

**HARTUNG
MATHIEU
HELTON.**



25th ANNIVERSARY

HARTUNG. MATHIEU. HELTON.

8 - 24 NOVEMBER 2019

OPERA GALLERY

**“MY PAINTINGS NEVER
TURN OUT THE WAY I EXPECT
THEM TO, BUT I’M NEVER
SURPRISED.”**

ANDY WARHOL

Opera Gallery is proud to present a group exhibition of artists John Helton, Hans Hartung and Georges Mathieu, for the first time. The great Post-War painters of European abstraction provide an influential precedent that still reverberates in our time.

Both Hans Hartung and Georges Mathieu were part of the movement called *Abstraction Lyrique*. This term first appeared in 1947 under the pen of critic Jean-José Marchand, and gathers together artists often perceived as the defenders of a free and spontaneous form of gestural painting, emancipated from too much control. Even though they all tend to affirm the power of sign, color, material and/or line, each one developed their own specific techniques and goals.

Hans Hartung (1904-1989), a French painter of German origins, started creating artworks featuring black swirls drawn with eyes closed, following his intuition. These strong, black lines, epitomize his style and pace his quest for ever more minimalistic forms: spraying, scraping, using brooms or lithography rolls... Hartung never stopped looking for new tools to expand his pictorial gesture.

French painter Georges Mathieu (1921-2012) was a precursor in the research of use of a primitive language. He crushed the pigments with his fingers and applied them using speed and thrust as his main tool. His improvisations led him towards a baroque overflow and then calligraphy. Later, he also elaborated into several performances including music.

Contemporary artist John Helton (b.1964) takes this approach further, creating calligraphy like sculptures that celebrate the symphony of energy that forms our world and the universe beyond it. His works are explorations of pattern, rhythm and balance in their simplest and most elementary form; defying gravity and redefining space. Although originating from New York, Helton has resided in Park City Utah for over twenty years. We are particularly pleased to showcase the sculptures of this talented artist who will be making his New York debut with this show.

The New York show offers a rare view of the gestural line of Hartung and Mathieu, expanding out across time and geography up to Helton. Allusions to musical rhythm, Eastern calligraphy, characters, and other symbolism tie these artists to the field of written expression. Also evident is a shared preoccupation of rendering motion and energy. Their wide repertoire of painted scrawls, scratches, brushwork and splodges finds a fresh vantage alongside Helton’s deftly balanced dynamic forms.

Opera Gallery New York invites you to experience the unique works of these influential artists and be part of their dialogue weaved through this unprecedented exhibition.

Gilles Dyan,
Founder and Chairman
Opera Gallery Group

Gregory Lahmi,
Director
Opera Gallery New York



HANS HARTUNG.

(1904 – 1989)

Hans Hartung was born in Leipzig, Germany, in 1904, and studied philosophy and art history at the Leipzig University before attending other art schools in Leipzig, Dresden and Munich. He moved to France to escape Nazism in the years preceding the World War II. Known for his gestural, lyrical and abstract works, he is considered one of the major Post-War artists. First inspired by masters like Rembrandt and Goya, he was also influenced by Kandinsky as his style progressively approached to Abstraction.

Hartung looked for the translation of the inexpressible by the means of eliminating figurative elements and by adopting spontaneous gesture, free from formal constraints. The artist used original tools such as brooms, olives tree branches and spray guns. The role of colors akin to Expressionism is also a significant element of his work; he thus created zones of monochromatic hues on his paintings, adding parallel and long brushstrokes.

In the late 1940s, he began to exhibit his works in major cultural cities including Paris where he met Joan Miró, Kandinsky and others. He became French in 1946 and was also decorated World War II veteran of the French foreign Legion. His innovative abstract approach would have a crucial influence in America in the 1960s, developing his technique and using new types of paints. The artist died in 1989, in Antibes, France.



UNTITLED, 1952.

Signed and dated on the lower right
Oil on canvas
19.7 x 25.6 in - 50 x 65 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie de France, Paris
Galerie Moos, Geneva
Private collection, Switzerland
Christie's, Paris, 10 June 2016,
lot 162A
Private collection, Italy

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the
forthcoming Catalogue raisonné
currently being prepared by the
Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman
has confirmed the authenticity of
this work under no. CT HH3506-0



T1960-7, 1960.

Signed and dated on the lower left and on the reverse
 Pastel and vinyl paint on canvas
 15.7 x 41.3 in - 40 x 105 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Daniel Gervis, Paris
 Galerie 5 Haus Geiselhart, Reutlingen
 Manfred Wandel collection, Germany
 Grisebach GmbH, Berlin, 4 June 2015, lot 311
 Private collection

EXHIBITED

Reutlingen, Galerie 5 Haus Geiselhart, *Hans Hartung*, 1987
 Reutlingen, Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst, *Die Intimität des Sammelns*, 1993
 Reutlingen, Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst, *Die konkrete Zeit-Gegenstände eines Jahrhunderts*, 1996
 Reutlingen, Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst, *Shiftung-ganz konkret*, 1988 - 1998, 1998 - 1999
 Reutlingen, Stiftung für Konkrete Kunst, *Umbruch 2013 - Module im wandel*, 2013

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. CT HH1419-0

P 1967-115, 1967.

Signed and dated on the lower left
Pastel and acrylic on baryta cardboard
28.7 x 19.7 in - 73 x 50 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Germany
Private collection, Switzerland

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared
by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. CT HH2176-0







T1970-H4, 1970.

Titled on the overlap
Acrylic on canvas
21.3 x 31.7 in - 54 x 80.6 cm

PROVENANCE

Galeria Eterso, Cannes, 1989
Artcurial, Paris, 31 May 2010, lot 64
Private collection

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Fondation Hartung Bergman



T1971-H28, 1971.

Acrylic on canvas
36.2 x 28.7 in - 92 x 73 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Sapone, Nice

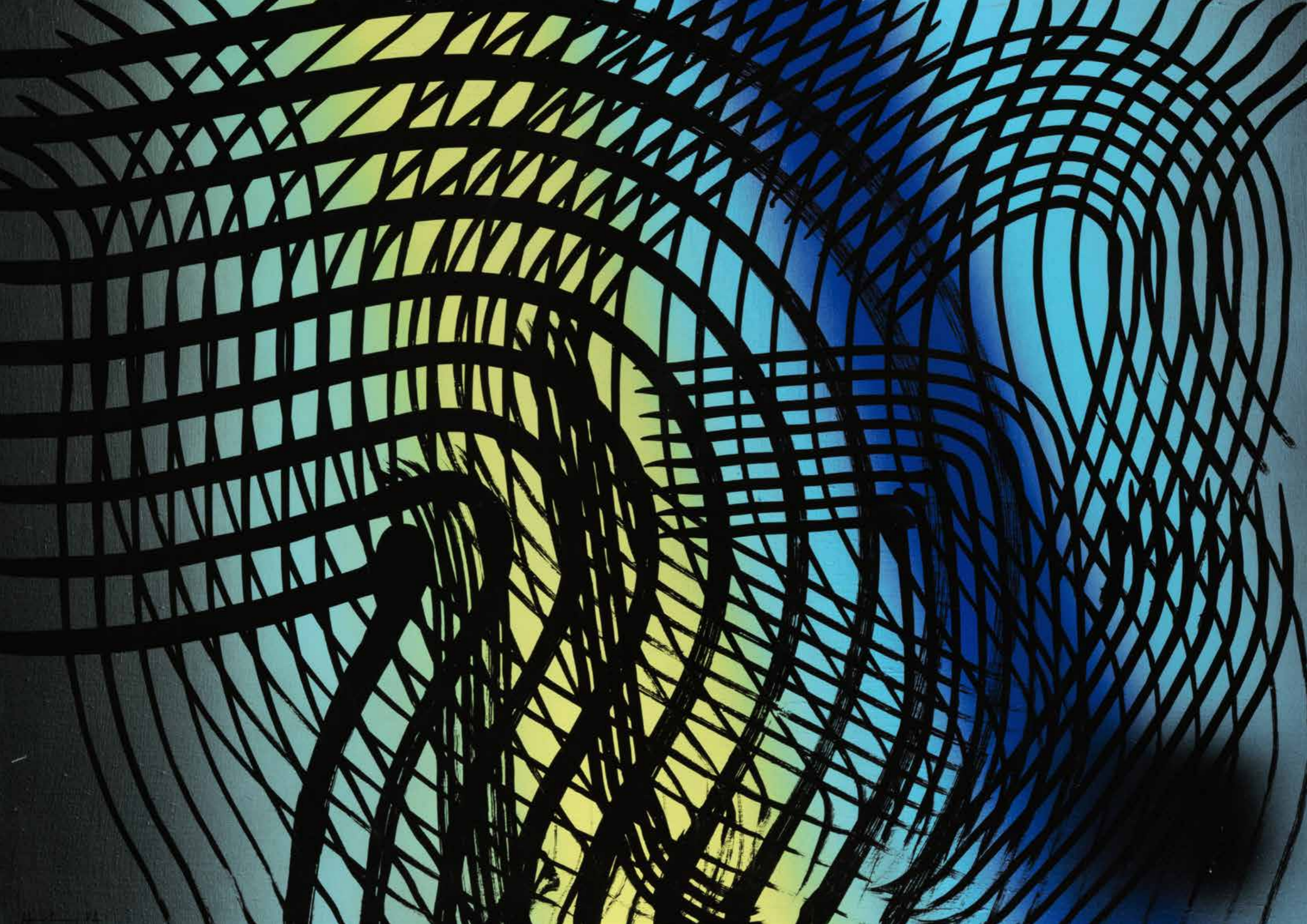
LITERATURE

Marchiori Giuseppe, *Attualità di Hartung*, *Arti visive*, Rome, October 1973
Descargues Pierre, *Hartung*, Editions Cercle d'Art, Paris, 1977
This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. 4467





**T-1972-H4, 1972.**

Signed and dated on the lower left
Acrylic on canvas
25.5 x 36 in - 64.8 x 91.4 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Maeght, Zurich, 1973
Davlyn Gallery, New York
Private collection, Monaco

EXHIBITED

Zurich, Galerie Maeght, *Hans
Hartung : Peintures récentes*, 1973

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the
Fondation Hartung Bergman

**T1973-E26, 1973.**

Signed and dated on the lower right
Acrylic on canvas
28.7 x 36.2 in - 73 x 92 cm

PROVENANCE

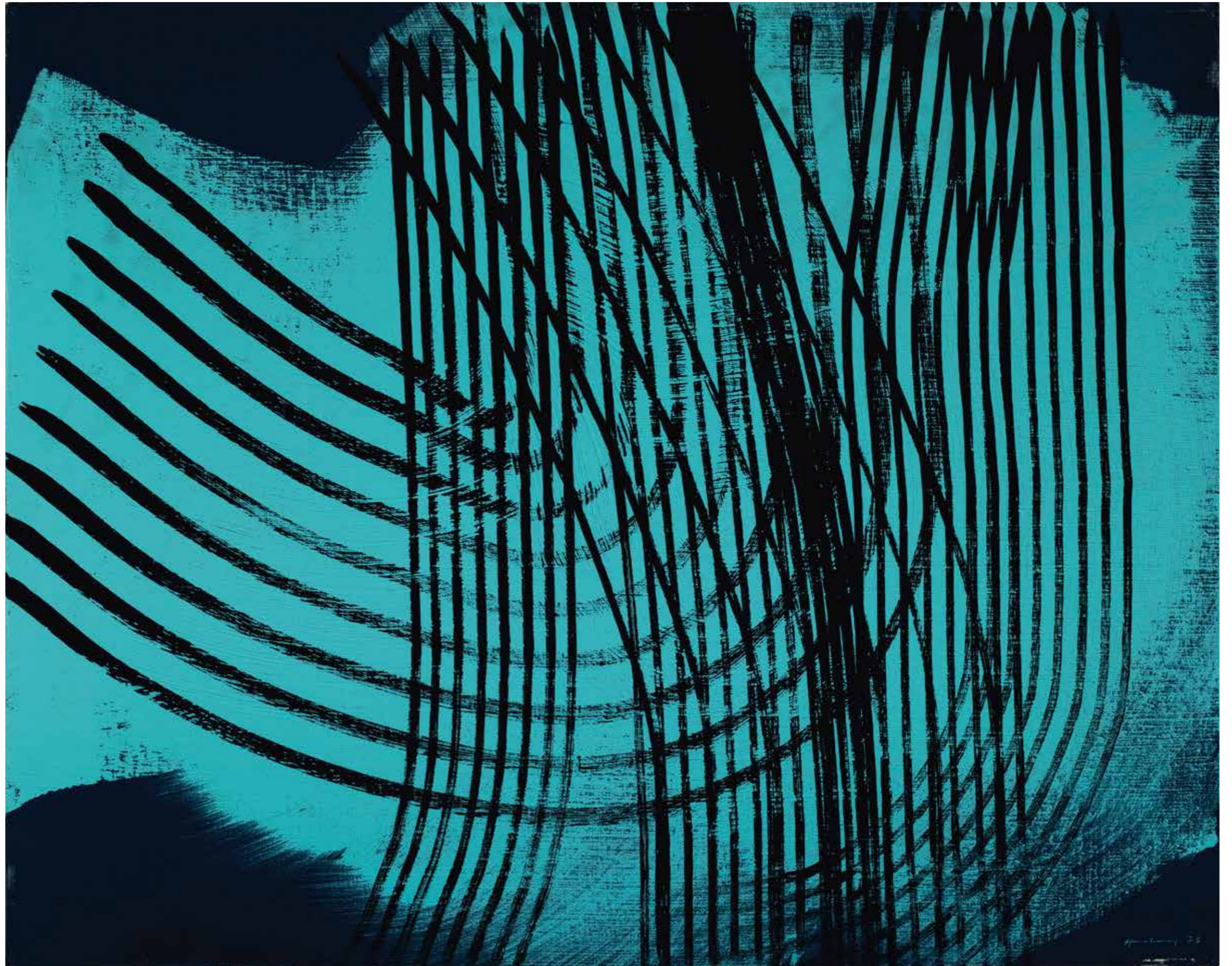
Galerie de France, Paris
Galleria Arte Borgogna, Milan
Private collection

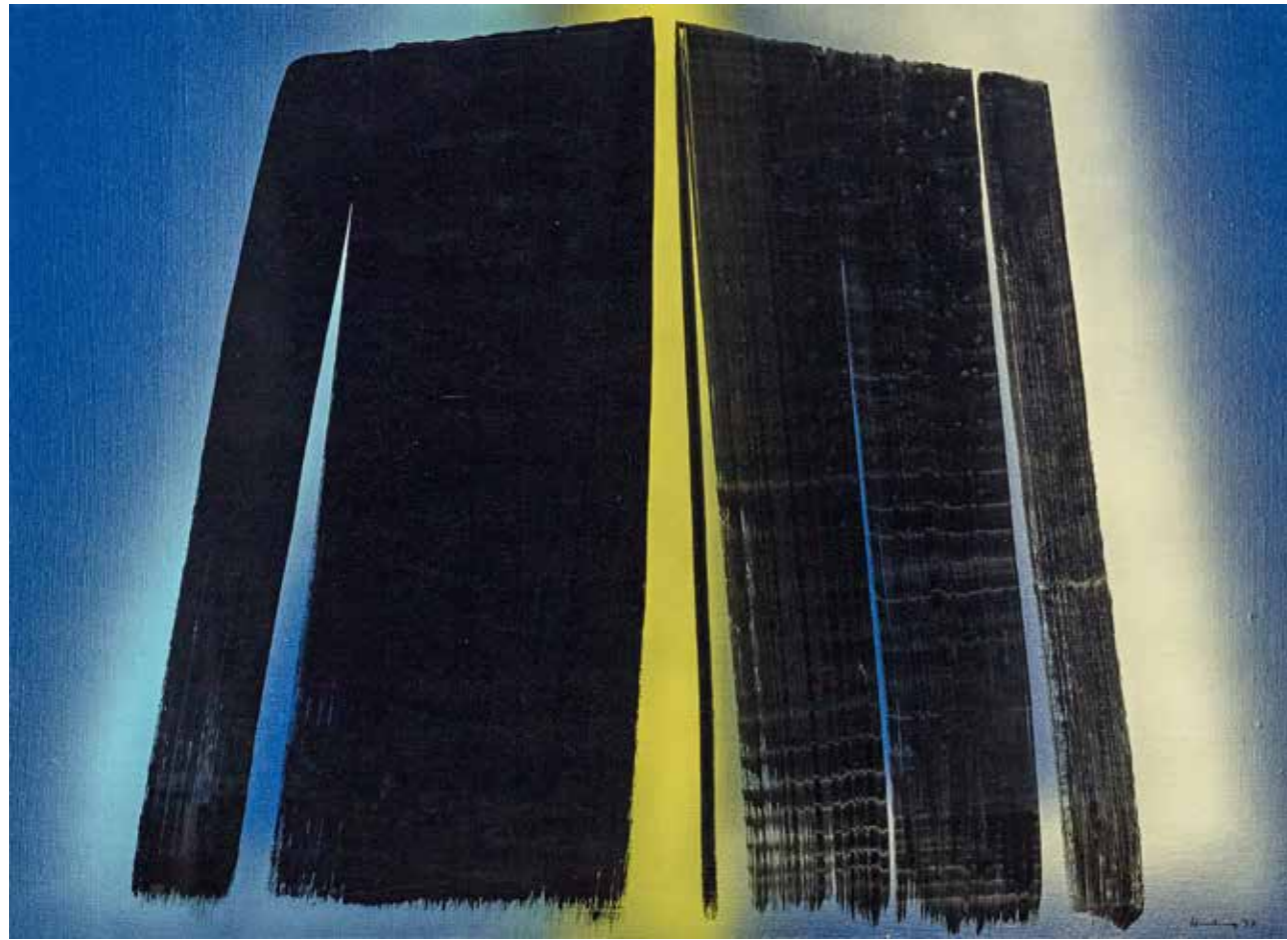
LITERATURE

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forthcoming Catalogue raisonné
currently being prepared by the
Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman
has confirmed the authenticity of
this work under no. CT HH603-0



**T1973-H45, 1973.**

Signed and dated on the lower right, titled on the stretcher
Acrylic on canvas
28.5 x 39.4 in - 72.5 x 100 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Maeght, Paris
Sotheby's, London, 22 June 2006, lot 152
Corporate collection, Germany

EXHIBITED

Milan, Centro Arte Internazionale, *Hans Hartung*, 1973

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

**P1973-C38, 1973.**

Signed and dated on the upper right
Acrylic on baryta cardboard laid down on canvas
29.4 x 41 in - 74.6 x 104.3 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie de France, Paris
Private collection
Sotheby's, Paris, 13 December 2007, lot 00112
Private collection

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. HH3143-0



**P1973-A 73, 1973.**

Dated on the reverse
Acrylic on baryta cardboard
29.4 x 40.9 in - 74.6 x 104 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Europe

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. 2166-5

**P50-1975-H32, 1975.**

Acrylic on cardboard
31.1 x 46.7 in - 79 x 118.5 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio
Telemarket Fine Arts, Italy
Private collection, Sardinia, Italy

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. CT2174-2



**T1976-E5, 1976.**

Signed and dated on the lower right, inscribed on the reverse

Acrylic on canvas

28.7 x 39.4 in - 73 x 100 cm

PROVENANCE

Galleria Sapone, Nice

Private collection, France

Studio d'Arte G.R., Italy

Private collection, Italy, 2007

Dorotheum, 28 November 2013, lot 1017

Private collection, Europe

EXHIBITED

Nice, Galerie Sapone, *Hans Hartung*, 1978

Biarritz, Niort, Avignon, Cholet, Guérande, Cherbourg, Rosny-sur-Seine, Saint Herblain, *Hans Hartung*,

Œuvres de 1960 à 1989, travelling exhibition from September 1991 to December 1993

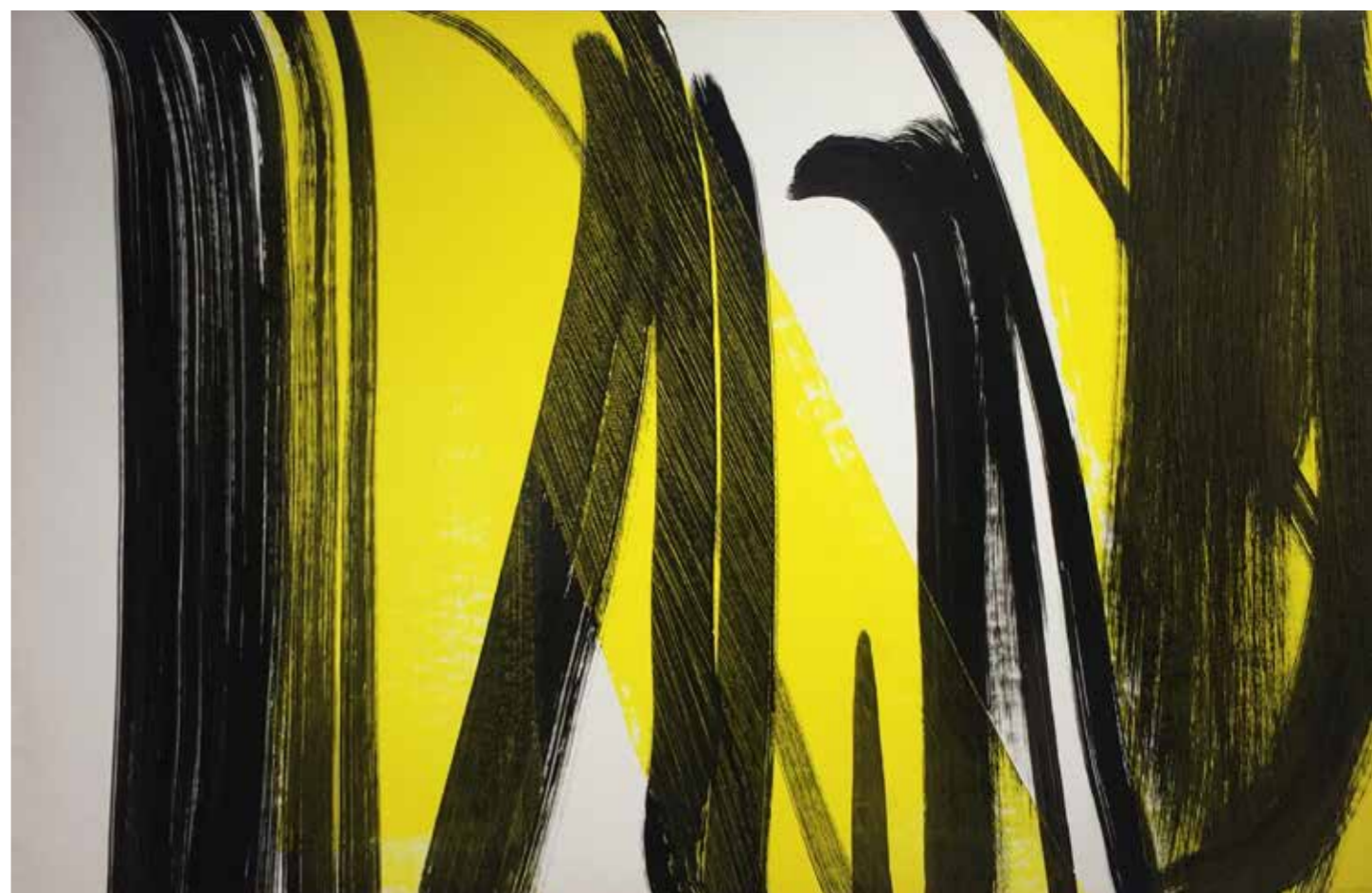
Avignon, Cholet, Biarritz, Guérande, Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, Cherbourg, Bourges, *Abstraction / Figuration*, travelling exhibition from March 1994 to August 1995, exh. cat. p. 109, ill.

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

**P50-1977-H2, 1977.**

Signed and dated on the lower right

Acrylic on baryta mounted on wood

31.1 x 47.2 in - 79 x 120 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection

EXHIBITED

Knokke, Casino de Knokke, *Hans Hartung*, 1998

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Fondation Hartung Bergman



**T1981-R29, 1981.**

Acrylic on canvas
25.6 x 36.2 in - 65 x 92 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, France

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. 1712

**T1982-R4, 1982.**

Signed and dated on the lower right
Acrylic on canvas
31.9 x 39.4 in - 81 x 100 cm

PROVENANCE

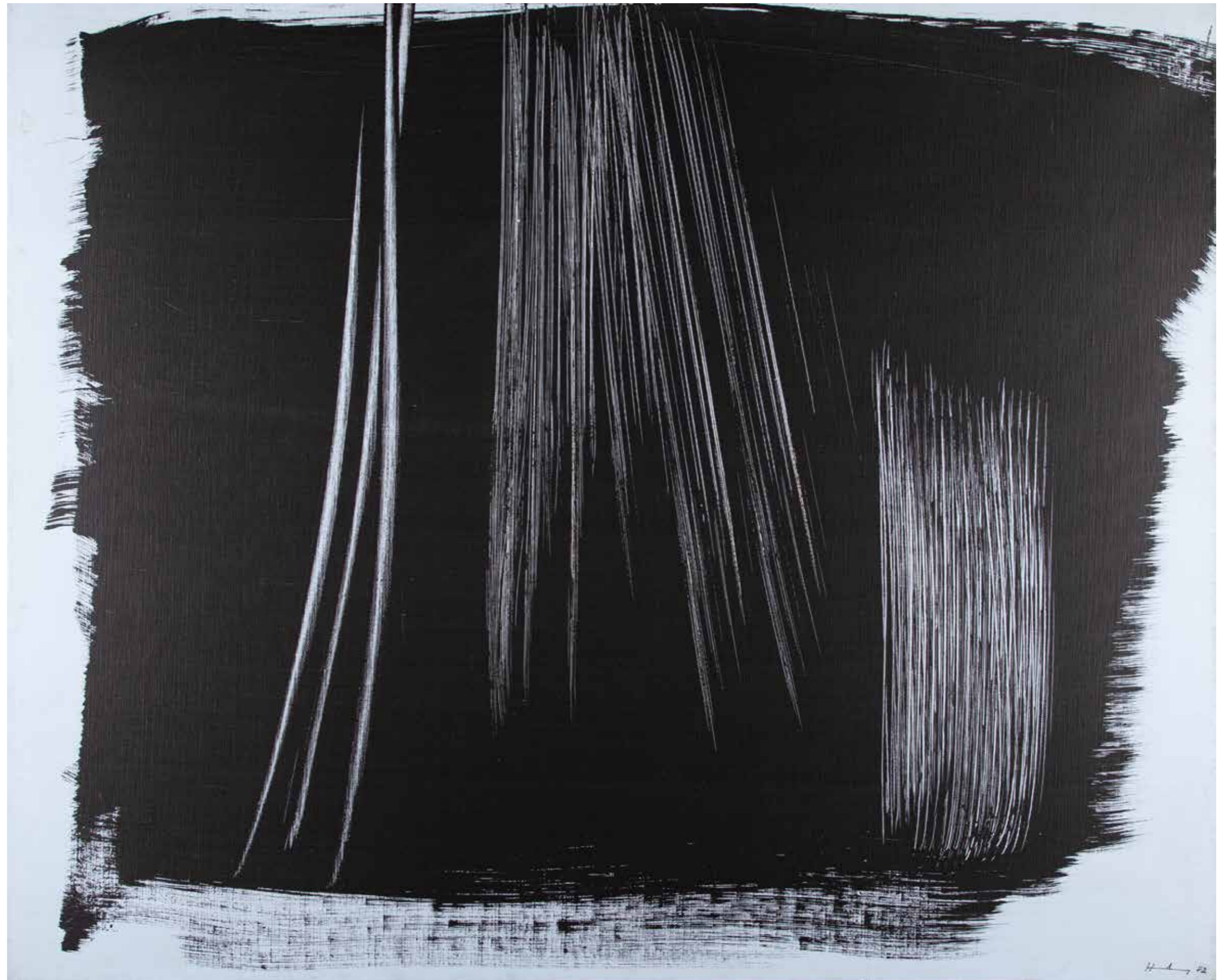
Galerie Sapone, Nice
Private collection

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. CT5141-0



T1983-E45, 1983.

Signed and dated on the lower right
and signed, titled and dated on the
stretcher

Acrylic on canvas
47.2 x 76.8 in - 120 x 195 cm

PROVENANCE

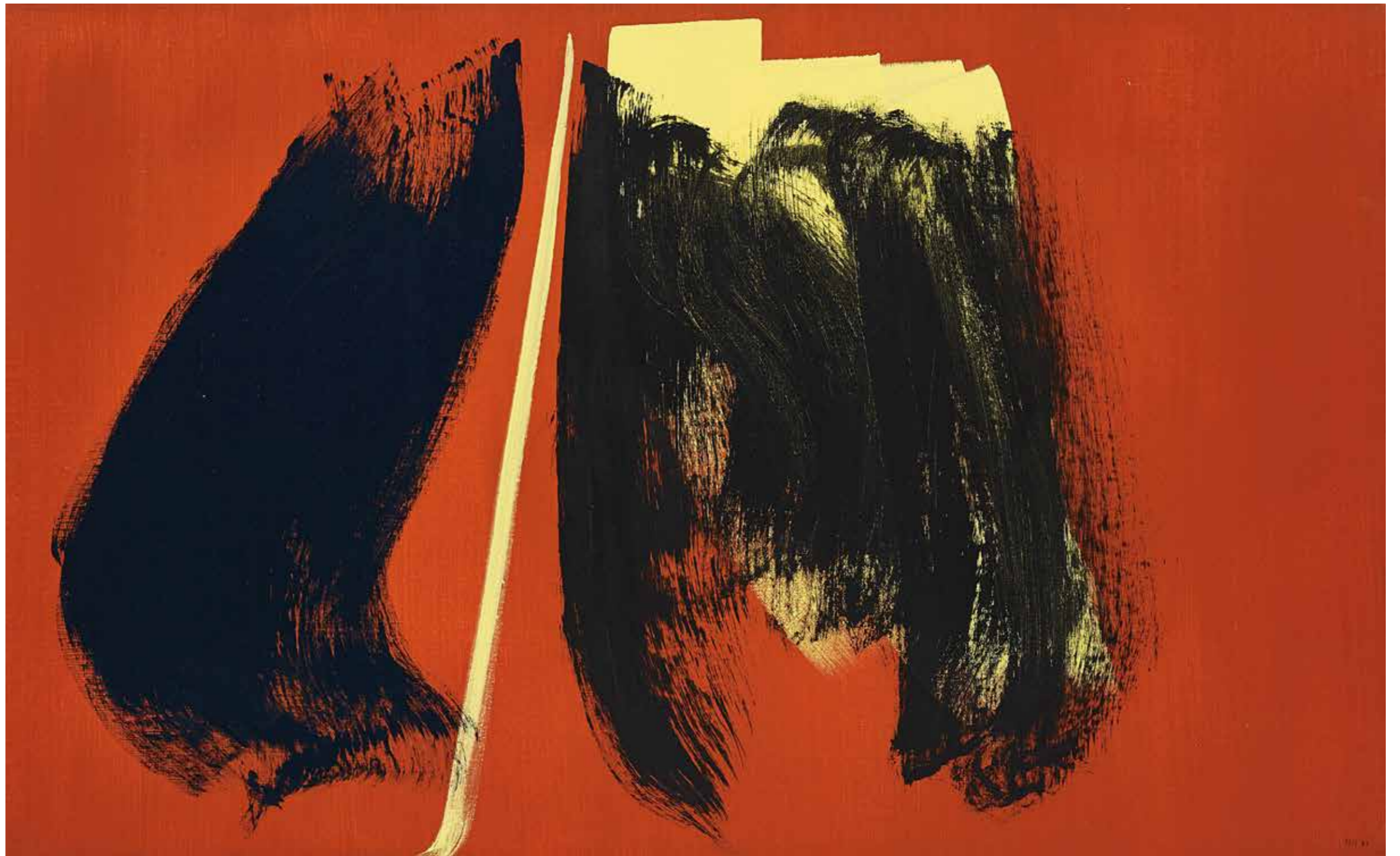
Galerie Gervis, Paris, 1985
Private collection, Belgium

EXHIBITED

Alhen, Helga Gausling, *Hans
Hartung*, September 1983, no. 20

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the
Fondation Hartung Bergman



P40-1984-H3, 1984.

Numbered and dated on the reverse

Acrylic on baryta cardboard and kraft paper mounted on board
35.4 x 47.2 in - 90 x 120 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Sapone, Nice
Private collection

EXHIBITED

Turin, Giampiero Biasutti,
Hans Hartung: opere dal 1970 al 1985: mostra, 2001, Editions Giampiero Biasutti arte moderna e contemporanea
Milan, *Arte 92, Hartung*, 2002

LITERATURE

Bellini Rolando, *Hans Hartung opere dal 1970 al 1985*, Giampiero Biasutti, Turin, 2001
Cerritelli Claudio, *Hartung*, *Arte 92*, Milan, 2002

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Fondation Hartung Bergman

CERTIFICATE

The Fondation Hartung Bergman has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. CT 1623-0





GEORGES MATHIEU. (1921 – 2012)

Georges Mathieu was born in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France, in 1921. After studying law, philosophy and literature at the University of Lille, the French artist began his career in 1942. His work consists of amorphous shapes and experimentation with drip techniques. From 1944–1945, Mathieu started to use a gestural technique for his works. He was the first to protest against American Abstraction Expressionism and to advocate a movement free from classical and formal constraints.

The artist thus became the pioneer of Lyrical Abstraction. In the late 1940s, the self-taught painter founded the group *l'Imaginaire* at Galerie du Luxembourg in Paris with major figures such as Hans Hartung and Camille Bryen in order to promote it. Mathieu's own works were closely associated with Tachiste painters (from the French *tache*), often squeezing paint directly onto the canvas and emphasizing the necessity of rapid execution to harness intuitive expression. Many of his paintings refer to French history events, identifying his work as aligned with abstract history painting. Mathieu also performed his art before an audience, executing monumental canvases. Thereby gestural abstraction with the calligraphic aspect, defined his work in the 1950s and 1960s. He received the Legion of Honour and was decorated Commander of Arts and Letters. In 1975, he became a member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Mathieu died on June 10, 2012, in Boulogne-Billancourt, France.

USUARD, 1956.

Signed and dated on the lower right, titled on the stretcher
Oil on canvas
78.7 x 39.4 in - 200 x 100 cm

PROVENANCE

Kootz Gallery, New York
Newark Museum, New Jersey
Private collection

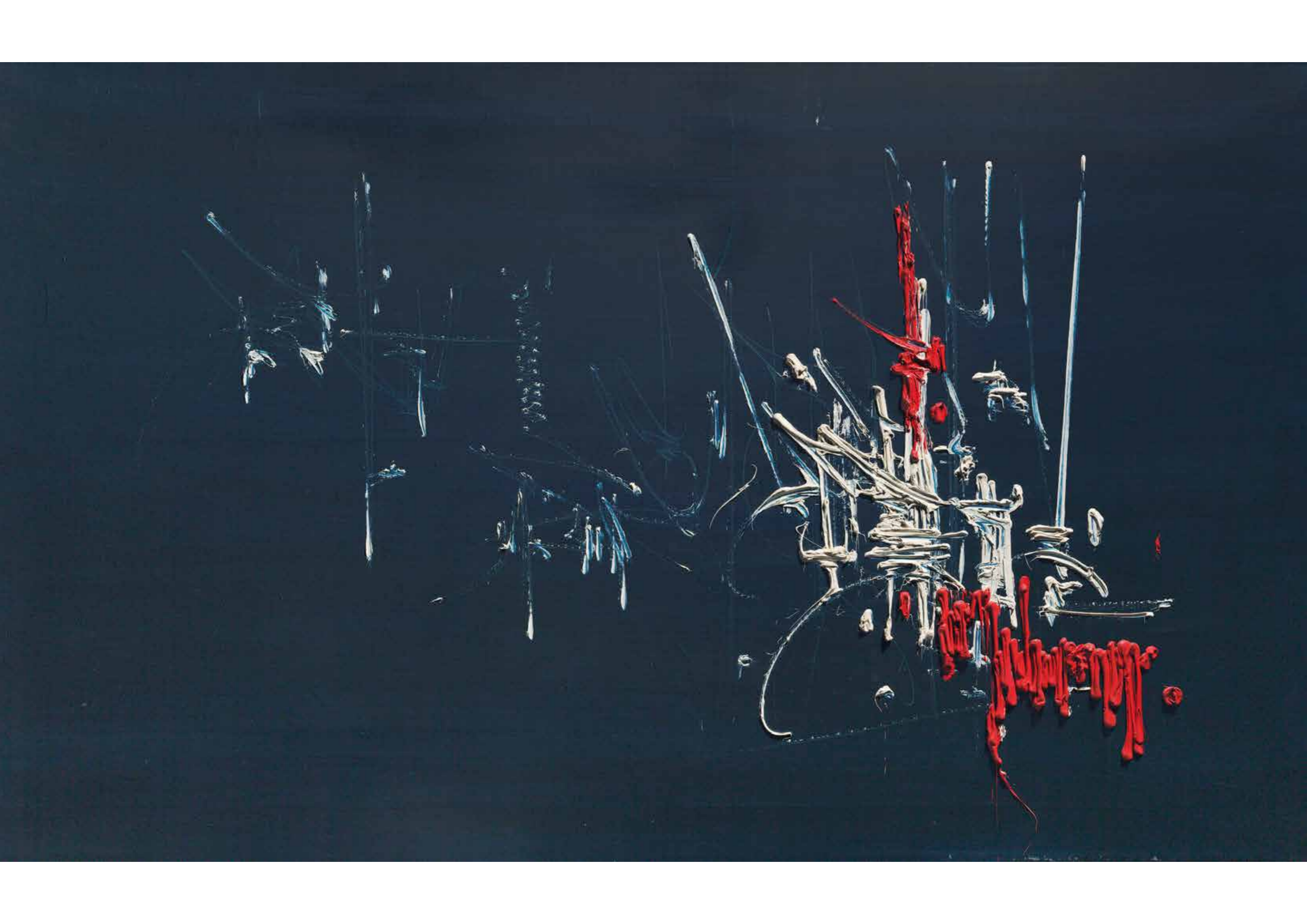
LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Comité Georges Mathieu

CERTIFICATE

The Comité Georges Mathieu has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. GM50039





**DÉFORMATION DE FONCTION VARIABLE CONVEXE, 1957.**

Titled on the stretcher

Oil on canvas

38.2 x 63.8 in - 97.1 x 162.2 cm

PROVENANCE

Betty Barman collection, Brussels

Galerie Michel Couturier, Paris

Dolf Selbach, Düsseldorf

Grisebach GmbH, Berlin, 27 May 2011, lot 108

Private collection

EXHIBITED

Brussels, Musée d'Ixelles, *L'École de Paris dans les collections belges*, 1961, no. 110

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *50 Œuvres particulièrement choisies parmi les collections belges*, 1963, no. 6a

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Comité Georges Mathieu

**COMPOSITION, 1958.**

Signed and dated on the lower left

Oil on canvas

31.9 x 51.2 in - 81 x 130 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Paris

LITERATURE

This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by the Comité Georges Mathieu

CERTIFICATE

The Comité Georges Mathieu has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. GM50033



**POTENTILLE, 1964.**

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

PROVENANCE

Gimpel Fils Gallery, London
Galerie de Seine, Paris
Galerie Jean Krugier, Geneva
Private collection
Christie's, London, 30 November 1989, lot 762
Private collection
Christie's, London, 25 March 1993, lot 20
Private collection

EXHIBITED

Zurich, Gimpel & Hanover Galerie, *Georges Mathieu*, 1965
Paris, Galerie Charpentier, *Georges Mathieu*, 1965

LITERATURE

François Mathey, *Georges Mathieu*, Milan, 1969, p. 46, no. 198, ill. in color
Georges Mathieu, *Mathieu : 50 Ans de creation*, Editions Hervas, Paris, 2003, p. 138

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Comité Georges Mathieu

**CHARANS, 1970.**

Signed and dated on the lower right, titled on the reverse
Oil on canvas
25.6 x 36.2 in - 65 x 92 cm

PROVENANCE

Galleria Il Milione, Milan
Private collection, Europe

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the Comité Georges Mathieu



BONISSAN, 1972.

Signed and dated on the lower right
Oil on canvas
28.6 x 36 in - 72.7 x 91.5 cm

PROVENANCE

Galleria Gissi, Turin
Private collection, Italy
Sotheby's, Paris, 9 December 2015,
lot 188
Private collection

EXHIBITED

Montreal, Dominion Gallery, *Linea
Europea*, 1973

CERTIFICATE

A certificate can be provided by the
Comité Georges Mathieu

ORAGES SOUMIS, 1988.

Signed on the lower left, titled on the stretcher
Alkyd on canvas
57.5 x 44.9 in - 146 x 114 cm

PROVENANCE

Galerie Guy Pieters, Knokke le Zoute, August 1988
Private collection, France

LITERATURE

Georges Mathieu, *Mathieu : 50 Ans de création*, Edition Hervas, Paris, 2003, p. 513
This work will be included in the forthcoming Catalogue raisonné currently being prepared by
the Comité Georges Mathieu

CERTIFICATE

The Comité Georges Mathieu has confirmed the authenticity of this work under no. GM80022





JOHN HELTON. (B. 1964)

John Helton, born in 1964, has displayed a talent for creating beautiful works of art from a very young age. His father was also an artist and exposed him to the galleries and museums of nearby Manhattan, New York throughout his childhood. Helton soon gained an appreciation for the complex and abstract ideas of the Modern Masters. When, in 6th grade science class, he learned that matter could neither be created nor destroyed, his perception of the world forever changed.

"I began to see an interconnectedness beyond comprehension. I see the world as a vast collaboration, a symphony of energy that is in constant motion. My work is a visual metaphor for the rhythm of life."

After graduating from Parson's School of Design, NYC, Helton found inspiration in the dramatic landscapes of the mountains and deserts of the West, where he maintains a studio to this day. His elegant and powerful sculptures are collected and exhibited internationally and Helton continues to gain recognition as an important voice in contemporary sculpture.

EPIPHANY, 2019.

Bronze with graphite patina

Unique piece

120 x 64 x 46 in - 305 x 162.5 x 117 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio



FLOATING RHYTHM, 2019.

Bronze with graphite patina

Unique piece

86 x 32 x 24 in - 218.5 x 81 x 61 cm

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio



THRESHOLD, 2019.

Bronze gilded 24 K gold leaf with
black granite base
Unique piece
64 x 26 x 22 in - 162.5 x 66 x 56 cm
(with base)

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





INTERPLAY, 2019.

Bronze with Carrara marble base
Unique piece
63 x 32 x 25 in - 160 x 81 x 63.5 cm
(with base)

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio

EXPANDING UNIVERSE, 2019.

Bronze with stainless rotating spindle and Carrara marble base

Unique piece

74 x 40 x 38 in - 188 x 101.5 x 96.5 cm (with base)

PROVENANCE

Artist's studio





ETERNAL FLAME, 2019.

Bronze gilded in 24 K gold leaf with
Carrara marble base
Unique piece
73 x 42 x 34 in - 185.5 x 107 x 86 cm
(with base)

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio

CASCADE, 2019.

Bronze with red patina and Carrara marble base
Unique piece
98 x 24 x 24 in - 249 x 61 x 61 cm (with base)

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



SONATA-ALLEGRO, 2019.

Bronze with graphite patina
Unique piece
102 x 50 x 50 in - 259 x 127 x 127 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



HANS HARTUNG.



UNTITLED, 1952. pp. 6-7



T1960-7, 1960. pp. 8-9



T1976-E5, 1976. pp. 26-27



P50-1977-H2, 1977. p. 29



T1981-R29, 1981. pp. 30-31



P 1967-115, 1967. p. 11



T1970-H4, 1970. pp. 12-13



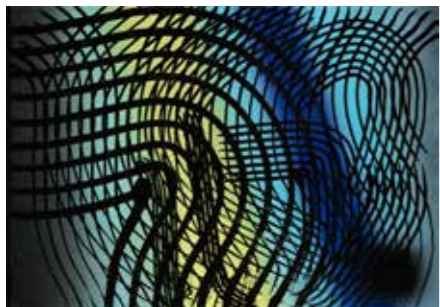
T1971-H28, 1971. p. 15



T1982-R4, 1982. pp. 32-33



T1983-E45, 1983. pp. 34-35



T-1972-H4, 1972. pp. 16-17



T1973-E26, 1973. pp.18-19



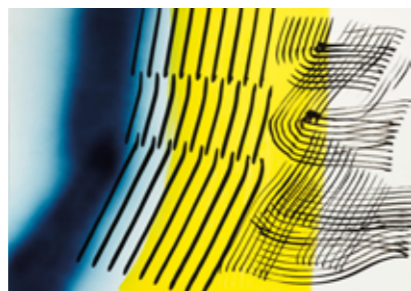
T1973-H45, 1973. p. 20



P40-1984-H3, 1984. pp. 36-37



P1973-C38, 1973. p. 21



P1973-A 73, 1973. pp. 22-23

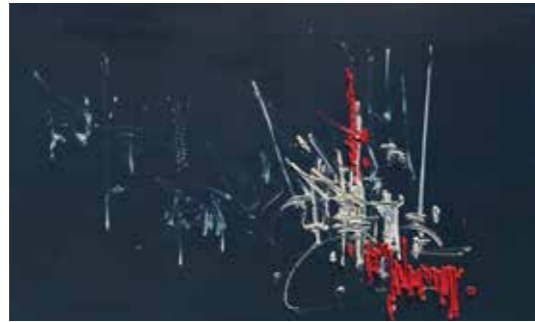


P50-1975-H32, 1975. p. 25

GEORGES MATHIEU.



USUARD, 1956. p. 41



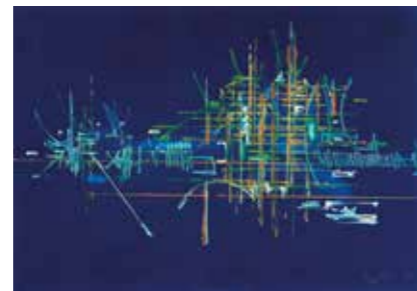
DÉFORMATION DE FONCTION VARIABLE CONVEXE, 1957. pp. 42-43



COMPOSITION, 1958. p. 45



POTENTILLE, 1964. pp. 46-47



CHARANS, 1970. p. 49



BONISSAN, 1972. pp. 50-51



ORAGES SOUMIS, 1988. p. 53

JOHN HELTON.



EPIPHANY, 2019. p. 57



FLOATING RHYTHM, 2019. p. 59



THRESHOLD, 2019. pp. 60-61



INTERPLAY, 2019. pp. 62-63



EXPANDING UNIVERSE, 2019. p. 65



ETERNAL FLAME, 2019. pp. 66-67



CASCADE, 2019. p. 69



SONATA-ALLEGRO, 2019. p. 71

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- p. 4: *Hans Hartung in his studio.* © Getty Images
- p. 38: *Georges Mathieu presents his new exhibition at Musée d'Art Moderne and especially his last painting 'La victoire de Denain' painted within 2 hours during the exhibition in March 27, 1963 in Paris, France.* Photo by Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone. © Getty Images
- p. 54: *John Helton in his studio, 2019.* © Dan Campbell Photo
- pp. 57, 59, 60-61, 62-63, 65, 66-67, 69, 71: © Dan Campbell Photo

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