

# eac. Arcay Studio history

**Wifredo Arcay** (1925, Havana, Cuba — 1997, Paris, France) trains at the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Havana. From 1942 onwards, he began to work in silk-screen painting for advertising purposes.

Thanks to a scholarship, he arrived in Paris in 1949 and quickly integrated himself into the world of post-cubist abstraction, studying with Edgard Pillet and Jean Dewasne at their abstract art studio. While pursuing a career as a painter, Wifredo Arcay set up his silk-screen painting studio in Meudon in 1951 at the invitation of André Bloc, founder of the group Espace and influential editor-in-chief of the review *Art d'Aujourd'hui*.

In Paris, Wifredo Arcay continued his personal painting practice for a few years. In the 1950s/1960s, he produced works that he sent to the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles (1951-1954) and to Cuba.

In 1963, Wifredo Arcay stopped painting and only resumed his practice a few years before his death. In 1955, Wifredo Arcay devoted himself fully to his profession as a silk-screen printer, putting his knowledge at the service of Denise René and the trends he defended : geometric abstraction and kineticism.

In particular, Vasarely's famous albums were published at that time: *Albums n°1* and *2, Venezuela, Album n°3* know as «kinetic», *Kassak, Lapidaire, Vega...*

The silk-screen painting thus corresponded to the desire of the artists of the time to wrest art from the cult of the single work and make it accessible to a wider audience.

Following in the footsteps of kinetic artists, representatives of narrative figuration such as Klasen, Monory or Telemaque also share this concern and are now heading or the Arcay Studio. But, as Wifredo Arcay himself points out, «it is not a question of *reproducing* works, but of reinventing with the artist a printed work that allows for changes in size, colour or medium».

Throughout his career, Wifredo Arcay worked for many french and foreign publishers. In 1981, La Pace gallery entrusted him with the creation of a 6 meter long silk-screen painting on silk roll : *Parcours de Jean Dubuffet*.

Two years later, UNESCO commissioned Arcay and Vasarely to produce the first *Estampe de l'espace* in 31 colours, 300 copies of which were printed and shipped in the spaceship SOYOUZ.