

HOMMAGE À GUY DE ROUGEMONT

Centre d'art contemporain Bouvet Ladubay, Saumur

June 3 - October 3, 2022



Guy de Rougemont in his studio, Paris, 2015
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Le Monde

GUY DE ROUGEMONT: THE PAINTER AND DESIGNER WHO DIDN'T WANT TO CHOOSE

This genre-breaking dandy of an artist from the 1970s and 1980s, who passed away in 2021, left behind a multi-faceted body of work dominated by an obsession with colour and volume. Discover more in Saumur.

By Véronique Lorelle

Vibrant, geometric forms emerge from the canvases with joyous abandon. Under the metallic architecture of the former 19th-century electricity plant, the artist's work finds expression in large upright tubes, like totems, and small pieces of everyday furniture, which it elevates with pop art colours. The exhibition "A Tribute to Guy de Rougemont (1935-2021)" – on show until 2 October at the Bouvet Ladubay Contemporary Art Centre, in Saumur (Maine-et-Loire) – highlights the pictorial talent of this graduate of the French National School of Decorative Arts (École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs) who ended his career as an elected member of the Painting section

of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He was unable, or unwilling, to choose between the fine and decorative arts.

It is no surprise then, that the best-known piece by this member of "the immortals" is a design object: the audacious Cloud coffee table (1970) in smoked Plexiglass and stainless steel with internal lighting, created for the Parisian designer Henri Samuel. Featuring a cloud-shaped tabletop with five arcs, the original edition (produced in eight copies) of the coffee table today sells for between 150,000 and 200,000 euros.

Although it does not appear in the exhibition – the estate has not yet been settled – other eccentric pieces of furniture, such as the Mini Golden Clover coffee table (2018) with its two-coloured cloverleaf design, and the articulated Sculpture-Screen (2013) in multicoloured painted steel, bear witness to the freedom of this multi-faceted artist, inspired by his meeting with Andy Warhol in the United States in the 1960s.