

DIANE DE POLIGNAC

OLIVIER DEBRÉ (1920-1999)



Olivier Debré
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A painter of the exaltation of colour and broad expanses, Olivier Debré is a key artist of Post-War Lyrical Abstraction. The personification of French Color Field, this “European Rothko” defined his painting as “fervent abstraction” because it arouses emotion.

BIOGRAPHY

OLIVIER DEBRÉ'S YOUTH AND TRAINING

In 1920 Olivier Debré was born in Paris to a family of doctors and politicians. His father was the famous paediatrician Robert Debré while Michel Debré, the future prime minister under de Gaulle, was his brother. It is from his mother's side that he inherited his artistic sensitivity. His maternal grandfather Édouard Debat-Ponsan, was an academic painter of the previous century and his maternal uncle, Jacques Debat-Ponsan, a famous architect and winner of the Rome Prize in 1912.

At a very young age, Olivier Debré began to draw, paint, and sculpt before entering the architecture section of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, where he joined the studio of his uncle Jacques Debat-Ponsan. At the same time he also frequented Le Corbusier's studio. For Olivier Debré, architecture was an extension of art, the logical continuation of his artistic beginnings. He said: "as a child, I mixed architecture, painting, and sculpture. For me it corresponded to the same thing, it was a way of being in opposition to medicine, law, mathematics. The Fine Arts formed a whole. Architecture as much as painting." Circumstances of life led Debré to abandon architecture to concentrate on painting at the beginning of the 1940s. The painter Debré confided: "during the difficult period of the War, I was there, in the Touraine, where I had always gone when I was a child, and I went back into the fields and I painted, simply, like that." he added "(...) In painting, I needed direct expression and physical communication with nature; perhaps precisely during that difficult time, the need to escape from that society and its terrible background." Painting became his means of expression, his own language, like the "transcription of [his] emotion" (Debré).

THE 'SIGN' IN OLIVIER DEBRÉ'S WORKS AND FIRST EXHIBITIONS

In 1941, Olivier Debré presented his paintings, landscapes of the Touraine and views of the banks of the Seine, at the Galerie Aubry in Paris. During winter 1942, Olivier Debré pushed his reflection towards the scope of painting, its impact, and formed a method of artistic expression that would be like a language, one that was both "pure" and equipped for communication. "Either the language is purely conventional, we know in advance what a given sign means, and it is basically writing or, if you want the sign to be comprehensible, it has to pass by emotion, by material sensation and, again, it is no longer a pure language. In that moment, I immediately introduced myself into the signs" explained Olivier Debré.

At that time, he met Picasso and visited his studio on the rue des Grands-Augustins in Paris many times. Picasso's work inspired him and incited him to express his

emotion without using representation, but beyond the decomposition of the object characteristic of Cubism. Debré used the sign, which was for him "the incarnation of thought".

In 1945, he married Denise Coulon with whom he had two children: Patrice and Sylvie.

Olivier Debré's work *Signe de Ferveur Noire* (Sign of Black Fervour) (1944-1945, private collection), painted directly with tube of paint, marked the passage to non-figurative art.

From 1948, Debré exhibited at the various art Salons in Paris: the Salon d'Automne, the Salon des Surindépendants, and then from the early 1950s at the Salon de Mai where he exhibited throughout his career, at the Salon d'Octobre, the salon Comparaisons and the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles where he showed regularly for ten years from 1957 to 1967.

The Galerie Bing in Paris held Debré's first solo exhibition in 1949: the paintings he exhibited, abstract and very expressive, were appreciated. Olivier Debré met other key painters of Lyrical Abstraction at the same time: Gérard Schneider, Jean-Michel Atlan, Pierre Soulages and Hans Hartung.

SIGN-FIGURES BY THE PAINTER OLIVIER DEBRÉ

At the start of the 1950s, Olivier Debré's work became more substantial, marked by a palette of muted colours. He worked the paint with a knife in flat areas of colour to construct his paintings: they are abstract still lifes and landscapes, solidly constructed, concentrated on the horizontal plane, or large vertical compositions constructed with broad impasto from which the full length silhouette of a man stands out: these are the *Sign-Figures*, characteristic of the 1950s, in restrained colours, almost monochrome.

At the end of the 1950s, two solo exhibitions of Olivier Debré's art were mounted in the USA, at the Knoedler Galleries of New York in 1959, and the same year a retrospective was held at the Philips Collection in Washington. This was a success. He met Franz Kline, Mark Rothko and Jules Olitski there. His works continued to travel abroad: to Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Finland, Norway, and Germany. In 1966 his first retrospective at a French museum, *Olivier Debré. Peintures 1943-1966*, was shown at the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Le Havre.

Gradually his work became more colourful and transparent. "The use of a palette knife in flat areas allowed him to create coloured impasto, of which successive layers created slight relief, playing with transparencies, traces, abrasions. This would lead after 1960 to what Debré himself called "fervent abstraction", as Lydia Harambourg has noted.

"Fervent Abstraction" is for Debré emotion evoked by the contemplation of a landscape. The painter Debré then abandoned the sign in favour of the emotion. Olivier Debré said that "At a given moment, something freezes in the material itself, this is the reality of the emotion and there is a sort of nesting within me between a mental and a real atmosphere... we are always within ourselves and outside ourselves.... I paint in the emotion of a reality that begets me, myself..."

SIGN-LANDSCAPES BY THE PAINTER OLIVIER DEBRÉ

At the start of the 1960s, therefore, the painter Olivier Debré turned fully towards the landscape that would become from then on his field of exploration. He said that "I want to do abstract Courbet." It is in contact with nature itself, most often working outside, that Debré created his paintings. Fully immersed in the landscape, he sought to remove any border between the perception of the landscape as observed and its expression on the canvas. Broad fields of colour are marked by fluid painting, weightless, in which light and transparency are allowed to dawn, punctuated by a few concretions that create a relief on the edges of the painting. These are the *Sign-Landscapes*.

In his new abstract compositions, Olivier Debré defied the classical composition of the painting to concentrate attention on an edge sometimes, or on a corner: this decentring favours the impression of fluidity and gives the composition movement. From the 1970s, Debré's painting found its formal balance in the square format he favoured most often.

With Olivier Debré the canvas becomes an open space. From 1962, Debré created huge paintings, which were exhibited at the Palais Galliera in Paris in 1968 alongside sculptures by Gilioli.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR OLIVIER DEBRÉ

At the end of the 1960s, Olivier Debré's work was shown several times in Japan: first in a group show at the Nippon Gallery in 1967 and then three years later at a solo show in the same gallery. In 1970, Olivier Debré also participated in the *International Art Exhibition* at Osaka for which he created a monumental ceramic piece. In 1967, Olivier Debré exhibited a gigantic painting, *Signe d'Homme*, for the French pavilion at the Montreal International Exposition.

The painter Olivier Debré travelled around the world and the titles of his paintings bear witness to this roaming: Jerusalem, Dakar, Hong-Kong, Mexico... He frequently went to Norway in search of unusual landscapes and wrote *Impressions de Voyages*, published in the catalogue of his exhibition at the Galerie Ariel in Paris in 1973. Debré also regularly painted in his studio in the Touraine, at Les Madères: he settled along the banks of the Loire, the river that inspired him so much.

In the mid-1970s, several retrospectives of Olivier Debré's paintings were held: at the Institut Français of New Delhi (1974), the Musée Picasso in Antibes (1975), the Musée d'Art et d'Industrie of Saint-Étienne (1975), the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (1975), at the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Nantes (1976), and at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff (1977).

A painter of large spaces, the artist projected his gesture into the canvas in a creative impetus that combined instantaneousness and speed. This sense of space was naturally used in Olivier Debré's monumental paintings and in his public commissions: two large paintings for the boarding section of the Royal School (1965), two paintings in the amphitheatre of the Medical faculty of Toulouse (1968), two large canvases for the city of Amboise (1971), a monumental painting for the École Polytechnique at Palaiseau (1976), a mural for the French Embassy in Washington (1982), a large panel for the Hôpital Robert-Debré in Paris (1988)...

MONUMENTAL ARTWORKS, STAGE CURTAINS AND BALLET BY OLIVIER DEBRÉ

It is above all in major stage sets that this call of the open space took shape, especially in the various commissions received for stage curtains: for the Comédie Française (1987), for the Hong Kong Opera (1989), ordered by the Fondation Louis Vuitton for the Théâtre des Abbesses in Paris (1996) and for the new opera house in Shanghai (1999). Plunged into the immensity of the canvas, the artist, a sweeping brush in his hand, spread the colour, mixed in with it, had the experience of being totally immersed in the colour.

From 1980 to 1985, Olivier Debré was also the head of the mural painting studio at the l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris.

In 1995, a major retrospective of the artist Olivier Debré was held at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris. This exhibition then travelled around Europe, to Liège, Milan, Stravanger (Norway), and Reykjavik as well as Latin America, to Medellín (Colombia), Mexico, Rio de Janeiro.

In 1997, an entire ballet, *Signes* was devoted to the work of the painter Debré. This unique show, directed by the choreographer Carolyn Carlson with décors and costumes by Olivier Debré, brought together painting, music and dance around the painter's work. Performed for the first time at the Bastille Opera in 1997, this contemporary ballet was again presented in the same opera house in 2013.

DECORATIVE ARTS IN OLIVIER DEBRÉ'S BODY OF WORK

Olivier Debré was also involved in multiple artistic collaborations. He drew tapestry cartoons, a stamp, and numerous pieces of stained glass: for the chapel of Saint-Mandé in La Croix Héliéan and at the Collégiale Notre-Dame-de-Grande-Puissance in Lamballe, Brittany (1994). Parallel to his painting, Olivier Debré continued to collaborate in printmaking and lithography projects. He illustrated several books by writers such as Michel Déon (*Avant-jour* 1998), Francis Ponge (*Le soleil lu à la radio* 1998), and Julien Gracq (*Les Eaux étroites* 1996).

Olivier Debré also made sculptures throughout his career, such as the monumental marble work that he created as a tribute to Charles de Gaulle for the City of Montréal (1992). He also created ceramics.

A few months before his death, he was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The painter Olivier Debré died in 1999.

Since 2017 the Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré in Tours has shown works by Olivier Debré, alongside contemporary creations.

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Translation: Jane Mc Avock



Olivier Debré
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SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Aalborg (Denmark), Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg
Amiens, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) de Picardie
Amman (Jordan), The Jordan Museum
Antibes, Musée Picasso
Besançon, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) de Franche-Comté
Bordeaux, Musée des beaux-arts
Bourg-en-Bresse, Musée de Brou
Brest, Musée des beaux-arts
Buffalo, NY, Albright Knox Art Gallery
Caen, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) de Basse-Normandie
Caen, Musée des beaux-arts
Cambridge, Ma, Fogg Art Museum
Cardiff, Fine Arts Museum
Castellanza (Italy), Museo Pagani, Arte Moderna e Contemporanea
Detroit, Mi, Ford Collection
Dunkirk, Lieu d'Art et Action contemporaine (LAAC)
Évreux, Musée d'Art, d'Histoire et d'Archéologie
Geneva, Fondation Gandur pour l'Art
Grenoble, Musée de Grenoble
Houston, Tx, De Menil Foundation
Jerusalem, Maison de France
Le Havre, Musée d'Art moderne André-Malraux (MuMa)
Liège, Musée des beaux-arts
Luxembourg, Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art
Lyon, Musée des beaux-arts
Marseille, Musée Cantini
Medelin (Colombia), Museo de Arte moderno
Metz, Musée de La Cour d'Or, Metz Métropole
Montauban, Musée Ingres
Nantes, Musée des arts
New Delhi, Museum
Nice, Musée d'Art moderne et d'Art contemporain
Oslo, Astrup Fearnley Museet for Moderne Kunst
Paris, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) d'Ile-de-France
Paris, Musée d'Art moderne de Paris
Paris, Musée national d'Art moderne, Centre Pompidou
Poitiers, Musée Sainte-Croix
Québec, Musée des beaux-arts
Reims, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) de Champagne-Ardenne
Rennes, Musée des beaux-arts
Reykjavik, Musée d'Art de Reykjavik
Rio de Janeiro, Museu de Arte moderna
Sables-d'Olonne, Musée de l'Abbaye de Sainte-Croix
Saint-Denis, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire
Saint-Etienne, Musée d'Art moderne de Saint-Etienne Métropole
Saint-Louis, Mo, The Art Museum
Saintes, Musée des beaux-arts, L'Echevinage

Sélestat, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) d'Alsace
Sotteville-lès-Rouen, Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) de Haute-Normandie
South Bend Indiana In, Notre Dame University
Strasbourg, Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain
Taipei, Musée des beaux-arts de Taipei
Toulouse, Les Abattoirs
Tours, Musée des beaux-arts
Vitry-sur-Seine, Musée d'Art contemporain du Val de Marne
Washington D.C., Hirshhorn Museum
Washington D.C., Philips Collection

MONUMENTAL WORKS AND PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

Two large paintings for the boarding section of the Collège de Royan, 1965
A large painting, Maison des Jeunes Travailleurs, Créteil, 1966
A monumental work, International Exposition of Montreal, Canada, 1967
A monumental work for the boarding school of Audruicq (Pas-de-Calais), 1968
Two oil paintings for the amphitheatre of the Medical Faculty of Toulouse, a painting on canvas for the administrative buildings, 1968
A large ceramic work, International Exposition, Osaka, 1969
Two large paintings town of Amboise, 1971
A large painting for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1972
A large painting on canvas, Lycée Rabelais, Chinon, 1975
A monumental painting for the École polytechnique, Palaiseau, 1976
A ceramic work for the external wall of the Nikko Hotel (now Novotel Paris Tour Eiffel), Paris, 1980
Large murals for the Lycée Technique of Belfort, 1980
Mural for the French Embassy, Washington, 1982
Décor and costumes for the work Racines, Festival d'Avignon, 1983
Commission from the French State for the stage curtain of the Comédie Française, Paris, unveiled in 1987
Painting for the grand staircase of the Mairie of Boulogne-Billancourt, 1988
Large panel for the Hôpital Robert-Debré, Paris, 1988
Monumental sculpture, boulevard Bourbon, Paris, 14th arrondissement, 1988
Stage curtain for the Opera of Hong-Kong, 1989
Monumental sculpture in marble, tribute to Charles de Gaulle for the City of Montreal, 1992
Ceramic wall for the Villa Kujoyama, Kyoto, 1992
Artists' residences, Paris, 13th arrondissement, in association with the SCP Mazerand et Meyran, 1993
Ceramic for the metro station Les Arènes, Toulouse, 1993
Ceramic for the Daikaku-ji Temple, Kyoto, 1993
Oil on canvas attached to the ceiling for the council chamber, RIVP, Paris 7th arrondissement, 1993

Works for the church Notre-Dame-de-la-Source, Compiègne, in association with the SCP Mazarand et Meyran, 1993-1996

Fountains for the motorways of the south of France (A9, A10, A11, A61), 1994

Group of four elements in steel painted red for the entrance of the Eurotunnel, Calais, 1994

Painting for the church Saint-Louis-d'Antin, Paris, 9th arrondissement, 1994

Stained glass for the chapel of Saint-Mandé, La Croix Héliéan (Morbihan), 1994

Stained glass for the Collégiale Notre-Dame-de-Grande-Puissance, Lamballe (Côtes d'Armor), France, including 3 windows in collaboration with Geneviève Asse, 1994

Paintings for the six galleries and the stage curtain for the Théâtre des Abbesses, Paris, 18th arrondissement, 1996

Décor and costumes for the ballet Signes by Carolyn Carlson, 1997

Stage curtain for the New Opera House of Shanghai in association with two Chinese painters Jing Shijian and Xu Jiang, 1998

Six Stained glass windows for the church of Notre-Dame-de-Lugagnac, Saint-Eutrope-de-Born (Lot-et-Garonne), 1998

Unveiling of the stained glass for the Collégiale Saint-Mexme of Chinon, 2006

Unveiling of the stained glass for the Collégiale Notre-Dame-de-Grande-Puissance, Lamballe (Côtes-d'Armor), 2008

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Salon d'Automne, Paris, 1948, 1950, 1952, 1965

Salon des Surindépendants, Paris, 1948, 1949

Solo exhibition, Galerie Bing, Paris, 1949

Group show, Perspectives Gallery, New York, 1950

Salon de Mai, Paris, 1950, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1968, 1991, 1998

Salon d'Octobre, Paris, 1952, 1953

Group show, Studio Facchetti, Paris, 1953, 1955

Salon Comparaisons, Paris 1954, 1957, 1962

Art 1955, Musée des beaux-arts, Rouen, 1955

Premio Lissone Internazionale per la Pittura, Lissone (Italy), 1955, 1959

Solo exhibition, Galerie Michel Warren, Paris, 1956

Salon des Réalités nouvelles, Paris, 1957, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1965, 1966, 1967

Debré, Knoedler Galleries, New York, 1959

Olivier Debré, Philips Collection, Washington, 1959

Peintres d'aujourd'hui / Pittori d'Oggi, Palazzo delle Arti, Vth Mostra, Turin, 1959

The John Moores Liverpool Exhibition 2, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 1959

École de Paris, 1960, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 1960

Solo exhibition, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 1960

Solo exhibitions, Galerie Knoedler, Paris, 1960, 1963

Prix Marzotto, Palais des beaux-arts, Brussels, 1960

Solo exhibition, Galerie Ronca Hans, Lucerne, 1962

Solo exhibition, Galleria Pagani del Grattacielo, Milan, 1962

Solo exhibition, Musée de l'Athénée, Geneva, 1962, 1972

Salon Grands et Jeunes d'aujourd'hui, Paris, 1962, 1965, 1999

Debré, Knoedler & Co., New York, 1963

Salon d'art contemporain, Grand Palais, Paris, 1963

Biennale de peinture, Menton, 1964

XIX^{ème} Salon des Réalités nouvelles, Maison de la Culture, Namur, 1964

Peinture contemporaine en France, travelling group show in Finland : Ateneum, Helsinki ; Musée des beaux-arts, Tampere, Musée des beaux-arts, Turku, 1965

Sculptures de peintres, group show, Galerie Claude Bernard, Paris, 1965

Climat 66, group show, Musée de la Peinture et de Sculpture, Grenoble, 1966

Solo exhibition, Collège culturel de Merzé, Cluny, 1966

Solo exhibitions, Galerie Haaken, Oslo, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1979, 1985, 1990, 1992, 1994

Olivier Debré. Malerei, Galerie Appel und Fertsch, Frankfurt, 1966

Olivier Debré. Peintures 1943-1966, Musée des beaux-arts, Le Havre, 1966

Tapis français contemporains, exposition collective itinérante en Belgique : Palais des beaux-arts, Namur ; Maison de la Culture, Namur, 1966

1967 50-57. Une aventure de l'art abstrait, travelling group show in France : Musée Galliera, Paris ; Musée des beaux-arts, Nantes ; Musée des beaux-arts, Brest ; Musée des beaux-arts, Orléans ; Maison de la Culture, Le Creusot ; Maison de la Culture, Lorient ; Musée de la Culture, Reims, 1967

Dix ans d'art vivant (55-65), group show, Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, 1967

Solo exhibitions, Galerie Cavaleiro, Cannes, 1967, 1977

L'âge du jazz, group show, Musée Galliera, Paris, 1967

L'art moderne en Europe, Expo 67, Pavillon de la Communauté européenne, Montreal, 1967

Peinture ininterrompue I, Musée d'Art moderne, Céret, 1967

Quinze artistes français, group show, Galerie Nippon, Tokyo, 1967

Rajzes Akwarell Franciaor Szàgban – Matisse tól Napjainkig, group show, Müscarnok, Prague, 1967

Vingt peintres du XX^{ème} siècle, group show, Cimaïse HEC, Jouy-en-Josas, 1967

II^{ème} Biennale des artistes de Cachan et de l'Île-de-France, Hôtel de Ville, Cachan, 1968

Olivier Debré, peintures – Gilioli, sculptures, Musée Galliera, Paris, 1968

Dix-huit peintures, Maison de la Culture, Caen, 1969

Debré. Œuvres de 1940 à 1969, Musée des beaux-arts, Brest, 1969

Vingt ans d'acquisitions 1948-1968, Musée des Augustins, Toulouse, 1969

Internationale exhibition, Expo 70, Osaka, 1970

Oliver Debré, Nippon Galerie, Tokyo, 1970

Olivier Debré, Galleria Pagani, Milan, 1970

Biennale de Montrouge, Montrouge, 1971

Solo exhibitions, Galerie Ariel, 1973, 1974, 1976

- Solo exhibition, Galerie Bettie Thommen, Basel, 1973
- Solo exhibition, Institut français, New Delhi, 1974
- Olivier Debré (dessins, sculptures, 1941-1974)*, Musée de l'Abbaye de Sainte-Croix, Les Sables-d'Olonne, 1974
- Solo exhibition, Musée Picasso, Antibes, 1975
- Olivier Debré – Rétrospective*, Musée d'Art et d'Industrie et maison de la Culture et des Loisirs, Saint-Étienne, 1975
- Olivier Debré. De la peinture au dessin*, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 1975
- Solo exhibition, Musée des beaux-arts, Nantes, 1976
- Solo exhibitions, Artcurial, Paris, 1976, 1990
- Certitude de l'incertain*, exposition collective, Musée Cantini, Marseille, 1977
- Solo exhibition, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1977
- Solo exhibition, Nordjyllands kunstmuseum, Aalborg (Danemark), Copenhague, Lyngby kunstforening, 1978
- L'espace du temps. Abstraction des années cinquante en France*, Maison de la Culture, 1978
- Solo exhibition, Galerie Nord, Randers (Denmark), 1979
- Solo exhibitions, Galerie Riis, Trondheim (Norway), 1979 ; Galerie Riis, Oslo, 1982
- Solo exhibition, Maison de la Culture, Montbéliard, 1979
- Solo exhibition, Musée des beaux-arts, Liège, 1979
- Solo exhibition, Museet i Varberg, Varberg (Sweden), 1979
- Solo exhibitions, Galerie Daniel Templon, Paris, 1979, 1984, 1986, 1989
- Olivier Debré. Bilder Skulpturen*, Forum kunst, Rottweil (RFA), 1979
- Solo exhibition, Musée d'Art moderne, Strasbourg, 1980
- Solo exhibition, Musée des beaux-arts, Tours, 1980
- Solo exhibition, Musée Sainte-Croix, Poitiers, 1980
- Olivier Debré*, Fondation du château de Jau, Cases-de-Pène (Perpignan), 1980
- Art contemporain en France, 1960-1980*, Musée national jordanien, Amman (Jordan), 1981
- Solo exhibition, Abbaye de Fontevraud, Fontevraud, 1981
- Solo exhibition, Galerie Hans Strelow, Düsseldorf, 1981
- Abstraction lyrique*, exposition collective, Centre culturel, Aubagne, 1982
- Solo exhibitions, Galerie K., Washington, 1982, 1983
- Solo exhibitions, Gimpel & Weitzenhoffer Gallery, New York, 1982, 1983
- Saint-Nazaire 1982*, group show,, Musée de Saint-Nazaire, Bourbon-Lancy, 1982
- Twelve Contemporary French Artists*, travelling group show, in the US : Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo ; The Rice University, Houston ; De Menil Foundation, Houston, 1982-1983
- Oliver Debré: Abstract Works on Canvas*, Meredith Long & Compagny, Houston, 1983
- Solo exhibition, Galerie Asbaek, Copenhagen, 1984
- Solo exhibition, Galerie d'Art international, Chicago, 1984
- Galerie Daniel Gervis, Paris, 1984, 1989
- Oliver Debré – Grands formats 1982-1984*, Pavillon des Arts, Paris, 1984
- Olivier Debré. Peintures. Lithographies. Sculptures*, école régionale des beaux-arts, Valence, 1984
- Peinture en France*, group show, Palazzo Sagredo, Venice, 1984
- Peinture, Peinture*, Maison de la Culture, Bourges, 1984
- Solo exhibition, Château de Poudres, Sommières, 1985
- Olivier Debré. Œuvres récentes*, Musée de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse, 1985
- Olivier Debré*, Musée Dynamique, Dakar, 1986
- Olivier Debré, peintures de 1943 à 1986*, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Metz, 1986
- Olivier Debré. Estampes et encres de Chine*, Théâtre municipal, Caen, 1986
- Peintures, encres de Chine, sculptures*, Musée Hébert, La Tronche (Grenoble), 1986
- Olivier Debré*, Abbaye des Cordeliers, Châteauroux, 1987
- Olivier Debré: l'œuvre gravé*, Bibliothèque nationale, rotonde Colbert, Paris, 1987
- Silence un*, group show, Cloître Saint-Pierre-le-Jeune, Strasbourg, 1987
- Abstractions lyriques : Paris 1945-1955*, travelling group show in France : Nouveau Théâtre, Angers ; Chapelle Saint-Julien, Laval ; Aire libre art contemporain Agora, Évry ; Musée du Mans, Le Mans ; Palais des Congrès, Saint-Jean-de-Monts, 1988-1989
- Notes de voyage d'Olivier Debré*, Maison de la culture de Nevers et de la Nièvre, Nevers, 1988
- Olivier Debré: peintures*, Musée Ingres, Montauban, 1988
- Olivier Debré. Œuvres monumentales 1966-1988*, Centre culturel, Boulogne-Billancourt, 1988
- Solo exhibition, Château de Tours, Tours, 1989
- Solo exhibition, Institut français, Hambourg, 1989
- FDAC Val de Marne : acquisitions 1988*, group show, Hôtel du département, Créteil, 1989
- Fondation Daniel Templon : exposition inaugurale*, group show, Musée temporaire, Fréjus, 1989
- Saint-Germain-des-Prés 1945-1950*, group show, Pavillon des Arts, Paris, 1989
- Olivier Debré. Œuvres récentes 1988-1989-1990*, Musée des beaux-arts, Carcassonne, 1990
- Debré. Dessins 1945-1960*, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Saint-Denis, 1990
- Solo exhibition (designs for the stage curtain for the Hong Kong Opera), Fondation Louis-Vuitton pour l'Opéra et la Musique, Musicora, Grand Palais, Paris, 1990
- Solo exhibition, Maison des Arts et Loisirs, Laon, 1990
- Jean Grenier : regard sur la peinture 1944-1971*, Musée des Jacobins, Morlaix, 1990
- L'Opéra de la vie : Olivier Debré*, Fort Napoléon, La Seyne-sur-Mer, 1990
- Les peintres et les livres*, Centre régional d'Art contemporain Midi-Pyrénées, Labège, 1990
- Olivier Debré et José Subira-Puig*, group show, Centre d'Art contemporain, Mont-de-Marsan, 1990
- Solo exhibitions, Galerie du Luxembourg, Luxembourg, 1991, 1995
- Olivier Debré, quatre tableaux*, Centre de Création Contemporaine, Tours, 1991

- Solo exhibition, Château d'Amboise, 1992
- Solo exhibition, Galerie Yoshii, Tokyo, 1992, 2003
- Solo exhibition, Hôtel du département, La Roche-sur-Yon, 1992
- Solo exhibition, Institut français d'Écosse, Édimbourg, 1992
- Solo exhibition, Institut français du Royaume Uni, London, 1992
- Solo exhibition, Maison de la Culture/ Nouveau Théâtre, Angers, 1992
- Libres espaces*, Direction régionale des Douanes, Strasbourg, 1992
- Olivier Debré. Estampes*, Le Majorat, Villeneuve-Tolosane, 1992
- Olivier Debré. Œuvres de 1948 à 1990*, Musée Denys-Puech, Rodez, 1992
- Paysage en exergue : dix années d'enrichissement du Fonds régional d'art contemporain*, Espace Art Brenne, Le Blanc, 1992
- Quinze artistes. Quinze stations*, Centre culturel Aérospatiale, Toulouse, 1992
- En 50 figures de l'abstrait : les grands courants de l'art contemporain*, Palais Benedictine, Fécamp, 1993
- Entre la sérénité et l'inquiétude*, exposition collective, Musée d'Art moderne, Saint-Étienne, 1993
- Solo exhibition, Galeria Charpa, Valencia, 1993
- Olivier Debré. 50 tableaux pour un timbre*, Musée de la Poste, Paris, 1993
- Olivier Debré. Anatomie du sourire. Eaux-fortes et textes originaux*, Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris, 1993
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective 1943-1993*, exhibition organized in three sections: *Les Signes-Personnages, la Verticalité*, Château des ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard, *Les Signes-Paysages, l'Espace*, Musée de Valence, 1993
- Les carnets de voyages, la couleur*, Musée Fesch, Ajaccio, 1993
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective 1943-1993*, repetition of the three sections of the exhibition with the addition of a section on Architecture, Théâtre de Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, Montigny-le-Bretonneux, 1993
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris, 1995 ; the exhibition then travelled around Europe: Liège, Milan, Stravanger (Norway), Reykjavik, and then Latin America: Medellín (Colombia), Mexico, Rio de Janeiro, 1996-1997
- Olivier Debré. Un peintre dans la ville*, Espace Jean Legendre, Compiègne, 1995
- Signes*, exhibition held during the Festival d'Art et de Musique, Galerie de la Prévôté, Aix-en-Provence, 1995
- Solo show, Städtische Galerie, Lienz (Austria), 1996
- La dimension du corps 1920-1980*, group show, Musée national d'Art moderne, Tokyo ; Musée national d'Art moderne, Kyoto, 1996
- Olivier Debré, Centre culturel*, ancien carmel, Tarbes, 1996
- Olivier Debré. 50 ans d'estampes*, Île des Impressionnistes, Chatou, and then travelled around Ukraine, Latvia, Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore, 1996
- Olivier Debré. Carnets de voyage*, Galleria Francese, Rome, 1996
- Olivier Debré. Maleri*, Baroniet Rosendal, Rosendal (Norway), 1996
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Galleria Credito Valtellinese, refettorio delle Stellite, Milan, 1996
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Art, Reykjavik, 1996
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée Saint-Georges, Liège, 1996
- Salon coup de cœur. 40 amateurs collectionneurs présentent 80 artistes*, Espace Cardin, Paris, 1996
- Olivier Debré*, Château d'Ô, Montpellier, 1997
- Olivier Debré. Paintings and Prints, 1948-1996*, Alex Gallery, Washington DC, 1997
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Art moderne, Medellín (Colombia), 1997
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Art moderne, Rio de Janeiro, 1997
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée des beaux-arts, Mexico, 1997
- Première Biennale de la gravure d'Île-de-France*, Domaine de Madame Élisabeth, Versailles, 1997
- 70ème exposition du cercle municipal des Gobelins et des beaux-arts*, Mairie du XIIIème arrondissement, Paris, 1998
- Artists in situ*, Banque et Caisse d'Épargne de l'État, Luxembourg ; Galerie d'art contemporain Am Tunnel, Luxembourg, 1998
- Autour de Georges Duby*, Galerie d'art du Conseil général, Aix-en-Provence, 1998
- Olivier Debré en Norvège*, Musée Astrup Fearnley, Oslo, 1998
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Art moderne, Hong-Kong, 1998
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Art moderne, Kamakura (Japan), 1998
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Histoire, Beijing, 1998
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée des beaux-arts, Taipei, 1998
- 30 artistes 1969-1999. Hommage à Olivier Debré*, Galerie d'art de l'Assemblée nationale, Paris, 1999
- Julius Baltazar, Frédéric Benrath, Jean Cortot, Olivier Debré, Pierre Dmitrienko, Roseline Granet, René Lâubiès, Alfred Manessier, André Marfaing, Jaroslav Serpan, Raoul Ubac, Zao Wou-Ki*, Galerie Simon Blais, Montreal, 1999
- Olivier Debré et Richard Texier*, Galerie d'art contemporain de Bécheron, Saché, 1999
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée d'Ettlingen, Ettlingen (Germany), 1999
- Olivier Debré. Rétrospective*, Musée Ludwig, Coblenz, 1999
- Hommage à Olivier Debré*, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris, 2000
- Olivier Debré à Shanghai*, Maison de la Chine, Paris, 2000
- Olivier Debré, la Loire... et ses amis*, Château, Musée international de la Chasse, Gien, 2000
- Olivier Debré, peintures de 1963 à 1999*, Centre d'Arts plastiques, Royan, 2000
- Hommage à six peintres de la Galerie*, Galerie Ariel, Paris, 2001
- L'Estampe. Le paysage, de Charles-François Daubigny à nos jours*, Mairie, Aulnay-sous-Bois, 2001
- L'iris en fleur*, Fondation Vincent-Van-Gogh, Arles, 2001
- Olivier Debré. Couleurs de paysages*, Musée Pincé, Angers, 2001
- Signes, traces, écritures de Alechinsky à Zao Wou-Ki*, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges- Pompidou, Paris, 2001
- 50 ans de la Galerie Ariel*, Galerie Ariel, Paris, 2002
- Collection d'hiver, art contemporain*, Monastère royal de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse, 2002
- Créations contemporaines*, Manufactures nationales, Sèvres, 2002

La Nouvelle École de Paris 1941-1965, Centre d'Art contemporain, Abbaye de Beaulieu, Ginals, 2002

Olivier Debré, Casa de Francia, Mexico city, 2002

Olivier Debré. Rétrospective, Alianza Francesa, Monterrey (Mexico), 2002

Philippe Cognée, Olivier Debré, Galerie Haaken Oslo, 2002

Solo exhibitions, Galerie Louis Carré & Cie, Paris, 2003, 2004 (8ème pavillon des Antiquaires et des Beaux-Arts, Paris), 2005 (FIAC-Porte de Versailles, Paris), 2009, 2011, 2013

Olivier Debré. Œuvres de la dation, Centre Georges-Pompidou, Paris, 2003

Lieu(x) d'être-collection les Abattoirs, Centre d'Art contemporain Georges-Pompidou, Cajarc, 2004

Regard sur l'art contemporain, Atelier Grogard Rond-Point des arts, Rueil-Malmaison, 2004

50 ans de peinture en France, une Galerie, une collection, Musée de Cahors Henri-Martin, Cahors, 2005

Olivier Debré, Antoine Poncet, Atrium, Geneva, 2005

Portraits de Sylvie, Galerie J. Bastien Art, Brussels, 2005

L'Envolée lyrique. Paris 1945-1956, Musée du Luxembourg, Paris, 2006

Gestes, signes, traces, espaces, Musée Malraux, Le Havre, 2007

Hommage à André Marfaing, Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain les Abattoirs, Toulouse, 2007

L'Action pensive Issy-les-Moulineaux, Johnson & Johnson, Couleurs, Couleurs, Musée de Gajac, Villeneuve-sur-Lot, 2007

Olivier Debré. Grands formats, Musée des beaux-arts, Angers, 2007

Olivier Debré. Loire... paysages abstraits, Musée des beaux-arts et d'Archéologie J. Déchelette, Roanne, 2007

Olivier Debré. Parcours 1943-1998, Musée de Cahors Henri-Martin, Cahors, 2007

Olivier Debré. Voyages, Musée de Millau, Millau, 2007

La poésie de l'eau Pont-Aven, Musée des beaux-arts, Pont-Aven 2008

Olivier Debré, peintre voyageur de la Touraine au monde, Château de Chenonceau, Chenonceau, 2008

Olivier Debré. Paysages de Loire, Musée des beaux-arts, Orléans, 2008

Repartir à zéro, Musée des beaux-arts, Lyon, 2008

Une grosse caisse dans un orchestre symphonique. Patrimoine et création, Centre d'Art contemporain, Maison de la Cure, Saint-Restitut, 2008

Abstractions (1956- 2006), Musée Fabre, Montpellier, 2009

Arte & Natura, Museo Villa dei Cedri, Bellinzona (Switzerland), 2009

Autour de Pierre Cabanne, Galerie Guillaume, Paris, 2009

La peinture de paysage. Chemins d'une collection, Espace Fondation EDF, Paris, 2009

Olivier Debré, de Loire et d'ailleurs, Musée de l'Hôtel-Dieu, Mantes-la-Jolie, 2009

Olivier Debré, signes-paysages / grands formats, Espace d'art contemporain Fernet-Branca, Saint-Louis, 2009

Olivier Debré, Signes-personnages, Lieu d'Art et d'Action culturel (LAAC), Dunkirk, 2009

Olivier Debré/Etienne Hajdu, Galerie Bernard Ceysson, Luxembourg, 2009

Picasso, Matisse, Dubuffet, Bacon... Les Modernes s'exposent, Musée des beaux-arts, Lyon, 2009

100 ans de peinture en Bretagne (1880-1980) & La Loire par Olivier Debré, Galerie Doyen, Vannes, 2010

L'Enfance de l'art, Galerie d'art du Conseil général, Aix-en-Provence, 2010

Olivier Debré, Musée national d'Art moderne et contemporain, Alger, 2010

Olivier Debré. Signes-paysages, signes gravés, Musée de la Cohue, Vannes, 2010

Signes-paysages, Musée Ziem, Martigues, 2010

Kings of Art, Château de Kalmar, Kalmar (Sweden), 2011

Les Sujets de l'abstraction. 101 Chefs-d'œuvre de la Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, Musée Rath, Geneva ; Musée Fabre, Montpellier, 2011

Olivier Debré. Un abstrait lyrique. Rétrospective, Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels, 2011

Parole & Figure, Museo Villa dei Cedri, Bellinzona (Switzerland), 2011

Regard sur l'abstraction lyrique, Montparnasse et Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Musée des beaux-arts, Carcassonne, 2011

L'Art en guerre, France 1938-1947, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 2012, travelling exhibition: Arte en Guerra, Francia 1938-1947; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao, 2013

Montparnasse/Saint-Germain-des-Prés, un certain regard sur l'abstraction lyrique, group travelling exhibition, Anciennes Ecuries des Ardoisières, Trélazé, then Montparnasse/Saint-Germain-des-Prés. *Abstractions d'Après-Guerre*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux, 2012

De l'impressionnisme à l'abstraction, une immersion dans la peinture, Musée des beaux-arts, Saint-Lô, 2013

Montparnasse/Saint-Germain-des-Prés, regards sur l'abstraction 1950-1990, exposition itinérante: Palais du Roi de Rome, Rambouillet ; Musée de Tessé, Le Mans, 2013

Olivier Debré, signes-personnages, signes-paysages, Musée des beaux-arts, Carcassonne, 2013

Olivier Debré. Les années 1950-1960, Galerie Brame & Lorenceau, Paris, 2013

Olivier Debré, Galerie Diane de Polignac, Paris, 2014, 2017

Olivier Debré. Un voyage en Norvège, Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré, Tours, 2017

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Jean-Baptiste Lysland, *Le Visage Intérieur*, Brandes, Roubaix, 1980. 2 prints

James Sacré, *Quelque Chose De Mal Raconté*, Ryoân-Ji, Marseille, 1981. 2 prints

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Patrice Huerre, *Perocco le Perroquet*, L'École des Loisirs, Paris, 1989. Illustrations

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Bernard Vargaftig, *VOICI ou un Souffle à Travers "Journal du Regard"* by Bernard Noël, Xonrupt-Longemer, Encrages & Co., 1990. 1 original drawing

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Olivier Debré
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