NICE 2017
ÉCOLES
DE NICE

EXPOSITIONS
23 JUIN ~ 15 OCTOBRE
We do not always realize how much Nice has been and remains a productive laboratory for contemporary artistic creation. Many twentieth-century artists have stayed in the area and have been deeply influenced by the power of its landscapes and the vivacity of the light offered by the city. It could have been possible that the changes occurring after the war would interfere with the city’s close relationship to creation. But this was not the case. This was the time of the birth of what art historians would call the “School of Nice”.

Thanks to some exceptional protagonists - Arman, Ben, César, Claude Gilli, Yves Klein, Robert Malaval, Claude Pascal, Martial Raysse, Bernar Venet - this school would signal a new way of thinking about art, a new way of producing it. Not by coincidence, when the Pompidou Center opened in 1977, it presented a seminal exhibition to the public, a first assessment of what the “School of Nice” meant. In addition to its flourishing development in the fifties and sixties, this school would later have infinite repercussions. Other than Paris, not many cities benefit from artistic density like this.

It was therefore fully justifiable that for the 70th anniversary of the symbolic birth of the “School of Nice” with Arman, Klein and Pascal, the City of Nice would dedicate its biannual summer program to the School of Nice, under the title of “Nice 2017. École(S) de Nice” (“School(S) of Nice”). This initiative has been associated to the MAMAC exhibition entitled “À propos de Nice: 1947-1977” (“Regarding Nice, 1947-1977”), to the Masséna Museum exhibition on “Nice à l’école de l’histoire” (“Nice in History”), which focuses in an exemplary way on Nice’s place in world history. The 109, an artists’ residence and creative area installed by the City of Nice, will also present an exhibition entitled “The Surface of the East Coast From Nice to New York”. Finally, the Ponchettes Gallery will feature an exhibition on Noël Dolla: “Noël Dolla, Restructurations spatiales” (“Spatial Restructurings”).

These exhibitions were organized under the leadership of Head Curator Jean-Jacques Aillagon, who is a former Minister of Culture, and coordinated by Olivier-Henri Sambucchi, Head Heritage Curator and Deputy Managing Director of City of Nice Services for Culture and Heritage.

This is the third time that the municipality of Nice has entrusted me with the curatorship of a summer program that brings together a number of the city’s museums under a common theme. In 2013, this program was based on the fiftieth anniversary of the Matisse Museum; in 2015, it focused on Nice’s candidacy for inclusion on the World Heritage list. Thus, “Un été pour Matisse” (“A Summer for Matisse”) was followed by “Promenade(S) des Anglais”.

When Olivier-Henri Sambucchi and I asked ourselves how to orient this year’s program, we quickly agreed that we could not avoid presenting the seventieth anniversary of the presumed creation of what the history of art would later call the “School of Nice”. This “school” most certainly existed, to the point that the recently opened Pompidou Center would dedicate an exhibition to it in 1977, named after a famous and pioneering cinematographic work by Jean Vigo: À propos de Nice (1930).

It was obvious to us that the “flagship” exhibition of the 2017 program would be the one presented by the MAMAC and curated by its new director, Hélène Guenin.

The MAMAC exhibition would constitute a milestone in our consideration of the “School of Nice”. The Masséna Museum exhibition would evoke some of the major moments in history when the destiny of Nice was interwoven with world history and became part of it by contributing to it with originality and frequently in a determinant way. Finally, taking note of the fact that 109, the creation laboratory of the City of Nice, wished to present an exhibition during the summer on the Supports/Surfaces movement, we decided to associate this event to the program. It constitutes a second contribution to thinking on the influence of artists from Nice, or who worked in Nice, to an international creative movement.

On the return path from these exhibitions, near the shore, visitors can also stop at the Ponchettes gallery to discover the exhibition entitled: “Noël Dolla, Restructurations spatiale” (“Spatial Restructurings”). It puts the spotlight on the pioneering work of this great artist from Nice, who was a member of Supports/Surfaces.

Christian ESTROSI
Mayor of Nice
President of Nice Côte d’Azur
Deputy President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Region

Jean-Jacques AILLAGON
Head Exhibition Curator
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School of Nice? ! … Whatever it’s called and whoever the protagonists are, a phenomenon of emulation has most certainly existed in Nice since the end of the fifties. A constellation of significant gestures and attitudes has been noted over the area, and charismatic individuals who wanted to weave links between Nice and international artistic capitals have affirmed their aspirations. In Paris in 1977, the Pompidou Center celebrated this effervescence with “A propos d’Nice” (“Regarding Nice”), orchestrated by Ben, one of the agitators behind this saga.

A seminal myth introduces this story with the symbolic division of the world among three young men on the beach at Nice in 1947: Yves Klein seized the infinite blue of the sky, the poet Claude Pascal took over the air and Arman was left with the earth and its treasures. This inaugural gesture – a quest for the Absolute mixed with an attitude of defiance and pure offhandedness – opened the way to new activity, at the heart of and in reaction to the tranquil seaside city.

Going beyond accounts that define the School of Nice in a traditional way as part of movements like New Realism, Fluxus and Supports/Surfaces, the exhibition returns to the core of the spirit that brought this adventure to life. It explores the primordial gestures and revisits this formal revolution, this insouciance of approach, this appetite for irreverence and this fascination for the tales that characterize it. It also underlines the emergence of personalities within a cosmopolitan context and in a city undergoing rapid transformation.

EXHIBITION PRESENTED AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART [MAMAC] FROM JUNE 23 TO OCTOBER 22, 2017

Head Curator of « Nice 2017. École(S) de Nice »: Jean-Jacques Aillagon
Exhibition Curator: Hélène Guenin
MAMAC Director, with the assistance of Rébecca François, Heritage Conservation Officer.
Associate Curators in the context of a curatorial research grant from the French Center of Visual Arts (CNAP): Géraldine Gourbe and Florence Ostende.
Documentary research on La Cédille qui Sourit: Éric De Backer, Historian
Scenography: Peaks

Regarding Nice: 1947-1977
In the context of “Nice 2017. École(S) de Nice” [School(S) of Nice] and the fortieth anniversary of the Pompidou Center.

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4 PAINTING CALLED INTO QUESTION
Third Floor / Landing - ROOM 4

In the mid-sixties, many young artists met each other in Ben's store or at the School of Decorative Arts in Nice. Committed to an analytical and material exploration of painting, Marcel Alocco and the art critic and poet Raphaël Monticelli created the label “INter VENTION” (1968-1973). Chacallis, Charvolen, Isnard Maccaferri and Miguel joined together under the name of “Group 70” (1971-1973). Finally, outside these group research projects, Jacques Martinez, who worked in the region, applied his personal pictorial language to the notions of surfaces, materials and gestures.

5 ART AS GESTURE AND ATTITUDE
Fourth Floor - ROOM 5

In 1963, Ben invited George Maciunas, the initiator of the Fluxus movement, to Nice, thereby encouraging the emergence of an art of attitudes that was unique in France. Works by Robert Watts, La Monte Young and George Brecht were performed again in the city, along with actions invented by artists from Nice. The same year, Ben and Annie Vautier, Robert Bozzi, Robert Érébo, Dany Gobert and Pierre Pontani, his accomplices, founded the Total Theater. A specificity was affirmed: art was now made in the street and in the cafés, by interacting with an audience that was singled out in its everyday context. L’Artistique theater was also an essential site for creating. The epic actions of Serge III and Pierre Pinoccelli participated in this attempt to tie art to life and in non-art. As the setting for constant infractions of reality and an art of gestures and attitudes that oscillated between everyday existence, the absurd, poetry and provocation, Nice became one of the leading sites for total art in France.

6 SUPPORTS/SURFACES
Fourth Floor - ROOM 6

Considered as the last great adventure of the French avant-garde, Supports/Surfaces existed for a brief but dazzling period (1970-1972), during which the Nice region was the place for major experimenting. Faced with the questioning recommended by the art of appropriation or the art of attitudes, the artists of this movement claimed that painting was encore possible and initiated a reworking of art fundamentals. Traditional tools were replaced with raw materials. Stretched canvas gave way to free canvas and ordinary fabrics. The accent was on process and the interaction between the gesture and the material support. As a prolongation of this critique through acts, the presentation of works was replaced with an unconventional display. The outdoor projects initiated by Jacques Lepage in the streets of the village of Coaraze in the summer of 1969 and on the Mediterranean coast in the summer of 1970 represent key moments of experimentation and interaction with the audience that emphasized the nomadic and experimental character of the works by Supports/Surfaces.

7 LA CÉDILLE QUI SOURIT
Fourth Floor - ROOM 7

The American George Brecht, a precursor of Conceptual Art, and the Frenchman Robert Filliou, the genius of the ordinary, decided to install themselves at Villefranche-sur-Mer, near Nice, to open a non-boutique and bookstore, an “international center of continuing creation” built on humor. This was "La Cédille qui Sourit". From October 1965 to March 1968, jewelry, multiples, editions and original works were shown there in no particular order. The activities of La Cédille were sometimes carried out on the premises at 12, Rue de May, “always closed, open only when requested by..."
FRENCH RIVIERA
Second Floor - ROOM 1

“À propos de Nice”, 1930: film director Jean Vigo takes a satirical look at a city of pleasure, where idle, wealthy tourists rub elbows with local residents as they hustle about their seasonal activities. A generation later, Nice offered a striking contrast between a certain modernity, with its “legion of bright-colored transatlantic liners, a monstrous display of plastic gadgets,” cosmopolitan summer visitors and culturally isolated young artists who were eager to invent. On the beaches of Nice, Yves Klein dreamed of making the blue of the sky his own, and on the promenade, Ben and his companions invented actions that tied art to life. In the midst of blue chairs and summer visitors, artists gathered and reshaped the world, finding subversive ways to express the stereotypes that incarnated the glamour of the Côte d’Azur to the world. Arman collected casino tokens and Martial Raysse made sparkling pop-art interpretations of the sea resort atmosphere, while Claude Gilli incorporated Côte d’Azur landscapes on vividly colored cutout panels. In these hedonistic evocations, bathing beauties and pin-ups inhabited an idyllic, sugarcoated society animated by the archetypes of the French Riviera. In parallel, votive offerings and gestures revealed the survival of a reinvented folklore that intermingled the consumer society with popular and Provencal traditions.

MODERN MARVEL?
Second Floor - ROOM 2

In the early sixties, under the influence of the development of international tourism and an Americanization of French society, Nice turned toward youth, hedonism, self-fulfillment and mass consumption. This perpetual quest for novelty and abundance would provide fertile ground for an unprecedented relationship based on the appropriation and subversion of reality by artists. “Yes, Nice is our tranquil and Pasteurized paradise. Starting from this basis, an art can be built that adheres to this manufactured reality,” wrote the critic Jean-Jacques Lévêque in 1967. Faced with this everyday spectacle, artists produced a new kind of beauty that was combined with excessiveness and bad taste. They proposed a "Modern Marvel" sociology based on the accumulations of their contemporaries and repetition to the point of saturation, proliferation to the point of corruption, or on the degrading of objects or the joyous destruction of the icons of the modern world. A symbol of modernity and a venerated object, the automobile fascinated – even as it decayed and after accidents – and symbolized contemporaneous tragedy on a background of controlled chaos and idealized disorder.

QUEST FOR THE ABSOLUTE
Second Floor - ROOM 3

In 1947, three young men who were budding artists divided the world among themselves. This mythical founding narrative offered a framework for ambition and testified to a quest for the absolute that was both nonchalant and eager for conquest. It inaugurated a series of radical gestures to come, as well as an artistic practice based on performance and a search for outrageousness. Yves Klein staged his Saut dans le vide (Leap into the Void) on the outskirts of Paris, Bernar Venet composed his own “fall” into a pile of trash during his military service in Tarascon and Ben threw God into the sea at the port of Nice. These actions suggested a spirit of research that combined triviality, irreverence and a desire for omnipotence that was not without prankish humor and competition. Certain gestures can be interpreted as a parody of the currently dominant lyric abstraction movement; others express an analytical and material approach or try to capture the "momentary states" of human beings and the world. From the imprints of ordinary objects or elements of nature to trial by fire, do these gestures offer a way to tie the transitory nature of life to art’s desire for eternity?

visitors” but more frequently in the streets and bars of
the old city. Robert Filliou sums things up this way: “We
played games, invented and uninvented objects,
communicated with the humble and the powerful, drank
and spoke with our neighbors." A forerunner of the
forms that criticized presence in the world and that
influenced a part of Western cultural movements around
May 1968, La Cédille qui Sourit was an attempt to bring
together art and life in a small town on the Côte d’Azur;
it’s history haunts international contemporary creation.

8 SCHOOL OF NICE?!
Fourth Floor / Landing - ROOM 8

A survey carried out in collaboration with the Pavillon
Bosio, Art & Scénographie, the Monaco School of Visual
Arts and the University of Paris IV (professional masters
degree in “Contemporary Art and How It Is Exhibited")
proposes a historical and critical appreciation of the
turbulent and controversial history of the School of Nice
based on the archives of art critics Jacques Lepage at the
Institute of Memories of Contemporary Publishing (IMEC)
and Pierre Restany at the Archives of Art Criticism.

Tour map: second floor

Tour map: third floor

Tour map: fourth floor

GUIDED TOURS AT MAMAC (by reservation only)
- Casual tour with the artist Emmanuel Régent: Sunday, June 25, at 11 a.m.
- Summer tours in French and English, Tuesday to Friday at 10:30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Tours starting in September: Fridays at 3 p.m. (groups of five or more)
  Individual price: €6 (free for children under 15) - Group price (10-30 people): €82
- Guided tours for school groups - One price of €20 per class for school groups – free of charge for schools in Nice Côte
d’Azur Métropole
Full program on www.mamac-ville.org

EXHIBITION CATALOG
Format: 28 x 24 cm - 200 pages - €25

VILLA ARSON COLLABORATION
As the originator of a research platform on performance and the Côte d’Azur (http://performance-art.fr/), Villa Arson is
a partner in a didactic project focusing on the appropriation and the reinvention of actions or performances that took
place on the Côte d’Azur from 1947 to 1977. An invitation to reactivate and update the spirit of this adventure through a
new generation. (programmation en cours)

Exhibition organized with the invaluable collaboration of
THE INVENTION OF FIRE - ROOM 1

The "invention of fire" was a determining factor in the history of humanity. The twentieth century would reveal that Nice was one of the major centers of this invention. A domestic hearth was found on the urban site of Terra Amata, at the foot of Mount Boron, a short distance from the port of Lympia, during preventive archaeological excavations carried out in 1966 by Prof. Henry de Lumley. Dating from 400,000 years ago, this site would prove to be one of the oldest unearthed in Europe. The domestication, production and use of fire are among the most ancient discoveries of Homo erectus. Fire kept humans warm, provided protection and
allowed better nourishment; later, it was used to make sophisticated tools. Nice was already present at this first appearance of humanity. It was the backdrop known as Terra Amata, which would give its name to the novel (1967) by J.-M. G. Le Clézio, who was born in Nice in 1940. In a similar manner, fire was used by many of the artists of the School of Nice to ignite a new way of creating. There were Yves Klein’s blowtorches, Arman’s cremations and Noël Dolia’s smoke. They are undoubtedly a distant reminder of the seminal act that occurred at Terra Amata, and, in the shape of fireworks, fire was a symbol of joyous Nice festivals until July 14, 2016, when an unbelievably brutality act clouded the colorful bursts.

THE INVENTION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
Nikaia and “Mare nostrum” - ROOM 2

Around the sixth century B.C., the Greeks established colonies and trading posts all around the Mediterranean. They settled there like “frogs around a pond,” as Plato described their presence. This implantation was carried out through a more or less peaceful relationship with local populations. The legend of the founding of Marseille with the marriage of Gyptis and Protes is an example of this. Indications point to the probability that Nikaia (Nice) was a trading post of the Phoenician colony of Massilia (Marseille), just like Antipolis (Antibes). The destiny of the territory of Nice, which until then had been tied to the mountain people in the hinterland, would open to the great adventure of the Mediterranean. Compared to previous centuries, Nice in the twentieth century wanted more ardently than ever to make its destiny Mediterranean. Between the wars, the city dedicated two buildings on the Promenade des Anglais to this antique heritage: the Palais de la Méditerranée and the Mediterranean University Center. Starting in the eighteenth century, this “Mediterranean spirit” was one of the keys to the success of tourism in Nice. Travelers came for the mild climate and the charm of plants that were so foreign to Northern Europe, with fields of olive trees among vineyards and vast citrus plantations; local lemon trees were first planted in Antiquity and orange trees at the start of the second millennium. Palms and other tropical trees were introduced in the nineteenth century on the “Côte d’Azur,” a neologism invented by Stéphen Liégeard in 1887. The Roman Empire finished what Greek colonization had begun: the unification of the Mediterranean within a unique political and cultural system. The Mediterranean became “our sea”: “Mare nostrum”.

Tour map: second floor
3 THE INVENTION OF THE CITY

The city: Cemenelum - ROOM 3
The territory - ROOM 4

The urban history of Nice began with its Romanization. This was determined by the development of the city of Cemenelum, which now corresponds to the Cimiez district. This was where Rome established the administrative center of the alpine province known as “Alpes maritimae.” In the Middle Ages, Nice pulled back to the hill of the castle, and at the foot of this acropolis a small, typically Mediterranean city developed. In the eighteenth century, a time of major urban growth, the kings of Savoy-Sardinia set out to create a modern city with a port and new districts with a rational layout to the east and west of the ancient city. In addition, Nice acquired an organism, known as the “Consiglio d’Ornato” (Council of Ornament), to regulate urban development. It was created in 1832 by Charles-Albert of Savoy, who assigned it the mission of planning the new city, deciding how it should be laid out and ensuring the homogeneity and quality of buildings. In a very precocious way, the city developed according to design. Along with its urban function, Nice has always been the administrative center of a territory, first of the Roman province of “Alpes maritimae,” then of the medieval county of Nice and, finally, of the Alpes-Maritimes department. Today, this metropolitan orientation has continued with the creation in 2012 of Nice-Côte d’Azur Métropole, which includes forty-nine municipalities and 550,000 residents. Throughout its history, Nice has never forgotten its dual role as a seaside city and the capital of a mountainous hinterland, a city of both the Côte d’Azur and the Mercantour National Park.

4a THE INVENTION OF EUROPE
Cementing the faith - ROOM 5

Christianity, an Eastern religion, became implanted very early in Roman Europe. It gave European culture a new horizon of religious faith. This religion spread along sea routes and also took advantage of the amazing network of roads that crisscrossed the Empire starting from Rome. Legend says that St. Reparata, the patron saint of Nice whose body washed up miraculously on the shores of the city, was martyred in the third century under the emperor Decius at Caesaria. In any case, it is certain that Christian communities developed very early around two episcopal centers. These were Cemenelum, where what remains of the cathedral can still be seen at Cimiez, and Nice, Nikaia, on Castle Hill. For nearly two millennia, this reality would shape the landscape at Nice, giving rise to an abundance of churches, chapels, domes and bell towers. Although the religious structures of the Middle Ages have disappeared, the city has a large number of later buildings, in particular Baroque churches and chapels. In the nineteenth century, this heritage was enriched with an impressive flourish of buildings dedicated to non-Catholic worship by foreigners on holiday, as well as a new synagogue on Rue Gustave-Deloye that was larger than the preceding ones, which had housed a community present since the Middle Ages. In the twentieth century, Nice continued the enthusiastic construction of religious buildings, as is shown by the remarkable church of Sainte-Jeanne d’Arc. During the second half of the twentieth century, Islam, a new religious practice, appeared and became part of the cultural landscape.

4b THE INVENTION OF EUROPE
The emergence of nations - ROOMS 6 AND 7

The Europe we recognize as a geographic and cultural area was born from the encounter of the Greco-Roman world with the Germanic and Slavic peoples of the northern and eastern regions of the continent. This encounter resulted from what was long known as the “barbaric invasions,” which established the cultural unity of this part of the world based on the diversity of the peoples composing it. Many of these peoples, such as the Franks, Lombards, Burgundians and Alemanni who installed themselves on the ruins of the Roman Empire, gave their names to regions in the area while extending the Empire beyond its limes (limits) to their countries of origin. Thus, Nice was concurrently influenced by both Visigoths and Ostrogoths. In the Middle Ages, competitive influences between Provence and the Republic of Genoa were followed by competition between those of Provence and Savoy, which Nice had placed itself under the protection of in 1388. Nice remained “Savoyarde” until 1860, but the kingdom of France and the French Republic continued to covet the territory until the first annexation of Nice by France in 1793. Although the city became part of the Piedmont region once again in 1815 after the fall of Napoleon,
it wasn’t until 1860 that this millenary history came to a conclusion, except for the dreams of annexation by Mussolini from 1942 to 1943. Nice was therefore a witness to the slow construction of a Europe of nations that, from the end of the Roman Empire through the horrors of two world wars, continuously established and abolished borders.

The appearance and development of tourism would have a decisive impact on the destiny of Nice. English aristocrats delighted in the waters at Bath but were increasingly attracted to the south. They were no longer motivated solely by the stimulus of antiquities but by a search for the mild climate and beautiful landscapes of the Mediterranean. Thus, Nice became one of the favorite destinations of European elites. This was evidenced by the early appearance of books dedicated to a pleasant stay in "Nissa". In 1766, Travels through France and Italy by Tobias Smollett was published, followed ten years later by the Journal of a Voyage Made in 1775 and 1776 to the Southern Countries of Europe by Johann Georg Sulzer. The English, followed by the Russians and Germans, were increasingly frequent visitors to the city, which adapted to their stays. A new city appeared with palaces, villas, residences, grand hotels and rental properties. Promenades became increasingly fashionable: on the banks of the Paillon River, on the Ponchettes terraces, on the hill of the castle – which was now a public garden – and, of course, on the Promenade des Anglais, a vast walkway on the seashore that would become the emblem of the city. Starting in the 1920s, the summer season would take over from the winter one. Hotels on the hillsides were transformed into prestigious apartments, and the aristocratic domains by the sea were replaced by residences with terraces and balconies looking out over the Mediterranean. Nice is thus a front-line witness to the "invention of tourism" and the change in touristic practices during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The history of cities is a fascinating literary and scientific genre. Privat, a leading publisher from Toulouse, has excelled at this genre, with dozens of books dedicated to the history of French and foreign cities. In the Privat collection, two publications are dedicated to Nice. In these descriptions, the singularity of the historic destiny of each city is noted, along with the subtle ways in which it is woven into the history of the country, the world and humanity. Thus, Bordeaux and Rouen echo the events of the Hundred Years’ War, Metz and Strasbourg bear witness to the major conflicts that opposed France and Germany, and Lille is rooted in the Industrial Revolution. As for Nice, it found itself several times at the very core of history in the making and is part of contemporary artistic history with the flourishing of the School of Nice. It is also the place where a civilization of leisure appeared with the development of the city’s role as a tourism metropolis.
Supports/Surface is an artistic movement born at the end of the 1960’s. One of their starting points is a 1969 exhibition, Questioning Painting (La Peinture en question) in which some artists, including Claude Viallat, Louis Cane, Daniel Dezeuze, Noël Dolla, Marc Devade, Patrick Saytour and Bernard Pagès, almost every one of them coming from the South of France, proclaimed: “The object of painting is the painting itself, and the exhibited paintings only relate to themselves. They don’t appeal elsewhere”. In 1970, they officially present the Supports/Surfaces group at the ARC – Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. In opposition with the creations of their time, the artists called upon the lack of lyricism and of the depth of expression. Willing to return to the work’s basics, they focus on the canvas and the frame, leaving them blank of any representation. Standing against the idea of the “bourgeois” painting hanged on the wall, in line with the post-May 1968 era, their works fit closely with the space itself, from floor to ceiling. The group interrogated the notions of deconstruction and reconstruction, going along with the queries about society. Even if the group was short-lived and the artists continued to explore their own path, their research and the emphasis on experience have made their mark, as much as on their time than of the painting characterization.

EXHIBITION PRESENTED AT THE 109
FROM JUNE 23 TO OCTOBER 15, 2017

In the context of « Nice 2017. École(S) de Nice » [School(S) of Nice] organized by the City of Nice, under the leadership of Head Curator: Jean-Jacques Aillagon
Exhibition Curator: Marie Maertens


The Surface of the East Coast. From Nice to New York
Supports/Surfaces vs the new scene of New York

1 SUPPORTS/SURFACES:
PAINTING AS AN ACT IN ITSELF

Supports/Surface is an artistic movement born at the end of the 1960’s. One of their starting point is a 1969 exhibition, Questioning Painting (La Peinture en question) in which some artists, including Claude Viallat, Louis Cane, Daniel Dezeuze, Noël Dolla, Marc Devade, Patrick Saytour and Bernard Pagès, almost every one of them coming from the South of France, proclaimed: “The object of painting is the painting itself, and the exhibited paintings only relate to themselves. They don’t appeal elsewhere”. In 1970, they officially present the Supports/Surfaces group at the ARC – Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. In opposition with the creations of their time, the artists called upon the lack of lyricism and of the depth of expression. Willing to return to the work’s basics, they focus on the canvas and the frame, leaving them blank of any representation. Standing against the idea of the “bourgeois” painting hanged on the wall, in line with the post-May 1968 era, their works fit closely with the space itself, from floor to ceiling. The group interrogated the notions of deconstruction and reconstruction, going along with the queries about society. Even if the group was short-lived and the artists continued to explore their own path, their research and the emphasis on experience have made their mark, as much as on their time than of the painting characterization.
2 NEW YORK, XX\textsuperscript{TH} CENTURY: BACK TO THE BASICS

In New York, from 2010, artists evolving in a completely different artistic, geographic, politic and economic context, started, in turn, to dismantle the canvas to reconstruct it. At the beginning, they don’t necessarily know the Supports/Surfaces artists, who had not been exhibited a lot so far, but tend to pertain more to Franck Stella, Ad Reinhardt, Minimalism or the Bauhaus – if one should seek historical references. Yet, it’s fascinating to note the formal similarities between their works. Again, the same researches on the frame, dismantled or reconstructed, or more generally the medium, go with the ones about the place of the painting in the room. The material in itself, often “poor” or reused, is placed once again at the core of their work, sometimes tied with the concept of craftsmanship. The canvas can now become horizontal, or woven. The hierarchy of the medium is threatened, it is put on an equal footing as their researches that can even be integrated to their works in the architecture or the environment. Today, as some Supports/Surfaces exhibitions took place in the US, and especially in New York, a bound started to appear and a new discussion began between some of the artists.

3 WHY THE CITY OF NICE?

The artistic movement Supports/Surface took its roots in the South of France and some of them still live there. Like Noël Dolla, in Nice, Claude Viallat, in Nîmes, or Daniel Dezeuze, in Sète. Of origin of Nice, Patrick Saytour lives in Aubais, Bernard Pâgès in the Alpes-Maritimes and Louis Cane always works in one of his studios in Beaulieu-sur-Mer. The founding elements of this movement in its officially short history also took place in the city of Nice.

Even before the group is clearly defined, an exhibition, which can be considered as one of the first exhibition of Supports/Surfaces, is organized in December, 1967, in the shop of the artist “Ben doubt nothing”, Tonduti Street in Nice. Accompanying the title, “the Hall of the questionings”, Noël Dolla shows its first airers, Patrick Saytour of corrugated boards, Louis Cane some stamps and Claude Viallat begins his impressions on free painting. At Jean Clair’s initiative on June 14, 1971 in the National Theater of Nice, the artists Noël Dolla, Tony Grand, Patrick Saytour, André Valensi et Claude Viallat sign a act officializing the end of group.

\textbf{Erik Lindman, \textit{Untitled}, on 2015-2016,}
\textit{Oil on canvas with linen collage, 243.84 x 152.4 cm,}
\textit{Courtesy Galerie Almine Rech.}

\textbf{Noël Dolla, \textit{Croix}, 1973,}
\textit{Dye on fabric, 285 x 315 cm,}
\textit{Courtesy Galerie Bernard Ceysson © Rémi Vilaggi.}
EXHIBITION PRESENTED AT THE GALERIE DES PONCHETTES
FROM JUNE 23 TO OCTOBER 22, 2017

In the context of “Nice 2017. École(S) de Nice” [School(S) of Nice] organized by the City of Nice, under the leadership of Head Curator Jean-Jacques Aïllagon

Exhibition Curator: Hélène Guenin and Élodie Antoine, Historian of Art.

On a proposal of Élodie Antoine and Fabrice Flahutez, Historian of Art and Exhibition Curator.

With the contribution of Jean-Michel Diaz, Fabrice Flahutez, Léa Gauthier, Robert Kudelka, Fabio Lapiana, Jean-Marc Pharisien, Rachel Stella et Max Torregrossa

Noël Dolla, Spatial Restructuring No. 5 
Ponchettes Beach, Nice, February 23, 1980
Three circles, 30 meters in diameter, natural pigment on pebbles
Intervention made during the artist’s exhibition at GAC, the Contemporary Art Gallery of the Museums of Nice
Nice, Noël Dolla collection © ADAGP, PARIS, 2015
PHOTO NOËL DOLLA

Noël Dolla. Spatial Restructurings
[MAMAC, EXTRA MUROS]

Starting in the fall of 1969, Noël Dolla carried out a series of interventions on the landscape inland from Nice. An active member of the Supports/Surfaces movement at the time, he invented new forms in nature, aware of their ephemerality and the intimate, even confidential, way in which spectators would encounter them directly on the mountain. Propos Neutre n°2 – Restructuration spatiale was created on October 5, 1969, at an altitude of 2,000 meters in the Authion mountains. Noël Dolla painted pink circles on rocks and low walls, in order to make “painting rise to new heights”. On February 5, 1970, he designed a new Spatial Restructuring on this same mountain top by creating three monumental colored circles on the snowy slope. At the time, certain members of Supports/Surfaces were experimenting with a dialog between their work and the public area and nature, to find a way to circumvent the established art system and its bourgeois circuits and generate new and unexpected interactions with the audience (Daniel Dezeuze, Bernard Pagès, Patrick Saytour, Claude Viallat). However, Dolla was the only one to intervene on the landscape through a specific work that exists only in the space and time granted by nature and in the memory of those who share the experience. Although the reversibility of his proposals is closer in spirit to English Land Art than to the more muscular American interventions, Noël Dolla would not learn about the simultaneous international existence of these approaches until later. He followed with other interventions in the mountains, on the beach at Nice or in the public area.

The exhibition recalls these historic interventions, as well as recent projects, through documents and photographs. For the exhibition, the artist also proposes an onsite intervention that will transform the space of the Ponchettes gallery.

Noël Dolla was born in 1945 in Nice, where he lives and works.
AND FOR THE YOUNGEST VISITORS...
Paleontologists, archeologists and historians have selected eight objects and works of art for you that will help you learn more about the history of Nice. Answer the questions by yourself or with the help of an adult, and take a trip through time. Bon voyage!

ROOM 1
Prehistoric humans used stones they had sharpened for everyday activities. What could they have used these stones for?

ROOM 2
This “ceramic” fragment was found at Nice. It’s a piece of tableware; draw the rest of the object.

ROOM 3
Romans placed these “markers” along the sides of roads. What were they used for?

ROOM 4
In 1789, a scientist from Nice made a collection of plants that he dried and pasted in a notebook. What could it be used for?

ROOM 5
This fragment of a column (the capital) is an element from the old cathedral on Castle Hill. What does it make you think of?

ROOM 6
This sword was used over 1,500 years ago. What material is it made from?

SALLE 7
Décrit la position de ce cavalier, à ton avis, que représente cette statue ?

ROOM 8
On this old photo of the Nice train station, you can see a “carriage”. What was it used for?
AND DON’T MISS

Guy Rottier at the Forum d’Urbanisme et d’Architecture
Forum d’Urbanisme et d’Architecture

Both a project architect and a man of debate, Guy Rottier uses all types of expression to liberate thinking on the city and to formulate visionary alternatives. A former collaborator of Le Corbusier, he opened an office in Nice from 1958 to 1969 and was a fellow traveler of artists like Arman, Ben and Venet. The Forum d’Urbanisme et d’Architecture opens a window on the world of Rottier through a display of the archive collections recently donated by his daughter Odette Barbéris-Rottier to the City of Nice. This was the starting point for three years of research work carried out jointly by the Archives services, the Forum d’Urbanisme et d’Architecture and MAMAC.

LOCATION & OPENING HOURS

1 - MUSEUM OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART [MAMAC]
Place Yves Klein – Nice
Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. except Monday, from June 23 to October 22
+33 (0)4 97 13 42 01 - mamac@ville-nice.fr

2 - MASSÉNA MUSEUM
65, rue de France – Nice
Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. except Tuesday, from June 23 to October 15
+33 (0)4 93 91 19 10 - ecolesdenice2017.nice.fr

MAMAC AND MASSÉNA MUSEUM:
Open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Thursday from July 20 to October 12.

3 - FORUM D’URBANISME ET D’ARCHITECTURE
Open Monday to Friday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. from July 12 to October 31

4 - GALERIE DES PONCHETTES [MAMAC, EXTRA MUROS]
77, quai des États-Unis – Nice
Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. except Monday, from June 23 to October 22
+33 (0)4 97 13 42 01 - mamac@ville-nice.fr

3 - 109
89, route de Turin – Nice
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. except holidays, from June 23 to October 15
+33(O)4 97 12 71 11 - ecolesdenice2017.nice.fr