



Roberto Matta in his studio, Paris, circa 1954. © Archives – Ramuntcho Matta.

DIANE DE POLIGNAC

Press Release

DIANE DE POLIGNAC GALLERY PRESENTS ROBERTO MATTA (1911-2002)

LES TERRES

OCTOBER 11TH to
DECEMBER 21TH, 2018

For the first time in a gallery, six fundamental works by the painter Roberto Matta will be exhibited at Diane de Polignac Gallery in the 7th Arrondissement of Paris, from October 11th to December 21st, 2018.

The exhibition **Roberto Matta: Les Terres** highlights a series of artworks created using naturally pigmented soils on hessian canvases.

Described by Marcel Duchamp as “the most profound painter of his generation”, Roberto Matta was a major artist of the 20th century.

Matta’s unique painting style identified in ‘Les Terres’, was heavily inspired by his insatiable curiosity for travel and exploration of the world. It was during a journey to Mexico with Robert Motherwell and Ann

Clark in 1941, that he was awakened by the “terrifying power of earth’s soil.” From this point onwards, the earth became an essential element of Roberto Matta’s artistic language.

Created between the 50s and 70s, the series not only reflects Matta’s explorations and origins, but also his ideological and philosophical principles.

To Matta, art had lost its intrinsic meaning and had become used only for decorative purposes. In turn, he decided to re-instill a sense of moral obligation and political meaning back into the discipline. In his attempt to reawaken a collective consciousness and initiate a movement of change, Roberto Matta replaced “industrial paint” with the earth’s soil – a natural and primary material – as an act of resistance.



Roberto Matta, 'La Question', 1958, mixed media on canvas, 202 x 287 cm / 79.53 x 113 in.
© ADAGP, Paris, 2018. Photo – Galerie Diane de Polignac, Christian Demare.

During this volatile post-war era, deeply wounded by horror, Matta personally distanced himself from the simple, homogenous representation of the world. With his strong, ever-present political conscience, he took a stand in many political discussions. For example, his denouncement of the torture perpetrated during the Algerian War was clearly visible in his painting, *La Question* (1958). *La Question* was a direct reference to the eponymous book, which had been immediately censored upon publication.

Figurehead of the surrealism movement and friend of André Breton, Matta embodies the apotheosis of the artistic multiculturalism inherent to the 20th century, an era in which politics and wars marked a whole generation. Matta influenced American abstract expressionists, such as Robert Motherwell.

In Matta's words, "You paint on an easel, you're still painting what you see. You have to put the canvas on the ground and paint what you feel."



Roberto Matta, 'Untitled', circa 1963, mixed media on canvas,
100 x 100 cm / 39.37 x 39.37 in. © ADAGP, Paris, 2018.
Photo – Galerie Diane de Polignac, Christian Demare.



Malitte Matta, André Breton and Roberto Matta, Paris, 1966. © Archives – Ramuntcho Matta.



Roberto Matta, Untitled, 1972, mixed media on canvas, 110 x 110 cm / 43.31 x 43.31 in. © ADAGP, Paris, 2018. Photo – Galerie Diane de Polignac, Christian Demare.



Roberto Matta, Untitled, circa 1963, mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm / 39.37 x 39.37 in. © ADAGP, Paris, 2018. Photo – Galerie Diane de Polignac, Christian Demare.

ABOUT ROBERTO MATTA :

Matta received great artistic acclaim and recognition and due to his rare knowledge and savoir-faire, he was awarded with the Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts in 1985 by the French Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. The Chilean artist originally trained as an architect at the Catholic University of Santiago, but then began to show his versatility in all art mediums, becoming renowned not only as an architect, but as a painter, sculptor and poet. He is now celebrated as one of the most emblematic figures of the second-half of the 20th century.

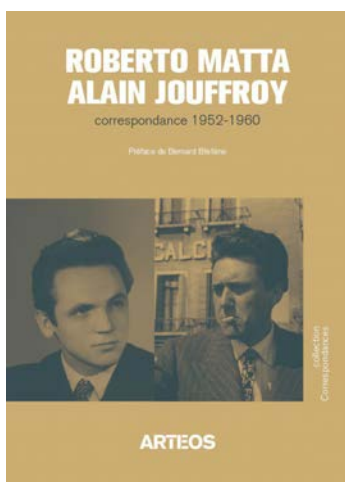


The team of the Galerie Diane de Polignac with Ramuntcho Matta, son of Roberto Matta. © ADAGP, Paris, 2018. Photo – Galerie Diane de Polignac, Christian Demare.

ABOUT DIANE DE POLIGNAC GALLERY:

Located in the 7th Arrondissement of Paris, Diane de Polignac Gallery specialises in 20th century art, supporting primarily post-war artists.

For this exhibition, the gallery co-published its first book with Les Editions Arteos: an unpublished correspondence between Robert Matta and art critic Alain Jouffroy. The authors highlight the connection between art, political commitment and friendship: Bernard Blistène, Director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Marine Nédélec, an academic, Roberto Matta's son, Ramuntcho Matta, and Christian Demare, Publishing Director.



Roberto Matta, Alain Jouffroy :
Correspondance 1952 – 1960.
Foreword by Bernard Blistène
Bilingual Edition
Published by Arteos - €29



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