

BERNARD  
BUFFET  
GENIUS  
UNMASKED

OPERA GALLERY

# BERNARD BUFFET

## GENIUS UNMASKED

OPERA GALLERY  
SINGAPORE



Annabel and Bernard Buffet  
in Château l'Arc studio in 1963.  
© Luc Fournol



Bernard Buffet in his studio sitting in front of a painting of Château l'Arc's chapel in 1961.  
© Daniel Frasnay

# PREFACE

Considered as one of the most valued 20<sup>th</sup> century painters in France, French Expressionist Bernard Buffet (1928-1999) continues to be sought after by both collectors and admirers of his works. With solo exhibitions worldwide, including New York, Chicago, Palm Beach, Montreal, Vancouver, Tokyo, Osaka, Johannesburg, London, Amsterdam, Brussels, Berlin, Warsaw, Basel, Zurich, Geneva, Rome, Venice, Milan and Madrid, Buffet's artworks promoted the synthesis of modern pictorial forms with traditional techniques and subject matter. He attracted critical attention with his figurative paintings notably, his technique of 'schematisation' which is the systematic lengthening of the face. His body of work, with a restrained palette that consisted of primarily cold colours and black outlines in a parade of gaunt expressionist figures and bleak still life paintings, were featured prominently in his landscape and narrative paintings.

Bernard Buffet's rose to fame for his ability to capture the disenchanted and fractured sentiments of post-WWII France. His popularity was further enhanced by his ability to capture the troubled mood of French society in the post-war era. These were captured in the "Horror of War" and "Hanged Men" themed series where depictions of brutality and torment were a central thread in his works. The precocious power of Buffet's harsh technique swiftly brought him to the attention of art critics seeking to revive the climate of innovation which had made Paris the 'capital of the arts' during the interwar years. An article in the French magazine *Connaissance des Arts*, published in February 1955 named him the first in a list of 'ten most talented post-war artists from today's young school of contemporary art'.

In his lifetime, Buffet created more than 8,000 paintings including landscapes, portraits and still life artworks, and to this day he remains a timeless, influential and highly acclaimed artist.

Permanent collections of his work are held at ARTAX in Dusseldorf, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Ca' la Ghironda, Bologna, Kunstmuseum Walter in Augsburg, Musée d'Art moderne de Lille in Villeneuve d'Ascq, Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje, National Gallery for Foreign Art in Sofia, National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo, Tampere Art Museum, Tate Gallery in London, Wellside Gallery in Seoul and the Alexandre de Bothuri collection in Palm Beach, USA.

**Gilles Dyan**  
Founder and Chairman  
Opera Gallery Group

**Stéphane Le Pelletier**  
Director Asia Pacific  
Opera Gallery

# BERNARD BUFFET:

Bernard Buffet, the unfortunate genius, rose quickly to unprecedented fame as quickly as he was shoved into obscurity, was much revered by collectors and disparaged by some of his contemporaries like Pablo Picasso. Buffet's genius was recognised early on in his career. At 20 years old, his paintings had already received recognition by the Salon des Indépendants, he had been awarded Prix de la Critique and some of his paintings were acquired by the French state. Buffet's career revealed both tragedy and celebration much like a tale of a fallen star. It was only after his suicide in 1999 that Buffet's genius was rediscovered.

Bernard Buffet was a French Expressionist painter whose work was associated with the philosophies and anxieties of Existentialism. His work alludes to questions on the essence of the being, and the concept of existence. Buffet's works antagonise and interrogate the vulgarity and the morbid beauty of the living, the dead, the ungodly and godly. In a disparate post-war France, Buffet's work became an important narration of the time. This is especially the case in his works depicting gloomy cityscapes and promenades. His unorthodox explorations of faith, the human condition and behaviour made Buffet's works sometimes unpalatable. The unsettling honesty in his depictions of human emotion and social anxieties, were received poorly by academics and critics much like Egon Schiele's sexually charged and emotional portrayal of the human body.

Throughout his lifetime, Buffet kept true to Expressionism and Social Realism within his works, and steered clear of the prevailing trend of Abstraction. This determination was displayed through Buffet's membership in *L'Homme-Témoignage* (Man as Witness); a group of artists promoting expressive Social Realism in painting that rejected the then school of Abstraction in 1945. Jean Bouret, the art critic who was pivotal in drawing up the group's manifesto remarked that, "Painting exists to bear witness, and nothing human can remain foreign to it". If anything, Buffet's works are painfully human.

Buffet's works recognises that the identities of people and things are fluid – ever changing. And the nature of this fluidity meant that there was meaning in repetition. For Buffet, the fluidity of identities meant that even his car, bouquet of flowers and even clowns would hold different meanings throughout the linearity of time. His paintings of his highly photographed Rolls Royce were a symbol of the height of his fame. The reinterpretation of his *La Voisin* throughout his career reveals the significance of his car during his lifetime. *La Voisin* (1997) was painted two years before Buffet's suicide. The work displays a much darker colour palette of greys and maroons. Buffet's brushstroke in this work is much heavier and the paint layer thicker revealing a narrative of a genius much later on in his life suffering from the tides of time and tormented by the effects of Parkinson's.

# GENIUS UNMASKED

Buffet's fascination in capturing the essence of the being led him to produce works that expose and explore the human condition. *Annabel de dos en maillot de bain* (1960) is one of many studies that Buffet has created featuring his great love and muse Annabel Schwob. "Portraits d'Annabel" was a series of works featuring Schwob that Buffet would exhibit at Galerie Maurice Garnier. His portrayal of the female nude is sterile, vulgar and almost sexless. The female nude is perhaps the most loaded effigy in art history. Artists throughout time have used the female nude to represent the saint, the Madonna and the whore. Fleshy sensuous figures were typical representations of beauty and reproduction, throughout antiquity and the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and were for Buffet, a dishonest portrayal of the female and the human figure.

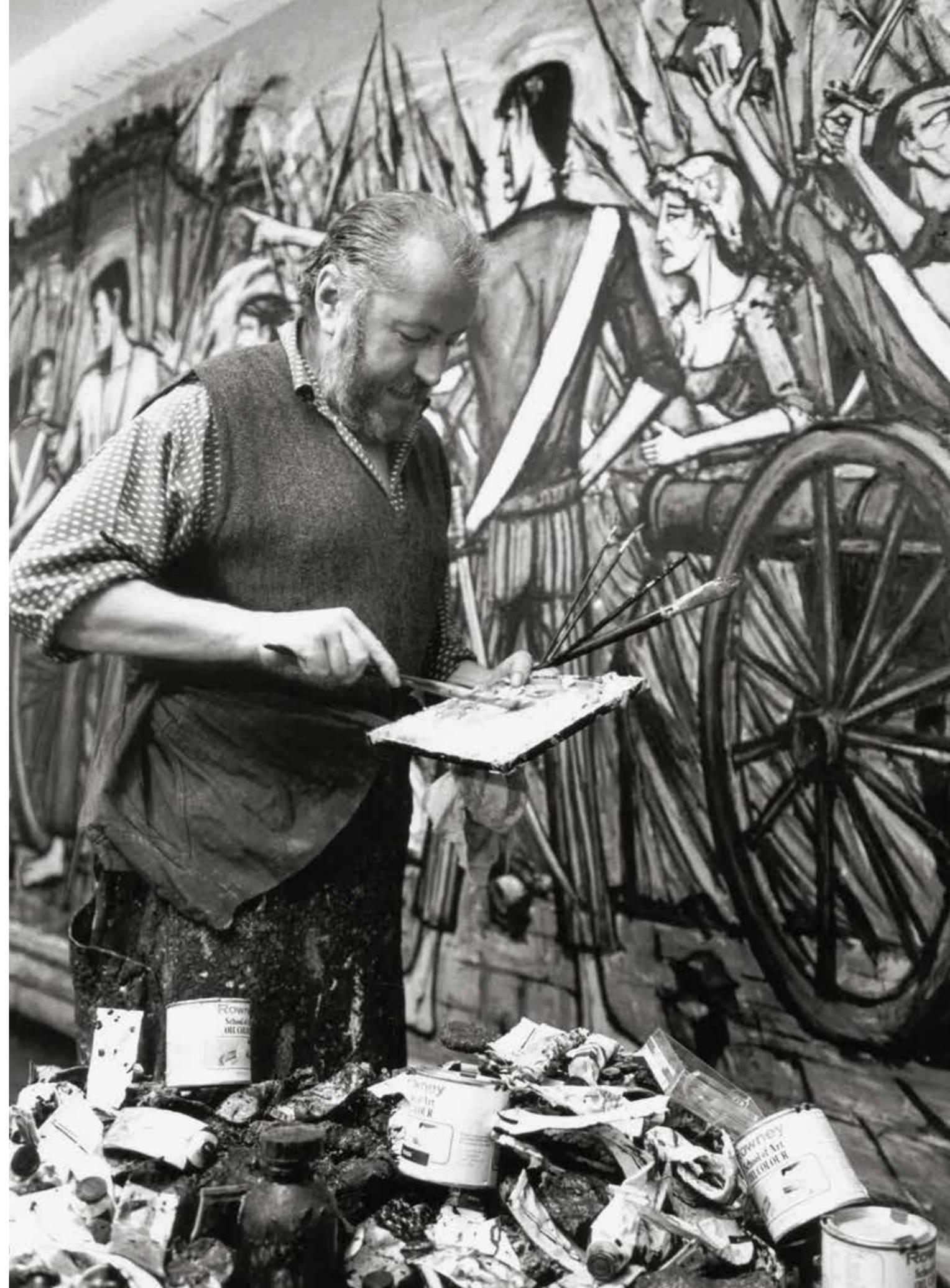
"... the human figure is the most important of painting subjects, isn't it? A man says something more to the spectator than a tree or a landscape. We must see things as they are, I saw some women looking at one of my pictures once and they said the women in it were monstrous. But the women who were talking looked to me even more monstrous. They didn't want to see themselves as they were." In a rare 1955 interview for *Apollo magazine*, Buffet's profoundly candid answers revealed his belief in portraying an honest aesthetic that goes beyond the superficiality of perceived beauty.

The appreciation and admiration of Buffet's works did not reside with academics and critics alike in his lifetime but, was widely respected and received by collectors globally. To critics Buffet said "Insults will never prevent me from painting. I have the faith of imbeciles and am proud of it." For that, we are blessed and privileged to be able to continue to admire Buffet's genius.

Opera Gallery Singapore is proud and honoured to present "Bernard Buffet: Genius Unmasked", featuring Buffet's works from the 1950s to 1999.

*You were possessed by the desire to paint.  
I have not been jealous of it certainly because  
I understood from the very first moments that  
this mistress would have no rival.*

**Annabel Buffet** – *Post scriptum*, Plon, 2001



Bernard Buffet in his studio  
in Villiers-Le-Mahieu painting *Liberté*,  
*La Prise des Tuileries* for his exhibition  
*La Révolution Française* in 1977  
© Luc Fournol



## CIRCUS AND PORTRAITS

Around 1955, paintings of clowns appear in Buffet's work. Buffet makes use of traditional circus imagery, without a doubt one of the artist's favourite subject, and always returns to the idea of performance, costumes and masks as a social commentary on the real people who hide beneath them. A clown can comically show his full range of emotions, often thoughtful, sometimes sad or even verging on exhaustion. Buffet's inward-looking faces with pallid skin may appear quite disconcerting; often depicted with deadpan faces these sombre portraits of clowns are a stark contrast to the smiling and jubilant entertainers one comes to expect at a circus, inciting viewers to look within themselves and contemplate the masks that they too wear throughout their lives.

Bernard Buffet's portraits are often rendered with a decidedly simplified surroundings, the figures tall and slender; his very graphic portraits are presented to the viewer in a variety of attitudes. The directness and anguish with which he painted, produced figures weighed down by folds of sagging flesh, an almost metaphysical manifestation of the existential torment that was pervasive throughout all of Buffet's work. Buffet's nihilistic view of the world can be felt throughout his works, but particularly in his portraits. He was hesitant to approach people in their attractive or graceful moods; his subjects are seemingly devoid of any semblance of gender, even humanity. The value of these works lies in what they reveal about people's mental state, by offering such a befitting representation of the pervading unhappiness and extreme anxiety felt throughout post-war France.

**ANNABEL DE DOS EN MAILLOT DE BAIN, 1960**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet le 9 janvier 1960' (upper right)

Oil on canvas

195 x 80 cm - 76.8 x 31.5 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris

Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the Galerie Maurice Garnier



**LE CIRQUE, LE CLOWN MUSICIEN, 1966**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 1966' (center left); signed 'Bernard Buffet' (lower left);  
Numbered 'XVII / XV / 26' (upper left, upper right, lower right; respectively)  
Mixed media on paper laid down on canvas  
65 x 49.7 cm - 25.6 x 19.6 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Wally Findley Galleries, Inc., New York  
Private collection, Florida  
Sale: Sotheby's New York, 6 May 2015, lot 144  
Private collection

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida Garnier and Jacques Gasbarian have confirmed the authenticity of this work



**CLOWN, 1968**

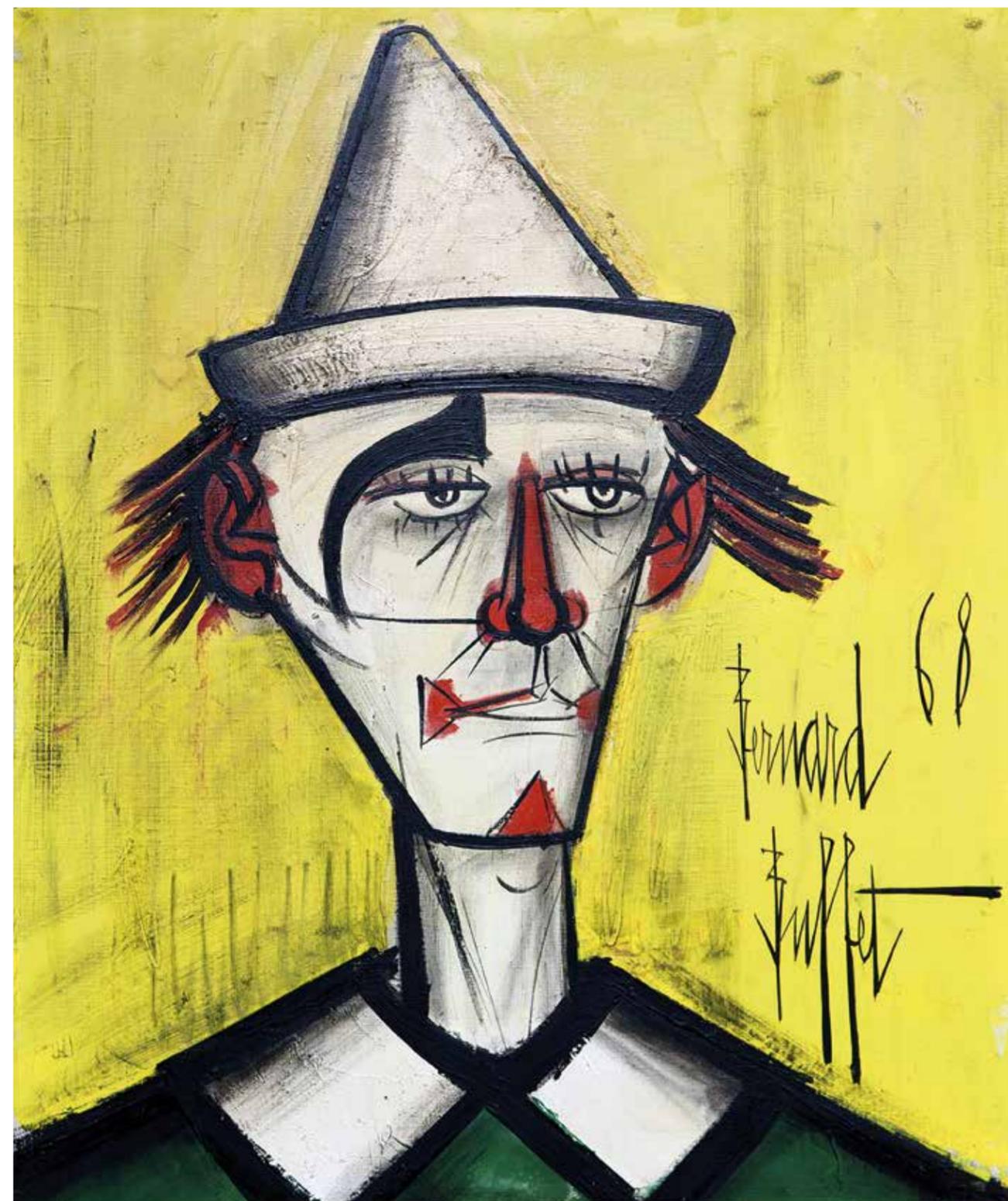
Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 68' (center right)  
Oil on canvas  
73 x 60 cm - 28.7 x 23.6 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Galerie du Château, Auray, France  
Private collection, Italy

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida Garnier and Jacques Gasbarian have confirmed the authenticity of this work



**DEUX CLOWNS À LA GROSSE CAISSE, 1989**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper left)  
and dated '1989' (upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
130 x 162 cm - 51.2 x 63.8 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Anonymous sale: Christie's New York,  
8 November 2000, lot 112  
Opera Gallery, London  
Private collection, Europe  
Sale: Christie's London, 10 February 2011, lot 490  
Private collection, Europe

**LITERATURE**

Yann le Pichon, Bernard Buffet, vol. III, 1982-1999,  
Éditions Maurice Garnier, Lausanne, 2007,  
no. 1082, p. 285, ill. pp. 278-279

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the Galerie  
Maurice Garnier

**NU AUX PERROQUETS, 1990**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 15 août 1990'  
(lower left)

Oil on canvas

114 x 146 cm - 44.9 x 57.5 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida Garnier and Jacques Gasbarian have confirmed  
the authenticity of this work



## PROMENADE

Bernard Buffet's cityscapes are faithfully architectural and linear in their composition; they are superbly drawn and carefully composed. His representations of landscapes have a significantly gaunt and emaciated appearance, bearing a strange resemblance to his own very attenuated and ascetic look. These outstanding paintings break free from the monotony of a perfect drawing through a process that exudes a mysterious quality, in direct opposition to Impressionists captivating use of light. The sceneries populating his cityscapes remind us of a theatre set; devoid of action, stylized by their linear rigidity and lack of voluminous shapes. Buffet forces us to recognise the unsuspecting harmony in its purest state, reflected in the city skylines without the grace of spring or the leaflessness of autumn – just the city and its soul.

**LA TOUR EIFFEL, 1955**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 55' (upper right)

Oil on canvas

146 x 97 cm - 57.5 x 38.2 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris

Sale: Leslie Hindman Auctioneers, 14 December 2015, lot 83

Sale: Matsart Auctioneers and Appraisers, 16 February 2016, lot 91

Private collection, Israel

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the Galerie Maurice Garnier



**MAISON PRÈS DE L'ÉTANG, 1964**  
Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 64'  
(lower centre)  
Oil on canvas  
81 x 130 cm - 31.9 x 51.2 in.



**PROVENANCE**  
Findlay Galleries, New York  
Private collection, Menlo Park  
Private collection, Los Angeles  
Private collection, Singapore

**CERTIFICATE**  
A certificate can be provided by  
the Galerie Maurice Garnier

**LA CHAUMIÈRE FLEURIE, NORMANDIE, 1974**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper right) and

dated '1974' (upper left)

Oil on canvas

89 x 130 cm - 35 x 51.2 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by  
the Galerie Maurice Garnier

**CERVY, LA GRANDE RUE, 1976**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper right) and  
dated '1976' (upper left)

Oil on canvas

89 x 130 cm - 35 x 51.2 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Singapore

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida Garnier and Jacques Gasbarian have  
confirmed the authenticity of this work

**L'ÉCLUSE, 1990**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper right)  
and dated '1990' (upper left)  
Oil on canvas  
97 x 146 cm - 38.2 x 57.5 in.



**PROVENANCE**

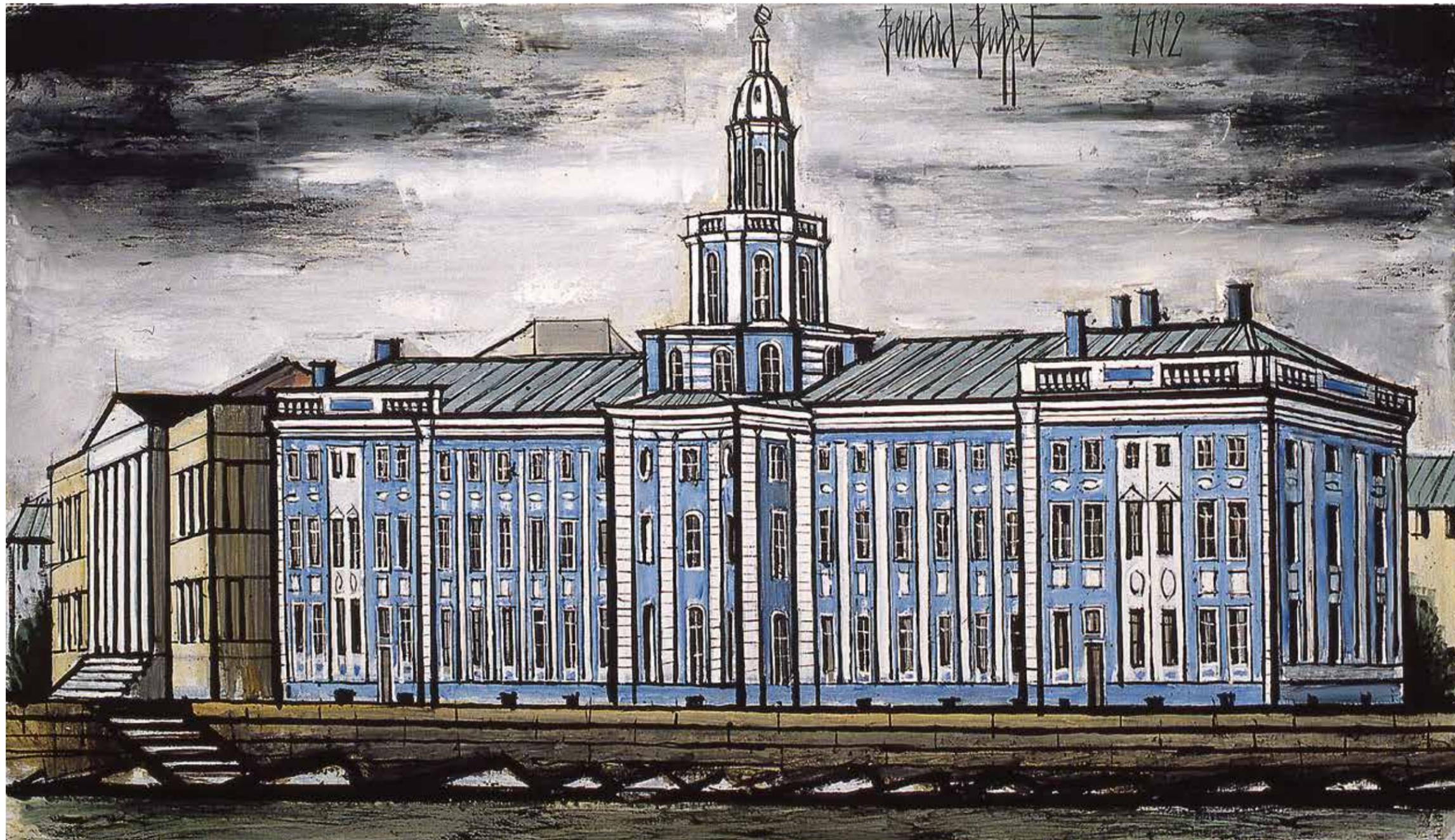
Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the  
Galerie Maurice Garnier

**SAINT-PÉTERSBOURG,  
MUSÉE D'ANTHROPOLOGIE, 1992**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 1992'  
(upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
114 x 195 cm - 44.9 x 76.8 in.

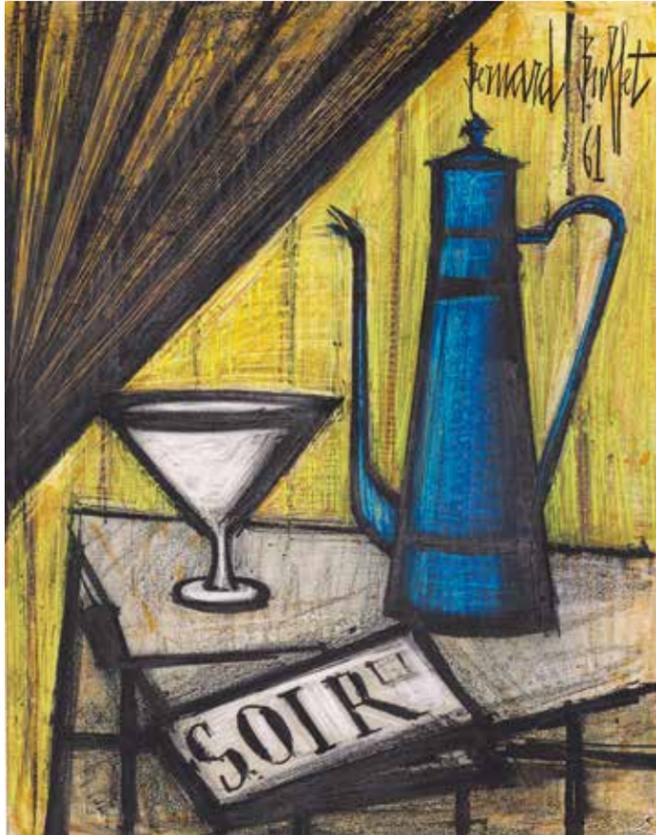


**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the  
Galerie Maurice Garnier



## SILENT THINGS

The genre of still life proved to be a subject of predilection for the artist; throughout his career Buffet painted dozens of natures mortes, infusing a uniquely morbid exuberance into a subject that is most often thought of as a static, safe one to paint. The objects featured in Buffet's still-life paintings anchor each work of art into a specific period in time; he depicted the ordinary objects found in his home, as can be seen with his painting *Cafetière bleue*. In the early years of his career, Buffet's still life paintings were composed of predominantly grey tones. Coloured paint was very expensive after the end of WWII. In his still life work, Buffet reduced the objects on the table to shrivelled, desiccated scraps, which composition is drawn from a restricted and muted palette of colours, enlivened by Buffet's habitual scoring with long, straight brushstrokes zigzagging back and forth across the canvas, as if the painting had been scarred by the paint. This technique enhances the unified background into a single, flat surface. The hard, thick black contours of the figures ensure each is precisely delimited, as if each object held its position in an ordered, almost morbid stillness.

**LE PÉTRIN, 1953**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 53'  
(upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
46 x 61 cm - 18.1 x 24 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Sale: Mainichi Auction, June 2007  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida and Maurice Garnier have confirmed  
the authenticity of this work

**LE PANIER DE FRUITS, 1957**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 57' (upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
54 x 65 cm - 21.3 x 25.6 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie David et Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, New York  
Sale: Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York,  
5 December 1962, lot 63  
Private collection, New York

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the  
Galerie Maurice Garnier

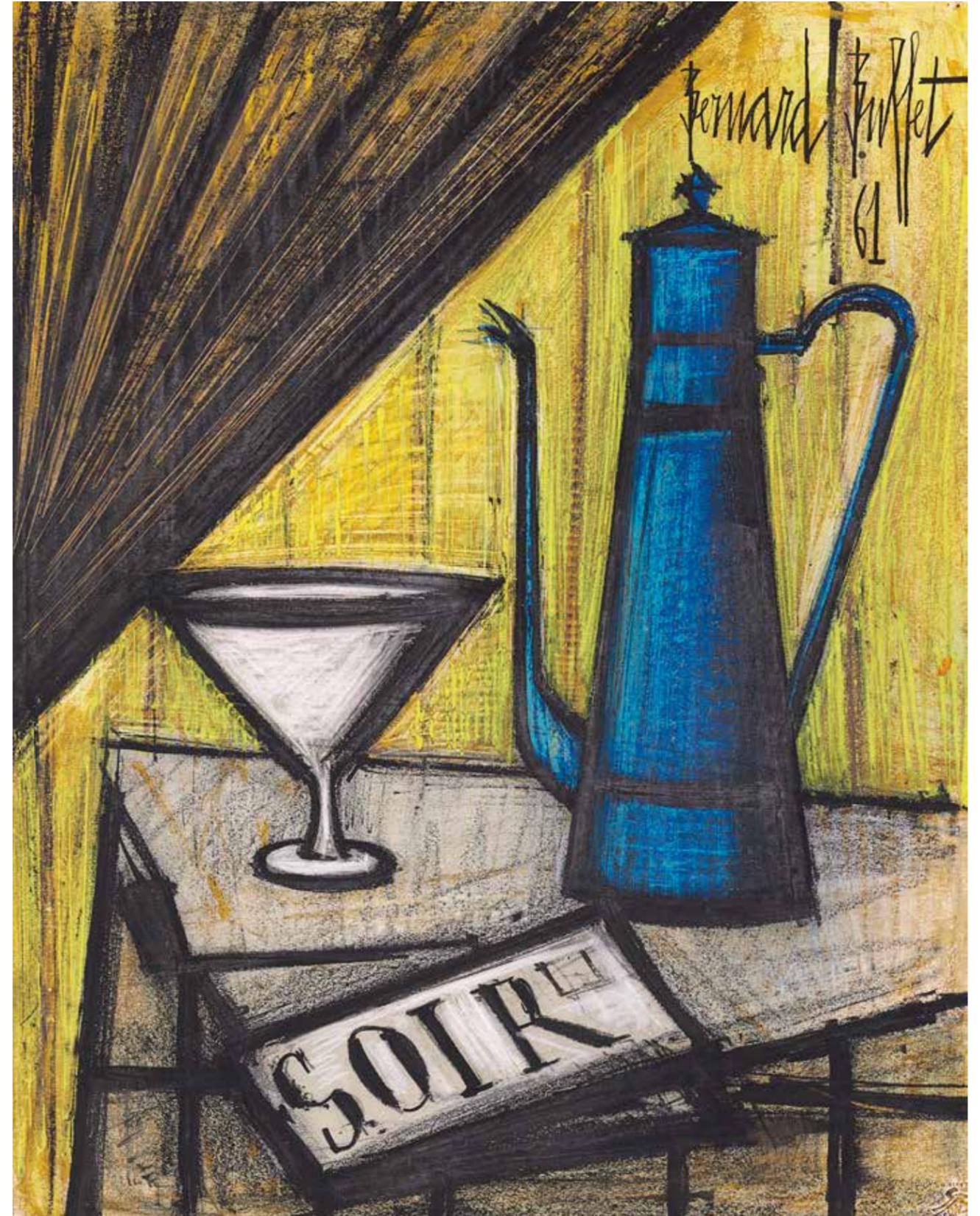
**NATURE MORTE À LA CAFETIÈRE BLEUE, 1961**  
Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 61' (upper right)  
Mixed media on paper  
65 x 50 cm - 25.6 x 19.7 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Galerie David et Garnier, Paris  
Greer Gallery, Inc., New York  
Estate of Edgar M. Bronfman, New York  
Sale: Christie's New York, 7 May 2014, lot 117  
Private collection, New York

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida Garnier and Jacques Gasbarian have confirmed the authenticity of this work



**NATURE MORTE À LA CASSEROLE ROUGE, 1982**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper center) and dated '1982' (lower left)

Oil on canvas

65 x 81 cm - 26.6 x 31.9 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, South America  
Sale: Christie's New York, 9 May 2013, lot 331  
Private collection, New York

**CERTIFICATE**

Maurice Garnier has confirmed the authenticity of this work

**NATURE MORTE AUX FLEURS, 1999**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper left)  
and dated '1999' (upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
73 x 100 cm - 28.7 x 39.4 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by  
the Galerie Maurice Garnier



## BOUQUETS

Best known for his representational works, Buffet's paintings are often graphic, figurative and central in their compositions. Adamantly opposed to anything Abstract, he fervently argued for the social importance of a more representational rendering of art, at a time when Abstraction was increasingly dominating the conversation among critics. Buffet produced many variations on the theme of flowers in a vase, with the aim of testing his technical ability to paint the same subject with a different result as unique as flowers varied in their composition. The energy and vigour with which he depicted each floral scene reflect Buffet's evident delight in the beauty of the natural world, and perhaps a latent desire to escape the monotony of everyday urban life.

**FLEURS DES CHAMPS DANS UN VERRE, 1951**  
Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 51' (upper left)  
Oil on canvas  
65 x 50 cm - 25.6 x 19.7 in.

**PROVENANCE**  
Galerie Drouant-David, Paris  
Private collection, France  
Sale: Sotheby's London, 20 June 2013, lot 488  
Private collection, Europe

**CERTIFICATE**  
Ida Garnier and Jacques Gasbarian have confirmed the authenticity of this work

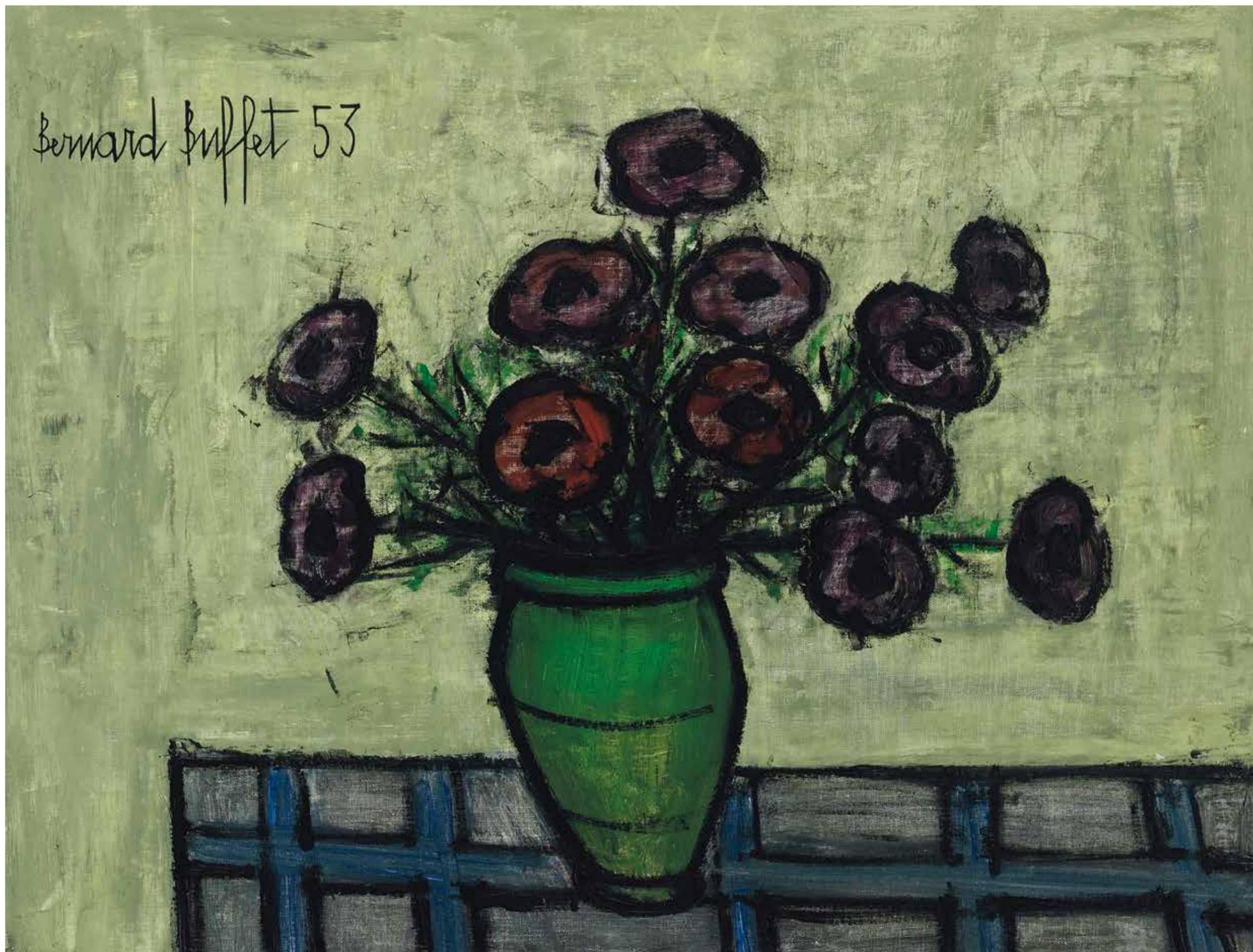


**BOUQUET DE FLEURS, 1953**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 53'  
(upper left)

Oil on canvas

50 x 65 cm - 19.7 x 25.6 in.



**PROVENANCE**

Stephan Hahn, New York  
Galerie Taménaga, Paris  
Lucien Krief Gallery, Jerusalem  
Private collection, London

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by  
the Galerie Maurice Garnier

**IRIS BLEUS DANS UN VASE, 1966**

Signed and dated 'Bernard Buffet 66' (lower right)  
Mixed media on paper laid down on isorel  
65 x 50 cm - 25.6 x 19.7 in.

**PROVENANCE**

E. David and M. Garnier, Paris  
Findlay Galleries, Chicago  
Private collection, Chicago  
Sale: Sotheby's New York, 9 May 2007, lot 465  
Private collection

**CERTIFICATE**

Ida and Maurice Garnier have confirmed the authenticity of this work



**LES ROSES, 1996**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper left) and dated '1996' (upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
65 x 50 cm - 25.6 x 19.7 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection, Singapore

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the Galerie Maurice Garnier



**CLÉMATITES ET LYS, 1998**

Signed 'Bernard Buffet' (upper left) and dated '1998' (upper right)  
Oil on canvas  
73 x 54 cm - 28.7 x 21.3 in.

**PROVENANCE**

Galerie Maurice Garnier, Paris  
Private collection, Paris

**CERTIFICATE**

A certificate can be provided by the Galerie Maurice Garnier



# BIOGRAPHY

- 1928** July 10, born in Paris. Grew up in Batignolles, Northeast Paris.
- 1939** Studies at Lycée Carnot where he wins his first prize in natural science, the only subject that interests him at the time.  
After criticizing the academic system he leaves the school.  
Takes drawing classes at the Paris municipal evening school, place des Vosges.
- 1944** At the age of 16, admitted to the École des Beaux-Arts with a special dispensation on account of his age.
- 1945** Prefers to visit museums than to attend classes, still wins the Academy's prize for studio work. Mesmerized by Antoine-Jean Gros's painting *Bonaparte visiting the plague-stricken in Jaffa*.  
His first work contains hints of Maurice Utrillo and Alphonse Quizet and their Parisian street theme. While vacationing one summer in Brittany with his mother, she falls ill. Her death a few months later deeply affects Buffet.
- 1946** His self-portrait becomes the first work exhibited at the Salon des moins de trente ans at the Gallery des Beaux-Arts. Thereafter, his works are regularly shown at the Salon des Indépendants, the Salon d'Automne, the Salon de Mai and the Salon des Tuileries.
- 1947** *L'Homme accoudé* garners critical acclaim at the Salon d'Automne.  
Meets liberal writer and critic Pierre Descargues who becomes one of Buffet's most ardent supporters and writes the catalogue preface for his exhibition.  
First solo exhibition at the bookshop *Les Impressions d'Art*. Raymond Cogniat purchases his work *Le Coq Mort* for the French government.
- 1948** Exhibits *Le Buveur* for the Prix de la Jeune Peinture; even though he doesn't win, he gets the attention of influential art collector Dr. Maurice Girardin, who buys several of his works. At the same time he concludes an exclusive contract with the Galerie Drouant-David, contract shared in Autumn 1948 with Maurice Garnier, owning the Galerie Visconti.  
Wins the Prix de la Critique along with Bernard Lorjou, which kick-starts his career.
- 1949** His solo exhibition at the Galerie Drouant-David becomes an annual event. His works on paper are exhibited at the Galerie Visconti, run by Maurice Garnier.  
In support of a return to realism he signs Jean Bouret's *Second Manifeste de l'homme témoin*.
- 1950** Member of the organizing committee of the first Salon des Jeunes Peintres at the Galerie des Beaux Arts (re-baptized the Salon de la Jeune Peinture) dedicated to up-and-coming figurative painters. Numerous international exhibitions in New York, London, Basel, Copenhagen and Geneva.  
Meets Pierre Bergé, his partner until 1958.



Annabel and Bernard Buffet in Château l'Arc in 1958.  
© Luc Fournol



Bernard Buffet's studio in Château l'Arc – Venice, 1962.  
© Daniel Frasnay

- 1951** Takes part in the first *Les Peintres Témoins de leur Temps* exhibition. Bernard Buffet and Pierre Bergé spend the summer in Manosque, Provence; they rent a house in Nanse, near Reillanne, where Buffet worked until 1954.
- 1952** Begins to paint thematically for Galerie Drouant-David's annual show, then for the Galerie David et Garnier and the Galerie Maurice Garnier, on a annual exhibition that would become a tradition. The first exhibition is *La Passion du Christ*. Participates in the Venice Biennale with *La Crucifixion*.
- 1953** Louis Aragon writes an article in *Les Lettres Françaises* entitled 'Le Paysage Français a quatre siècles et Bernard Buffet 24 ans' (Four Centuries of French Landscape Painting and Bernard Buffet is 24 Years Old).
- 1955** Tops the list of the Ten Best Post-war artists by the magazine *Connaissance des Arts*. Buys property in Domont, near Paris.
- 1956** *Paris Match* publishes an article on his luxurious lifestyle in his Manine property in Domont, triggering a public controversy towards Buffet's work.

- 1958** At the age of 30, the first retrospective of his work, held at Galerie Charpentier, establishes his reputation. *The New York Times* names Buffet as one of 'France's Fabulous Young Five', among peers such as Yves Saint Laurent. Meets Annabel Schwob and marries her in December. Around this time Buffet's technique changes drastically, incorporating more colours and depth, primarily using the beautiful and slightly androgynous Annabel as his muse. At the Venice Biennale, a whole room is dedicated to Buffet's work.
- 1961** Creates a series of paintings depicting the life of Christ for his chapel at the Château l'Arc, Provence.
- 1962** Birth of first adopted daughter, Virginie.
- 1963** Birth of second adopted daughter, Danielle.
- 1964** The German magazine *Stern* commissions a portrait of Mao Zedong. He moves to Saint-Cast-le-Guildo, Brittany, where he works until 1970.
- 1971** Appointed Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. Buys the Château de Villiers-le-Mahieu. Birth of his adopted son, Nicolas.
- 1973** Influential Japanese collector Kiichiro Okano establishes a Bernard Buffet Museum in Shizuoka, Japan.
- 1974** Elected as member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, painting section.
- 1978** Designs a postage stamp depicting the Institute and the Pont des Arts, Paris.
- 1980** Visits his museum in Japan: this trip to Japan leaves a strong mark on him and became one of Buffet's main inspirations. Buys a manor in Normandy, which he left in 1986 to live at the Domaine de la Baume, in Tourtour, Haut-Var.
- 1986** Georges Durand publishes *La Divine Comédie* de Bernard Buffet at the Desclée de Brouwer publishing house.
- 1988** A large extension to the Bernard Buffet Museum is inaugurated in Japan.
- 1989** Art critic Alin Alexis Avila publishes *Bernard Buffet*, edited by Nouvelles Editions Françaises, Casterman.
- 1991** A major Russian retrospective of his work is held in the Puskhin State Museum, Moscow and the State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg.
- 1993** Promoted to the rank of Knight of the French Order of the Legion of Honour.
- 1997** Diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.
- 1999** No longer able to paint, 71-year-old Bernard Buffet takes his own life on 4 October in his Tourtour studio.
- 2000** Galerie Maurice Garnier organizes a major posthumous exhibition of his final works, on the theme of Death.

# SELECTED MUSEUM COLLECTION

Tate Gallery, London, UK  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA  
The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA  
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, USA  
Hirschhorn Museum and Sculptural Garden, Washington, USA  
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia  
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France  
Bernard Buffet Museum, Shizuoka, Japan  
Museum of Art Roger-Quilliot, Clermont-Ferrand, France  
National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA  
The Smithsonian, Washington, USA  
Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, Evanston, USA  
Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, USA  
Harvard University of Art Museums, Massachusetts, USA  
Indiana State University Art Collection, Indiana, USA  
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, USA  
Lille Metropole Museum of Modern Art, Villeneuve d'Ascq, France  
National Gallery of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia  
New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK  
San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, USA  
Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago, Chicago, USA  
University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa, USA  
National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, Japan  
Ca' la Ghironda Modern Art Museum, Bologna, Italy  
Museum of Modern Art, Paris, France  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada

# MAJOR RETROSPECTIVES AND SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2016-17** Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris, France
- 2015** *Bernard Buffet The Theory of Line*, Opera Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2014-15** *Bernard Buffet*, Heydar Aliyev Center, Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2014** *Post 1958 : une symphonie de couleur en plus*, Musée du Touquet-Paris-Plage, Le Touquet, France
- 2010** *Bernard Buffet*, Meguro Museum, Tokyo, Japan  
Galerie DIL, Paris, France  
Galerie Pascale Froessel, Strasbourg, France

- 2009** *Bernard Buffet*, Centre de la Vieille Charité, Marseille, France  
*Bernard Buffet et Annabel*, Sogo Museum of Art in Yokohoma, Japan
- 2008** *Bernard Buffet Maler*, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2007** *Bernard Buffet et la Bretagne*, Musée départemental breton, Quimper, France
- 2006** *Bernard Buffet: een omstreden oeuvre*, Gemeentemuseum den haag, The Hague, The Netherlands
- 2003** *Bernard Buffet*, Paul Valéry Museum, Sète, France
- 2000** Sogo Museum of Art, Yokohoma, Japan
- 1998** *Bernard Buffet*, Palais Bénédicte, Fécamp, France
- 1996** Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Kaohsiung City, Taiwan
- 1995** *Bernard Buffet*, Odakyu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan
- 1994** *Bernard Buffet retrospective*, Documenta-Halle, Kassel, Germany
- 1993** *Bonjour Monsieur Buffet !*, Museum Gustave Courbet, Ornans, France  
*Bernard Buffet*, Château de Chenonceau, Chenonceau, France  
*Vingt mille lieues sous les mers*, Départemental Museum of l'Oise, Beauvais, France
- 1991** The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia  
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia  
Gallery Hyundai, Seoul, Korea
- 1987** Odakyu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan
- 1985** Réfectoire des Jacobins, Toulouse, France
- 1983** The Seedamm Cultural Centre, Pfäffikon, Switzerland
- 1978** *Bernard Buffet*, Museum of the French Postal Service, Paris, France  
Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, Japan
- 1977** Museum de Wieger, Deurne, The Netherlands
- 1969** *Bernard Buffet*, Museum Unterlinden, Colmar, France
- 1963** The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan
- 1959** Knokke-Le-Zoute, Belgium
- 1958** The French Institute, Berlin, Germany  
*Cent tableaux de 1944 à 1958 par Bernard Buffet*, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, France  
*Les Voyages fantastiques de Cyrano de Bergerac*, Jacquemart-André Museum, Paris, France
- 1955** *Paintings by Bernard Buffet*, Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, USA

# INDEX



L'Écluse, p. 32



Saint-Petersbourg, Musée d'Anthropologie, p. 34



Annabel de dos en maillot de bain, p. 12



Le cirque, le clown musicien, p. 14



Clown, p. 16



Deux clowns à la grosse caisse, p. 18



Le Pétrin, p. 38



Le Panier de fruits, p. 40



Nature morte à la cafetière bleue, p. 42



Nu aux perroquets, p. 20



La Tour Eiffel, p. 24



Maison près de l'étang, p. 26



Nature morte à la casserole rouge, p. 44



Nature morte aux fleurs, p. 46



Fleurs des champs dans un verre, p. 50



La Chaumière fleurie, Normandie, p. 28



Cervy, la grande rue, p. 30



Bouquet de fleurs, p. 52



Iris bleus dans un vase, p. 54



Les Roses, p. 56



Clématites et lys, p. 58

# THANKS

We would like to thank the Galerie Maurice Garnier for their kind help in our research.

**Coordinators:** Irene Chee, Aurélie Heuzard  
**Authors:** Natalie Hong, Adeline Yeo, Kayleigh Roberts  
**Designer:** Élisabeth Chardin

OPERA GALLERY

2 Orchard Turn, # 02-16 ION Orchard, Singapore, 238801 . +65 6735 2618 . spore@operagallery.com . [operagallery.com](http://operagallery.com)

Jean-Michel Buffet

Le 1<sup>er</sup> Janvier  
1960

