

Jean Dubuffet (French, 1901-85) – Artist Resources



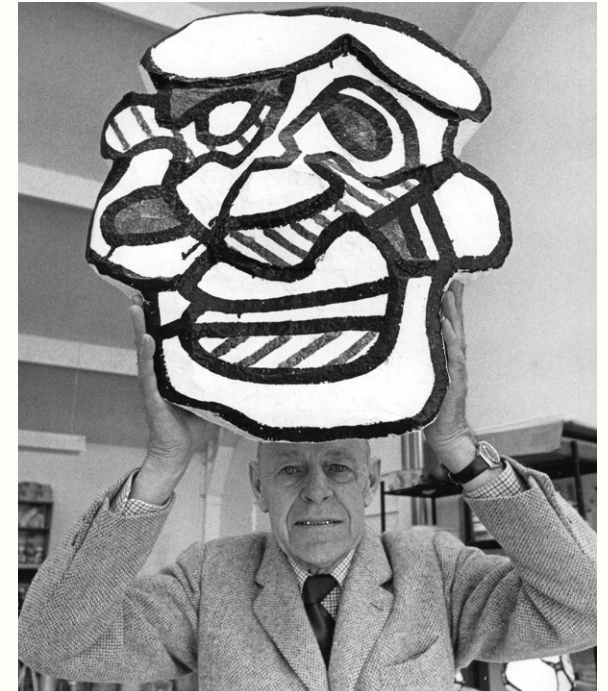
Dubuffet, 1960, Photograph: Paolo Monti/BEIC

[Fondation Jean Dubuffet](#): biography, artworks, exhibitions, publications, and press.

A seminal exhibition at MoMA in 2015, [Jean Dubuffet: Soul of the Underground](#), explored Dubuffet's groundbreaking approach to creativity and materials from the 1940s through the 1960s. Paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, and book illustration from the museum's collection explored Dubuffet's experimentations mixing paint with sand and gravel, applying paint with palette knives, scratching and scraping surfaces; and his innovations in lithography.

Hauser & Wirth Gallery explored Dubuffet's lifelong preoccupation with urban space, architecture, and the modern history of Paris in their 2018 show, [Jean Dubuffet and the City](#).

Following a debut in London, the Pace Gallery in New York expanded their 2018 exhibition, [Théâtres de mémoire](#), centered around the monumental paintings that comprise the titular series, which Dubuffet began in 1975. Loans drawn from multiple collections fill out the central theme of exploring the conflict between sight, perception, and memory.



Dubuffet, late 1970s, Photograph: Kurt Wyss



Jean Dubuffet (French, 1901-1985)

Arabe à l'oeillet (The Arab in Orange), 1948

Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2023:64.1

In the 1940s French artist Jean Dubuffet founded the *art brut* (“raw art”) movement, which he understood as art “created from solitude and from pure and authentic creative impulses – where the worries of competition, acclaim and social promotion do not interfere.” From 1947 to 1949, Jean Dubuffet took three trips to North Africa to escape the social pressures of the Parisian art world. **Arabe à l'oeillet (The Arab in Orange)** is one of twelve oil paintings the artist painted upon his return to France. The graffiti-like style and simple linework is part of Dubuffet’s attempt to practice a childlike approach to artmaking. Given Dubuffet’s deliberately rough style, this particular work walks a difficult line when seen through contemporary eyes. On the one hand, the artist’s generically rendered “Arab” appears as a raw, powerful figure sketch. On the other, the figure’s childish and perhaps naïve rendering may appear to veer into cultural and racial stereotyping, regardless of how the artist may have intended it at the time.

On view August 23 – November 26, 2023

Jean Dubuffet (French, 1901-1985)

Le vaste monde, 1982

Acrylic on paper laid on canvas

Private Collection; L2022:116.1

Jean Dubuffet studied painting at the Académie Julian in Paris but abandoned the field to become a wine merchant. It wasn't until 1942, when the artist was 41 years old, that he returned to artmaking and made significant impacts in both France and the United States. Dubuffet was interested in what he considered "raw art" (*art brut*) created by "outsiders" such as psychiatric patients, imprisoned people, and children. **Le vaste monde** ("The wide world") was painted near the end of the artist's life in his characteristic red, white, black, and blue color palette. As Dubuffet once described: "I had given up any ambition of making a career as an artist.... I had lost all interest in the art shown in galleries and museums, and I no longer aspired to fit in that world. I loved the paintings done by children, and my only desire was to do the same for my own pleasure."

On view February 1 – May 7, 2023





Jean Dubuffet (French, 1901-1985)

L'Accueillant, 1973

Epoxy paint on polyurethane

Shaw and Shirin Shahery, Los Angeles; L2022:5.1

French artist Jean Dubuffet is known for founding the *art brut* (“raw art”) movement, which he understood as art “created from solitude and from pure and authentic creative impulses – where the worries of competition, acclaim and social promotion do not interfere.” Dubuffet collected art created by those labeled “outsiders” to the mainstream art world, including psychiatric patients, imprisoned people, and children. In his own paintings and sculptures, Dubuffet reflected what he saw as an *art brut* style that emerges from self-taught or untrained artists disconnected from an academic approach to artmaking. **L'Accueillant** (“The Welcoming”) features the artist’s signature red, white, black, and blue color scheme on a whimsical, child-like figure. The sculpture was used as a model to create a monumental version of **L'Accueillant** after the artist’s death, which now welcomes visitors at the entrance to the Robert-Debré Hospital in Paris.

On view March 23 – June 26, 2022

Jean Dubuffet (French, 1901-1985)

L'Amphibologique, 1965

Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2019:145.1

Jean Dubuffet studied painting as a young man but only seriously began making art at age 41. Rejecting his formal education, Dubuffet turned for inspiration to art created by children and the mentally ill. He termed his style *art brut*, or “raw art,” advocating for an expressive spontaneity untainted by the limitations of academic convention and dominant cultural trends. **L'Amphibologique** is a prime example, from the series *L'Hourloupe*, which he began 1962 and worked on for over a decade. The series began as a cycle of drawings in red and blue ballpoint pen inspired by a doodle he produced while on the telephone. Translated through paint, the juxtaposition of the linear with organic curves, of black with primary colors, serves as a visual expression of the titles of the painting and the series. *Amphibologique*, related to the French adjective *amphibolous*, refers to the notion of syntactic ambiguity and the multiple meanings that can arise from the relationships between words and clauses within a sentence. *Hourloupe* merges the French verbs *hurler* (to roar) and *hululer* (to hoot) with the noun *loup* (wolf), creating an ambiguous phonetic jumble. As Dubuffet explained, “it evokes a character who’s at once somewhat enchanting and grotesque: a kind of tragic, growling, lumbering figure.”

On view January 15 – April 19, 2020

