



FONDATION OPALE

- ≡ Cultural foundation
- ≡ Exhibition

PRESS RELEASE

Europe's platform for Australian Aboriginal art welcomes Yves Klein's oeuvre

From December 10th, Fondation Opale in Lens/Crans-Montana (Switzerland) presents its ground-breaking exhibition *Dreaming in the dream of others*. Yves Klein could well have been one of the first European artists to take an explicit interest in Aboriginal visual art. In short, as in many areas, he was a precursor.

The exhibition title is borrowed from an aphorism by Fernando Pessoa "I have discovered that reading is a slavish way of dreaming. If I must dream, why dream the dreams of others?", that was quoted in the writings of Yves Klein. But it also evokes the mysterious, fascinating "Dreaming", the spiritual foundation of the oldest living culture on Earth: that of Indigenous Australians.

The connection between artworks by perhaps the most significant French artist of the second half of the 20th century and his counterparts from the antipodes operates on several levels:

From the first public displays of the *Anthropometries* — imprints of bodies previously coated with paint and directly applied to the canvas — Klein's work has been associated with rock paintings: doesn't the act of making a colour imprint (of, say, a hand) go right back to the dawn of time?

But everything carried on as if Klein's fascination with Prehistory had diverted him from what is known as Indigenous art: in his work, there is no reference to Africa or Oceania, with the exception of a few shamanic-looking drawings from his youth kept in the Yves Klein Archives in Paris, which historians were not sure how to interpret until now.

A recent careful examination of these works has led to their recognition as reproductions of Aboriginal artworks, which Klein probably drew in the mid-1950s, a time in Europe when the culture of Australia's first inhabitants was little known, and even discredited.

With this new perspective as a starting point, *Dreaming in the dream of others* aims to open a sensitive, poetic path to this primordial brotherhood of awareness, the evidence of which only artists can reveal.

THE EXHIBITION

From December 10th, 2022 to April 16th, 2023, *Dreaming in the dream of others* will juxtapose works by twelve Aboriginal artists (Angkaliya Curtis, Bardayal "Lofty" Nadjamerrek, Bill Whiskey Tjapaltjarri, Danie Mellor, Dhambit Mununggurr, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Ignatia Djanghara, Paddy Bedford, Waigan Djanghara, Wattie Karuwara, Judy Watson, Paji Honeychild Yankarr) with those by Yves Klein.

Exhibition Curators: Yves Klein Foundation, Philippe Siauve, for Fondation Opale: Georges Petitjean, Bérengère Primat.

Alongside the main exhibition, the Special Focus space at the Art gallery of Lens/Crans-Montana will display *Aboriginal Afterimages*, a series by German performance artist Ulay, the "afterimages" born of his collaboration with Aboriginal communities, holding what remains after the nomads' departure at the end of a ritual ceremony.

Art gallery open from Wednesday to Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm

L'Opale restaurant open on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday, 9.30 am to 6 pm, on Friday and Saturday from 9.30 am to 11 pm

FONDATION OPALE

Established in December 2018, Fondation Opale is the sole contemporary art centre dedicated to promoting Aboriginal art in Europe. It fosters dialogue between cultures and peoples through art. The foundation is based on the Collection Bérengère Primat which counts more than 1,300 works by nearly 350 artists, constituting one of the most important collections of this art movement in private ownership.

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