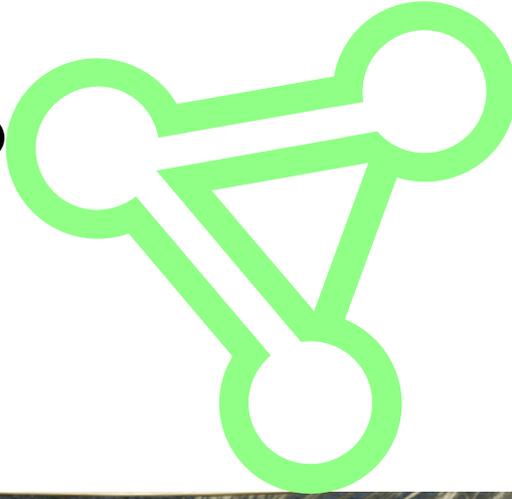


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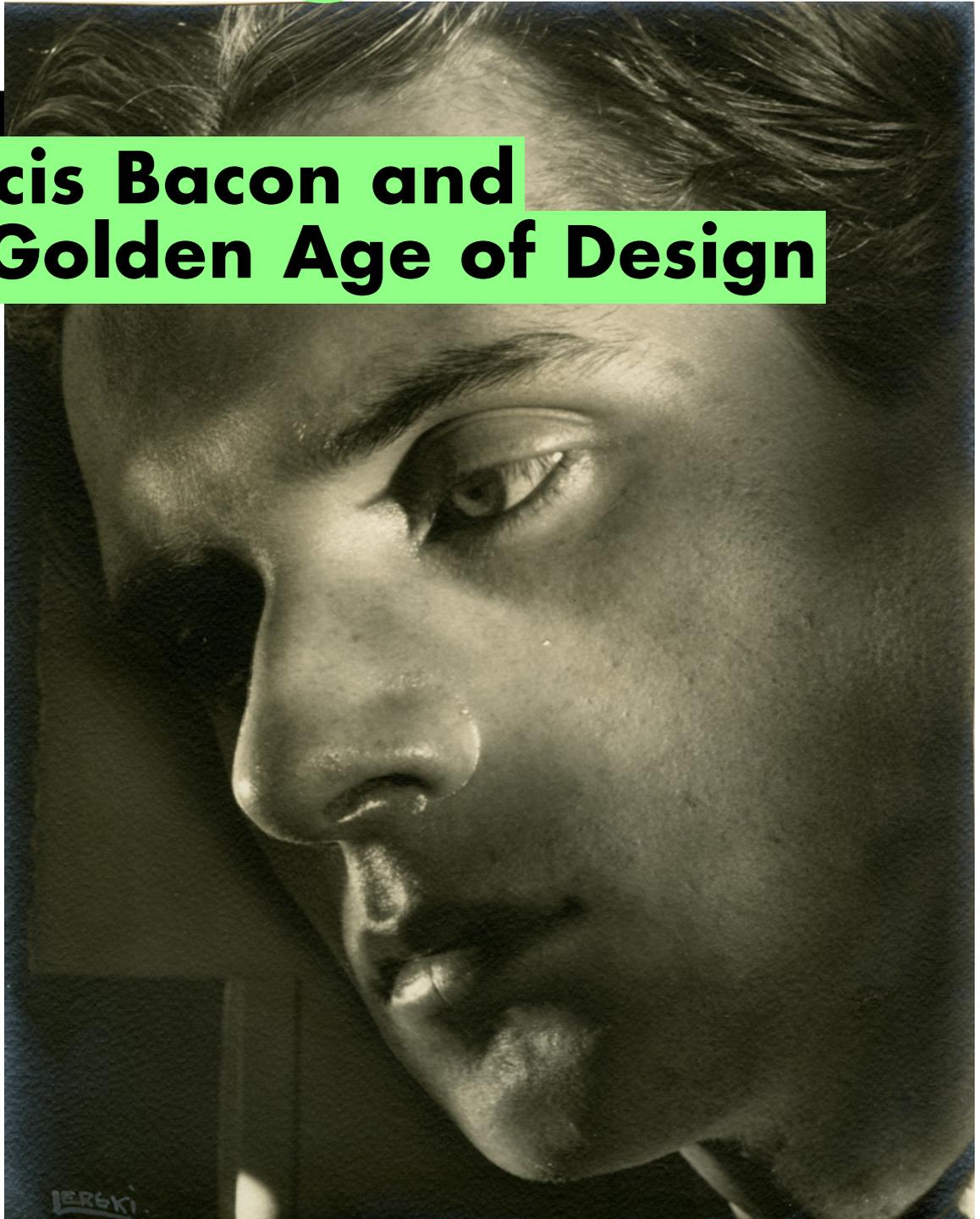


In partnership with



**Exhibition**

# Francis Bacon and The Golden Age of Design



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

**9.6.2024 → 5.1.2025**

**press release**

# eac. Francis Bacon and The Golden Age of Design



9 June 2024 • 5 January 2025  
Preview Sunday 9 June at 11am

Co-curators : **Elsa Boustany**, Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation  
and **Fabienne Grasser-Fulchéri**, Director of eac.

Albers-Honegger Donation

Artists : **Francis Bacon, Sonia Delaunay, Roy De Maistre, Eileen Gray, Pierre Jeanneret, Fernand Léger, Le Corbusier, André Lurçat, Robert Mallet-Stevens, Charlotte Perriand, Pablo Picasso, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe**

Exhibition **co-produced with the Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco**

2024 marks the 20th anniversary of the construction of the building which houses the Albers-Honegger Donation. For this anniversary year, eac is giving design pride of place with an exhibition devoted to a little-known aspect of Francis Bacon's practice, namely the furniture he created in the early 1930s, its influences and the traces this period left throughout his career.

Bacon said that he was greatly influenced by French design. He also stated that post-Cubism, as well as the Bauhaus, had left their mark on him and had been major sources of inspiration. It was at the same time, in 1930, that the Concrete Art group was established, with principles that can be applied to other fields coming into direct contact with reality and society, such as typography, architecture and design.

At the same time, an article published in the British art magazine *The Studio* entitled 'The v 1930 Look in British Decoration' singled out Francis Bacon's work, praising the surprisingly avant-garde nature of his interior design. His furniture was mainly influenced by the work of contemporary designers such as Pierre Chareau, Eileen Gray, Le Corbusier, André Lurçat, Robert Mallet-Stevens and also Charlotte Perriand.

The exhibition features a significant collection of Francis Bacon's works from this period, including paintings, furniture, rugs and archive documents.

As well as displaying design objects, the exhibition includes paintings by artists such as Roy De Maistre, Fernand Léger and Pablo Picasso so as to provide a fuller picture of the context of this period and the various influences on Bacon.

A large part of the exhibition is devoted to paintings from Fernand Léger's "Purist" period, which are directly echoed in the geometric designs of Francis Bacon's rugs.

The works by Francis Bacon on display come from the Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, which houses Majid Boustany's private collection (MB Art Collection). This collection holds the greatest number of pieces of furniture and rugs dating from this period.

Cover page:

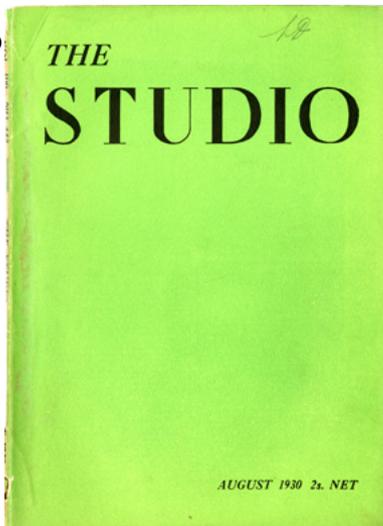
**Francis Bacon, Berlin, c. 1929-1930. Photo: Helmar Lerski**

Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco / MB Art Collection  
© Estate Helmar Lerski, Museum Folkwang, Essen, 2024

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**A catalogue will be published to go with the exhibition**

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Bilingual version : French — English  
Scheduled publication : Summer 2024



**The Studio magazine, August 1930, no 449**

Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco/MB Art Collection  
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notice n°1 p. 6



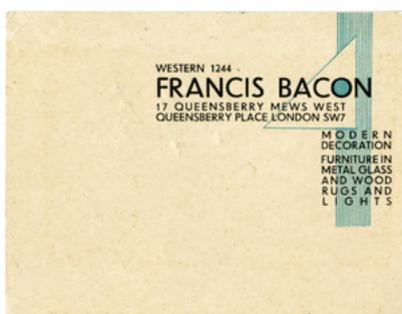
**André Lurçat, Table, c. 1930**

Chromed metal coffee table with two glass tops  
77 x 87 x 67,5 cm  
Galerie Jacques Lacoste, Paris  
© photo Hervé Lewandowski © Adagp, Paris 2024  
notice n°10 p. 7



**Francis Bacon, Table, 1930**

Mirror topped tubular steel table  
D 77cm x H 53 cm  
Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco/MB Art Collection  
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notice n°3 p. 6



**Business card of Francis Bacon as a furniture designer in the early 1930s**

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notice n°4 p. 6



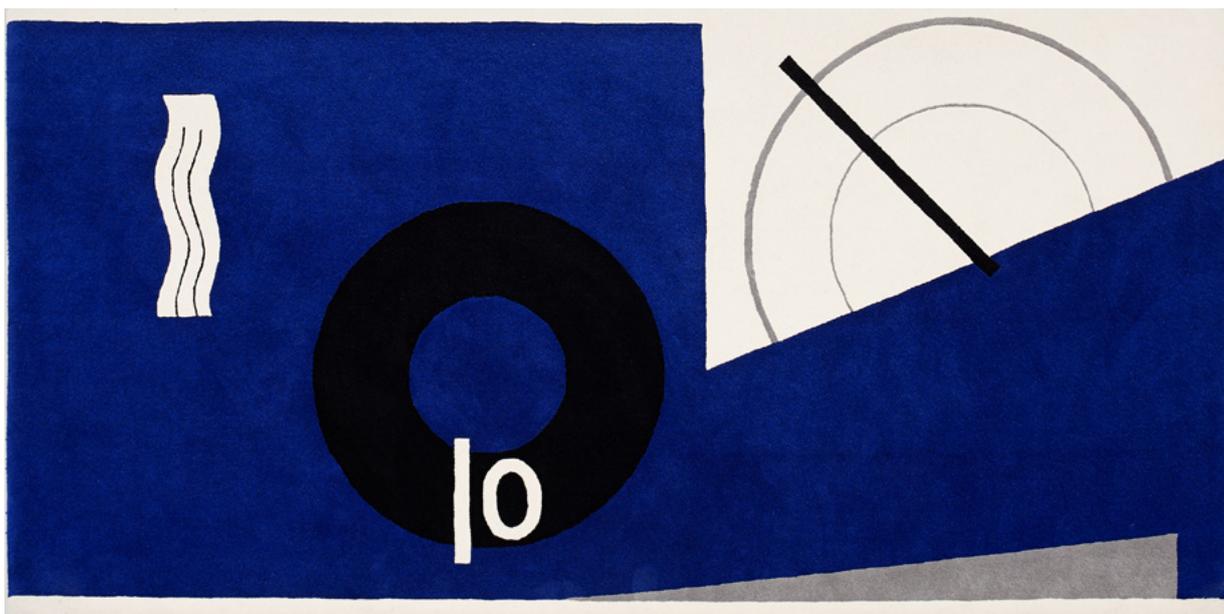
**Francis Bacon, *Rug*, c. 1929**

Wool rug — 212 x 128 cm  
Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco / MB Art Collection  
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notice n°2 p. 6



**Francis Bacon, *Stool*, c. 1930**

Painted plywood — 41 x 52 x 38 cm  
Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco / MB Art Collection  
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notice n°5 p. 6



**Eileen Gray, *Mediterranee*, 1923 / 1990**

Rug, hand-tufted pure virgin wool velvet — 175 x 340 cm  
Inv Fnac 02-1225 Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris / Dépôt à l'eac., Mouans-Sartoux  
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notice n°9 p. 7



**Thérèse Veder at Carlyle Studios, Chelsea, Londres, c. 1932**

Photo: Eric Megaw

Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco / MB Art Collection

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notice n°6 p. 6



**Francis Bacon, 'Gouache', 1929**

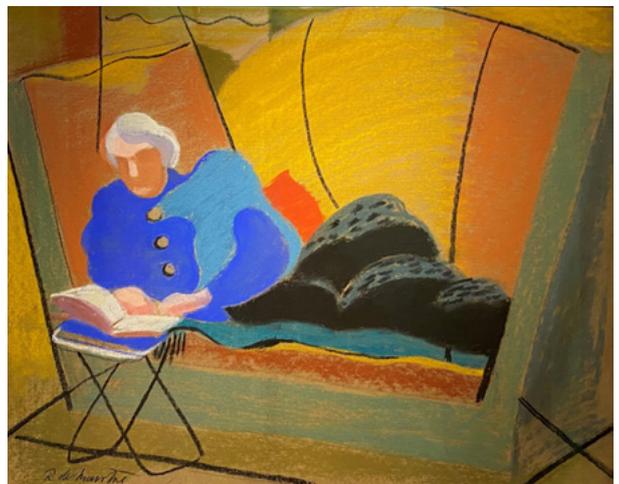
Gouache, distemper and watercolour on paper – 35.5 x 25 cm

Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco / MB Art Collection

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notice n°7 p. 7



**Roy De Maistre, Figure on Sofa, c. 1932**

Pastel on paper — 48 x 59 cm

Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco

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notice n°8 p. 7

# eac. press pack information about the works

## notice n°1

### **Arts magazine, "The Studio", August 1930, no 449**

Several pages of the August 1930 issue of "The Studio" - a monthly British arts magazine - focused on the "1930 Look in British Decoration". In this article, Madge Garland (fashion journalist and editor of Vogue magazine) devoted two pages to the young Francis Bacon, whose furniture she saw as part of the Modernist movement. She praises the way he uses steel and glass to create original pieces, as well as the purity of form so apparent in his rugs. This publication also includes previously unpublished photographs of Bacon's London studio at 17 Queensberry Mews West.

## notice n°2

### **Francis Bacon, Rug, c. 1929**

This pure wool rug is one of seven remaining designs by Francis Bacon, produced by Wilton Carpets, the prestigious British manufacturer. Inspired by the painter and tapestry designer Jean Lurçat, Bacon liked to hang his rugs on the wall. His signature was also woven into them, turning these decorative pieces into true works of art. The dimensions of these rugs foreshadow those of the artist's future paintings, while the geometric patterns covering the embroidered surface reveal how Cubism marked Bacon's nascent work.

This rug's ornamental elements are also expressed in his early pictorial work. For example, the tree leaf motif overhanging the rug's rectangular shapes also appears in one of Bacon's first gouaches, painted in 1929. Bacon's transition from working as a designer to becoming a painter is revealed in this rug.

## notice n°3

### **Francis Bacon, Table, c. 1930**

Designed by Francis Bacon in 1930, this table is the only surviving example of this model. First exhibited at 17 Queensberry Mews West, London, it was later acquired by Diana Watson, Bacon's cousin and one of his earliest patrons. The table features a circular base made of tubular steel - a material Marcel Breuer had introduced when designing his chairs.

Bacon incorporated this structural element into his later paintings, in particular *Painting 1946*, in which he depicts a captive figure in a cage which evokes these steel frames. The table is crowned by a mirrored top, a recurrent device in Bacon's work, which he drew upon both in his interior design and in his paintings which often feature figures gazing at their mirrored reflection.

## notice n°4

### **Business Card, Francis Bacon, 1929**

This business card was found glued to the back of the mirror top of the circular table Bacon designed and is one of the cards the young designer was using from 1929 onwards. It provides precise details of Bacon's areas of specialisation, i.e. furniture in metal, glass and wood, rugs and lights. The card's graphic design reflects the essence of his furniture, with its overlaying of geometric shapes which echo the aesthetics of his rugs and the straight lines and sharp angles characteristic of Art Deco style.

## notice n°5

### **Francis Bacon, Stool, c. 1930**

Made in 1930, this stool was shown for the first time in Francis Bacon's studio and showroom at 17 Queensberry Mews West, London. It is one of only two remaining examples of this model from Bacon's period as furniture designer. Made from painted plywood, the structure has a wavy line at right angles to the floor. It then narrows inwards to produce two rounded joins, before curving into its centre.

This atypical piece of furniture was clearly inspired by the stools designed by Pierre Chareau and Robert Mallet-Stevens, with their sober, curved lines. Gilles Deleuze also mentions this type of seat in the preface to the English version of his book *Logique de la sensation* (The Logic of Sensation). In it, the philosopher describes the stool as a source of unease, provoking contorted postures, an idea reflected in Bacon's later compositions.

## notice n°6

### **Thérèse Veder at Carlyle Studios, Chelsea, Londres, c. 1932**

This is a photograph Eric Megaw took of his companion, Thérèse Veder, at Carlyle Studios. It shows an armchair, a rug and a table, all designed by Francis Bacon. After abandoning his studio at 17 Queensberry Mews West, Bacon moved with his mentor Roy De Maistre to Chelsea, where he stored some of his furniture.

## notice n°7

**Francis Bacon, 'Gouache', 1929**

This gouache is Francis Bacon's second painting. In this composition, the painter plays with the illusion of openness simulated by frames, doors and windows which open onto different interior views.

This series of different planes demonstrates a certain mastery of space, a skill which Bacon had honed while working as a designer. The painter also drew inspiration from the iconography of his contemporaries. For example, the column and the brick wall resonate with Giorgio De Chirico's compositions, whereas the diagonal lines which evoke the texture of a parquet floor, bear the stylistic imprint of Pablo Picasso. Furthermore, the tree leaf leit-motif, which also features in his rugs, echoes the works of Fernand Léger, which boldly combine geometry and plant motifs. Finally, the yellow and white frame that runs through Bacon's composition prefigures the geometric shapes (often called 'cages') that in future works would imprison his characters.

## notice n°8

**Roy De Maistre, Figure on Sofa, c. 1932**

A sofa designed by Francis Bacon features prominently in this pastel by Roy De Maistre. A friend and patron of the Australian painter is reclining on the sofa. At a time when Bacon was abandoning design to instead devote himself to painting, he found in De Maistre a mentor who could introduce him to the basics of oil painting and use of photographic sources, a technique the Australian artist himself used as a basis for some of his works.

Although they both shared an interest in painting, De Maistre, who had become an interior designer before moving to Europe in 1930, also had a keen interest in the furniture Bacon designed. This is shown in de Maistre's series of paintings dating from 1930 which faithfully reproduce many of Bacon's furniture designs and which immortalised Bacon's studio at 17 Queensberry Mews West, London. These pictorial works were displayed alongside the young designer's furniture at an exhibition in November 1930.

## notice n°9

**Eileen Gray, Mediterranean, 1923 / 1990**

This rug is a reproduction of an original one created for the Villa E-1027 in Roquebrune Cap-Martin. Intended as holiday home, this villa was designed as a metaphor for naval architecture which is reflected in all the furnishings that make up the villa. This is echoed in this 'Mediterranean' rug through its theme and choice of colours, and although abstract, the rug reflects the revival of artistic and architectural language driven in particular by the international spirit of the Bauhaus.

## notice n°10

**André Lurçat, Table, c. 1930**

André Lurçat's table is representative of all the canons of avant-garde design at that time, including the use of glass shelves and chrome-plated tubular steel which was first used by Marcel Breuer in 1925. This technique was used for both Eileen Gray's and Francis Bacon's tables.



**Francis Bacon in Paris in 1932**

Photo: Diana Watson  
Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco/MB Art Collection  
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## Francis Bacon

1909, Dublin (Ireland) • 1992, Madrid (Spain)

Born in Dublin in 1909, Francis Bacon is recognised as one of the twentieth century's leading painters, in particular for his figurative works which explore different aspects of the human condition. Drawing inspiration both from images of those closest to him and from traditional subjects from the history of art, such as crucifixion, bullfighting and myths, Bacon created works full of torment and often imbued with violence.

Before coming into his own as a painter, Bacon had embarked on a career as a furniture designer.

In 1927, he made two highly important trips, one to Berlin and the other to Paris. It was while he was travelling that he came across some of the Bauhaus work in Berlin and in Paris he visited an exhibition devoted to Picasso at the Paul Rosenberg Gallery, an experience that sharpened his determination to become an artist.

Bacon returned to London in 1929 and here, as a self-taught artist, he began designing furniture, moving into a garage which he converted into a studio. In this studio, he designed furniture in the tradition of the Modernists, and produced his first paintings influenced by Cubism and Surrealism.

**Sonia DELAUNAY**

1885, Gradizhsk (Ukraine)  
1979, Paris (France)

Sonia Delaunay arrived in Paris in 1905, where she painted portraits influenced by Expressionism and Fauvism. Here she met Robert Delaunay, and they married five years later. She produced her first abstract works on fabric, book bindings, fashion items and decorative objects. At the same time, she began her first research into pure colours.

With Cendrars and Diaghilev, Delaunay worked on the mural decoration of the Air and Railway Pavilions at the 1937 International Exhibition. After her husband died, she joined the 'Espace' group and began her Coloured Rhythm (*Rythmes colorés*) series, figures built around circles and contrasting bright colours. Delaunay's continued commitment to applied arts shows how she remained true to the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the total work of art.

**Roy De MAISTRE**

1894, Bowral (Australia)  
1968, London (United Kingdom)

Australian-born painter Roy De Maistre established himself as a pioneer of abstraction in his native country. After studying art and music, and in particular the violin, from 1918 he developed an interest in "colour music", a creative approach based on the connection between the colours of the spectrum and musical notes.

In 1923, the Sydney Society of Artists awarded De Maistre a grant which enabled him to travel to London, Paris and Saint-Jean-de-Luz and embrace the influences of European Modernism.

Enthralled by this experience, he decided to divide his time between Australia and Europe, working as a teacher and interior decorator, before choosing to settle permanently in London in 1930. From then on, De Maistre concentrated on producing figurative works which were influenced by Cubism and which left a deep imprint on some of his contemporaries, including Francis Bacon. His "Stations of the Cross" series hangs permanently in Westminster Cathedral, London, while several of his paintings are in the Tate Gallery (London) and the Art Gallery of New South Wales (Sydney).

**Eileen GRAY**

1878, Enniscorthy (Ireland)  
1976, Paris (France)

At a very early age, Eileen Gray came across the works of Lalique, Grasset and Gallé. In 1907, she moved to Paris where she met the sculptor and decorator Jean Dunand, with whom she studied lacquer techniques with the Japanese lacquer master Sugarawa. Gray studied weaving and produced her first rugs, which she showed in her own gallery, which opened in 1922. Closely connected to the De Stijl group, from 1926 to 1929, she built her first house in Roquebrune Cap-Martin. Gray also designed the furniture for the house with and for the architect and art critic Jean Badovici.

Her work as a designer includes such iconic pieces as the Transat Chair, the Satellite Mirror and the Bibendum Armchair, originally designed to furnish Villa E1027 in a highly innovative and unusual style. Despite its size, the Bibendum Armchair combines majesty of shape with avant-garde spirit and charm. Gray called it Bibendum to reference its take on the Michelin man mascot. It has a U-shaped chromed tubular steel frame and a comfortable seat. Eileen Gray was one of the first designers to follow other designers such as Marcel Breuer and Charlotte Perriand and use tubular steel structures. The armchair's size, generous comfort and innovative character, still make it one of the 20th century's iconic pieces of furniture.

**Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris,  
known as LE CORBUSIER**

1887, La Chaux-de-Fonds (Switzerland)  
1965, Roquebrune-Cap-Martin (France)

Undoubtedly one of the most famous architects of the 20th century, Le Corbusier became interested in architecture as a teenager and built his first house, the Villa Fallat, in 1905. After several years of travel, work and study, he settled in Paris and in 1922 he opened an architectural studio on rue de Sèvres. With his manifesto for Modernism and a visionary town planner, Le Corbusier campaigned and worked to establish a new architecture "on a human scale" in a context where man would find himself "in harmony with the conditions of nature: Sunshine, Space, Greenery".

He designed a number of urban development projects (for Rio, Sao Paulo, Algiers, Antwerp, Geneva and Stockholm) and built various public and private buildings before embarking on what was to be the culmination of all his ideas about housing: his Housing Units.

In 1952, he built the first building of this type in Marseille - the Radiant City (*Cité Radieuse*). In the 1950s, at the request of the Indian authorities, Le Corbusier

drew up the master plan for the city of Chandigarh and built most of its administrative buildings. He died in 1965, leaving behind him a significant body of work which would leave its mark on several generations of architects.

### **Pierre Jeanneret**

**1896 – 1967, Geneva (Switzerland)**

Pierre Jeanneret studied at the Geneva Fine Arts School, later moving to Paris where he worked with Gustave and Auguste Perret for a year (1921-1922). He soon began working with his cousin Le Corbusier. In 1926, they published "The Five Points Towards a New Architecture", a manifesto that was to play a major role in their architectural work, as shown by their construction of the Villa Savoye (1928-1931). Jeanneret's role in Le Corbusier's building projects is sometimes downplayed, whereas his work was actually a determining factor in his famous cousin's work.

### **Charlotte PERRIAND**

**1903 – 1999, Paris (France)**

Her father a tailor and her mother a haute-couture seamstress, Charlotte Perriand graduated from the Central Union of Decorative Arts in Paris (*Union centrale des arts décoratifs* (UCAD)) in 1925. At the age of 24, she made a name for herself with her metal "Bar under the Roof" (*Bar sous le toit*), which she designed for her apartment-studio in Place Saint-Sulpice and which the critics adored. She then began collaborating with Pierre Jeanneret and Le Corbusier, working with them for ten years. In 1929, along with René Herbst, Pierre Chareau, Robert Mallet-Stevens and Eileen Gray, she founded the French Union of Modern Artists (*Union des Artistes Modernes* (UAM)), an avant-garde movement that sought to combine Modernism and Rationalism while preserving tradition. Influenced by her commitment to pro-Communist politics, Charlotte Perriand developed a new vision for housing which had a strong human element. A major figure in the history of Modernism, and linked to European, Japanese and Brazilian avant-gardes, through her humanist vision of applied art, Charlotte Perriand helped to make modern design advances available to as many people as possible.

In October 1927, Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret hired a young architect, Charlotte Perriand, who enjoyed a certain notoriety at that time. Their collaboration proved to be extremely fruitful. The connection between the three designers led to them producing objects that dealt with the issue of 'home furnishings'. In 1929, at the Paris Autumn Salon, they unveiled a collection of modern furniture - the LC Collection - comprised of tubular steel chairs, stools and a set of modular steel shelves. This collaboration lasted until 1937 and resulted in some highly innovative projects.

### **Fernand LÉGER**

**1881, Argentan (France)**  
**1955, Gif-sur-Yvette (France)**

Associated with the great Cubists of the early twentieth century, Fernand Léger distanced himself from them by his attachment to the third dimension and to colour in a body of work which was dedicated to glorifying mechanical progress and the working-class world. Léger applied his decorative and monumental style to projects for theatre sets and costumes, book illustrations and films (e.g. *Mechanical Ballet* (*Ballet mécanique*) produced in 1924 with the film-maker Dudley Murphy).

As his political interests led him down an educational path, he wrote many articles, opened an academy in his studio and founded a magazine *L'Esprit Nouveau* (The New Spirit) with Le Corbusier and Amédée Ozenfant.

In the 1940s, Léger fled to the United States, where he spent time with André Breton, Max Ernst, Marc Chagall and Piet Mondrian. On returning to France, he joined the Communist Party and began experimenting with new techniques. He took on commissions for stained glass windows for churches in Assy and Audicourt, and contributed to monumental projects, in particular the fresco for the facade of the Gaz de France building in Alfortville.

### **André LURÇAT**

**1894, Bruyères (France)**  
**1970, Sceaux (France)**

A French architect and a major figure in twentieth-century modern architecture, André was the brother of the painter Jean Lurçat. After graduating from the École des Beaux-Arts (School of Fine Arts) in Paris in 1923, he worked in Robert Mallet-Stevens's architectural practice.

From 1924 onwards, he designed a series of artists' houses, including the Villa Seurat in Paris. He took part in the 1928 International Congresses of Modern Architecture where he presented ideas about functionalist architecture. In 1933, he built the Karl-Marx school complex in Villejuif.

From 1934 to 1937, in recognition of his work, Lurçat was invited to Moscow. On his return, he helped set up the "National Front of Resistance Architects" (*Front national des architectes résistants*). In 1945, he was put in charge of the reconstruction plan for the town of Maubeuge. From 1955 onwards, as a member of the architectural council of the Ministry of Reconstruction and Town Planning, Lurçat built numerous buildings in the Paris suburbs, particularly in Saint-Denis, where he was chief architect and town planner for many years. Alongside this work, following his contemporaries' example, he designed furniture made of tubular steel and glass.

**Robert MALLET-STEVENS****1886 – 1945, Paris (France)**

A French architect and designer, Robert Mallet-Stevens was a major figure in the so-called 'standard' Modernist movement of the 1920s. Between 1903 and 1906, he studied at the private architecture school, the *École Spéciale d'Architecture* in Paris. Mallet-Stevens began his career working as a film set designer, in particular for Marcel L'Herbier and Jean Renoir. His architectural style was influenced by the Austrian architect Josef Hoffmann's Palais Stoclet in Belgium and is characterised by clean lines and the use of modern materials such as reinforced concrete, glass and metal.

In 1923, he built the Villa Noailles in Hyères for his patrons Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles who had commissioned a modern villa with bold geometric forms. Other milestones in the architect's career are the Villa Cavrois in Croix, north of Lille, the private mansions and Martel studio on rue Mallet-Stevens in Paris, and the casino in Saint-Jean-de-Luz. He took part in the 1925 International Exhibition of Decorative Arts (*Exposition des Arts décoratifs*) and the 1937 International Exhibition of Arts and Techniques Applied to Modern Life (*Exposition internationale des arts et des techniques*), both held in Paris. In 1929, he co-founded the French Union of Modern Artists (*Union des Artistes Modernes* (UAM)). He wrote numerous articles about architecture and in 1935 became director of the Lille School of Fine Arts.

**Pablo PICASSO****1881, Malaga (Spain)  
1973, Mougins (France)**

A virtuoso draughtsman, trailblazer for Cubism, surrealist painter and sculptor... Pablo Picasso revolutionised twentieth-century art to its roots. Achieving breakthrough after breakthrough, the artist constantly renewed art's relationship with reality and history, as for example, with *Les Femmes d'Alger* (O.J. Version O) (1912) and *Guernica* (1937), which rank among the most important artworks of the twentieth century. Picasso created bridges between the classics of ancient art and its great masters, and non-Western art too. Picasso had a huge influence on modern and contemporary art and is considered as one of the main contributors to the Modernist movement.

**Ludwig MIES van der ROHE****1886, Aachen (Germany)  
1969, Chicago (United States)**

An architect and designer, Mies van der Rohe met Gropius and Le Corbusier in 1911. After the Great War, he joined the Novembergruppe, and from 1923 ran the design magazine *G* (*Gestaltung*). He then aligned himself more with De Stijl and Constructivism. In 1929, he designed the famous Barcelona Chair for the German Pavilion at the Barcelona World Fair. From 1930 to 1933, he was director of the Bauhaus.

Forced to emigrate to the United States in 1937, Mies van der Rohe was appointed Head of Architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Involved in developing the International Style, his architecture is characterised by its maximum, rigorous use of new construction materials such as steel, concrete and glass.



## Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco

The Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation is primarily dedicated to promoting a deeper understanding of Francis Bacon's art, life and working practice, with a particular focus on the time during which Bacon lived and worked in Monaco and France. The MB Art Collection - Majid Boustany's collection - now encompasses over 3,500 items, including the largest collection of the artist's early paintings and furniture.

The Foundation also holds the most extensive collection of photographs of Francis Bacon, as well as a unique collection of working documents and tools used by the artist and coming from his various studios, books and other archives.

The collections housed by the Foundation, its archives and its library provide an essential resource for art historians, exhibition curators and scholars who are able to visit by appointment all year round. The institution is also open to the general public, by appointment only, for guided tours on Tuesdays and the first Saturday of the month.

The Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation's philanthropic initiatives include support for research and young artists. A research scholarship is awarded every four years to a PhD student from the École du Louvre in Paris, and an artist scholarship is awarded every two years to a student who has graduated from the Villa Arson art school in Nice, offering a financial support to the young artist to launch his career.

The Foundation takes part in most of the exhibitions dedicated to the British artist, by agreeing to loans, by contributing financially and also by offering its expertise. Over the years, the Foundation has also consolidated its authority by becoming the world's foremost publisher, co-publisher and support for the publication of books and documentaries related to Francis Bacon.

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The Foundation is open to the public throughout the year by appointment only.

[www.mbartfoundation.com](http://www.mbartfoundation.com)

To book a guided tour: [info@mbartfoundation.com](mailto:info@mbartfoundation.com) — Tel.: +377 93 30 30 33

Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation  
21 Bd d'Italie, 98000 Monaco

# 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.

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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



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## + 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.**

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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.**

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- 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

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- Mamco, Genève (Suisse)
- Haus Konstruktiv de Zurich (Suisse)
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#### **Mécènes et institutions privées**

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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



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

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