

ALMINE RECH

**ALMINE RECH JOINS REPRESENTATION OF THE KAREL APPEL ESTATE
INAUGURAL EXHIBITION TO OPEN IN PARIS IN THE FALL OF 2019**

Karel Appel
Almine Rech Paris
October 12 – November 16, 2019



Karel Appel, *Burning Child with Hoop*, 1961 – Oil on canvas – 300 x 230cm, 118 1/8 x 90 1/2 inches / © Karel Appel Foundation / Adagp, Paris 2019 / Collection Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France.

Almine Rech is pleased to announce that it will join the representation of the Karel Appel Estate, beginning with an exhibition in Paris during the fall of 2019.

Almine Rech will hold its first monographic exhibition dedicated to Karel Appel (1921-2006), on view in the gallery's Paris space from October 12 to November 16, 2019.

If Appel is considered the most important Dutch artist of the second half of the 20th century, this is only partly true: he was of course born in Amsterdam, but in 1950, at age 29, left the Netherlands for good. He moved to Paris with Corneille, Constant and Asger Jorn - somewhat the nucleus of CoBrA, a fiercely European avant-garde group founded two years earlier. "Amsterdam was the city of my youth; Paris was that of my evolution. What I learned there remains most crucial", he later told writer Simon Vinkenoog.

Soon after settling in Paris, he visited an exhibition of drawings by mentally ill persons at Sainte-Anne hospital. He was deeply impressed by what he saw and covered the pages of the exhibition's accompanying brochure, and their scientific descriptions of pathologies, with drawings. The resulting *Psychopathological Notebook*, part manifesto, part dictionary, was his own way, inspired by Dubuffet's example, of inventing a pictorial language, his peculiar form of *Art brut*. He kept the brochure with him all his life.

In 1952, Michel Tapié included him in his now-legendary exhibition *Un art autre* and in the eponymous book. Of the CoBrA movement's protagonists, Appel was the only one chosen by Tapié, which made him being associated with artists like Mathieu, Fautrier, Étienne-Martin, Riopelle, Sam Francis or Pollock and earned him his first New York exhibition at Martha Jackson's in 1954. In 1957, for his second show, he travelled to New York for the first time: from then on, the Parisian art world's perception was that he had disappeared in the US, but he actually remained based in France until the mid-1970s.

Appel is often identified with CoBrA, although the movement itself only existed for a mere three years. Some German painters of the following generation, such as Baselitz or Lüpertz, were keen to free themselves from the orthodox abstract style of the 50s without fully returning to figuration: to them, Karel Appel's work was a reference. Neither entirely abstract nor fully figurative, it stood somewhere in between. The ultimate example of this stance was of course Picasso, but he had already become a historical figure beyond a young artist's reach when Appel came to Paris: Édouard Pignon, a close friend of the master, conveyed the message. Appel had met him as early as 1947 when he visited Paris for the first time with Corneille.

The crucial importance of Karel Appel's formative years and artistic development in France had been all but forgotten until some ten years after his death, the Centre Pompidou, through an exhibition of drawings curated by Jonas Storsvé (2015), and the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, with a retrospective curated by Choghakate Kazarian (2017), endeavoured to set the record right. The exhibition hosted by Almine Rech under Franz W. Kaiser's curation follows in their footsteps. It focuses on two pervasive themes highly characteristic of Karel Appel's work: the figure and the landscape.

The Karel Appel Estate will continue to be represented by Blum and Poe in New York and Los Angeles, Max Hetzler in Berlin, Jahn & Jahn in Munich, Galerie Lelong Paris, and Galerie Ulysses in Vienna.

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