



**jean dubuffets art brut!
the origins of the collection**

January 25, 2017 – July 2, 2017

An exhibition by the **COLLECTION DE L'ART BRUT LAUSANNE**

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An exhibition by the Collection de l'Art
Brut, Lausanne

curator: Sarah Lombardi
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Jean Dubuffet rue de Vaugirard, ca 1946, Photo: © J. Cordier /Archives Fondation Dubuffet, Paris

PRESS BREAKFAST: January 25, 2017, 10 a.m.

OPENING: January 25, 2017, 7 p.m.

with curator Sarah Lombardi

(Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne)

DURATION: January 25 – July 2, 2017

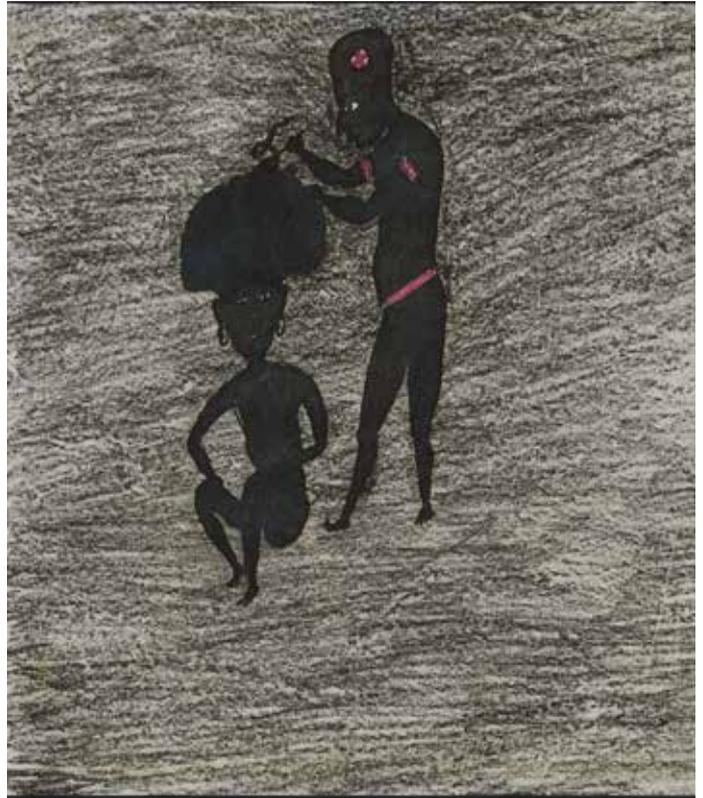
**Real art is always there where it is not expected!
(Jean Dubuffet)**

1945 marked the end of the Second World War and the beginning of a second modernism. At this point in time Jean Dubuffet – one of the most imaginative minds of the twentieth century – was tired of established art and went in search of a new concept of art: free, unbiased, anti-intellectual, and raw – it should be “brut”. And Dubuffet would indeed find it in unexpected places: on the street, in prisons, in folkart, and in psychiatric clinics in Europe and abroad. This art would form the foundation of Dubuffet’s notion of Art Brut. museum gugging presents 169 works from Dubuffet’s illustrious collection, which he assembled between 1945 and 1949. It includes works by famous artists such as Aloïse Corbaz, Adolf Wölfli, Auguste Forestier, and many other recognised – but also anonymous – artists. They are all united in this historical exhibition, which was shown for the first time in autumn 1949 in Paris at Galerie René Drouin under the title “L’Art Brut”. Today these works form the original core of the Collection de l’Art Brut in Lausanne, which compiled this showcase on the occasion of their 40th anniversary.

museum quejning

In the mid-1940s the creative multitalent Jean Dubuffet began his quest for a new art, which should be free from bourgeois constraints and status pursuits. Dubuffet did something quite unheard-of at the time by searching for artists whose works were not generally recognised as art and thereby calling the traditional concept of art radically into question.

In his search for new, uninfluenced art Dubuffet travelled through European countries, such as Switzerland, Belgium, and France, but also to the African continent as well, and had works sent to him from countries like Brazil. Dubuffet also looked for L'Art Brut, the raw and primitive in art, in places where the outsiders of society resided. The works he discovered were just as extraordinary as the individuals whose artistic creativity had fascinated him: pieces by psychiatric patients, children, autodidacts with professions distant to the arts, products of folk art (later he would distinguish works by children and folk art from the concept of Art Brut). Doctors and psychiatrists supported him in his investigations. Not the official art world rather social outsiders would become the protagonists of his concept of art.



Somuk, ohne Titel, n.d. Black pencil and colored ink on paper 23 × 21cm Foto: Olivier Laffely, AN Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne

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Monsieur Dubuffet thumbs a long nose at the art world

In autumn 1949 Dubuffet organised the exhibition on "L'Art Brut" at Galerie René Drouin in Paris, where he presented 200 works he had collected over the course of the past years. The provocative title of the catalogue published by René Drouin – "L'art brut préféré aux arts culturels" (Art Brut in Preference to the Cultural Arts) – and Dubuffet's controversial text printed within illustrate that Art Brut was something of a manifesto against the art world for the artist. He questioned what was officially considered as art: "[...] real art is always there where it is not expected. Where nobody would think of it nor speak out its name. [...] It walks about everywhere; everyone has met



Eugène Engrand, genannt Paul End (1896 – 1973), Frau mit Sternenhaar, 1948, Grafitstift und Farbstift auf mit Ölfarbe eingestrichenem Packpapier, Foto: Claudine Garcia, AN, Collection de l'art Brut, Lausanne

it somewhere along the way, running into it twenty times a day at every street corner, but not a single one of them might get the idea it could be Mr. Art himself, whom everyone speaks of in the best of terms. Because he simply doesn't look like him."

The exhibition didn't address just a small, versed circle of artists, painters, and writers anymore, who wholeheartedly supported Dubuffet's cause – the vernissage was attended by Francis Ponge, Henri Michaux, Tristan Tzara, Mirò, Claude Lévi-Strauss, André Malraux, and Michel Ragon, amongst others – but also a broader audience with an interest in art. It was the first contact with Art Brut for many of the visitors. Some reactions were vehement, and many journalists voiced loud criticism (see Sarah Lombardi's contribution in the catalogue).

"The exhibition in Galerie René Drouin in Paris presented 200 works by 63 artists. While the majority came from the collections of the Compagnie de l'Art Brut, some were lent for the occasion, in particular by André Breton, who possessed the painting 'Groupe d'enfants à Tartas' by Alphonse Benquet and the two shell assemblages by Pascal-Désir Maisonneuve, 'La Reine Victoria' and 'Visage en poire.'" (Sarah Lombardi, curator and director of the Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne). In 1971 Jean Dubuffet bequeathed his collection to the City of Lausanne, which formed the basis for the Collection de l'Art Brut. The museum was founded on February 26, 1976, and in February 2016 it celebrated its 40th anniversary. The exhibition "Jean Dubuffet's Art Brut, the origins of the collection" is the original core of the Collection de l'Art Brut.

Chronology

July 5–22, 1945

Jean Dubuffet travels to Switzerland with Jean Paulhan and Le Corbusier where they meet with Paul Budry. Dubuffet visits psychiatric clinics and prisons, meets with writers, artists, publishers, museum curators, doctors, and prison directors. He makes his first major discoveries, amongst them the works of Adolf Wölfli, Heinrich Anton Müller, and Berthe Urasco. Later this trip would be viewed as the “origins of Art Brut”.

August 1945

Jean Dubuffet begins to correspond with numerous psychiatrists, amongst them Jean Oury, Walter Morgenthaler, and Charles Ladame. He hopes they can help in his search for artistic creativity on the periphery of the established art world. He already refers to this type of artistry as “Art Brut”.

September 1945

Acquisition trip in southern France. Jean Dubuffet meets the psychiatrist Gaston Ferdiere at the Sainte-Anne psychiatric centre. He has close contact with Surrealist artists who, like himself, have great interest in the artistic work of the “mentally ill”.

Autumn 1945

Jean Dubuffet visits a number of different psychiatric hospitals and the Musée national des Arts et Traditions populaires (Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions) in Paris. He strove persistently to build up a “network” of people who supported his collecting activities: doctors, artists, intellectuals, art dealers, and art enthusiasts.

1946 and 1947

Jean Dubuffet works on various illustrated publications about the works of the artists he is collecting: Adolf Wölfli, Aloïse, Somuk, Louis Soutter, Heinrich Anton Müller, Berthe Urasco, Auguste Forestier, Fleury-Joseph Crépin, Xavier Parguey.

February–April 1947

Jean Dubuffet travels in the Sahara for the first time.

November 15, 1947

The exhibition room “Foyer de l’Art Brut” opens in a space provided by the gallerist René Drouin in the basement of his same-named gallery on Place Vendôme in Paris.

November 1947 to April 1948

Second trip to the Algerian Sahara.

September 7, 1948

Opening of the new Foyer de l'Art Brut in a pavilion that publisher Gaston Gallimard made available on Rue de l'Université 17 in Paris. The works of 50 Art Brut artists are presented in the opening exhibition.

October 1948

Upon invitation of Dr. Beaudoin, Jean Dubuffet visits the hospitals Ville-Évrard and Maison-Blanche near Paris. He discovers the embroidery work and drawings of Jeanne Tripier and meets Juliette Élixa Bataille and Antinéa. Adolf Wölfli exhibition in Foyer de l'Art Brut.

November 1948

Joaquim Vicens Gironella exhibition in Foyer de l'Art Brut.

December 14, 1948

Foundation of the association "Compagnie de l'Art Brut". Founding members are Jean Dubuffet, André Breton, Jean Paulhan, Charles Ratton, Henri-Pierre Roché, and Michel Tapié. Aloïse exhibition in Foyer de l'Art Brut.

1949

The Compagnie de l'Art Brut organises regular exhibitions in Foyer de l'Art Brut, which are accompanied by small publications. The Croatian painter Slavko Kopač provides continuity. He would later become the curator of the collections.

October to November 1949

Jean Dubuffet organises the exhibition "L' Art Brut" in the official spaces of Galerie René Drouin on Place Vendôme in Paris. In the exhibition catalogue he publishes a text which is considered the manifesto of Art Brut: L'Art Brut préféré aux arts culturels (Art Brut in Preference to the Cultural Arts).

October 1951

Jean Dubuffet announces the dissolution of the Compagnie de l'Art Brut: He reasons that he does not have enough space for his collections and is not supported in his endeavours by the other members.

1951

Dubuffet accepts the offer of artist Alfonso Ossorio to house the collections in his residence in East Hampton near New York.

1959

Jean Dubuffet now lives in the small town Vence in the south of France. He resumes his acquisition activities in the realm of Art Brut, encouraged and supported by his friend Alphonse Chave, who has been running a gallery there since 1947.

1962

All collections are brought back to Paris in a large house on Rue de Sevres that Jean Dubuffet bought. The Compagnie de l'Art Brut is founded anew. The collection continues to grow thanks to numerous acquisitions and donations.

1964

Jean Dubuffet begins publishing the brochure series L'Art Brut. The first eight issues are published between 1964 and 1966.

1971

Jean Dubuffet bestows his collections to the City of Lausanne. A part of Chateaux Beaulieu – an 18th-century patrician residence – is set up as a museum. The collection catalogue names 4100 Art Brut works by 135 artists. They are complemented by 1200 other artistic works, which represent a less radical break in social and psychological terms than those of the Art Brut artists. These works were assembled into a special collection, which received a new name in 1982: "Neuve Invention".

February 26, 1976

Opening of the Collection de l'Art Brut in Lausanne.

Artist's biographies

Julie Bar (1868 – 1930), Geneva, Switzerland

Julie Bar suffers from epilepsy and has a mental disability. Never attending school, she is placed in a clinic at a very early age. Her surviving drawings date from 1916 to 1930, the period when she was transferred to the private clinic of Bel-Air. Julie Bar. Draws chiefly in lead pencil, and sometimes with coloring pencils, in sketchbooks she fills entirely. Her works are organized according to a principle of reiteration: alone or in groups, the

subjects (motifs, figures, animals) are repeated in identical fashion.

Robert Gie (1869 – ?), Soleure, Switzerland

Robert Gie is a carpenter before he is hospitalized in a psychiatric institution at Rosegg from 1908 to 1922 due to hallucinatory disorders. From 1916 on, becoming increasingly reclusive, he devotes himself feverishly to drawing on walls or on bits of paper he manages to salvage. His drawings are characterized by complex networks of cables that penetrate the figures, crossing through them and extending into others. In all probability this motif should be viewed in the context of the tactile hallucinations he suffered.

Joseph Heuer (1827 – 1914), Geneva, Switzerland

Of German origin, Joseph Heuer has jobs as a cabinetmaker and bookbinder, and works ruling registers before embarking on an army career. For unknown reasons, he is interned in 1860 in the asylum at Vernets, where he remains for forty years. He is subsequently transferred to the Bel-Air institution, where he confines himself to his room to draw and write. The artist's topographies are based on memories and elements of geography and military tactics.

Jean Mar (1831 – 1911), Geneva (?), Switzerland

Jean Mar. remained interned at the Vernets asylum from 1868 to 1900, before being transferred to the Bel-Air psychiatric hospital. During his internment, he withdrew in a totally hermetic state, avoiding all contact with his entourage. Mumbling to himself, he spends all day writing, drawing, and making little objects composed of pieces of wire and leaves that he sticks together with chewed breadcrumbs.

Berthe Urasco (1898 – ?), Geneva, Switzerland

From childhood, Berthe Urasco plays the piano and sings, abandoning these activities around the age of thirty on the appearance of her mental disorders. Taking the form of hallucinatory delirium, these increase in intensity and necessitate her internment in 1937 at the hospital of Bel-Air. During the seven-year period of her hospitalization, using black pencil filled in with blocks of color, she executes many drawings in precise, rapid strokes, without preliminary studies or later corrections. Urasco depicts human figures in a pastoral setting.

ART FROM ELSEWHERE

Jean Dubuffet was wont to roam beyond European borders. In 1943, he seems to have taken an interest in collecting African art; he also was attracted to ethnography, as testified by his encounters at the time and his copious correspondence with various

specialists. The latter included Reverend Father Patrick O'Reilly, who had close ties to the Museum of Man and had spent time in (today named) Papua New Guinea; O'Reilly gave him a series of drawings by the natives there. Dubuffet's desire to travel in non-accredited milieus drove him to travel three times to the Algerian Sahara (spring 1947, winter 1947-1948, and spring 1949). There he not only found inspiration for his own creative activity, but he also made new discoveries in the realm of Art Brut. He set out to find singular creations among the native productions. Later, however, and as he had already decided with respect to folk art, he would refuse to collect pieces stemming from other traditions, in order to concentrate on creations unlinked to any cultural practices whatsoever.

Qadour Douida (dates unknown), Algeria

The identity of this creator has not been established with certainty, but it is probably Sidi Kouider Douida (also spelled Qouider Ben Douida), postmaster at El Golea, a town in the center of Algeria where Jean Dubuffet stayed twice between 1947 and 1948. Douida's works represent colorful landscapes and architecture.

Somuk (1902 – ?), Buka, Papua New Guinea

Somuk comes from Buka, where he lives from fishing. Acknowledged for his talent as a storyteller and for his extraordinary memory, in the evening he tells the villagers about the warlike exploits of his ancestors. In about 1934, a Marist brother collecting indigenous legends asks him to illustrate his tales, and Somuk, who has never drawn before, becomes extremely keen on the exercise. Using ink from the village school as well as coloring pencils on the back of printed materials or on paper from schoolbooks, he produces hundreds of drawings. His compositions depict Melanesian stories and customs, as well as traditional dances and ceremonies.

FOLK ART

Folk Art implies a certain familiarity with a cultural heritage; it is based on respect for customs and traditions. During his first explorations, Jean Dubuffet took an interest in such sorts of creations, collecting mainly wood or stone sculptures. Several of these are unsigned, thus remaining productions by unknown creators. Dubuffet also collected a variety of other information, including various facts about votive offerings, toys or even different varieties of tattoos. He paid visit to several ethnographic museums including, in 1945, the one in Geneva, where he discovered carnival masks from the Lötschental region. Later, he would give up searching for folk art, placing emphasis instead on creations in a more determinedly self-taught and singular vein: to his mind, these were more emblematic of individual expressivity than shared traditions.

On November 29, 1945, Jean Dubuffet visited the National Museum of Folk Art and Traditions in Paris. Among several objects capturing his attention—including some small stone statuettes, or engraved horns used by the shepherds of Camargue for transporting oil—he discovered a few pieces by Xavier Parguey. A museum project leader by the name of René Perrot had brought back several pieces by Parguey and was willing to lend some of those in his possession to Dubuffet, most especially for the René Drouin Gallery show in 1949.

Xavier Parguey (1876 – 1948), Vuillafans, France

Born into a family of winegrowers, Xavier Parguey inherits land and properties in the Doubs, his native region, but his resources are much reduced after WWI, in which he takes part, being interned in a German camp. On his return, he becomes a tramp in his native village. Earning a modest living poaching and making grape carriers, he is then given the nickname Zouzou. From around 1920, he uses a billhook to carve little wooden tools — cabbage dibbles, mallets, etc.— whose function disappears beneath their figurative exuberance.

Unknown creator, known as Le Barbare Guillaume (wood sculpture of a penis)

We have no information on this creator, nor do we know how Jean Dubuffet acquired this object.

Unknown creator (small stone statue)

We have no information on this creator, nor do we know how Jean Dubuffet acquired this object.

Unknown creator (Corozo nut)

We have no information on this creator, nor do we know how Jean Dubuffet acquired this object.

Unknown creator (Copper plate)

We have no information on this creator, nor do we know how Jean Dubuffet acquired this object.

CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS

In carrying out his canvassing, Jean Dubuffet followed several leads with respect to creators «unscathed by culture.» He found children's creations selfless and spontaneous—traits he associated with Art Brut. The Compagnie de l'Art Brut's first register bears witness to the diversity of sources on which he drew for his collection of child-

ren's drawings: returning from a trip to Egypt in 1947, Henri Michaux gave him thirteen drawings. Dubuffet had these immediately photographed and integrated into his collections. In 1948, Pierre Duquet, a teacher in the village of Creuse (Department of Somme, France), entrusted him with over a hundred drawings. Other members of the teaching profession, such as Célestin Freinet, were among Dubuffet's favorite contacts, sharing the latter's ideas on education based on allowing children to express their creativity most freely. Several children's drawings hung on the walls of the Foyer de l'Art Brut in Paris, but only two of these were shown at the 1949 René Drouin Gallery show. At some point Dubuffet stopped collecting drawings by children: he felt that they were overly influenced by their apprenticeship.

Béguin (first name and life dates unknown), Switzerland

Béguin is a child about whom we have no information.

Unknown creator, known as Aymon (dates unknown)

Aymon is a child about whom we have no information.

NAÏVE ART

When he started out canvassing for works of art failing to be officially accredited, Jean Dubuffet turned to works in the vein of what was called «naïve» art. Ever since the end of the 19th century, and the recognition of Henri Rousseau on the artistic scene, naïve art had cropped up in many varied, heterogeneous styles. Nonetheless, the works loosely classed in this category are figurative, depicting landscapes, cityscapes, everyday life scenes and human figures. Their creators were, just like the creators of Art Brut, self-taught. Dubuffet's interest in them slowly waned when he began finding that they borrowed from the accredited culture aesthetically and technically, most especially in their use of oil paint or gouache on canvas or paper.

Willi Otto Gappisch (1908 – ?), Leipzig, Germany

Willi Otto Gappisch learns to be a locksmith in his native town. At the end of WWII, he settles in Munich where he finds employment as a laborer and later as a farmhand. He is already painting at this period, probably during his spare time. Imprisoned for "vagrancy" in 1948, he is then transferred to a psychiatric hospital. Producing landscapes and maritime scenes on paper, he does not use a brush, but squeezes the oil paint directly from the tube onto the support.

Clotilde Patard (c. 1860 – c. 1950), France

Clothilde Patard must have lived in some poverty in the 10th arrondissement of Paris.

The only work in the Collection de l'Art Brut was probably created in about 1948, towards the end of its creator's life, at a time when she was physically extremely weak.

Georges Roger (? – 1947), France

Disabled following an injury and described as a simple man, Georges Roger lives in Paris in the mid-1940s, selling posters. Attracted by the art world, he teaches himself how to paint in oils. The work preserved in the Collection de l'Art Brut is a portrait of a chaouch, a term used in North Africa to designate an employee or servant.

Jean Stas (1865 – ?), Belgium

A gardener by trade, Jean Stas lives in Brussels, undertaking regular excursions in the region during his spare time. Beginning to paint at the age of sixty-five, his works represent colorful landscapes, small dwellings, and gardens. Naive in style, his images are based on chromos, colored lithographs, which he enjoys examining on the counter in a print dealer's store in the city.

Amélie Stern (dates unknown)

We have no information on this creator.

SWITZERLAND: THE WALDAU PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC, BERN

Switzerland's Waldau Psychiatric Clinic (near Bern), dates back to 1749. Its history is marked by all the famous Swiss and international writers and artists it has hosted: among others, the writer Robert Walser and the dancer Vaslav Nijinski came — either of their own volition or not— and pursued their activities there.

Walter Morgenthaler, the establishment's Head Doctor and Director until 1933, drew on the institution to assemble one of the world's most important collections of art by hospitalized patients, assembling as it does several thousands of their works. That collection encompasses, notably, Adolf Wölfli's oeuvre, and too, that of Heinrich Anton Müller, interned at the neighboring hospital of Münsingen. Walter Morgenthaler also provided Dubuffet with information on works being produced in by patients in other institutions, as well as with numerous contacts. The two corresponded regularly thereafter and, until his death in 1965, Morgenthaler would remain the Compagnie de l'Art Brut's most important go-between for its many acquisitions of works by Wölfli.

Gottfried Aeschlimann (1858–1930)

There is a dearth of information concerning Gottfried Aeschlimann. Married, he worked in a factory, he is interned in the psychiatric hospital of Waldau, close to Bern, from

1908 until his death in 1930.

Ernst Bollin (dates unknown)

We know nothing of the life of Ernst Bollin prior to his stay in the Psychiatriezentrum Münsingen, close to Bern, where he is interned probably from 1914 until 1922.

Adolf Wölfli (1864 – 1930), Bern, Switzerland

Abandoned by his father at the age of seven, Adolf Wölfli remains alone with his mother. Following her death, he is placed in a number of peasant families. After an unstructured youth, as a young man he suffers a romantic setback that upsets him greatly. In 1890, arrested for indecent assault, he is imprisoned. As a result of a second offence, he is interned in 1895 in the psychiatric hospital of Waldau, where he remains until his death. He starts to draw, write, and compose music at the age of thirty-five, working from morning to night. From 1904 on, his output is preserved and studied by Dr. Walter Morgenthaler. Wölfli's colossal opus of some 25,000 pages includes an imaginary autobiography, graphic compositions, collages, literary works, and musical scores.

Unknown creator (drawing of a cow)

We have no information on this creator.

SWITZERLAND: THE ROSIÈRE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, GIMEL-SUR-MORGES

Restricted to patients suffering chronic illness, La Rosière Psychiatric Hospital is linked to the Cery Psychiatric Hospital near Lausanne. Its director from 1920 to 1960, Dr. Hans Steck, was the first to notice Aloïse's work: during a course in psychiatry at the University of Lausanne he presented her drawings to the students, among which Jacqueline Forel. Her curiosity awakened, Ms. Forel met the patient in 1941, and was so fascinated by Aloïse's works that she sought to understand her and provided her with drawing materials. Undoubtedly, the support and attention that Ms. Forel lavished on Aloïse fostered the latter's creativity. In the fall of 1946, due to a mail distribution error, Jacqueline Forel received a letter that Jean Dubuffet had written to her cousin, Oscar Forel, a former psychiatrist at the Waldau. Soon thereafter, Ms. Forel travelled to Paris, where she met Dubuffet and showed him the drawings by Aloïse. During the following years, Dr. Jacqueline Forel, having remained in touch with Jean Dubuffet by letter, made several donations to his collection. As for Jean Dubuffet, he visited La Rosière on several occasions from 1948 onwards, seeking out Aloïse and acquiring several of her works.

Aloïse Corbaz, known as Aloïse (1886 – 1964), Lausanne, Switzerland

After obtaining her school-leaving certificate, Aloïse becomes a governess, in particular at the court of Wilhelm II in Prussia, where she ends up besotted with the emperor, acting out an entirely imaginary love affair. The outbreak of WWI forces her to return to Switzerland. At the time, Aloïse began acting rebelliously and displaying exalted religious feelings, causing her to be committed to an institution. She was first interned at the University Psychiatric Hospital of Cery (from 1918 to 1920), and then transferred to the La Rosière Psychiatric Hospital, where she would remain until her death.

Up until 1936, she works in secret, using lead pencil and ink on any surface she can find. She also employs fluids from pressed petals, crushed leaves, and toothpaste. The theme of the couple in love, and her passion for the theater and the opera predominate in her oeuvre.

FRANCE: THE SAINT-JEAN DE DIEU PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL, SAINT-ANDRE-LEZ-LILLE

In 1948, Jean Dubuffet began corresponding with Dr. Paul Bernard, doctor at the Saint-Jean De Dieu psychiatric hospital, who forwarded several drawings by one of his patients to him: Eugène Engrand, nicknamed Paul End for reasons of medical confidentiality. In exchange, Jean Dubuffet sent drawing materials to the hospital, for which Dr. Bernard in turn sent back works created by his patients. Dr. Bernard donated over one hundred works by not only Paul End., but also Gaston Duf., Sylvain Lecocq, Stanislas Lib. and Alcide Verret. Moreover, aware of the doctor's interest in the subject, Jean Dubuffet sent him several reproductions and information on other hospitalized creators whose works joined the Art Brut collections—namely, among others, by Auguste Forestier, Robert Gie, Julie Bar and Berthe Urasco.

Gaston Dufour, known as Gaston Duf (1920 – ?), Pas-de-Calais, France

Born into a family of ten children, for a few years Gaston Duf. works in a mine in his native region. Of delicate health, he ends up being unable to work at all and takes refuge in alcohol before being interned at the age of twenty. The physician notices him hiding drawings in his clothes. They are drawn in lead pencil on paper he tears from the margins of newspapers he salvages. Thereafter, his doctor provides him with drawing materials. The recurring subjects of his works are a kind of buffoon and a protean animal, which fancifully spelt captions indicate as being a rhinoceros.

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Eugene Engrand, known as Paul End (1896 – 1973), Aire-sur-la-Lys, France

Having lost his father, Paul End. starts working at the age of eleven. From 1911, he is employed as a laborer in a steelworks, a job he will retain for twenty-two years. In 1933, he is interned following a phase of schizophrenia and four years later he begins to draw. His works in lead and colored pencil on packing paper coated with white oil paint exhibit an interesting texture. Geometrical forms evocative of cityscapes mingle with faces and human outlines in dream-like sequences.

Sylvain Lecocq (1900 – 1950), Boulogne-sur-Mer, France

Working as a tradesman, Sylvain Lecocq marries and becomes the father of three boys. In 1942, he is operated on for an ulcer, giving up his job and withdrawing into an imaginary world. Interned in 1947, three years later he commits suicide. His intense literary and graphic output from 1948 to his death comprises poems, love letters, songs, and drawings, to produce which he salvages notebooks, kraft paper, blotters, and cardboard. He covers the entire surface of the support, filling it with a childlike and regular script in marked contrast with its delirious content.

Stanislas Lib (1899 – ?), Poland

There is a dearth of information concerning Stanislas Lib. During a stint in a psychiatric hospital psychiatrique Saint-Jean de Dieu in Lille, France, he makes oil paintings, framing them himself. The artist privileges erotic scenes in which female figures appear most frequently.

FRANCE: THE SAINT-ALBAN-SUR-LIMAGNOLE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

This hospital, an austere former castle converted into a public asylum in 1824, is located in the heart of Gévaudan, in southern France. Its far off geographic situation made it a favorite refuge for many intellectuals fleeing the Occupation in 1940; these included Paul Eluard and Tristan Tzara, as well as Georges Vuillamy. That same year marks the arrival of the Spanish physician François Tosquelles : he himself was fleeing the Franco government. He became Head Doctor of the asylum in 1953, bringing renewal to the institution and turning it into the cradle of institutional psychotherapy along with Lucien Bonnafé—a therapy emphasizing relations between caretakers and their wards. Jean Dubuffet was mainly in touch with Dr. Jean Oury, who did his internship there from 1947 to 1949. Both Oury and Tosquelles enthusiastically encouraged Dubuffet's endeavors, regularly sending him works by patients confined to their hospital.

Benjamin Arneval (1907 – ?), Lozère, France

Until his mobilization at the outbreak of WWII, Benjamin Arneval works on the family farm managed by his brother. During the conflict he starts to suffer from hallucinations. On his return, he sees his brother as a “ghost” and kills him in August 1942. He is then interned in the Saint-Alban hospital. In 1948, at the end of a violent outburst of anxiety, he spends two months drawing constantly. Taking inspiration from his past on the farm, he depicts tools, vehicles, machines, and animals. Extremely meticulous, his drawings exhibit a concern for detail that sometimes leads him to represent his subjects from the inside.

Auguste Forestier (1887 – 1958), Langogne, France

Long fascinated by the railroad, on several occasions Auguste Forestier runs away, escaping by train. One day in 1914, he piles up some rocks on the line and derails a convoy. He is then interned in a psychiatric hospital, where he starts to draw, make medals, and carve bones from the butcher’s shop. He also whittles pieces of salvaged wood into figures and animals. These statuettes are then clad in pieces of cloth or leather and bits of trash collected at the dump.

Aimable Jayet (1883 – 1953), Normandy, France

For a time, Aimable Jayet works as a butcher in Paris. In about 1934, he starts displaying signs of mental imbalance and, following an attempted suicide, he is interned in the Saint-Alban hospital. There, he starts to write in schoolbooks, on packing paper, and on rags. His output is founded on the principle of symmetry. Often deployed over two facing pages, his writings are accompanied by illustrations, to the point that the words, which he always declines in their masculine and feminine form, combine with the images to form an inextricable whole.

Marguerite Sirvins (1890 – 1957), Lozere, France

Born into a peasant family, in 1931 Marguerite Sirvins manifests schizophrenic disorders that result in her hospitalization. Thirteen years later she starts to produce drawings, watercolors, and embroideries. For the last of these she takes pieces of cloth, adding colored silks and woolen yarn she obtains by unpicking rags.

Unknown creator (raffia figure)

We have no information on this creator. It was Dr. Jean Oury who mailed the piece, which came from Dr. Tosquelles’ office, to Jean Dubuffet in March 1948.

FRANCE: VILLE-ÉVRARD HOSPITAL AND MAISON-BLANCHE HOSPITAL, NEUILLY-SUR-MARNE

Upon its opening in 1868, the Ville-Évrard Hospital was reserved for the destitute. In 1875, a mental hospital came into being in the same place, intended for a wealthier clientele. Finally, in 1900, a third institution, namely the Maison-Blanche Hospital, came into being. In 1948, almost 2000 patients (men and women) were hospitalized in the latter institution, including Jean Dubuffet's friend Antonin Artaud for a period of time. When Jean Dubuffet, together with the Croatian painter Slavko Kopac, first visited the Maison-Blanche Hospital, on 10 October 1948, he met with Dr. Henri Beaudouin, who handed over, in the guise of «documents,» a series of works Dubuffet had selected. In actual fact, these were embroidery pieces, drawings and writings, all by the hand of Jeanne Tripier, a patient at the institution. At Ville-Evrard too, Dr. Chanès introduced him to Marie-Louise Bergeaud, known as Antinéa, and Juliette Elisa Bataille. Five days later, Dubuffet revisited the two of them, taking André Breton along with him this time. He returned still again in February 1949, bringing along some sweets, a little money and wool: all this he gave them in return for a few works which the two women were rather reluctant to yield.

Juliette Élis Bataille (1896 – ?), Étapes, France

Juliette Élis Bataille marries in 1917, settling in Paris following her husband's mobilization. After embarking on various trades, she becomes a florist. Around the age of forty, she is afflicted by psychological disorders that result in her being sectioned. Following her internment, and for about three years, she starts embroidering with thick woolen yarn, cotton, and silk. By tacking the threads in various directions, she defines at once the outlines of motifs and the color of a continuous element, such as the sky or a façade, treated as a flat tint. She also produces pastels on paper and cardboard.

Marie-Louise Bergeaud, known as Antinéa (1897 – 1983), Aurillac, France

Prior to her marriage, Marie-Louise Bergeaud works for five years in a tax office. Around the age of thirty-five, she suddenly becomes mute and then expresses deranged ideas. Interned in 1938, a few years later she starts to draw, claiming to be Antinéa, a "female divinity." Realized in watercolor or crayon, her works show figures, often divinities, and symbols taken from a particularly rich personal belief system.

Georges Berthomier (1897 – 1963), La Haye, France

Georges Berthomier is employed as a laborer in the Paris area, before being interned in

a psychiatric hospital in 1948. There, he devotes his time to drawing. Three years later, he is transferred to a different institution and stops drawing and painting for several years before his death. Berthomier represents landscapes peppered with architectural constructions of inventive elevation. So as to develop his motifs more freely, he multiplies the points of view, modifying the direction in which his compositions can be viewed.

Fernand Costa (dates unknown)

We have very little information about this creator. In about 1948, Fernand Costa, then around forty, is one of a number of patients cared for in the psychiatric hospital of Ville-Évrard. Drawing delicately colored stylized banknotes, between 1948 and 1950 he donates several examples of his work to Jean Dubuffet.

Jeanne Tripier (1869 – 1944), Paris, France

Jeanne Tripier lives in the district of Montmartre, working as a saleswoman in a department store. At the age of fifty-eight she becomes fascinated with the doctrines of spiritualism and begins to produce drawings, embroideries, and works in crochet. Also writing texts, she regards all her creations as mediumistic revelations. In 1934, she is interned in the psychiatric hospital of Maison-Blanche, where she continues her creative work. Frequently inserting little drawings in black, violet, or blue ink into her texts, she might also add dyes, nail varnish, or sugar.

FRANCE : PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS, LIMOUX

On the recommendation of Dr. Baudouin, Jean Dubuffet got in touch with Dr. Henri Dagand at the of end October or in November 1948. Dagand was quick to reply, and to send him a series of anonymous pieces comprising drawings and a medallion-shaped embroidery piece. Only two creators of these works could later be identified: Jaime Saquer and Gerhard Schaefer. Dubuffet did not correspond with Dagand on a particularly large scale: they exchanged only six letters between November 1948 and March 1949. Thereafter, Dubuffet having set off for the Sahara, it seems the two fell out of touch with each other. When the collections were sent back to Paris in 1962, Dubuffet set about contacting all the go-betweens who had helped him discover the major creators whose works belonged to those collections. He was seeking to complete the existing body of works, but also to pick up any additional information of use in composing texts about the creators whose works he had collected.

Jaime Saguer (1896 – ?), Spain

Of Spanish origin, Jaime Saguer works as a farmhand in the Pyrénées-Orientales. He is sectioned in Limoux in 1942, after being charged with “aggravated assault and public order offences.” Notes by his physician, Dr. Dagand, record intellectual backwardness and alcoholism. Discharged from psychiatric hospital in 1960, Saguer is placed in an old people’s home. He draws in lead pencil and coloring pencils on small lined or squared notebooks.

Gerhard Schaefer, known as Gustav (1885 – ?), Saarland, Germany

Following the death of his father, Gustav grows up in a Catholic orphanage. At twenty-six, he leaves Germany and moves successively to Italy and Spain, and then France, where he is living on the outbreak of WWII. As a German national, he is placed in an internment camp, where he starts writing and drawing. Suffering from delirium, in 1942 he is transferred to a psychiatric hospital where he continues to produce his art. Prophetic in scope, his drawings deal in a personal mythology interlarded with events from history and the Bible, two subjects he also addresses in his writings.

unknown creator (medallion-shaped embroidery piece)

We have no information on this creator.

FRANCE: PULET PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY, AGEN

Before landing in Dubuffet’s hands, Raymond Oui’s drawings—of which but one remains in the museum collections today—were entrusted to several people. It was Dubuffet’s friend René Bertelé, closely befriended with Henri Michaux, who handed over «a roll of drawings» to him: nineteen pieces that had belonged to Dr. Fretet, a former psychiatrist at the Agen facility. Before all the Art Brut collections were sent to the USA in 1951, Dubuffet returned eighteen of the drawings to Dr. Fretet, keeping but one of them. Later, in 1963, Dubuffet would get in touch with the Agen hospital center to obtain more information on that piece’s creator, and also to inquire after any other remaining drawings. Apparently none remained.

Raymond R., known as Raymond Oui (ca. 1915 – ?), France

In about 1943, when around thirty, Raymond Oui, who has a serious mental handicap, is hospitalized in a psychiatric institution in Agen. Just as when he expresses himself orally, Raymond’s drawings in black lead and coloring pencils and ink continuously repeat the word “yes.”

BRAZIL : THE JUQUERI PSYHIATRIC HOSPITAL, SÃO PAULO

Jean Dubuffet unceasingly sought to enlarge his collection of Art Brut pieces, developing as wide a network as possible. He contacted a number of people with an interest in works by the self-taught, or else sought introductions to them through various acquaintances. In October 1948, through his friend André Virel, he learned that the Brazilian cultural attaché in Paris, namely P.E. Sales-Gomez, showed interest in his researching. Dubuffet took up contact with him, and received in return the address of Dr. Osorio Cesar, a psychiatrist in Sao Paulo and the author of a study on artistic expression by «the alienated» (published in 1929). Dr. Cesar, on the staff of the Juqueri hospital, was in possession of a collection of some fifty works by patients in his ward—works he would forward to Dubuffet in April 1949. From among these, Dubuffet selected eight drawings by Albino Braz for his Art Brut collections, five of which would be exhibited in 1949 at the René Drouin Gallery in Paris: the five were attributed to the «unknown person of Sao Paulo.»

Albino Braz (1896 – 1950), Brazil

A farmer of Italian origin who settled in Brazil, Albino Braz is diagnosed with schizophrenia. Interned in the Juqueri psychiatric hospital in Sao Paulo in 1934, he remains there for sixteen years until his death. His drawings in lead and colored pencil predominantly represent naked figures of imposing size surrounded by real or imaginary animals. Often, these scenes betray an epic character, with the chief protagonists demonstrating their dominance over an animal or a figure of the opposite sex as they brandish a tool, a flower, or another animal.

BELGIUM: NEUROPSYCHIATRIC CENTER, BRUSSELS

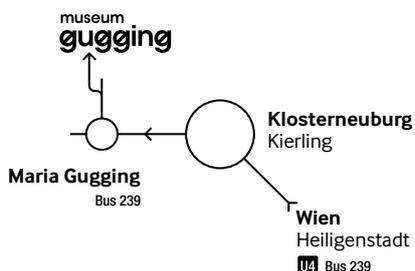
Jean Dubuffet travelled to Belgium in January 1949 to spend some time with to his art dealer friend Geert van Bruaene. He took advantage of being there to visit this center (in the commune of Schaerbeek), where he met Dr. Jean Titeca. Between the time of their meeting and 1971, Dr. Titeca went on to entrust him with works produced by three of his former patients: a number of drawings by Victor Waedemon, five compositions by Germaine Crohain and two notebooks drawn up by Annette Libotte. The neuropsychiatrist also gave him the addresses of several fellow doctors, who however failed to cooperate with Dubuffet's researching.

Victor Waedemon (? – 1945), Belgium

We know nothing of the life of Victor Waedemon prior to his stay in the neuropsychiatric unit in Brussels, where he is interned from 1936 until his death in 1945. Suffering from senile dementia, he experiences euphoric and delirious phases. His abstract and decorative compositions are carried out in lead and coloring pencils.

Anfahrtsplan

GPS
48°18'48.82"N
16°15'30.90"E



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Wir danken

PROF. DR. HELMUT ZAMBO

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