

# LÉVY GORVY

## UN ART AUTRE ABSTRACTION IN POSTWAR PARIS

26 April—5 July 2019

Lévy Gorvy  
22 Old Bond Street  
London W1S 4PY

Opening Reception: Thursday 25 April 2019, 6-8PM



Joan Mitchell. *Untitled*, 1957. Oil on canvas, 69 x 58 1/2 inches (175.2 x 148.5 cm) © Estate of Joan Mitchell. Private Collection, Santa Barbara.

**London**—Opening on 26 April 2019, Lévy Gorvy is pleased to present *Un art autre*, an exhibition centred on the innovative reassessments of abstraction that emerged in postwar Paris. *Un art autre*, a term meaning ‘Art of another kind’ was coined by legendary art critic and curator Michel Tapié in 1952. The artists involved provided a distinctively European parallel to the American Abstract Expressionist movement. This exhibition will offer an insight into the allure of Paris in the 1950s and ‘60s: a hub of cross-cultural exchange, intellectual activity, and artistic re-invention. It will explore the works by artists Sam Francis, Joan Mitchell, Jean Paul Riopelle, Pierre Soulages, and Zao Wou-Ki.

*Un art autre* will feature an outstanding painting from 1956/58 by Sam Francis on loan from the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum in St. Louis, titled *Arcueil* after the location of the artist’s studio in Paris. This will be the first time the work is exhibited in the UK in sixty years, since *The New American Painting* at the Tate Gallery, a landmark exhibition organised by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, which travelled internationally in 1958-1959. Joan Mitchell’s *Untitled* (1957) will be another highlight of

the exhibition. Made at a pivotal point in her career, this bold and significant work is exemplary of the energetic brushstrokes that are iconic in Mitchell’s oeuvre. *Un art autre* will also include exceptional paintings by Francis and Riopelle, both on loan from the Henie Onstad Kunstsenter in Høvikodden, Norway, and *Abstraction (Orange)* (1952), a masterwork by Riopelle from the Museu Coleção Berardo in Lisbon which will be exhibited for the first time in the UK. The exhibition will celebrate the singular contributions made to abstraction in this vibrant moment.

In the wake of the traumatic ruptures of the Second World War, artists were moved to radically deconstruct form and create new aesthetic landscapes rooted in dynamism, vitality and gestural freedom. Tapié became the spokesperson for this movement in his book *Un art autre* (1952), and its accompanying exhibition. The subtitle of his book, *Où il s’agit de nouveaux dévidages du réel* (‘where dealing with new unwindings of the real’), encapsulates the motivating sensibility behind this drive to break with traditional notions of composition and order. By ‘unwinding’ naturalism, figuration, and geometric form, these artists sought a visual language that might piece together a shattered world.



Sam Francis. *Arcueil*, 1956/58. Oil on canvas. 80 3/4 x 76 inches (205.1 x 193 cm). © Sam Francis Foundation, California / DACS 2019. Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard K. Weil, 1962.

*Un art autre* illuminates the intersections of the local and the global as artists, philosophers, poets, and academics from around the world gathered in Paris during this moment of intense creation. Lévy Gorvy is delighted to announce the commission of a scholarly essay by art historian Elizabeth Buhe and a comprehensive chronology by academic Matthew Holman, to accompany the exhibition. In addition, on the occasion of the exhibition, New York-based filmmaker and biographer Lisa Immordino Vreeland will make a short film lending insight into the atmosphere of Paris during the '50s and '60s, capturing the zeitgeist of the era and offering a portrait of these artists as they came together in the city.

### **About Lévy Gorvy**

Lévy Gorvy cultivates a program devoted to innovation and connoisseurship in the fields of modern, postwar, and contemporary art. Founded by Dominique Lévy and Brett Gorvy, Lévy Gorvy maintains gallery spaces at 909 Madison Avenue in

New York, in Mayfair, London, and in Central, Hong Kong. The gallery fosters continued dedication to the living artists and artists' estates that it represents and offers a robust program of exhibitions and multidisciplinary events. The gallery also produces ongoing art historical research and original scholarship, publishing exhibition catalogues, monographs, and other key publications. Our Zürich office, Lévy Gorvy with Rumbler, offers bespoke private advisory services to collectors and institutions around the globe.

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