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Parte del circuito
MASILugano

Yves Klein e Arman

Le Vide et Le Plein

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Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati

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Curated by Bruno Corà
Exhibition design by Mario Botta

The Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati in Lugano opens its 2024 autumn season with "Yves Klein e Arman. Le Vide et Le Plein", a groundbreaking new exhibition that for the first time compares the work of the two French artists who were key exponents of the celebrated "Nouveau Réalisme" movement. Both born in Nice, and close friends in their younger years, Yves Klein (Nice, 1928-Paris, 1962) and Arman (Nice, 1928-New York, 2005) were the leading lights of a highly innovative current of European and international art. The exhibition brings together sixty works from prestigious private collections, is the first show to highlight two opposing and complementary aspects of their poetics, namely *Le Vide* and *Le Plein*. Curated by Bruno Corà, the exhibition is produced in collaboration with the Yves Klein Foundation. The exhibition design is created by Mario Botta.

Le Vide et Le Plein, the Void and the Full. The two elements explored by Yves Klein and Arman in their artistic practice traverse eras and cultures, and are the focus of disciplines ranging from physics to philosophy, poetry to the popular imagination. For Klein *Le Vide*, as a spatial entity, resonated with the poetic dimension of "immateriality" he sought to embrace throughout his artistic career, influenced by Zen philosophy. Arman, on the other hand, looked to the concept of *Le Plein* to celebrate industrially produced objects, which he amassed to the point of saturating the given space.

While in 1958 at his historic exhibition *Le Vide* at Iris Clert's gallery in Paris Klein left the entire venue completely empty, like a *sukiya*, the Japanese "tea house", two years later Arman did exactly the opposite in the same gallery, filling the space with detritus, objects and old furniture, and turning it into an exhibit that the public could only view from the outside.

"While Klein in *Le Vide* forged an innovative fusion of Eastern and Western culture, opening up new horizons in our perception of reality, Arman, by accumulating miscellaneous items and urban waste, appeared to be highlighting the significance of objects and the phenomenon of mass production, taking it to the point of saturation, almost foreshadowing the advent of consumerism and the overproduction that now characterizes Western societies, and beyond", explains the curator Bruno Corà about *Le Vide et Le Plein*.

The layout of the show

In the show, the opposing and complementary poetics underpinning *Le Vide et Le Plein* forge a dialogue between the practices of Klein and Arman. The layout designed and set up by Mario Botta showcases the encounter between their works, which are presented in two parallel arrangements in the apse-like spaces of the Collezione Olgiati.

The side dedicated to Klein opens with a series of monochromes that exemplify the intense period of his career that the artist devoted to this strand of his work.

As well as paintings in his famous blue, like the two *Monochromes bleu sans titre* (IKB 38) and (IKB 246), this series, produced between 1955 and 1959, includes monochromes in yellow, pink and white, as well as *Monochrome or sans titre* (M 59), in gold leaf on glass.

The forms, materials and techniques that characterize Klein's oeuvre can be observed in various groups of works, such as the *Anthropometries*, the imprints on paper and canvas of the bodies of models coated in dry blue pigment and synthetic resin: what the artist called a "trace of life". The Lugano exhibition presents five of these, produced in 1960, including *Anthropométrie sans titre* (ANT 7) and *Monique* (ANT 59). The *Cosmogonies*, on the other hand, echo Klein's youthful cosmological musings: varying applications of dry blue pigment and bonding substances depict natural phenomena like sunlight, wind and rain, as is the case in *Cosmogonie pluie* (COS 22) of 1961.

For Klein the canvas was an open field that bodies and atmospheric phenomena could be left to operate on, not to mention primordial elements like fire, which the artist described as "authentic and contradictory", embracing its manifestation as "the essence of the immediate".

The exhibition presents five works from the series *Peintures de Feu Couleur* and *Peinture de Feu sans titre* (F 13) created between 1961 and 1962, made using dry pigment and synthetic resin burnt on cardboard. The monochromes on display also include those made using sponges, such as *Sculpture Éponge bleue sans titre* (SE 263) and the *Relief Éponge Fa* (RE 31).

Technical mastery and the artist's pursuit of the immaterial come together in the poetic *Excavatrice de l'espace* (S 19), created by Klein in collaboration with the sculptor Jean Tinguely. When electrically powered, the wooden disc in the work reaches an exceptionally high speed, creating a halo that evokes the idea of the immateriality of Blue.

The incorporeal, impalpable works of Klein are offset by the works that give form to Arman's idea of *Le Plein*, sparked by his interest in objects. Initially, as can be seen in the *Cachet* series, Arman gathered imprints, applying inked stamps to paper or board. These pieces were followed by the *Allures d'objets*, 1958. In 1959 he began working on his *Accumulations* and *Poubelles*, waste materials encased in Plexiglas cases. He saw himself as the interpreter of an era dominated by consumerism, which, as he put it, "in around half a century had produced more objects than in the fifty thousand years previously".

From electric razors to light bulbs for cars (*Fiat pas Lux II*); from dolls' hands (*Les mains*) to timepiece mechanisms, this series of works "accumulated" a vast miscellany of objects in Plexiglas cases and wooden compartments. His partnership with the car company Renault led to the *Accumulations* made using wing parts of yellow cars, such as *Les ailes jaunes – Accumulation Renault n. 105* of 1967.

Like Klein, Arman too used the destructive yet creative power of fire in his works. Klein's *Peinture de Feu* is offset and contrasted by Arman's *Untitled*, 1969, featuring a burnt violin preserved in resin and presented in a Plexiglas case.

Other pieces that will not go unnoticed are *Cello*, 1962, a "coupée" of a cello on board, and *Antonio e Cleopatra*, 1966, a "colère" of two sliced cellos on wood panel.

The show culminates in an intriguing *mise en abyme*: Arman's *Premier portrait-robot d'Yves Klein, le Monochrome* which portrays Klein in the form of a crumpled heap of clothing, papers and books by

Bachelard, showcased in Plexiglas, to which Klein “responds” with his *Portrait relief d’Arman*, a relief portrait of Arman in dry pigment: nude like a classical statue, the artist is projected into another dimension, the purity of Klein’s absolute blue.

An exhibition catalogue in two languages (Italian and English) will be published for the occasion by Mousse Publishing, with an introduction by Giancarlo and Danna Olgiati, a historical/critical/academic essay by Bruno Corà, a text by the Director of MASI Lugano Tobia Bezzola, a conversation between Bruno Corà and Mario Botta, and biographical and bibliographical resources and information on the works edited by Aldo Iori.

Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati La Permanente 2024-2025

The Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati, which is open to the public in the exhibition space beside the LAC cultural centre, shows a changing selection of works every year from an extensive collection covering 120 years of art history, from the early 20th century to the present day. Its focus is on Italian art that looks to the rest of the world. In conjunction with the exhibition *Yves Klein e Arman. Le Vide et Le Plein*, significant works by the artists listed below will be on display in the area devoted to the Permanent Collection. The final room plays host to the Futurist Archive, which contains 1200 original documents.

Harold Ancart	Fortunato Depero	Enrico Prampolini
Giovanni Anselmo	Luciano Fabro	Seth Price
Tauba Auerbach	Günther Förg	Sterling Ruby
Giacomo Balla	Antony Gormley	Salvatore Scarpitta
Massimo Bartolini	Wade Guyton	Mario Schifano
Huma Bhabha	Anselm Kiefer	Jan Schoonhoven
Alighiero Boetti	Jannis Kounellis	Ettore Spalletti
Agostino Bonalumi	Wolfgang Laib	Rudolf Stingel
Louise Bourgeois	Alberto Magnelli	Wolfgang Tillmans
Heidi Bucher	Mario Merz	Günther Uecker
Alberto Burri	Marisa Merz	Giuseppe Uncini
Pedro Cabrita Reis	Giulio Paolini	Franz West
Pier Paolo Calzolari	Giuseppe Penone	Christopher Wool
Enrico Castellani	Gianni Piacentino	
Ettore Colla	Michelangelo Pistoletto	

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Opening hours:

Thursday – Sunday: 11 am – 6pm
Free entrance

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Press images

01.
Yves Klein
Monochrome rose sans titre, (MP 30)
1955
Dry pigment and synthetic resin on panel
100.3 × 64.5 × 2 cm
Private collection
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Zürich



02.
Yves Klein
Monochrome jaune sans titre, (M 73)
1957
Dry pigment and synthetic resin on gauze on wood
panel
40 × 60 × 3 cm
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Zürich



03.
Yves Klein
Monochrome bleu sans titre, (IKB 246)
1958
Dry pigment and synthetic resin, on gauze on
board
13.5 × 50 × 2 cm
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Ph: François Fernandez
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04.
Yves Klein
Sculpture Éponge bleue sans titre, (SE 263)
1960 ca
Dry pigment and synthetic resin, natural sponge on
metal base
50 × 34 × 12 cm
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05.
Yves Klein
Fa, (RE 31)
1960
Dry pigment and synthetic resin, natural sponges
and pebbles on panel
92 x 73 x 11 cm
Private collection
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06.
Yves Klein
Anthropométrie sans titre, (ANT 7)
1960 ca
Dry pigment and synthetic resin on paper
102 × 73 cm
Private collection
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07.
Yves Klein
Peinture de Feu sans titre, (F 13)
1961
Burnt cardboard mounted on panel
65 × 50 cm
Private collection
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Zürich



08.
Yves Klein
Portrait relief d'Arman, (PR 1)
1962-1989
Dry pigment and synthetic resin on bronze on
board coated with gold leaf
176 × 96 × 26 cm
Private collection
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09.
Arman
Cachet (Tampons assemblages)
1959
Rubber stamps traces and ink on paper mounted
on canvas
135 × 178 cm
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Ph: Stefania Beretta
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10.
Arman
Premier portrait-robot d'Yves Klein, le Monochrome
1960
Objects in wood and Plexiglas case
76 × 50 × 12 cm
Private collection
© Arman Studio Archives New York / 2024,
ProLitteris, Zürich



11.
Arman
Malheur aux barbus
1960
Accumulation of electric razors in wooden and glass box
101 × 60.5 × 10 cm
Private collection
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12.
Arman
Les mains
1961
Accumulation of dolls hands in glass box with wooden frame, visible from both sides
40.1 × 20.3 × 3.5 cm
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Ph: Franco Borrelli
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13.
Arman
Cello
1962
Sliced cello on wood panel
160 × 135 × 21.5 cm
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Ph: François Fernandez
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14.
Arman
Antonio e Cleopatra (Colère)
1966
Sliced cellos on painted wood panel
200.5 × 160.5 × 21 cm
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Ph: Studio Pagi, 2024
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15.
Arman
Dans la nébuleuse mécanique
1963
Clock works in Plexiglas
135.4 × 44.5 × 4.5 cm
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Ph: Stefania Beretta
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16.
Arman
Les ailes jaunes – Accumulation Renault n.105
1967
Welded yellow car elements (fender wings)
164 × 120 × 115 cm
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17.
Installation maquette of the *Sculptures Éponges*
section Mario Botta Architetti

