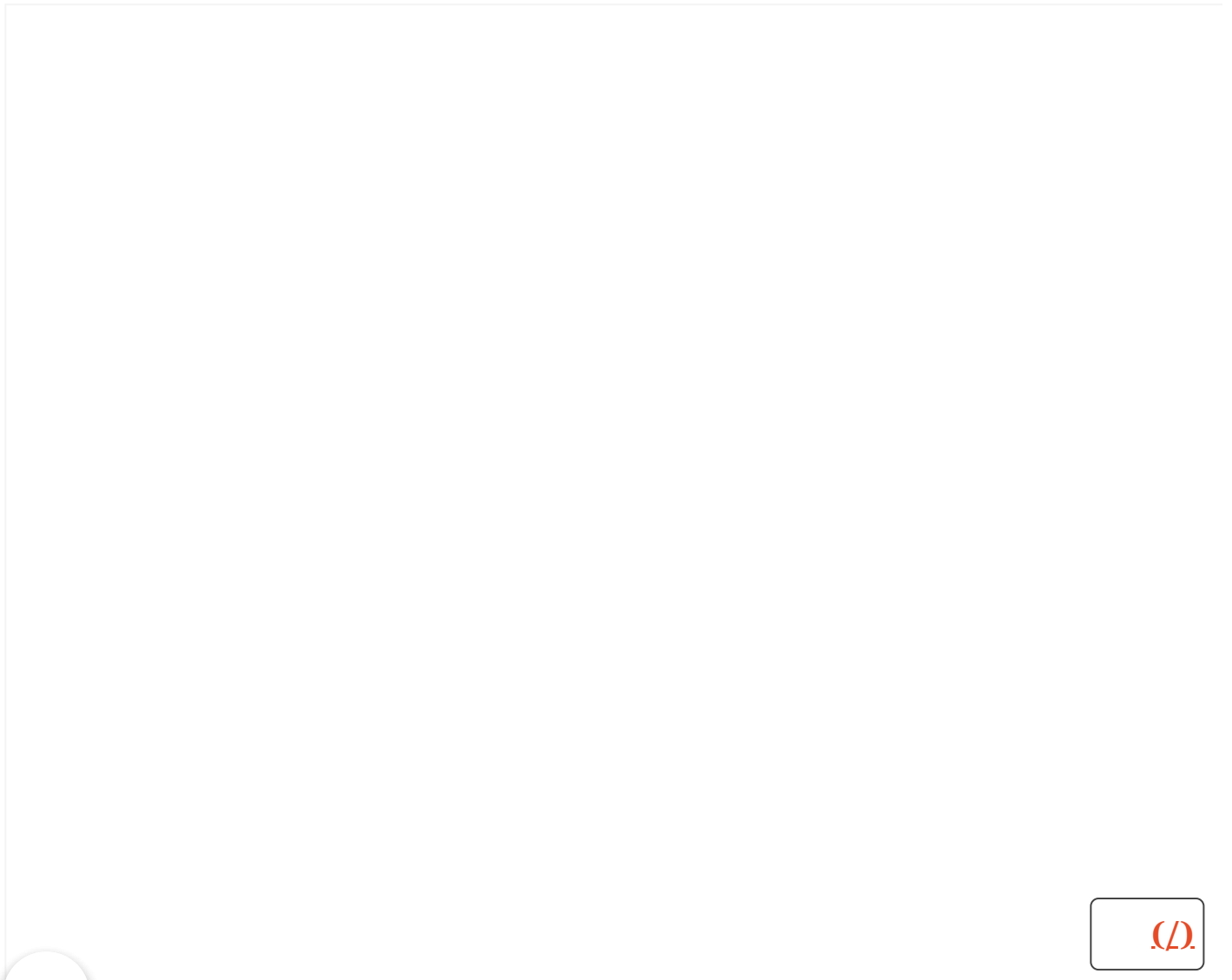


Photo Courtesy Galería Sur

You know when one says it's not all black or white? Well, at Galería Sur's booth, it sure is. Based in the Punta del Este, Uruguay, the gallery took an approach this year that's meant as an homage to Joaquín Torres García's painting *Arte Universal con planos de color* (1943), which has three blue, red, and yellow rectangles juxtaposed over a checkered background and is currently being shown at TEFAF. "It can be considered the centerpiece of our booth, because the rest of the artists we have selected were somehow influenced by him," said director Martín Castillo. Right in the middle hangs a gem of kinetic art, a diamond-shaped black mobile by Argentina-born Julio Le Parc (2018). All around stand elegant and immaculate marble sculptures by Uruguayan artist Pablo Atchugarry (b. 1954), whose father Pedro was a student of Torres García. One of them is called *Sound of Silence* (2022), and it may leave Simon and Garfunkel's namesake hit stuck in your head.

Le Corbusier at Zlotowski

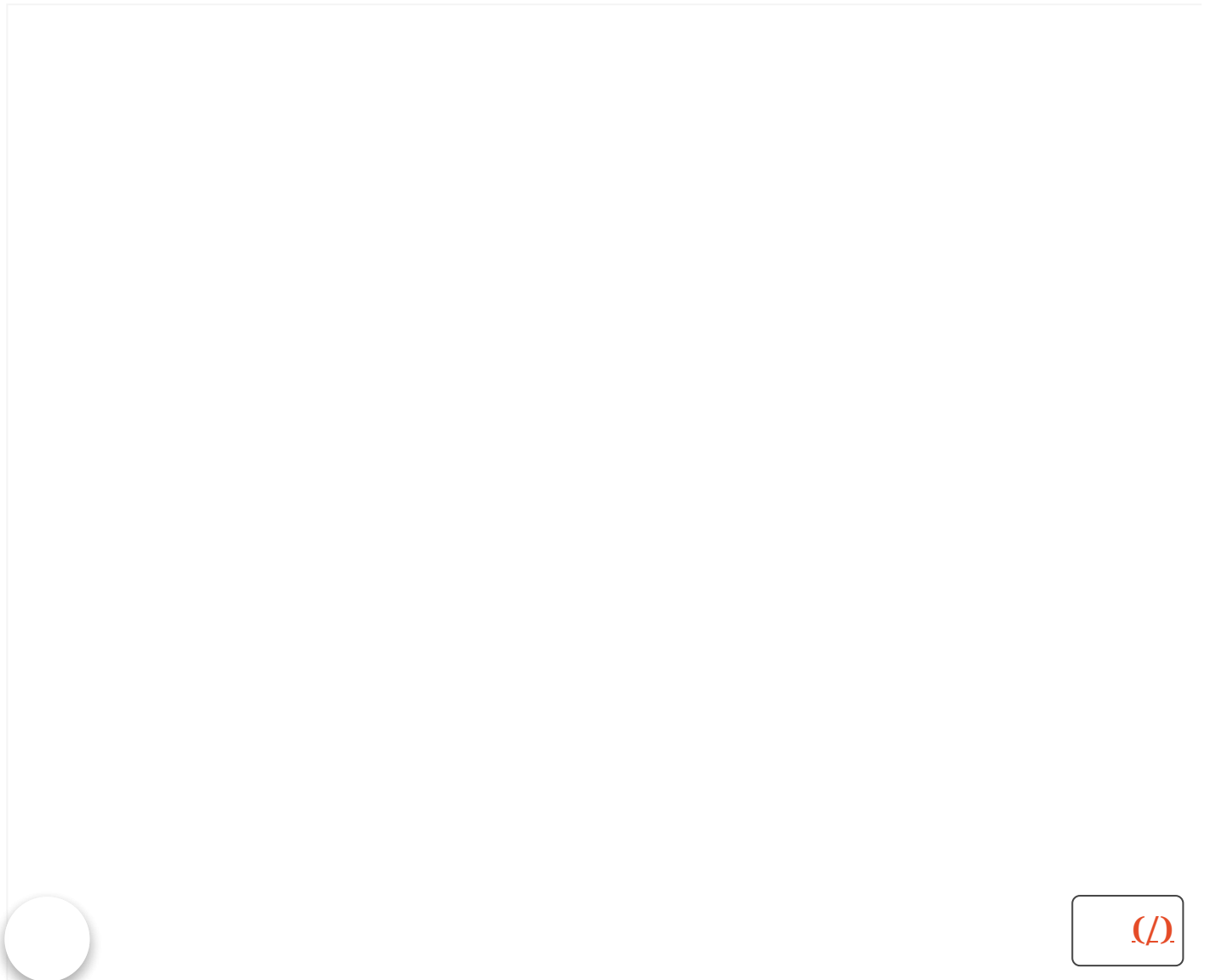


Photo : Photo Sarah Belmont/ARTnews

Not so black and white, but still less colorful than other of his works, is a tapestry by Le Corbusier hanging at the Zlotowski booth. Le Corbusier is still best known as an architect, but he periodically experimented with other mediums such as this one. Art collector Marie Cuttoli had suggested to Le Corbusier that he try his hand at making tapestries in 1936, and the architect then started collaborating with painter and art history teacher Pierre Baudouin, who put him in touch with the Aubusson weaving workshops. Baudouin once wrote that this work was in part inspired by a tapestry cartoon by Alexander Calder with three black stars on it. Le Corbusier pinned a tracing paper on it, reproduced one of the stellar motifs, and named his work *Bonjour Calder*. (Calder was aware of the Le Corbusier piece and once joked that he would make a similar work based on a Miró piece.) Le Corbusier took tapestry seriously, referring to his works as “mural nomads.” “We cannot have a mural painted on the walls of our apartment. But a woolen wall of tapestry can be taken down, rolled up, tucked under your arm, and taken to be hung somewhere else”, he once said. How convenient!



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