

THE  
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**Recent acquisitions, Musée Fabre,  
Montpellier (2004–2022)**

# Recent acquisitions, Musée Fabre, Montpellier (2004–2022)



**F**IFTEEN YEARS AFTER its reopening in 2007, following a major renovation campaign, the Musée Fabre continues to be a lively place of constant renewal: temporary exhibitions accompanied by inventive cultural mediation have helped build loyalty among an ever-increasing number of visitors. The permanent collections have also been completely reinvigorated thanks to a targeted and proactive purchasing policy. If today the Musée Fabre is a major institution that forms part of the rich mosaic of French museums, it is firstly due to the unfailing commitment of the Métropole de Montpellier with the support of the French State and the Region through the Fonds du patrimoine and the Languedoc-Roussillon and then the Occitanie Fonds regional d'acquisition des musées (FRAM). Secondly, it is thanks to the support of patrons such as the Friends of the Musée Fabre Association and the Fondation d'entreprise. The acquisitions made have reinforced the major themes of the museum's collection, and respect the spirit of its great historic donors, François-Xavier Fabre, Antoine Valedau and Alfred Bruyas. They include works from the Italian seicento, the French seventeenth century, the Neo-classical movement (so prevalent in Montpellier), the nineteenth-century academic art of Alexandre Cabanel, works by Frédéric Bazille and the beginnings of Impressionism, Symbolism and modern art around the emblematic figures of Jean Hugo and

Installation view of the Galerie des Griffons, Musée Fabre, Montpellier, 2020.

Germaine Richier, who are so closely linked to Languedoc. For more than two decades now, the Musée Fabre has turned its focus towards contemporary art, exploring the different paths of post-war abstraction, the Supports/Surfaces movement (many members of which attended the Montpellier School of Fine Arts) and more – all artists who have challenged notions of materiality and revealed the essential components of painting. This collection would not have been possible without the generosity of the artists themselves, such as Pierre and Colette Soulagés, who donated a significant number of works to the museum in 2005. The selection presented here highlights works across the entire museum, but also highlights some key pieces: paintings and drawings by Bazille, *Landscape with a river god*, a fragment of *Venus and Adonis* by Nicolas Poussin, a painting donated by Fabre in 1825, with which it was happily reunited in 2010, and the exceptional *Lamentation over the dead Christ* by Leonello Spada. These last two works have been listed as masterpieces of national heritage by the Ministry of Culture.

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**MUSÉE FABRE, MONTPELLIER**

**Recent acquisitions, Musée Fabre**

**1. Lamentation over the dead Christ, by Leonello Spada. c.1610–11. Oil on canvas, 120 by 158 cm.**

*Oeuvre d'intérêt patrimonial majeur, purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon and various sponsors, 2012, inv. no.2012.10.1.*

Trained in Bologna, Leonello Spada (1576–1622) had the opportunity to discover the major principles of Caravaggio's art very early on, both in Rome and in Malta. This poignant *Lamentation*, from the Chigi collection, is a radical example of this. The artist successfully blends a frank naturalism and a very sober palette with a monumentality in the composition and figures that gives an almost classical character to this touching scene.

**2. Judith and Holofernes, by Filippo Vitale. c.1635. Oil on canvas, 126 by 154 cm.**

*Gift of Didier Malka, 2020, inv. no.2020.34.1.*

From the beginning of his career, Filippo Vitale (1585–1650) was deeply influenced by Caravaggio's stay in Naples, of which this *Judith and Holofernes* is a distant echo. In this elegant and colourful work, the figure of the heroine also reveals the painter's evolution towards a more brilliant art, under the influence of Massimo Stanzione and Jusepe de Ribera. Vitale also took inspiration from Ribera in the outrageous, grimacing howl of his Holofernes.

**3. Martyrdom of St Agatha, by Andrea Vaccaro. c.1635–40. Oil on canvas, 122 by 159 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2013, inv. no.2013.16.1.*

This dramatic composition offers an interpretation of Caravaggio's lesson tempered

by the noble, idealised features of the saint, reminiscent of Guido Reni's ecstatic faces, and by the rich blue of her dress. Andrea Vaccaro (1604–70) reveals here the multiple influences that affected Neapolitan painting during the 1630s.

**4. Death of St Joseph, by Bernardo Cavallino. c.1635–40. Oil on canvas, 46.5 by 36 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and various sponsors, 2015, inv. no.2015.4.1.*

This small devotional painting is one of the earliest works by the Neapolitan artist Bernardo Cavallino (1616–56). The moving composition is bathed in unfathomable darkness, awakened by the divine light summoned by this young, beardless Christ. Despite this austerity, the pictorial touch is modulated with virtuosity and the colouring is both simple and lively, already revealing the extent of the talent of this painter.

**5. A coastal landscape with shipwrecks and ruins, by Salvator Rosa. c.1637.**

**Oil on canvas, 73.8 by 163.5 cm.**

*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2019, inv. no.2019.16.1.*

This great coastal panoramic landscape was made very early in the career of Salvator Rosa (1615–73). The painting's large masses are defined by a disturbing chiaroscuro, enhanced by the strange and fantastic forms of beached ships and ancient ruins. In the foreground, the workers' colourful outfits enliven the composition. Under the influence of Claude Lorrain, this tormented sensibility was to give way to landscapes with a warmer light and more classical composition.





**6. *Venus and Adonis*, by Nicolas Poussin. c.1625–26. Oil on canvas, 74.5 by 199 cm.**

*Gift of F.-X. Fabre, 1825, inv. 825.1.171, and Oeuvre d'intérêt patrimonial majeur, purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon and various sponsors, 2010, inv. no.2010.14.1.*

The acquisition in 2010 of the *Landscape with a river god* from the Patti Birch collection made it possible to reunite this fragment with the *Venus and Adonis* donated by François-Xavier Fabre to the Montpellier museum in 1825, so reinstating the original scale of this composition from Nicolas Poussin's (1594–1665) youth, which features seductive neo-Venetian colouring. The painting, originally an overdoor, was one of the first purchases made by Cassiano dal Pozzo from his young protégé.

**7. *The fall of Phaeton*, by Sébastien Bourdon. c.1636–42. Oil on canvas, 137 by 170 cm.**

*Purchase, 2018, inv. no.2018.9.1.*

Through its acquisitions, the Musée Fabre is very keen to offer the most complete presentation of the art of Sébastien Bourdon (1616–71), a native of Montpellier. This vast mythological composition, inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, offers a beautiful synthesis between an elegiac subject and the sensuous charm of the palette. Undoubtedly executed during or just after his Roman sojourn of 1636–37, it reveals the influence of the young Poussin on the young Bourdon, and, through him, of Venetian colouring.

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8. *St Paul healing the sick and exorcising a possessed man*, by Eustache Le Sueur. 1645–46. Oil on canvas, 175 by 137.5 cm.

*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2018, inv. no.2018.25.1.*

This painting by Eustache Le Sueur (1616–55), his reception piece for the Paris painters' corporation, was acquired by Lucien Bonaparte in the early nineteenth century. In this very austere composition, inspired by Raphael's cartoons of the *Acts of the Apostles*, Le Sueur reveals his break from the sinuous graces of his master, Simon Vouet, and thus lays down one of the first milestones of Parisian Atticism.

9. *Bust of Jean Deydé*, by Christophe Veyrier. 1684. Marble, 50 by 35 by 23.5 cm.

*Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and the FRAM Occitanie, 2017, inv. no.2017.15.1.*

This bust is one of the few remnants of the prestigious marble ensemble, dismantled during the Revolution, that the magistrate Jean Deydé commissioned to adorn his funeral chapel in the Cathedral of St Pierre, Montpellier. Under the direction of Pierre Puget, architect of the project, Christophe Veyrier (1637–89) carved this extremely expressive bust as well as that of Deydé's wife, Catherine d'Ortholan, which was acquired by the Musée Fabre in 2000.

10. *Anne Melon*, by Jean Ranc. 1702. Oil on canvas, 147 by 116 cm.

11. *Joseph Bonnier*, by Jean Ranc. 1702. Oil on canvas, 146 by 116 cm.

*Purchases with the support of the FRAM Occitanie, 2017, inv. nos.2017.12.1 and 2017.12.2.*

Trained in Montpellier in the workshop of his father, Antoine, Jean Ranc (1674–1735) perfected his skills in Paris with Hyacinthe Rigaud before launching his career as a portraitist in 1700. It was probably on the occasion of their wedding that Ranc painted the emphatic portraits of his compatriot Joseph Bonnier and his wife, Anne Melon. Bonnier, who was to become the seventh richest man in the kingdom, was the father of the famous collector Joseph II Bonnier, Baron de la Mosson. Following his reception at the Academy, Ranc exhibited the portrait of Joseph at the Salon of 1704.

12. *Offering to Priapus*, by Jean Raoux. 1720. Oil on canvas, 91.5 by 74 cm.

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2010, inv. no.2010.9.1.*

Trained in Antoine Ranc's workshop in Montpellier, Jean Raoux (1677–1734) won the Grand Prix in Paris in 1704 and then, after a long stay in Italy, was admitted to the Academy in 1717, on the same day as Jean-Antoine Watteau. This small painting, from the collection of the Marquis de Choiseul, evokes with a libertine humour an ancient



ritual promising fertility to a young wife. In a vast palace depicted in pearly tones, Raoux offers a rich vision of Antiquity, enhanced by richly coloured hangings, a ewer and a gleaming cassalette and flowers painted with the skill of a miniaturist.

13. *Masterpiece of craftsmanship: rattle*, by Marc David Pascal Bazille. 1782. Gilded silver, length 13.5 cm.

*Purchase, 2007, inv. no.2007.11.1.*

This exceptionally preserved rattle, made of silver gilt, is a masterpiece of craftsmanship that resulted in its creator, Marc David Pascal Bazille (1762–1814), receiving the title of master goldsmith in 1782. Beneath its whistle, shaped like a human face, this object features the master's distinctive hallmark, the last representative of one of the most eminent dynasties of the Languedoc goldsmithery.

14. *Display jar*, by the workshop of Pierre Favier the Younger. c.1650–60. Tin-glazed earthenware and polychrome grand feu decoration, 46 by 35.5 by 26 cm.

*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2013, inv. no.2013.8.1.*

This display jar is an example of the type of decorative earthenware ceramics that would have furnished the high shelves of an apothecary alongside trivets, pillboxes and jars for storing medicines. The Favier pottery works, which had imported its expertise to Montpellier from Venice, supplied many pharmacies with pots featuring their trademark royal iconography, copied from engravings.

15. *Silver covered bowl*, by Jacques II Bazille. 1741–42. Silver, 12.5 by 17 cm.

*Purchase with the support of FRAM Occitanie, 2021, inv. no.2021.17.1.*

Reflecting the refinement achieved by master silversmiths in Languedoc, this silver bowl is remarkable for its decoration. Its triangular handles incorporate a chiselled bust of a man framed by two dolphins and its doucine-moulded cover, edged with gadrooned and beaded borders, is decorated with lambrequins terminating in florets that have a matt finish, characteristic of the Regency style. A circular knob decorated with a woman's profile in the Antique style delicately crowns this masterpiece.



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16. *The paddle game*, by Jean Honoré Fragonard. c.1760–65. Oil on canvas, 75.5 by 99 cm.

17. *The seesaw*, by Jean Honoré Fragonard. c.1760–65. Oil on canvas, 75.5 by 99 cm. *Trésors Nationaux*, transfer from the Musée du Louvre to the Musée Fabre; the acquisition of these works was made possible thanks to the patronage of Webhelp, 2022, inv. no.2022.10.1 and inv. no.2022.10.2.

The appearance in 2017 of these two unknown paintings, their classification as National Treasures, their acquisition by the Musée du Louvre and their generous transfer to the Musée Fabre allowed works by Jean Honoré Fragonard (1732–1806) to be shown in Montpellier for the first time. These paintings, from the Bergeret de Grandcourt collection, were probably produced at the end of the artist's stay at the French Academy de France in Rome. In a setting of wild, poetic nature, inspired by the abandoned gardens of the Villa d'Este where the artist had spent the summer of 1760, they show the gallant games of young Italian peasants in folklore costume. These are the two most ambitious landscapes that Fragonard produced at this early stage of his career.

18. *Sarah presenting Hagar to Abraham*, by Joseph Marie Vien. 1749. Oil on canvas, 98 by 134.5 cm.

*Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine*, 2015, inv. no.2015.21.1.

The collection of the Musée Fabre is enhanced by a beautiful set of paintings by the Montpellier artist Joseph Marie Vien (1716–1809). This biblical subject, created by the artist during his stay at the French Academy in Rome, illustrates his break from the Parisian rocaille aesthetic. Enriched by the naturalism of the Bolognese painters of the seventeenth century, and in emulation of the brilliant Classicism of Pompeo Batoni, Vien's rigorous setting presents an easily accessible scene, enhanced by draperies in shimmering colours.

19. *Pyrrhus seeing Philoctetes in his lair on the island of Lemnos*, by Pierre Henri de Valenciennes. 1789. Oil on canvas, 68.4 by 98.9 cm.

*Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and the FRAM Occitanie*, 2019, inv. no.2019.32.1.

In 1789, for his second appearance at the Salon, Pierre Henri de Valenciennes (1750–1819) exhibited this ambitious historical landscape telling the story of Philoctetes, a favourite narrative of artists of the Neo-classical period. The landscape naturally guides the eye from the ancient ship on the left to the two heroes, Pyrrhus and Ulysses, approaching Philoctetes on the right, who is relegated to a dark cave. With the vegetation, the palm tree, the high mountain and the clouds, Valenciennes builds an original landscape that is both exotic and sublime.

20. *Bust of Jean-Baptiste Riban*, by Augustin Pajou. 1793. Terracotta, 54.5 by 48 by 32.5 cm.

*Purchase*, 2005, inv. no.2005.11.1.

During the Time of Terror Augustin Pajou (1730–1809), a former sculptor to Louis XVI, moved to Montpellier, probably to escape the political turmoil of the capital but also to care for his sick wife. While in the city, he created a multitude of sculpted portraits of members of Montpellier society. The model for this bust, Jean-Baptiste Riban, was the son of Maurice Riban, a perfumer who housed Pajou. Passionate about the arts, Jean-Baptiste was heavily involved in the life of the Société des Beaux-Arts and the school of drawing in Montpellier.

21. *Dying Achilles*, by Jean-Baptiste Giraud. 1788. Plaster, 55 by 83 by 37 cm.

*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre*, 2021, inv. no.2021.28.1.

Jean-Baptiste Giraud (1752–1830) presented this plaster for his acceptance by the Academy, before creating the marble version as his reception piece (Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence), which he exhibited at the Salon of 1789. The figure of the hero is based on a masterly synthesis of ancient sculpture and anatomical study. Achilles' cry of pain is

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a superb response to the famous *Laocoön*, an ancient group unanimously admired in the Europe of the Enlightenment for the intensity of its anguished expression, which in no way detracts from its nobility.

**22. *Arria and Paetus*, by François André Vincent. c.1787. Oil on canvas, 102.8 by 124.5 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2014, inv. no.2014.5.1.*

**23. *Renaud and Armide*, by François André Vincent. c.1787. Oil on canvas, 104 by 122.5 cm.**

*Purchase, 2021, inv. no.2021.29.1.*

François André Vincent (1746–1816) has been well represented in Montpellier since acquisitions of his works by Fabre in the early nineteenth century. Purchased successively in 2014 and 2021, these two pendants are now reunited and reveal the breadth of the painter's repertoire. Vincent depicts two love scenes; one, from ancient Rome, takes place in a dungeon setting and shows Arria stabbing herself with a dagger to exhort her husband, Paetus, who had been condemned to death, to commit suicide with courage. The other, inspired by the modern epic *Jerusalem Delivered* by Torquato Tasso, shows Armide ready to faint after confessing her love to her rival Renaud. Vincent invents a bright, colourful Middle Ages, heralding the inventions of the troubadour movement.

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**24. *Commode 'sauteuse'*. Southern French. c.1774–92. Wood and marble, 92 by 130 by 65 cm.**

*Purchase, 2019, inv. no.2019.26.1.*

This chest of drawers, of a characteristic late-eighteenth-century form, is unusual in the decoration of its façade with topographical scenes: on a blue lacquer background the Place Royale du Peyrou, Montpellier, can be recognised, indicating that this piece of furniture was probably commissioned to mark its opening c.1772. Similar panels form part of the decoration of a prie-dieu owned by the Société archéologique de Montpellier.



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**25. View of Florence and the Arno, by Joseph Wright of Derby. c.1789–93. Oil on canvas, 58.4 by 76.5 cm.**  
*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, A. d'Espous and the Société Jean Larnaudie 2017, inv. no.2017.1.1.*  
 Florence at the time of the Grand Tour, home of François-Xavier Fabre (1766–1837) for thirty-two years, plays an important role in the history of the museum's collections. This visionary landscape by Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–97), depicting the subtle light of dawn on the city as seen from the Parco delle Cascine, evokes the international appeal of Tuscany to artists and travellers in the late eighteenth century. The acquisition will make the artist better known in France, since he is poorly represented in the country's museums.

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**26. View of the Arno valley, in Florence, by Louis Gauffier. 1795. Oil on canvas, 82 by 110 cm.**  
*Purchase with the support of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2016, inv. no.2016.21.1.*  
 After winning the Grand Prix de l'Académie in 1784 and training as a history painter while boarding in Rome, Louis Gauffier (1762–1801) converted to the art of landscape painting when he moved to Florence in 1793. This vast panorama, dated to 1795, is the first example he completed. An accurate topographer, he has created a rigorously constructed view of the Oltrarno district, to which he has nevertheless given an idyllic atmosphere by placing at its centre a group of Italian women enjoying the golden light of the end of the day.

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**27. Self-portrait as a youth in a frock coat, by Pierre-Paul Prud'hon. c.1784. Brown ink and pen on paper, 21 by 17 cm.**  
*Purchase, 2017, inv. no.2017.26.1*  
 Pierre Paul Prud'hon (1758–1823), a contemporary of Fabre, has signed this heavily inked self-portrait. Despite his youthful appearance, it appears that the artist drew this portrait between 1784 and 1788. He had won the Prix de Rome des Etats de Bourgogne and was no doubt intended, by depicting himself in a wig and formal dress, to create an image of himself that corresponded to the codes of official portraiture at the time.

**28. The return of Ulysses, by François-Xavier Fabre. 1799. Oil on canvas, 100.5 by 148 cm.**  
*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon and the association of the Friends of the Musée Fabre, 2006, inv. no.2006.4.1.*  
 Fabre's composition was probably inspired by an ancient terracotta relief and perhaps also an engraving by John Flaxman, both illustrating the same subject. The archaeological accuracy of the painting, notably in the depiction of the furniture and precious ceramics, does not alter its dramatic power, which is reinforced by a radical chiaroscuro in which a shaft of light falls directly on the nurse's startled eyes. The hanging in the background, a motif reminiscent of Nicolas Poussin's paintings, emphasises the silhouettes of the protagonists.

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29. *View of the Benedictine Abbey at Vallombrosa*, by Louis Gauffier. 1797. Oil on canvas, 84 by 116 cm. Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2008, inv. no.2008.1.1.

This painting belongs to a cycle of four illustrating the itinerary of tourists on the site of Vallombrosa Abbey (the others are in the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Philadelphia Museum of Art). An accurate portrait of a real place, the painting in the Musée Fabre is the first in the cycle and suggests the arrival at the abbey. The Renaissance building appears to be protected by a natural fortress of mountains and conifers. In the lower-right corner, Gauffier incorporates the picturesque detail of a group of priests enjoying a game of ball.

30. *Belisarius*, by François-Xavier Fabre. c.1789–1800. Pen, metallic ink and black ink, and metallic ink wash over graphite pencil drawing on laid paper, 20.5 by 15.1 cm.

*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2009, inv. no.2009.35.2*

This beautiful pen-and-ink study can be compared to Fabre's copy of a painting by his teacher, *Belisarius begging for alms*, exhibited by Jacques-Louis David at the 1784 Salon. This drawing, the pen-and-ink style of which perfectly conveys the moving intensity of the scene, testifies to Fabre's keen interest in his master's work.

31. *The martyrdom of St Agnes*, by François-Xavier Fabre. 1800–10. Pen and brown ink, and grey wash, over graphite lines, 57 by 48 cm.

*Purchase, 2017, inv. no.2017.24.1.*

This religious subject is the largest known drawing by Fabre. Although its squaring up, visible at the sides, suggest that it was made in preparation for an important commission, neither its context nor patron are known. St Agnes was condemned to the stake for having rejected the advances of the son of the prefect of Rome.

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32. *Undergrowth*, by Antoine Laurent Castellan. 1819. Black chalk, watercolour and white gouache highlights on paper, 14 by 19 cm.

33. *The peaks at dusk*, by Antoine Laurent Castellan. c.1828. Watercolour over black chalk lines on paper, 15.5 by 23.7 cm.

*Purchases with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2001, inv. no.2001.5.3 and inv. no.2001.5.1.*

Antoine Laurent Castellan (1722–1838), an artist from Montpellier and a friend of François-Xavier Fabre, trained in the studio of the famous Neo-classical landscape painter Pierre Henri de Valenciennes. Based in Fontainebleau, he conveyed in his drawings an already romantic sensitivity to the beauty of

this place, which would soon become a source of inspiration for the artists of the Barbizon School.

34. *Marquise Fanny Grimaldi*, by François-Xavier Fabre. 1804. Oil on canvas, 80 by 50 cm.

35. *Marquis Luigi Grimaldi della Pietra*, by François-Xavier Fabre. 1804. Oil on canvas, 80 by 50 cm.

*Gift of A. d'Espous and the Société Jean Larnaudie, 2021, inv. no.2021.6.1 and inv. no.2021.6.2.*

In 1802 Fanny Grimaldi was married by Napoleon to his orderly officer Giovanni Battista Grimaldi, who died eight months later. His younger brother Luigi fell in love



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with his sister-in-law; their engagement was celebrated, but this time it was Fanny who died, in February 1804. It was in this context that Luigi asked Fabre in Florence to paint these two moving portraits, whose allegorical dimension evokes the unfortunate fate of the models. Fanny, wrapped in a shroud, is about to step into her husband's tomb, but Love tries to hold her back. After her death, a solitary Luigi meditates on the tomb of his beloved in the Tuscan countryside. The sentimental poetry of these two paintings and the prominent role given to nature reveal a rare pre-Romantic sensibility in Fabre.

**36. *Conjugal tenderness*, by Louis Léopold Boilly. c.1807–10. Oil on wood, 52.5 by 43.5 cm.**

*Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2021, inv. no.2021.5.1.*

This scene of a bourgeois interior illustrates a subject of great originality, namely a wife inviting her husband to touch her abdomen, in anticipation of a happy event.

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By stressing tenderness, Boilly depicts the sentimental values of a middle-class couple in love in the aftermath of the Revolution, as opposed to the libertinism of the old aristocracy. The woman's exposed breast perhaps suggests a touch of eroticism, unless it is an allusion to a new practice in the upper classes and bourgeoisie, breastfeeding by the mother rather than a wet-nurse.

**37. *Mont Saint-Michel in a storm*, by Théodore Gudin. 1830. Oil on canvas, 97 by 138 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Occitanie, 2017, inv. no.2017.27.1.*

Trained at the Royal Naval College in Angoulême, Théodore Gudin (1802–80) had direct experience of the sea since he spent three years in the American navy. Subsequently choosing a career as a painter, he trained with Jacques Louis David, Antoine Jean Gros and Anne Louis Girodet-Trioson, and became the major representative of the marine genre in the Romantic period. In this view of Mont Saint-Michel, Gudin takes advantage of the sky's ominous chiaroscuro, an impressive low-angle view and the spectacle of the rising tide to make this landscape a true Romantic drama.

**38. *Bust of Henry Vassal-Fox, 3rd Baron Holland*, by Joseph Nollekens. 1799. Marble, 69 by 43 by 18 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Occitanie, 2018, inv. no.2018.10.1.*

During his Grand Tour through Europe, Lord Holland became a regular customer of Fabre and Louis Gauffier in Florence. The Musée Fabre owns a portrait by Gauffier of Holland's wife, Elizabeth Vassall. This bust in the Antique style was commissioned by Holland's uncle, Charles James Fox, leader of the Whig party during the Napoleonic wars. It adorned a temple of friendship in his residence at St Anne's Hill House, Surrey, in which Fox assembled a set of effigies of his relatives and political allies, inspired by the examples of Viscount Cobham and the Duke of Bedford.

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**39. *Women at the fountain*, by Dominique Papety. c.1839–40. Oil on canvas, 96 by 135 cm.**

*Gift of Marie-Hélène Yseult Sabatier, 2010, inv. no.2010.17.1.*

A resident at the French Academy at the Villa Medici, Rome, when Ingres was its director, Dominique Papety (1815–49) produced this painting for his third consignment of works for Paris. Rather than history or mythology, it was everyday Antiquity that the artist sought to illustrate here: the colourful architecture, the Greek vases and the chitons with linear folds inspired by archaic Greek sculpture are all details that offer a fresh image of Antiquity, on the eve of the blossoming of the Greek revival.

**40. *Mariuccia*, by Henri Lehmann. 1841. Oil on canvas, 96.4 by 71 cm.**

*Purchase, 2016, inv. no.2016.17.1.*

Born in Kiel, Germany, Henri Lehmann (1814–82) moved to Paris at the age of seventeen to train as a painter in the studio of Ingres. The young student went to Rome in 1839 following his master's appointment as director of the Villa Medici. It was there that he painted this dazzling portrait of Mariana Cenci, nicknamed Mariuccia, a young Italian woman who posed for French artists. In this radiant image, Lehmann perfectly synthesises the Antique monumentality taught by Ingres and the picturesque beauty of Italian costume.

**41. *Countess Victoire de Clermont-Tonnerre*, by Alexandre Cabanel. 1863.**

**Oil on canvas, 182.5 by 138 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of FRAM Occitanie, 2021, inv. no.2021.2.1.*

This portrait represents the Countess of Clermont-Tonnerre, one of the ladies-in-waiting of Princess Clotilde of Savoy at the court of Napoleon III. Cabanel takes up the principles of Ingres' portraits; by highlighting the features of his model, he gives a sober elegance as well as an assertive intensity to the face of the countess. Cabanel was particularly satisfied with this painting and exhibited it at both the 1863 Salon and the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris.

**42. *Michelangelo in his studio, visited by Julius II*, by Alexandre Cabanel. 1856.**

**Oil on canvas, 63.3 by 103.1 cm.**

*Purchase, 2015, inv. no.2015.10.1.*

In the early nineteenth century, troubadour and then Romantic painting popularised the taste for paintings of historical anecdotes illustrating the exemplary lives of artists. This work from Alexandre Cabanel's (1823–89) early career in Paris, shortly after a stay at the Villa Medici, is in this vein. In a

deliberate anachronism, the artist depicts an elderly Michelangelo contemplating the masterpieces of his career (*Moses*, *Pietà* and *Slaves* in the Musée du Louvre, *The Last Judgment* and the plan for St Peter's basilica, Rome), while Julius II and his court enter the studio on the right.

**43. *Little Italian street singer*, by Frédéric Bazille. 1866. Oil on canvas, 131 by 98 cm.**  
Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine and the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2002, inv. no.2002.5.1.

A rare example of a Parisian scene by Frédéric Bazille (1841–70), this work, which shows Manet's influence, depicts a young female travelling musician from Italy. The unusual low-angle composition, focused on the full-length figure of the young girl and her worried gaze, lends a particular tension to the painting, amplified by the sketchy and nervous treatment of the background. The modernity of the painting lies not only in the treatment of the subject, capturing a changing city, but also the vigorous brushstrokes and bold colours.

**44. *Head of a faun*, by Alexandre Cabanel. 1860. Charcoal, stump and white highlights on paper, 52.9 by 40.8 cm.**

Gift of the Talabardon & Gautier gallery, 2020, inv. no.2020.29.1

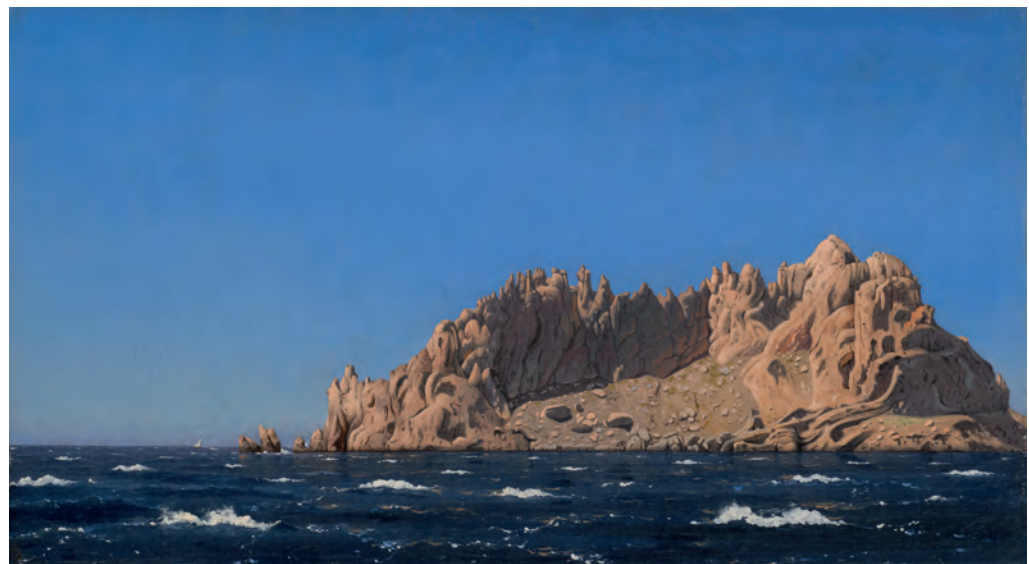
This is one of the preparatory studies for Alexandre Cabanel's painting *Nymph abducted by a faun* (1860; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lille), one of the most recurrent

themes in the history of Western art. Executed in charcoal in a large format, it focuses on the expressive features of the sculptural figure of the faun.

**45. *View of Maire Island*, by Carl Frederik Emmanuel Larsen. 1854. Oil on canvas, 32 by 56.5 cm.**

Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2020, inv. no.2020.2.1.

A student of Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg in Copenhagen, the Danish artist Carl Frederik Emmanuel Larsen (1823–59) specialised in marine painting. He undertook voyages to the Faroe Islands and Iceland in 1845, then travelled to England, the Netherlands, Belgium and France from 1852. He was in Marseille in 1854 where he created this astonishing view of the jaggedly rocky Maire Island, off the coast of the village of Les Goudes, near Marseille. This painting is an important milestone in artists' 'invention' of the French southern landscape, in the same way that Gustave Courbet discovered the Languedoc in the same year.



## Recent acquisitions, Musée Fabre

46. *Flowers*, by Frédéric Bazille. c.1870. Oil on canvas, 63 by 48.5 cm.

Purchase, 2004, inv. no.2004.13.2.

Following the model of Manet's still lifes, Bazille combines a vase of flowers with cut flowers in this depiction of a bouquet, structuring the composition along two axes, a division reinforced by the luminous treatment of the background. A reflection of a bouquet in the making – or just finished, as is the case in Bazille's *Young woman with peonies* in the Musée Fabre – this still life is animated with an astonishing economy of means, giving it an undeniable freshness and delicate naturalness.

47. *Naked young man lying on the grass*, by Frédéric Bazille. 1870. Oil on canvas, 147.5 by 138 cm.

Purchase with the support of the Fonds du Patrimoine and the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2002, inv. no.2002.5.2.

This canvas, produced in the year of Bazille's early death, is the result of the layering of two unfinished compositions. The earlier, in the lower part, shows two women in a garden, one of them sitting on the ground. The second, forming the upper part, shows a naked young man sleeping on the grass. The scene is undoubtedly the Domaine de Méric in Montpellier, a family property where the artist regularly spent the summer. Moving away from *plein-air* effects, Bazille chooses instead to express dreamlike and melancholy personal feeling.

48. *The painter René Andreau*, by George Daniel de Monfreid. 1895.

Oil on canvas, 97.2 by 130.2 cm.

Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre, 2020, inv. no.2020.19.1.

The painter and collector George Daniel de Monfreid (1856–1929), originally from Roussillon, became close to the Nabis and Paul Gauguin while in Paris. His work possesses a sonorous palette and pronounced taste for ornament, as in this portrait of his friend René Andreau, a painter from Paul Verlaine's circle. Amidst a sumptuous display of fabric and colour, the model's face stands out against the vibrant blue background of an oriental carpet. The young artist poses with ostentatious languor, a cigarette in his hand, in a very turn-of-the-century manner, his painter's attributes almost hidden under the cushion at the right-hand end of the sofa.

49. *Orpheus*, by Odilon Redon. c.1910. Oil on card, 63.3 by 61 cm.

Gift of Jacqueline Englert-Marchal, 2009, inv. 2009.38.1.

Considered by many to be the greatest French Symbolist painter, Odilon Redon (1840–1916) repeatedly explored the subject of Orpheus, faithfully following the account given by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*. The square format of the work focuses on an indeterminate space around the main motif of the hero's head, which, after being torn from his body by angry maenads, floats on the waters,

encircled with a laurel wreath. All of the mystery and dreaminess that characterise Redon's production emanate from this work.

50. *Girls in green*, by Auguste Chabaud. c.1907. Oil on canvas, 80 by 65 cm.

Purchase, 2018, inv. 2018.2.1.

Originally from Nîmes, Auguste Chabaud (1882–1955) completed his artistic education in Paris with workshop companions who would give birth to Fauvism. He did not participate in the scandalous 'Cage aux Fauves' at the 1905 Salon d'automne, but joined them at the Salon des Indépendants the following year. During this period in Paris, he was particularly interested in the nightlife of Montmartre and especially in brothels. With heavily made-up eyes, three prostitutes are rendered in a brutal play of colours. The violence of Chabaud's brushstrokes, like that of his themes, brings him close to contemporary German expressionism.



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51. *Two footballers*, by Jean Hugo. 1921. Gouache on paper, 30.5 by 25 cm. Purchase with the support of FRAM Occitanie, 2021, inv. no.2021.15.1. The Musée Fabre has been working for several years to showcase the work of Jean Hugo (1894–1984), great-grandson of Victor Hugo, who settled near Montpellier in the early 1930s. This is one of the artist’s rare early works, a series of small-format gouaches made in 1921, the poetic strangeness and refined colours of which reflect the influence of Henri Rousseau as well as that of Picasso.

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52. *Panic*, by Jean Hugo. 1930. Tempera on canvas, 45 by 54 cm. Purchase with the support of DRAC Occitanie, 2022, inv. no.2022.8.1. Hugo painted this work at a turning point in his career, when he retired not far from Montpellier to a farmhouse on a vineyard that he had inherited from his grandmother, Aline Ménard-Dorian. Striking in its strangeness as well as in the clarity of its colours, this serious and enigmatic scene is part of a series executed in tempera, a return by the artist to this technique in the manner of the primitive painters.



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**53. Paul Eluard, by Valentine Hugo. 1932. Pastel on paper, 47 by 30 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of FRAM Occitanie, 2019, inv. no.2019.4.1.*

Valentine Hugo (1887–1968), wife of the painter Jean Hugo, was one of the muses of the Surrealist movement in the 1930s. Close to Jean Cocteau, a friend of the composer Erik Satie and photographed by Man Ray, from 1925 she became close to the group of Surrealist writers. She produced several portraits of them, notably André Breton as well as the poet Paul Éluard, who is shown in this mysterious work, imbuing her subjects with a strong suggestive power.

**54. Marie Bell en Phèdre, by Jean Hugo. c.1946. Folding screen with two leaves, pastel on panel, each panel 122 by 49 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of DRAC Occitanie, 2022, inv. no.2022.2.1.*

Marie-Jeanne Bellon-Downey (1900–85), known as Marie Bell, played the greatest female roles in the theatre with such talent that André Malraux held her up as an example of 'French genius'. This screen is a sensitive reflection of the long friendship forged between the actress and Jean Hugo. They met in 1938, on the occasion of the commemoration of the centenary of *Ruy Blas*, a drama by Victor Hugo, the artist's great-grandfather.

**55. Composition, by Hans Hartung. 1945. Oil on paper mounted on plywood, 73 by 50 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2009, inv. no.2009.4.1.*

During the 1930s Hans Hartung (1904–89) developed a pictorial method described as 'calculated spontaneity': This painting, which seems to transcribe spontaneity and speed, is in fact based on preliminary drawings enlarged and transferred onto the canvas. *Composition* was produced in the year of his first solo exhibition at Lydia Conti, which marked the beginning of the international recognition Hartung would receive with the Grand Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1960. The work reveals a graphic repertoire to which the painter would frequently return, comprised of signs of a personal rhythmic calligraphy, made of jerks and twists on vertical chromatic bands.

**56. Painting, by Simon Hantaï. 1958. Oil on canvas, 232.5 by 214 cm.**

*Purchase, 2002, inv. no.2002.9.1.*

A Hungarian artist who settled in France from 1949 and who was close to André Breton in his early days, Simon Hantaï (1922–2008) quickly moved away from Surrealist tutelage to develop a new approach to pictorial practice that aimed to reintroduce automatic processes. Influenced by Jackson Pollock, Hantaï moved closer to lyrical expression, and during the 1950s produced a set of 'writings' in which the artist reveals an underlying coloured layer with a gesture that removes the black pigment covering the canvas, a method evocative of action painting.

**57. The bat, by Germaine Richier. 1946. Cleaned natural bronze, 91 by 91 by 52 cm.**

*Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 1996, inv. no.96.10.1.*

The 'first baroque appearance' for Georges Limbour, this sculpture, which depicts a hybrid half-woman, half-animal being, uses new processes that elevate the theatricality already present in Richier's work. By using plaster-coated wire to cover the iron frame, Richier (1902–59) reinforces the jagged and uneven aspect of the surface, the effects of holes in the material. The cast, in cleaned natural bronze, gives it an unprecedented animation and impression of sacredness. The iconography of the bat, a skeleton of which the artist had in her studio collection, was also the subject of a set of engravings by Richier.

**58. Fencer with mask, by Germaine Richier. 1943. Bronze, 105 by 70 by 33 cm.**

*Purchase, 2006, inv. no.2006.19.1.*

Executed during the Second World War, this sculpture is part of a period of transition in the artist's work between figures made in a realistic tradition and the hybrid beings that first appear in 1944. *Fencer with mask* shows the continuation of Richier's research on the depiction of the human body as well as on the rendering of bronze: the female figure, in a dynamic posture, shamelessly displays its uneven surface. While it has a solid base that confers a certain stability to the body, its upper section exudes movement and flexibility. The artist suggests action without depicting it: there is a subtle balance between the weight of the bronze and the lightness of the blow to come.

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59. *60-T-26*, by Martin Barré. 1960. Oil on canvas, 140 by 130 cm. Gift of the Fondation d'entreprise du Musée Fabre with the support of Société Générale, 2009, inv. no.2009.2.1.

A distinctive participant in the post-war abstract adventure, Martin Barré (1924–93), who trained in Nantes before moving to Paris in 1948, successively used brushes, palette knives, putty knives, sliced paint tubes and spray cans. This work demonstrates a controlled composition, playing with space as much as with forms: these break the preparation into a fine skein of blue, red and yellow inscribed on the edge of the painting. The exploration of the periphery, which creates an imbalance within the canvas and takes into account the space beyond the work itself, is the artist's main line of research.

60. *Untitled*, by Claude Viallat. 1966. Oil on canvas, 80 by 150 cm. Purchase, 2008, inv. no.2008.10.1.

Claude Viallat (b.1936), an artist from Nîmes and co-founder of the Supports/Surfaces movement, turned to abstraction in the mid-1960s, stimulated by his discovery of contemporary American painting. He then engaged in a critical analysis of traditional pictorial codes by enumerating the different parameters that constitute a work. In 1966, he developed a pictorial system to which he remains faithful to this day and which allows him to get around the problem of representation: the infinitely repeated use of a form that is as neutral as possible, evoking a sponge, and which comes into contact with various supports, such as bed sheets or tent material. This painting is part of a set of fifty works donated by the artist to the Musée Fabre.

61. *Large pink space I*, by Vincent Bioulès. 1969. Glycerophtalic lacquer on canvas, 195 by 189.5 cm.

Gift of the association of the Friends of the Musée Fabre, 1995, inv. no.95.8.1.

Alongside the official path represented by the Second Prix de Rome, which he won in 1961, Vincent Bioulès (b.1939), who would become one of the founders of ABC Production and Supports/Surfaces, was interested in the art of his time and particularly in the work of American artists living in Paris. The shock caused by the paintings of Ellsworth Kelly and Helen Frankenthaler exhibited at the 1966 Venice Biennale reinforced the influence of colour field painting on his research. At the end of the 1960s, he began to paint large-format works with glycerophtalic lacquer, an industrial paint that, once diluted, has the sensuous qualities of watercolour, as in this painting.

62. *Transparency*, by Geneviève Asse. 1973–74. Oil on canvas, 82.5 by 10.5 cm.

Gift of the artist, 2013, inv. no.2013.3.3.

During the 1960s Geneviève Asse (1923–2021) turned to abstraction, in which she explored light and the play of transparency: 'When the object was present, transparency interested me more than anything', she wrote. 'It is perhaps through it that I acquired the light'. A white line, evanescent and subtle, emerges in the white of the canvas, not pure but tinged with blue, grey and ochre. Samuel Beckett, whom Asse had met in 1943, particularly appreciated these white canvases, which he studied in the artist's studio. From 1980, Asse devoted herself exclusively to chromatic research on the blue that appears in the six other paintings by her in the Musée Fabre.

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63. *Untitled, 8 November 1967*, by Michel Parmentier. 1967. Lacquer on canvas, 245.5 by 229 cm.

Purchase, 2020, inv. no.2020.11.1.

Initially close to American abstraction, Michel Parmentier (1938–2000), co-founder of the Paris-based art group BMPT, has been creating a systematic and impersonal painting since 1965 as part of a deep institutional critique. In 1967, together with his associates, he publicly declared 'we are not painters' and sought to reach 'the zero degree of painting'. Whereas Buren executes vertical stripes that are 8.7 centimetres wide, Parmentier, during a short period of three years, painted canvases covered with monochrome horizontal stripes that are 38 centimetres high, which alternate with identical white stripes that follow a prior folding of the canvas.

64. *Frame*, by Pierre Buraglio. 1974. Wood, paint technique and thread, height 180 cm.

Purchase with the support of the FRAM Languedoc-Roussillon, 2015, inv. no.2015.14.1.

Close to the Supports/Surfaces movement, Pierre Buraglio (b.1939), a 'painter without a brush', has been working on poetising banal and everyday materials since his training at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, which he entered in 1959. Dedicating his life to activism between 1968 and 1973, he did not start painting again until 1974, the year of *Frame*. This work reflects on the notion of painting and reveals the support used by traditional painting, usually hidden, which here becomes the surface. The nylon threads stretched between the interior corners of the frame emphasise the space devoted to the environment of the painting, which fully incorporates the work.

65. *White*, by Simon Hantai. 1974. Oil on canvas, 236.5 by 207 cm.

Gift of Jean-Marie Bonnet in memory of Jean Fournier, 2006, inv. no.2006.10.1.

From the 1960s, Hantai worked on developing 'pliage (folding) as a method', developing several processes that give rise to various forms. In this painting, the painted fragments of multiple colours burst across the entire surface of the canvas, like an all-over pattern. The space left in reserve, the 'unpainted', becomes an active element of the painting. This work was donated to the Musée Fabre in memory of Jean Fournier, a great Parisian gallery owner who championed Hantai's work throughout his life.

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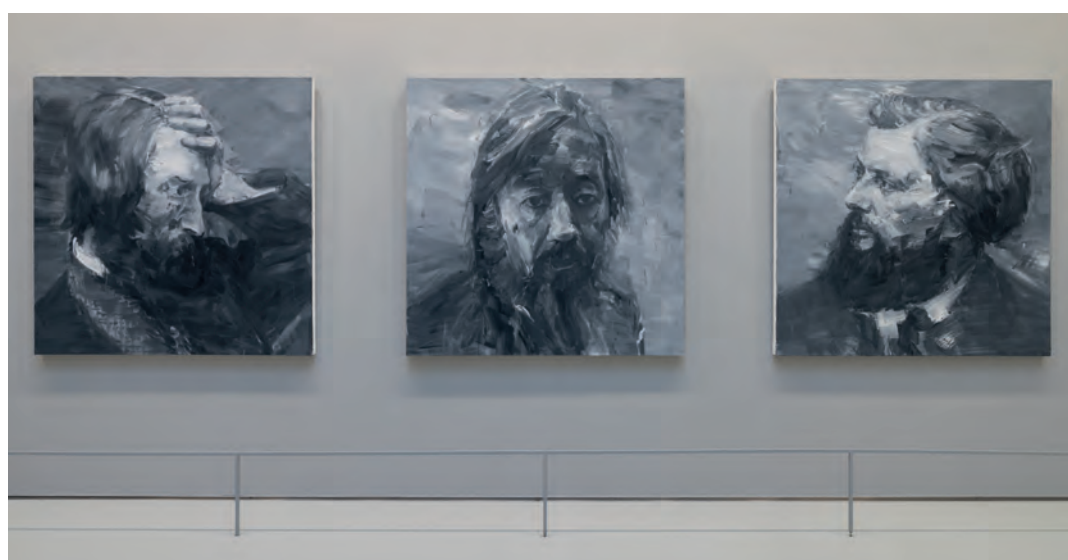
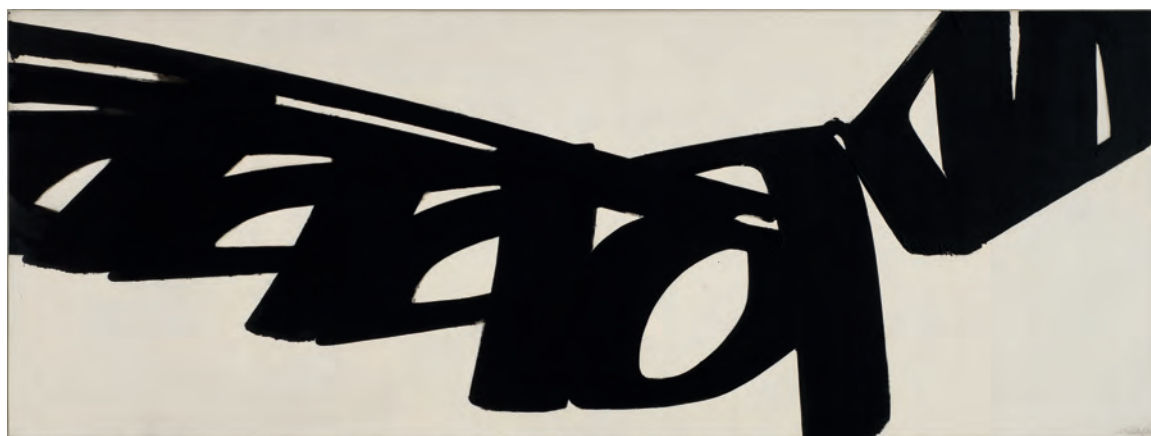


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66. *Painting* 162 x 114 cm, 27 March 1971, by Pierre Soulages. 1971. Oil on canvas, 162 by 114 cm.

*Gift of Pierre and Colette Soulages, 2005, inv. no.2005.12.6.*

The end of the 1960s marked an important turning point in the work of Pierre Soulages (1919–2022). The painter became more extreme in his practice, allowing himself only the dialogue of black and white. The formats developed horizontally while colour was spread uniformly, in areas of equal intensity. Soulages referred to his art of this period as ‘Cistercian asceticism’, which had a substantial impact on him during his childhood at Sainte-Foy-de-Conques Abbey. Described as ‘macrography’ by Harold Rosenberg, this work reflects Soulages’s perfectly mastered control of a dark flow of paint on the immaculate white of the canvas, which creates a single, monumental form.

67. *Painting* 163 x 434 cm, 28 December 1959, by Pierre Soulages. 1959. Oil on canvas, 163 by 434 cm.

*Gift of Pierre and Colette Soulages, 2005, inv. no.2005.12.2.*

Trained briefly at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and then in Montpellier during the war, Pierre Soulages moved back to Paris in 1946 and produced his first abstract canvases, made up of large areas of colour broken up by large straight black bars, which allow a few luminous halos to emerge within the canvas. He adopted house painters’ tools that he made himself, including broad knives, which he used to exaggerate his gestures. This element was fully realised during the 1950s, which saw the painter opt for the technique of scraping; he removed material to reveal both an underlying blue layer and the white of the preparation. In this way, Pierre Encrevé wrote, ‘matter, colour and form become inseparable’.

68. *Untitled*, by Pierrette Bloch. 1992. Knotted horsehair on foam board, 100 by 70 cm.

*Purchase, 2019, inv. no.2019.11.3.*

Fourteen works by Pierrette Bloch (1928–2017) entered the Musée Fabre’s collections in 2019. Trained in Paris and influenced by American minimalism, Bloch saw her approach as a discreet struggle, a ‘relentless’ resistance that led her to repeat the same gesture over and over again. While she introduced her long lines of Indian ink dots in the 1970s, her horsehair designs emerged in the 1990s following the earlier development of imposing meshes of rope and thread. Here, the horsehair is looped around a cardboard support, like writing, casting a soft shadow over a primordial place.

69. *The impossible encounter*, by Yan Pei-Ming. 2019. Oil on canvas, triptych, each panel 150 by 150 cm.

*Purchase with the support of the Fonds du patrimoine, the Dupuy de Parseval bank and private donors, 2022, inv. no.2022.13.1.*

In 1988, during a stay in Montpellier Yan Pei-Ming (b.1958), who was born in Shanghai and has lived in Dijon since 1980, discovered Gustave Courbet’s *The meeting*, a painting that is among the masterpieces of the Musée Fabre. This triptych, created as a tribute to the master of realism, is based on photographs of the artist and his patron Alfred Bruyas. At the centre of the three panels, the painter places his self-portrait, asserting his position as an artist and highlighting his contemporary solitude, as emphasised by the work’s title. Yan Pei-Ming’s painting, which displays great technical skill, is characterised by the frequent use of black and white, treated in an Expressionist vein.

The authors of the entries in this supplement are: Florence Hudowicz, Heritage curator; Maud Marron-Wojewodzki, Heritage curator; and Pierre Stépanoff, Heritage curator, Musée Fabre, Montpellier. All images in this supplement are © Musée Fabre de Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole; all photographs © Frédéric Jaulmes except no.7 © C2RMF Thomas Clot.