

**« Art does not come and lie down in the beds that have been made for it; it runs away as soon as anyone utters its name: what it likes is being incognito. Its best moments are when it forgets what it is called. »**

**Jean Dubuffet**

**COLLECTION DE L'ART BRUT LAUSANNE**

**1945** Jean Dubuffet begins his search for works free of all cultural conventions. Sharing his discoveries with, notably, André Breton and Jean Paulhan, he soon establishes a link with Switzerland through his connections with Swiss writers, artists and psychiatrists.

**1947** The art dealer René Drouin allows the basement of his gallery in Paris to be converted into the *Foyer de l'Art Brut*, inaugurated with the "Barbus Müller" granite sculptures.

**1948** The *Compagnie de l'Art Brut*, founded in October, takes up headquarters in a pavilion provided by the publisher Gaston Gallimard. The artist Slavko Kopac acts as secretary, curator and archivist for the collection. Shown in confidential places as desired by Dubuffet, the works are introduced to such visitors as Jean Cocteau, Tristan Tzara, Joan Mirò, André Malraux and Henri Michaux.

**1949** Major exhibition at the Galerie Drouin entitled *L'art brut préféré aux arts culturels* (Art Brut preferred to cultural art). In a preface to the exhibition catalogue, Jean Dubuffet defines the concept of Art Brut.

**1951-1962** The *Compagnie* is dissolved. Taking up the painter Alfonso Ossorio on his proposal to install the entire collection in his own residence near New York, the works are shipped to the United States.

**1962** The collection returns to France. Jean Dubuffet acquires a town house in the heart of Paris. Here the *Compagnie de l'Art Brut* is reborn and becomes a research center open to interested visitors by appointment only.

**1962-1970** Works by Madge Gill, Carlo, Lesage, Gaston Duf, and Podestà, among others, are shown in the collection, which grows considerably thanks to research projects and donations. For an exhibition at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 1967, 700 pieces are chosen from among the 5000 works constituting the collection's holdings at the time. In 1964, publication of the first issue of *L'Art Brut*, the first in a series of monographs on the collection's main creators.

**1971** With the intention of donating his collection, Jean Dubuffet enters into contact with the City of Lausanne. The City Council ratifies the proceedings in 1972.

**1976** Inauguration of the Collection de l'Art Brut in Lausanne, with Michel Thévoz as curator.

**2001** Lucienne Peiry is appointed director of the Collection de l'Art Brut, and, since 2009, acts as its artistic director.

The Collection de l'Art Brut presents works by self-taught creators who, for various reasons, have eluded cultural conditioning and social conformity.

Marginalized people endowed with a rebellious spirit or immune to collective norms and values, those who produce Art Brut include prisoners, inmates of psychiatric hospitals, eccentrics, loners and outcasts. They work in solitude, secrecy and silence, paying no heed to public criticism or the gaze of others. Unscathed by influences deriving from artistic traditions, the works feature singular modes of representation. Availing themselves of totally novel materials and means, their creators develop techniques of their very own.

Jean Dubuffet, the discoverer and theoretician of Art Brut, began his search for such works in Switzerland in 1945. The French painter's enthusiasm was immediately aroused by these marginal creations, in which he perceived "the completely pure artistic operation, raw, reinvented from scratch in all its stages by its creator, based only on his own impulses". This museum owes its existence to Jean Dubuffet: the Collection de l'Art Brut opened in 1976 thanks to his important donation of works to the City of Lausanne in Switzerland.

Boasting some 60,000 pieces to date, the Collection de l'Art Brut, is visited by an ever-growing number of people. Every year, nearly 40,000 visitors from Europe, the USA and Japan flock to the museum to discover original and subversive works. In parallel to its permanent collection, the museum puts on a number of temporary exhibitions devoted to specific themes (Crowds, Writing) or creators (Aloïse, Walla, Wölfli). The Collection de l'Art Brut also organizes concerts, theatre and dance performances, as well as numerous youth activities.

## **COLLECTION DE L'ART BRUT LAUSANNE**

Avenue des Bergières 11  
CH – 1004 Lausanne

Tél. +41 21 315 25 70  
Fax +41 21 315 25 71

[art.brut@lausanne.ch](mailto:art.brut@lausanne.ch)  
[www.artbrut.ch](http://www.artbrut.ch)