

Andri Brasilica.

OPERA GALLERY

André Brasileira.

“ To be worthy of the name, a painter must have something to say beyond painting itself. Beyond the lines and colours, Brasilier does have something to tell us. Like Chardin, he paints with emotions. ”

Bernard de Montgolfier

Honorary Chief Curator, the Ville de Paris Heritage

From his beginnings in the early 1950s at the École des Beaux-Arts to his international recognition saluted with a major retrospective exhibition in Saint Petersburg at The State Hermitage Museum in 2005, André Brasilier is among France's most important living expressionist artists.

On the occasion of his first London exhibition, Opera Gallery has carefully curated a selection of dream-like paintings by André Brasilier that includes his most notable themes, illustrating his love for nature, music, the human and life in general.

Set against the most simplistic and romantic backgrounds, these paintings transport us into surreal landscapes and lighten our soul with the purity of their colours, shapes and forms. These magical compositions won Brasilier numerous awards throughout the years and positioned him as a highly collectable artist in French art circles.

Besides, one of André Brasilier's essential achievements as a painter has been his ability to take his work beyond the 'figurative versus non-figurative art' discussion. Humbly and effortlessly, he did so thanks to his independent spirit and an unbreakable peace of mind.

Opera Gallery is delighted to bring to you this inspiring collection of paintings and introduce you to André Brasilier's colourful and exultant body of work.

Gilles Dyan

Chairman & Founder

Opera Gallery Group

Jean-David Malat

Director

Opera Gallery London

OPERA GALLERY

BORN INTO AN ARTISTIC FAMILY IN 1929, BRASILIER HAS SPENT MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY CREATING CANVASES THAT ARE A BLEND OF ABSTRACTION, EXPRESSIONISM, AND SOMETHING DISTINCTLY HIS OWN. HIS WORKS OFTEN FEATURE THEMES AND MOTIFS LIKE HORSES, NATURE, MUSIC, AND WOMEN. BRASILIER'S ART IS KNOWN AROUND THE WORLD, FROM JAPAN TO THE UNITED STATES.



There are certain major themes in your work, such as women, music, horses, and nature. Can you tell us more about these themes?

I like to paint the human form. For me, one can measure the importance of a painter by his or her ability to portray the human form. Think about how much the human figure has allowed painters like Picasso, de Staël, or Bacon to go beyond their contemporaries. I love, above all, life, and in all of its forms. Music is one of these forms that I especially appreciate. My first exhibition in 1959 was entitled "Autour de la musique" ("About Music"). Since then, I've always liked to work with this theme. Everything is beautiful in music, the discipline of the orchestra, the harmony of a quartet... As for nature, I've always liked landscapes, pastoral scenes. I remember my first impressions of rural scenes, like oxen pulling a plough... As for the horse, I really like this animal, as much for its beauty as for the harmony that it has with nature. In nature, the horse gives a sense of scale. It provides interesting proportions with the sea and the sky, for example. I love life, and horses, with their forms and their ardour, delight and intrigue me.

As a young artist, after your stay at the Villa Medici, you decided to leave and discover the world. What was your spiritual state then, and how did you work?

I did, in fact, want to discover the world. And so, I travelled a great deal around Europe: Holland,

Germany, Norway, Sweden, etc. I lived wherever I landed. At the time, I painted straight in front of the subjects. This is no longer the case today: when I see a subject that I find interesting, I take notes and later only transcribe my impressions on the canvas. In my opinion, a painting is a physical object; it must represent an emotion that was born into and from life. In my canvases, I try to create a harmony between the two.

Looking at your biography, it seems Europeans and Americans greatly appreciate your paintings. But the Japanese are equally fans, and yet, their culture is very different from that of the West. How do you explain it?

I think it comes from my way of expressing my thoughts and emotions, my way of using colour, and above all my taste for the ellipse. I am absolutely not a realist painter. I like things to be suggested, and even mysterious. It is my nature to simplify things. I always try to highlight the quintessence of a subject with very little effect, to say a lot with a little, like Japanese artists who focus on asceticism and simplicity. I already had this inclination as a student at the Institut des Beaux-Arts. But above all things, what is important for me is composition. Before making any sketch, I try to compose the painting in my mind. If composition is at the base of all painting, in the end, it must be forgotten or overlooked; the public must not notice it. This is what characterises my painting, and probably what makes it able to reach out to people from different cultures.

In the past, you've made non-pictorial works, as in 1985, when you created the scenery and costumes for a play, and in 1987 when you created a mosaic. Are you still open to other modes of expression?

In 1985, my friend Pierre Jourdan, a theatre director, gave me carte blanche to create the scenery and costumes of Ciboulette, a play by Reynaldo Hahn. The play was performed in the grandiose setting of the Opéra Garnier de Monte Carlo. I remember painting some of the scenery during rehearsals, in front of the actors. This was an unusual experience, and a very interesting one. I had another, similar experience at the Théâtre de Compiègne for the play Mignon by Ambroise Thomas. Rather than create scenery portraying a city, which didn't inspire me at all, I decided to depict a natural landscape, with rocks and ivy. The scenery was a success, it seemed, and I was asked afterwards to decorate a stage curtain, which is still in use in the theater today. As for the mosaic, in 1987, I did, in fact, do a drawing for one intended for a German friend's property in Vence, Provence. An interesting experience, and again one that I wasn't used to.

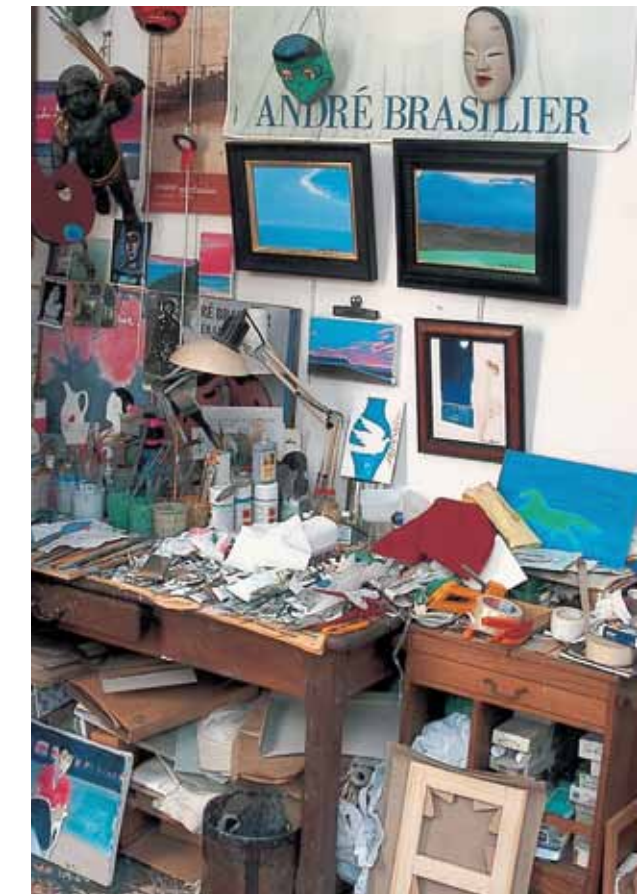
You have also worked on a project of campanology, can you tell us more about it?

I had a wonderful and unusual experience in the art of campanology (i.e. the decoration of bells). I did a drawing for the cathedral of Saint-Étienne in Toulouse, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The drawing is an image of the Virgin, intended to adorn a 1.5-ton bell that sits in the campanile of the cathedral. It was a surprising experience for me to witness the casting of the bell, its blessing by the Bishop of Toulouse, and its installation in the bell tower. After this, I created other drawings for churches along the route of the Saint-Jacques

(Saint James) of Compostella's pilgrimage, notably at Rocamadour. I had also been commissioned to decorate the interior of the chapel of Arnac Pompadour, a small village in the Corrèze region. Although it is small, this chapel makes for a great challenge for a painter: to create panels 25 meters (82 feet) across and 7 meters (23 feet) high isn't something done much today. It was a challenge, even for me who appreciates large canvases! This job was truly fascinating.

Do you always feel the desire to paint?

I am always painting. And if I'm not in front of a canvas, I have sheets of paper with me to take notes, and to write down ideas that come to me. I will look them up later when I start a new work. Painting is my life.





Women

“ From Botticelli's Venus de Milo to the Cathedral Madonnas of Delacroix and Picasso, women have always been an essential source of inspiration.”



LES LYS DE VALLAURIS, 1999

Oil on canvas, 130 x 89 cm - 51.2 x 35 in.



MÉDITERRANÉE, 2013

Oil on canvas, 146 x 97 cm - 57.5 x 38.2 in.



RÊVERIE BLEUE, 2013
Oil on canvas, 130 x 89 cm - 51.2 x 35 in.



LES ROSES DE L'ÉTANG, 1977
Oil on canvas, 116 x 81 cm - 45.7 x 31.9 in.

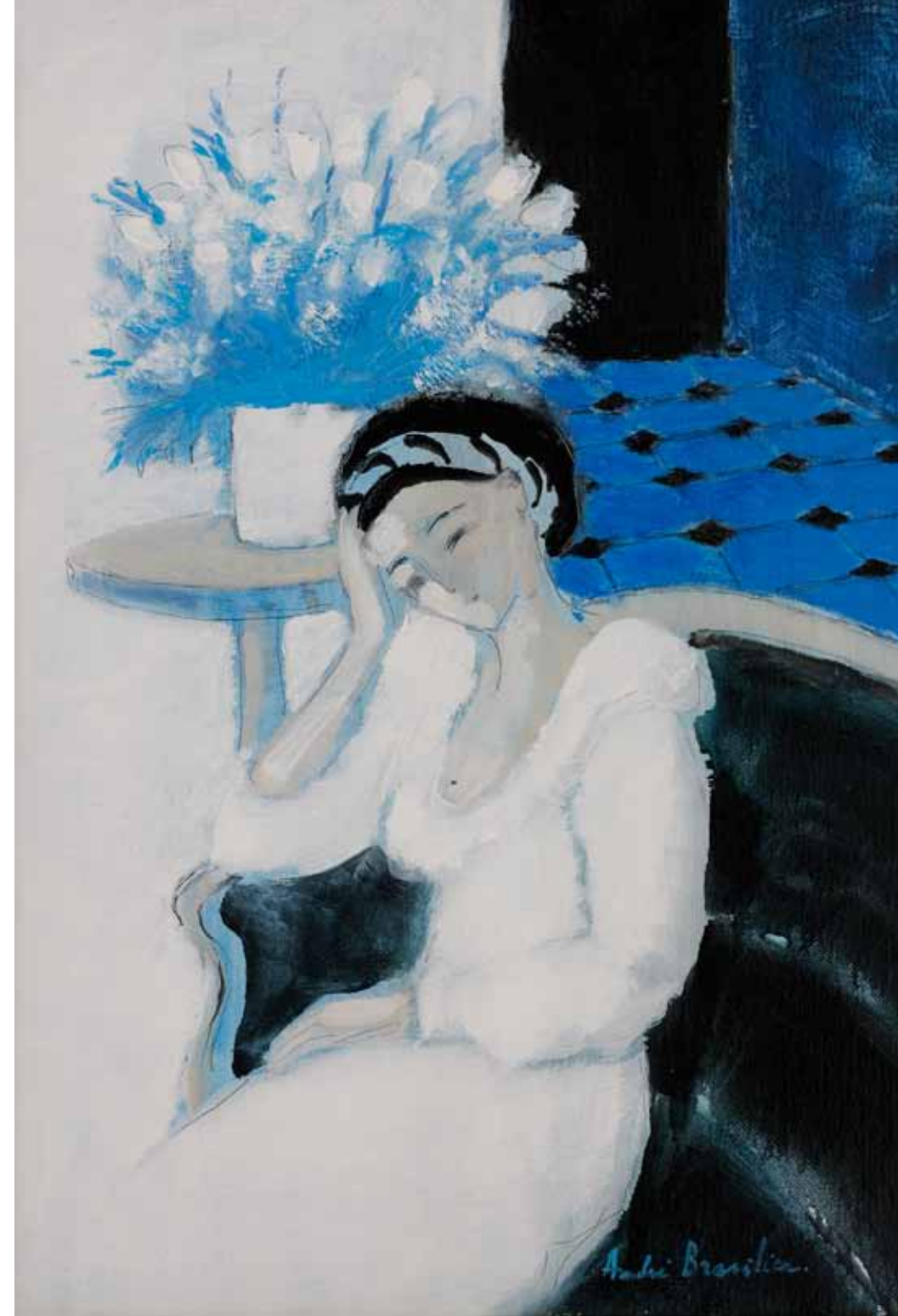
ODALISQUE À LA KOUTOUBIA, 2013

Oil on canvas, 130 x 162 cm - 51.2 x 63.8 in.





LA FONTAINE MAROCAINE, 2012
Oil on canvas, 130 x 97 cm – 51.2 x 38.2 in.



LE TURBAN BLEU, 1975
Oil on canvas, 55 x 38 cm – 21.6 x 15 in.

NU ROMAIN, 2011

Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm - 18.1 x 21.6 in.





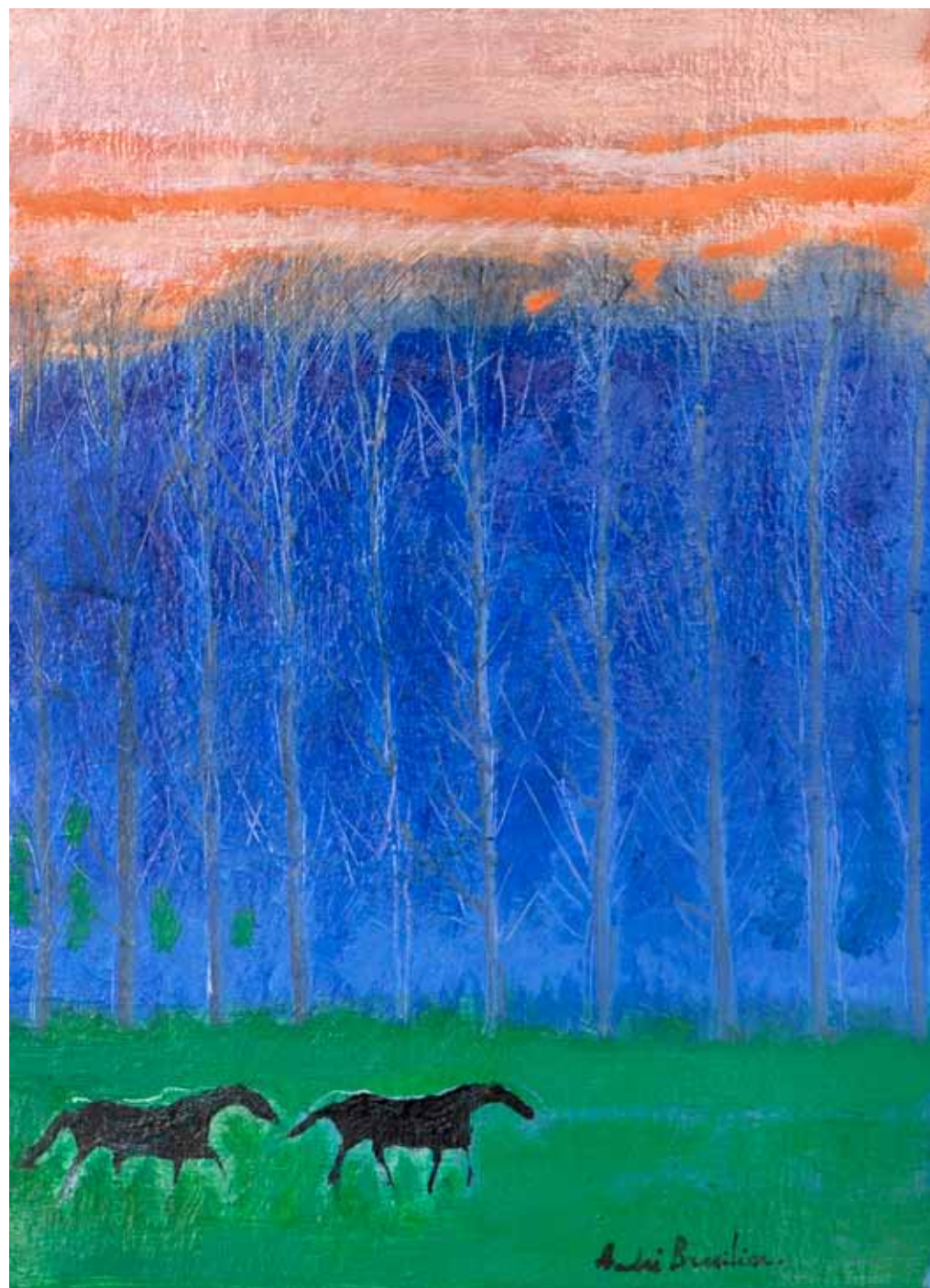
Horses

“ As for the horse, I really like this animal, as much for its beauty, as for the harmony that it has with nature.”



DEUX CHEVAUX NOIRS SUR LA NEIGE, 2013

Oil on canvas, 89 x 146 cm - 35 x 57.5 in.



DEUX CHEVAUX À LOUPEIGNE, 2010
Oil on canvas, 38 x 55 cm - 15 x 21.6 in.



VALLÉE DE LOUPEIGNE, 2012
Oil on canvas, 46 x 33 cm - 18.1 x 13 in.

PETITE CAVALCADE AU CIRQUE, 2007

Oil on canvas, 38 x 55 cm - 15 x 21.6 in.



FER À CHEVAL BLEU, 1999

Oil on canvas, 61 x 38 cm - 24 x 15 in.



RIVAGE AU CIEL ROSE, 2012

Oil on canvas, 65 x 50 cm - 25.6 x 19.7 in.





L'ENTRAÎNEMENT SUR LA PLAGE, 2004-2013
Oil on canvas, 46 x 65 cm - 18.1 x 25.6 in.

RIVAGE, 2010
Oil on canvas, 55 x 33 cm - 21.6 x 13 in.



LES CHEVAUX MARINS, 2013

Oil on canvas, 130 x 162 cm - 51.2 x 63.8 in.





RETOUR DES CAVALIERS, 2009
Oil on canvas, 55 x 33 cm - 21.6 x 13 in.



LES VOLCANS BLEUS, 2012
Oil on canvas, 38 x 61 cm - 15 x 24 in.

PROMENADE À CHEVAL, 2013

Oil on canvas, 130 x 162 cm - 51.2 x 63.8 in.





PETITE CHEVAUCHÉE AU PARC, 2013
Oil on canvas, 46 x 61 cm - 18.1 x 24 in.

SOUS-BOIS EN JANVIER, 2010
Oil on canvas, 54 x 81 cm - 21.2 x 31.9 in.

RENDEZ-VOUS SUR LA NEIGE, 2013
Oil on canvas, 165 x 205 cm - 65 x 80.7 in.





RENCONTRE DES CAVALIERS, 2013
Oil on canvas, 54 x 73 cm - 21.3 x 28.7 in.



SOUS-BOIS, 2013
Oil on canvas, 55 x 46 cm - 21.6 x 18.1 in.

GRANDE CHEVAUCHÉE DU PARC, 2013
Oil on canvas, 200 x 250 cm - 78.7 x 98.4 in.





JOCKEYS SUR LA NEIGE, 2012
Oil on canvas, 55 x 33 cm - 21.6 x 13 in.

COURSES À VINCENNES, 2009
Oil on canvas, 38 x 61 cm - 15 x 24 in.





André Breton.

Music

“ Everything is beautiful in music, the discipline of the orchestra, the harmony of a quartet. ”

PIANISTE À NEW YORK, 2012
Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm - 18.1 x 21.6 in.





JAZZ QUARTET, 2013

Oil on canvas, 114 x 146 cm - 44.9 x 57.5 in.

CONCERT (DUKE ELLINGTON), 2013

Oil on canvas, 97 x 130 cm - 38.2 x 51.2 in.





PIANO À NEW YORK, 2013
Oil on canvas, 146 x 114 cm - 57.5 x 44.9 in.

TANGO, 2010
Oil on canvas, 38 x 55 cm - 15 x 21.6 in.





ANDRÉ BRASILIER, WHOSE PARENTS WERE ALSO PAINTERS, WAS BORN IN 1929, IN SAUMUR, FRANCE. FROM AN EARLY AGE, HE SHOWED NATURAL INCLINATION FOR PAINTING AND HE ENTERED THE ÉCOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS IN PARIS AT THE AGE OF 20.

André Brasilier.



In 1953, aged only 23, Brasilier won the Premier Grand Prix de Rome of painting. He had his first retrospective of 100 artworks from 1950-1980 at the Château de Chenonceau in 1980 and a retrospective exhibition at the Musée Picasso-Château Grimaldi in Antibes (French Riviera) in 1988.

Over the years he held numerous exhibitions all over the world: France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Canada, United States, Russia, The Netherlands, Korea, Hong Kong... Notably, he was honoured by a retrospective exhibition of his work at Russia's renowned The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg in 2005 and at the Museum Haus Ludwig für Kunstausstellungen Saarlois in Germany in 2007.

Brasilier's works often feature themes and motifs of horses, nature, music and women. Set against the most simplistic and romantic backgrounds, he transports us easily into surreal landscapes, which lighten the soul with dreamy infusions of figures set in simplicity of colours, shape and form. In an intimate communion with nature, he draws his inspiration from its language, sounds and colours, thus revealing the natural beauty of our surroundings.

Although Brasilier bases his painting on reality, he is not a realistic painter, as once explained by Bernard de Montgolfier: "One could say that Brasilier has a very personal way of being non-figurative within figuration". Indeed, he strives to make the invisible visible again, opening the viewers' eyes upon the non-obvious, in a relentless quest for intimate and cohesive humanism.



- 1929** Born in Saumur, in Anjou, France
- 1949** École Nationale des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France
- 1952** Wins Florence Blumenthal Prize
- 1953** Wins Premier Grand Prix de Rome of Painting Award
- 1954** Stay at Villa Medici
- 1957** Travels around the world
- 1959** First lithography in Mourlot's workshop, advised by Jacques Sorlier
First exhibition in Paris, on the theme of music, Galerie Drouet, Paris, France
- 1960** First exhibition at the Galerie Weil, Paris, France
Wins Villeneuve-sur-Lot Award
- 1962** Exhibition at David B. Findlay Galleries, New York, USA

- 1963** Exhibition at David B. Findlay Galleries, New York, USA
- 1964** Exhibition at Galerie Weil, Paris, France
- 1969** First exhibition at Galerie de Paris, Paris, France
First exhibition at Yoshii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
Exhibition at the Centre Gildas Fardel, Nantes Museum, Nantes, France
- 1971** Exhibition at Arte Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela
Exhibition at David B. Findlay Galleries, New York, USA
- 1972** Exhibition at Galerie de Paris, Paris, France
- 1974** Exhibition of lithographs and tapestries at Galerie Vision Nouvelle, Paris, France
Exhibition at Yoshii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 1976** Exhibition at Galerie de Paris, Paris, France
- 1979** Exhibition at Galerie Matignon, Paris, France
- 1980** First retrospective (1950-1980), 100 artworks at the Château de Chenonceau, Chenonceau, France
- 1983** Exhibition of watercolours at Galerie des Chaudronniers, Geneva, Switzerland
Exhibition at Nichido Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 1985** Exhibition at Hammer Gallery, New York, USA
Decors and costumes for "Ciboulette", a Reynaldo Hahn's play, staged by Pierre Jourdan
- 1987** Mosaic work (15 x 3 m) in Vence, France
- 1988** Exhibition at Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver, Canada
Retrospective exhibition at the Musée Picasso-Château Grimaldi in Antibes, France
Receives the Médaille de Vermeil distinction, granted by the Ville de Paris
Exhibition at Galerie Hopkins-Thomas, Paris, France
- 1989** Exhibition retrospective "Hommage à André Brasilier", in Angers, France
Receives the Chevalet d'or distinction

- 1990** Exhibition at Nichido Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 1991** Publication of "Harmonies", an album of 10 lithographs (Text by Yann le Pichon) presented at Drouot Montaigne, Paris, France
- 1992** Publication of the "Catalogue Raisoné des lithographies", Editions Callithos
"André Brasilier à Bagatelle": retrospective exhibition organised by Didier Jumaux & Partenaires, Mairie de Paris, Paris, France
- 1993** Exhibition at the Château de Sédières, Clergoux, France
- 1994** Exhibition at Musée des Beaux-Arts, Palais Carnolés, Menton, France
- 1995** Exhibition at Nichido Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
Ceramics exhibition at Galerie Landrot, Paris, France
Exhibition at the Arsenal de Metz, Metz, France
Paintings exhibition at Galerie Bac Saint-Germain, Paris, France
Exhibition of watercolours at Buschlen Mowatt Galleries, Vancouver, Canada
- 1996** Exhibition at Soufer Gallery, New York, USA
Exhibition at Château de Vascœuil, Vascœuil, France
Permanent exhibition at Galerie Bac Saint-Germain, Paris, France
- 1997** Exhibition at Nichido Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
Exhibition in Verden, Germany
- 1998** Exhibition at Printemps Ginza, Tokyo, Japan
- 1999** Exhibition of watercolours at Galerie Nichido, Paris, France
Exhibition at Kunsthaus Bühler Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany
Exhibition at Garden Gallery, Nice, France
Exhibition at Les Salles du Palais Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2002** Exhibition at Mitsukoshi department store, Nihombashi, Tokyo, Japan

- 2003** Publication of the "Catalogue Raisoné de paintings 1982-2002", Editions Acatos
- 2004** Exhibition at the Mainau Castle, Constance Lake, Germany
- 2005** Exhibition at Galerie Schüller, Munich, Germany
Exhibition of watercolours at Galerie Barès, Paris, France
Retrospective exhibition at The State Hermitage Museum, Sept.-Nov., Saint Petersburg, Russia
- 2006** Retrospective exhibition at Espace des Arts, March-June, Paris, France
- 2007** Retrospective exhibition in five cities in Japan, Oct.-April, Tokyo, Nagoya, Niigata, Sapporo, Fukuoka
"André Brasilier chez La Fontaine", exhibition in the Jean de La Fontaine Museum, Château-Thierry, France
Exhibition at E.J. van Wisselingh & Co, Dec.-Jan., Haarlem, The Netherlands
Exhibition at Museum Haus Ludwig für Kunstausstellungen Saarlouis, March, Saarlouis, Germany
- 2008** Inaugural ceremony for the Chapel of Saint-Blaise, May 12, Pompadour, France
Etchings-Illustrated books, Sept.-Nov., Bibliothèque Louis Nucéra, Nice, France
- 2009** Travelling exhibition in Japan: Tokyo, Sendai, Nagoya, Fukuoka
- 2010** Exhibition at Gallery Artbank, May-June, Seoul, Korea
Exhibition at Château de Chenonceau, June-Nov., Chenonceau, France
- 2011** Exhibition at Moulins Albigeois, Sept.-Oct., Albi, France
- 2012** Exhibition at Opera Gallery, January, Hong Kong

**“ Painting is the artistic translation
of life's emotions
by attempting to surpass them
and share them ”**

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OPERA GALLERY

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