

DIANE DE POLIGNAC

**MARIE RAYMOND**  
**(1908-1989)**



Marie Raymond in her studio, Paris, c1948  
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Marie Raymond was a French painter and art critic. A prolific and inventive artist, she made a place for herself in the art world of Post-War Paris. She is also the artist Yves Klein's mother.

## BIOGRAPHY

### THE FEMALE PAINTER MARIE RAYMOND'S YEARS OF STUDIES

Marie Raymond was born on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1908 at La Colle-sur-Loup in the south of France, into a Provençal bourgeois family. Her father was a pharmacist and her grandfather was a flower and perfume merchant. Marie Raymond studied in the Blanche de Castille boarding school in Nice. From her adolescence, she practiced yoga, which was still rare in Europe at the time. This unusual interest in yoga and occultism came from her older sister Rose and her husband, a doctor.

Marie Raymond discovered her vocation for painting on visiting the studio of Alexandre Stoppler, a painter based in Cagnes-sur-Mer. He trained the young artist by getting her to paint directly from life. Her memories of the scents, colours and light of the south of France determined the future development of Marie Raymond's painting. She wrote: "From my early childhood, the memory of playing among mountains of cut roses that my grandfather bought all over the countryside has remained strong." The south of France attracted a lot of artists, many whom visited Cagnes-sur-Mer to paint. This is how Marie Raymond met the painter Fred Klein whom she married in 1926. She was just eighteen years old.

Two years later, Fred and Marie had a son: Yves Klein. Marie Raymond had the intuition very quickly that her son would be famous: "I was already aware and desired one day to have a son who would be famous. I have always very clearly remembered a phrase from an Opera I heard in Nice. It was *Antar*, I think, a phrase stayed in my memory that echoed very strongly in me: 'and one can, with the beat of a wing, fly away to the Sun', sung of course. And when I consider life, Yves's momentum, I can't help finding in it something like the prescience of destiny which was realized, achieved by Yves Klein's life in its meteoric evolution."

### MARIE RAYMOND'S LIFE BETWEEN PARIS AND THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

The Klein family regularly moved back and forth between Paris and the South, between the desire to live in the art world and economic reality. In Montparnasse, they lived a bohemian life among their friends the artists Jacques Villon, Frantisek Kupka, and especially Piet Mondrian with whom Marie Raymond shared her studio. As she described: "It was like a family, many brothers who found each other and had fun in endless conversations. I still remember chatting to Mondrian, at the Dancing de la Coupole. I wasn't yet twenty, he was sixty, but he was so happy to be dancing." Between the south of France and the Netherlands, another painter influenced Marie Raymond: Van Gogh, whose *Gardener* she first saw, in the form of a coloured print, at Jacques Villon's home.

Back in Nice in 1932, Marie and Fred became close to Nicolas de Staël and his first wife, Janine Teslar. The painter Marie Raymond attended classes at the Nice school of decorative arts where she met the sculptor Émile Gilioli. She was awarded the commission for a fresco for the pavilion of the Alpes-Maritimes at the International Exposition of 1937. In 1938, Fred Klein exhibited in Amsterdam and the family took advantage of this to visit the Netherlands. At the start of the war, the family settled in Cagnes-sur-Mer where Marie Raymond started to paint *Imaginary Landscapes* (1941-1944), inspired by her wanderings in the hinterland; this is when she met Hans Arp and Alberto Magnelli.

At the end of the war, the woman artist Marie Raymond left her post-Surrealist period and chose abstraction definitively: "gradually, you become internalized, you work. I again sensed the need to express something, but what? The sun still shines! But nothing tangible. How do you recompose life? This is how the first step towards abstract painting is taken." She made herself a place in the Parisian art scene, which was essentially masculine at the time. Until 1954, Marie Raymond opened her apartment-studio every Monday, creating the "Mondays of Marie Raymond" where the gallerists Colette Allendy, Iris Clert, artists Pierre Soulages, Raymond Hains, François Dufrêne, Jacques de la Villeglé, César, Eugène Ionesco, Jean Tinguely, Hans Hartung, and Nina Kandinsky, as well as the critics Charles Estienne, Pierre Restany, and Georges Boudaille would gather. Pierre Soulages said: "We would go, especially in the evening, for a coffee. We were close, Colette and I, and also our friend Hartung who liked Marie's painting a lot."

Marie Raymond was also an art critic. She published many articles, especially in the Dutch magazine *Kunst en Kultuur* for which she was the Paris correspondent from 1939 to 1958.

### RECOGNITION FOR THE PAINTER MARIE RAYMOND

In 1945, Marie Raymond participated in her first major exposition at the Salon des Surindépendants. Her work was hung alongside pieces by Hans Hartung, Jean Dewasne, Jean Deyrolle and Gérard Schneider. The following year, Marie Raymond participated in the exhibition *La Jeune Peinture Abstraite* at the Galerie Denise René. The same year, she exhibited with Serge Poliakoff and Engel Pak at the Centre de Recherches d'Art Abstrait in Paris and then at the first Salon des Réalités Nouvelles. In 1949, she was awarded the Kandinsky Prize with Youla Chapoval and at the Galerie de Beaune an exhibition was held entitled *Les gouaches de Marie Raymond*. This woman artist also participated in the first São Paulo Biennale in Brazil.

In 1951, Marie Raymond presented her work with Arp, Doméla, Magnelli, Poliakoff, amongst others at the

travelling exhibition *Klar Form – 20 Artistes de l'École de Paris* organized by Denise René. This exhibition travelled to Copenhagen, Helsinki, Stockholm, Oslo and Liège. In 1952, Marie Raymond exhibited at the Salon de Mai. She interviewed Matisse for the Japanese magazine *Mizue*.

In 1953, the Klein couple exhibited for three days at the Franco-Japanese Institute of Tokyo and at the Bridgestone Museum of Art in Tokyo. Marie was given a solo show at the Museum of Modern Art of Kamakura.

Fred and Marie participated in 1955 in a travelling exhibition of the Der Kreis (The Circle) Group in Austria and Germany. Marie Raymond then exhibited at the Rio de Janeiro Museum of modern art and at the Lausanne Musée Cantonal. In 1957, an important retrospective called *Marie Raymond* was held at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. In 1960, she entered the Marzotto Prize and won a prize for France with the painter Dimitrienko.

At that time, the painter Marie Raymond's form of abstraction was luminous and lyrical. "For those who haven't understood the Abstract process, I will try to give a few indications of my working method. After preparing canvases and colours, I would go outside to penetrate myself with the day's light, walk, even run a little in the Luxembourg gardens near my home, so as to distance myself from the material gesture. For many years, on coming back home, I would focus by reading a few pages from Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, which is so full of images, so poetic. With this backbone: having reached a certain internal rhythm, I approached the canvas. A harmony having been revealed, the next stage was tuning and the rhythm of this internal state reached beyond reality and was experienced internally, something beyond the tangible, a chord with 'the immaterial' in summary that Yves made light, later on."

Then came the difficult years for the artist Marie Raymond. The Kleins separated in 1958 and divorced in 1961. The following year, Yves Klein married Rotraut Uecker and died that year of a heart attack at the age of only thirty-four. Marie Raymond said: "Yves had prepared a painting of gold and still had a bouquet of artificial roses separately, taking the bouquet in his hands, he placed it on the painting and asked me the question: "What does this make you think of?" (...) These paintings, he called them "tombs". Was it a premonition? Because he was in perfect health and very active: This was in the spring, his wife was expecting their child. Who could have foretold that a few months later, he would be carried off so suddenly, in the prime of life, while accomplishing his work." Marie Raymond's father also died of a heart attack in 1963.

The artist Marie Raymond's painting was changed forever by these experiences. The painter found inspiration again in her passion for esotericism and the Cosmos. From 1964, she painted a series of works that she called *Abstraction-Figures-Astres*. Marie Raymond exhibited at the Galerie Cavaleiro in Cannes at the Fondation Maeght at Saint Paul-de-Vence and at the Galerie aux Bateliers in Brussels. In 1966, Daniel Templon opened his first gallery, the Galerie Cimaise Bonaparte, with an exhibition of Marie Raymond. In 1972 a major show of her work and of her son, Yves Klein, was organized at the Château-Musée of Cagnes-sur-Mer. In 1988, the Pascal de Sarthe Gallery in San Francisco dedicated a solo exhibition to Marie Raymond. Three times, works by her were shown at the Centre Pompidou in Paris: in 1977, in the exhibition *Paris – New York*, in 1981, in the exhibition *Paris – Paris, Créations en France 1937 – 1957*, and finally in 1988 during the exhibition *Les années 50*. Marie Raymond died the following year in 1989.

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Translation: Jane Mac Avock



Marie Raymond in her studio, Paris, c1950  
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## SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum  
Cagnes-sur-Mer, Château-Musée Grimaldi  
Nantes, Musée d'Art  
Paris, Centre National des Arts Plastiques  
Paris, Centre Pompidou  
Tokyo, Bridgestone Museum of Art

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

12e Salon des Indépendants, Paris, 1945  
Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1975, 1988  
*Marie Raymond, Engel Pak, Poliakoff*, Centre de Recherches d'Art Abstrait, Paris, 1946  
Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, Paris, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1958, 1962, 1968  
*Prise de terres, Peintres et sculpteur de l'objectivité*, Galerie Breteau, Paris, 1948  
Galerie Colette Allendy, Paris, 1949, 1950, 1956  
Galerie de Beaune, Paris, 1949, 1950, 1951  
Salon de mai, Paris, 1952, 1961  
*Marie Raymond Fred Klein*, Bridgestone Gallery, Tokyo, 1953  
*Marie Raymond*, Musée d'Art Moderne, Kamakura, 1953  
*Marie Raymond Garbell Hillaireau Lyrisme de la couleur*, Galerie Art Vivant, Paris, 1953  
*Marie Raymond*, Galerie du Théâtre de Poche, Brussels, 1954  
*Du futurisme à l'art abstrait*, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, 1955  
*Marie Raymond*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1957  
*Il Micro-salon di Iris Clert di Iris Clert di Parigi in esclusività per l'Italia*, Galerie Apollinaire, Milan, 1957  
Galerie Iris Clert, Paris, 1957, 1958  
Galerie La Tartaruga, Rome, 1957  
Galerie Europe, Brussels, 1959  
*Marie Raymond*, Galerie Cavaléro, Cannes, 1963  
Galerie Cimaize Bonaparte, Paris, 1966  
*Marie Raymond peintures – Dessins*, Galerie aux Bateliers, Brussels, 1966  
*Marie Raymond Yves Klein*, Château Musée, Cagnes sur Mer, 1972  
*1<sup>ère</sup> Biennale française de la tapisserie en hommage à Jean Lurçat*, Palais de l'Europe, Menton, 1975  
*11<sup>ème</sup> Biennale Française de la Tapisserie en hommage à Le Corbusier*, Palais de Juan-les-Pins, Antibes, 1977  
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1977, 1981, 1988  
*Charles Estienne et l'art à Paris 1945-1966*, Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Paris, 1984  
*La part des femmes dans l'art contemporain*, Vitry-sur-Seine, 1984  
*Aspects de l'art en France de 1950 à 1980*, Musée Ingres, Montauban, 1985  
*Hommage à Iris Clert*, Acropolis, Nice, 1986

*L'Art en Europe – Les années décisives 1945-1953*, Musée d'Art Moderne, Saint-Étienne, 1987  
*Abstraction expressions – confrontations 1950-1970*, Galerie Bernard Davignon, Paris, 1988  
Pascal de Sarthe Gallery, San Francisco, 1988, 1991  
*Marie Raymond, Rétrospective 1937-1987*, Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice, 1993  
*L'École de Paris – 1945-1964*, Musée national d'histoire et d'art, Luxembourg, 1998  
*Marie Raymond – Yves Klein*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers, 2004  
*Marie Raymond – Yves Klein*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Carcassonne, 2006  
*Marie Raymond – Yves Klein*, Museum Ludwig, Koblenz, 2006  
*Marie Raymond – Yves Klein*, LAAC Dunkerque, Dunkirk, 2007  
*Marie Raymond – Yves Klein Herencias*, Circulo de bellas arte, Madrid, 2010  
*Marie Raymond – Vers la Lumière*, Galerie Diane de Polignac, Paris, 2019

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Charles Estienne, Léon Degand, *Pour ou contre l'art abstrait*, Paris, Le Courneur, 1947  
Marie Raymond, *Les Origines de l'Art abstrait*, in *Kroniek Van Kunst En Kultuur*, n°9, September 1949  
Marie Raymond, *Soulagés à la Galerie Lydia Conti, Vieira da Silva à la Galerie Pierre*, in *Kroniek Van Kunst En Kultuur*, n°11, November 1949  
Charles Estienne, *L'art abstrait est-il un académisme?*, Paris, Éditions de Beaune, 1950  
Michel Ragon, *Expression et non-figuration*, Paris, Éditions de la Revue, 1950  
Pierre Francastel, *Peinture et société*, Lyon, Éditions Audin, 1951  
Léon Degand, Julien Alvard, R. Van Gindertael, *Témoignage pour l'art abstrait*, Paris, Art d'Aujourd'hui, n°1, 1952  
Pierre Courthion, *Peinture d'aujourd'hui*, Geneva, Éditions Pierre Caillier, 1952  
Marie Raymond, *Interview avec Henri Matisse*, in *Mizue* (monthly art magazine), Tokyo, n°571, March 1953  
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Renée Huyghe, *Dialogue avec le visible*, Paris, Éditions Flammarion, 1955  
Michel Ragon, *L'aventure de l'art abstrait*, Paris, Éditions Robert Laffont, 1956  
Marcel Brion, *L'abstraction*, Paris, Éditions Aimery Somogy, 1956  
Jean Bouret, *L'art abstrait : ses origines, ses luttes, sa présence*, Paris, Éditions Club français du livre, 1957  
Michel Seuphor, *Dictionnaire de la peinture abstraite*, Paris, Éditions Fernand Hazan, 1957  
Bernard Dorival, *Les peintres du XXe siècle*, Paris, Éditions Tisné, 1957

Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia, *Aires abstraites*, Geneva, Éditions Pierre Caillier, 1957

Michel Ragon, *La peinture actuelle*, Paris, Éditions Berger-Levrault, 1959

Pierre Restany, *Lyrisme et abstraction*, Milan, Éditions Apollinaire, 1960

Jean Cassou, *Panorama des arts plastiques contemporains*, Paris, Éditions Gallimard, 1960

Michel Ragon, *Naissance d'un art nouveau – Tendances et techniques de l'art*, Paris, Éditions Albin Michel, 1963

Raymond Bayer, *Entretiens sur l'art abstrait*, Geneva, Éditions Pierre Caillier, 1964

Michel Seuphor, *La peinture abstraite, sa genèse, son expansion*, Paris, Éditions Flammarion, 1964

Herbert Read, *Histoire de la peinture moderne*, Paris, Éditions Somogy, 1966

Dora Vallier, *L'art abstrait*, Paris, Éditions Le Livre de Poche, 1967

Michel Ragon, Michel Seuphor, *L'art abstrait 1939- 1970*, Paris, Éditions Galerie Maeght, vol. III, 1973

Marie Raymond, *Au Grand-Palais, la FIAC 79 – Les Fantômes de Picasso*, in + – O, n°29, April 1980

Michel Ragon, *25 ans d'art vivant 1944-1969*, Paris, Éditions Galilée, 1986

Marie Raymond *Forty Years of Abstract Painting*, San Francisco, Pascal de Sarthe Gallery, 1988

Geneviève Bonnefoi, *Les années fertiles 1940-1960*, Paris, Mouvements Éditions, 1988

Jean-Luc Daval, *Histoire de la peinture abstraite*, Paris, Éditions Fernand Hazan, 1988

Georges Boudaille, Patrick Javault, *L'art abstrait*, Paris, Nouvelles Éditions françaises, 1990

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Lydia Harambourg, *L'École de Paris 1945-1965 Dictionnaire des peintres*, Neuchâtel, Éditions Ides et Calendes, 1993

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Marie Raymond – Yves Klein *Herencias*, Madrid, Circulo de bellas arte, 2009

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Marie Raymond in her studio, Paris, c1950  
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