KAREL APPEL IN “TRENTE GLORIEUSES” FRANCE

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In an interview with Michel Ragon — one of the last living witnesses to the time when Karel Appel moved to Paris — conducted for the catalogue of the painter's major retrospective held at The Hague's Gemeentemuseum in 2016 - he told me, in reference to the consequences of the dissolution of CoBrA in 1951: "As for Appel, at one point, he vanished to the United States." This surprised me greatly, as I knew that Appel had lived in Paris from 1950 to 1976, between the ages of 29 and 55. In other words, the age of maturity. He was therefore in France during the "trente glorieuses", the nation's three decades of reconstruction after the disaster of war.

Author of the invaluable monograph *Karel Appel: The Early Years 1937-1957*, published in 1988, Ragon had also been the main promoter of international avant-garde movement CoBrA in Paris. It was he, for instance, who organized the movement's only two Parisian exhibitions during its brief existence: in February 1951 at the Librairie 73 and, two months later, at the Galerie Pierre[1]. He also made regular contributions to CoBrA magazine, the existential connection for the movement; the last issue came out for its final exhibition in the autumn of 1951, at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Liège. Although founded in Paris, where its core of activist artists settled in late 1950, and using French as its lingua franca, the movement's name — an acronym of the founders' home cities (Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam) — betrays its somewhat ambivalent relationship with what was then still the world's capital of modern art: the 'Pa' for Paris is conspicuously absent. In truth, CoBrA artists lived there in appalling destitution, sometimes to the point of malnutrition. Underlying conflicts inevitably broke out, leading to the group's dissolution barely a year after it had moved to Paris. Of its members, Appel was the only one to achieve his international breakthrough from Paris — not as a CoBrA artist, though, but rather as an "Informel" or abstract expressionist artist in the circle of Michel Tapié.

Karel Appel has often been associated with, or even reduced to CoBrA — especially in its main protagonists' home countries — which is rather misleading if you consider the movement's very brief existence and Appel's success in a different context. I have analysed in more detail elsewhere what CoBrA meant to him, and vice versa[2]. Conversely, the fact that the importance of Paris and France in his work and career is not well known is astonishing given the long periods of time he lived there. The unawareness is probably due to a combination of his Dutch origins and standing as an international artist. On this account, the careers of two other Dutch artists, of Van Gogh and Mondrian, come to mind. The latter was adopted

1
Michel Ragon, *Karel Appel – Peinture 1937-1957* (Éditions Galilée, Paris 1988), p. 321-323. The exhibition *Appel, Constant, Corneille*, organised by Jacques Doucet at the Colette Allendy gallery in the spring of 1949, although held after CoBrA was founded, was announced as presenting 'Trois peintres du groupe expérimental de Hollande' (Three painters of the Dutch Experimental Group). The invitation card is preserved in the Karel Appel Foundation archives, Amsterdam. It can hardly be considered a CoBrA exhibition, as is the case for the *Les Mains Éblouies* exhibition at Galerie Maeght in the autumn of 1950, which brought together Alechinsky, Corneille and Doucet (Ibid., p. 324, 352).

2
Franz Wilhelm Kaiser, *Appel et Cobra*, in the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris exhib. cat., *Karel Appel* (Paris, Paris Musées, 2017), p. 47-50.

by America, although he actually only lived in New York for the last four years of his life; interestingly, it was precisely the context of a revolt against geometric abstraction — the style essentially inspired by Mondrian — that facilitated the very quick take off of Appel's career. And France adopted Van Gogh to the extent that he came to form, along with Cézanne and Gauguin, the accepted triumvirate of modern art precursors. In this trio, the Dutchman served as a precursor of Expressionism, a key reference for artists in Karel Appel's context. Was Appel perhaps too elusive to be adopted by anyone? Michel Ragon seems to confirm this although, in his monograph, he cites Dutch writer Simon Vinkenoog quoting Appel: "Amsterdam was the city of my youth; Paris was that of my evolution[3]". Much of this remains to be explored.

The first research attempts following this lead were proposed in publications accompanying two recent exhibitions, mounted in Paris on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the artist's death: *Karel Appel - Œuvres sur papier* at the Centre Pompidou, under the direction of Jonas Storsve, and *Karel Appel* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, under the direction of Choghakate Kazarian. In the former, Anne Lemonnier presents Appel as an artist of "the streets of the world"; she dedicates a paragraph to Paris, located between those about Amsterdam and New York City, and concludes with an "Everywhere, Nowhere", which seems to confirm the thesis of the elusive artist[4]. The catalogue for the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris show is structured in periods: "Les années parisiennes : 1952-1957" is the title of Anne Montfort's paper, the first of all writings about Karel Appel to be dedicated entirely to the importance of Paris for him[5] — 1952 is the date when Appel was included in the seminal exhibition *Un art autre*, curated by Michel Tapié in Paul Facchetti's Paris studio, while 1957 witnessed the artist's first trip to New York for his second exhibition at the Martha Jackson Gallery.

This was the time when Appel emerged internationally, while still Paris-based, and essentially the time when New York City superseded Paris as the world's modern art capital. Appel was able to benefit doubly from this transitional period: first, Paris' prestigious reputation meant it was still attracting people involved in modern and contemporary art, which partly explains how the young Dutch painter was able to meet so many of those who were to play a crucial role in his career — artists, writers, art critics, gallery owners, museum directors and collectors. And second, he was one of the first European artists to understand that the future would play out on the other side of the Atlantic: after his first trip to New

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Simon Vinkenoog, *Het verhaal van Karel Appel – Een proeve van waarneming* (Utrecht, A.W. Bruna & Zoon, 1963), p. 86; French translation: Ragon, op. cit., p. 411.

4

Anne Lemonnier, *Dynamo City : Karel Appel dans les rues du monde*, in the Centre Pompidou exhib. cat., *Karel Appel – Œuvres sur papier* (Paris / Munich, MNAM Centre Pompidou / Sieveking Verlag, 2015), p. 21-29.

5

Anne Montfort, *Les années parisiennes : 1952-1957* op. cit. , note 2 above, p. 58-65.

York in 1957, he returned to the US almost every year — which may explain the "vanishing" perceived by the Paris art world and described by Michel Ragon, who picked 1957 as the cut-off moment to end his monograph. Nevertheless, in the US, Appel routinely introduced himself as a Paris-based "European painter"[6]. When in New York, he stayed with friends or in hotels, and worked in borrowed studios — first that of Sam Francis, then Richard Lindner's, to name but a few. It was not until 1971 that he rented a penthouse cum studio on 69th Street. The following year, however, he also bought a large studio and apartment on rue Marie Pape-Carpantier, in the 6th Arrondissement. Paris remained his centre of gravity, and the Paris years far exceed the period stated as the "Parisian years" in the title of Anne Montfort's essays — both before and after. She does mention a few landmark moments *before*, which she did not explore further, probably for lack of space: Appel's first trip to Paris in 1947, with his friend Corneille, to visit Édouard Pignon, during which they discovered Dubuffet; his second trip in 1948, to attend an "international conference of avant-garde art", a scission from which gave birth to CoBrA; his third, for the Appel-Corneille-Constant exhibition at Galerie Colette Allendy; and last, the seminal visit he paid, just after moving to Paris in September 1950, to an exhibition of drawings by the mentally ill at Sainte-Anne Hospital[7]. For the *after*, Fabrice Hergott, in his preface to the catalogue entitled "Karel Appel and Paris", mentions the interest Pierre Restany and Pierre Gaudibert — both highly influential in the 60s to 80s — took in the artist. Paris therefore remained an important anchor place for Appel, even when he no longer lived there.

6 Cathérine van Houts, *Karel Appel – de biografie* (Amsterdam/Antwerp, Uitgeverij Contact, 2000), p. 239.

7 Monfort, op. cit., p. 63.

It all started in 1945. No sooner had Appel returned to Amsterdam from his wartime hideout in the countryside that he discovered a portfolio, *Cinq peintres d'aujourd'hui*, dedicated to Leon Gischia, Maurice Estève, Edouard Pignon, André Beaudin and Francisco Borès[8]. Ragon calls the five "post-cubists"[9], by which he probably means they found inspiration in Picasso's interwar work that developed its imageries somewhere between abstraction and figuration. Two years later, Appel visited Paris for the first time to meet with Pignon, a hard to categorise painter little known outside of France. What was it that he saw in him? Perhaps, now that the war had ended he was eager to escape the constraints of figuration and Pignon appeared closer to him than Picasso or Matisse, the overbearing figures of the previous generation he had discovered in art magazines while studying at the Amsterdam Rijksakademie? Like him, he came from a working class background, and neither ever disowned their origins. Learning to paint was no easy task: it required specific and sustained efforts. Pignon — a staunch Communist who became a dedicated painter — was unable to

8 Published in 1943 by Éditions du Chêne (Paris) on the occasion of an exhibition at the Galerie de France.

9 Ragon, op cit., p. 74.

accept socialist realism, a propagandistic form of illustration devoid of any artistic stakes. This was a constant topic of his conversations with Picasso, a close friend. Combining figuration and abstraction: this was to be Karel Appel's most distinctive trait, likening him to Picasso and Pignon and setting him apart from the 1950s mainstream, when abstraction was very much the orthodoxy.

Michel Ragon, who came also from a modest background, still saw himself as an "art critic in the making" when he first discovered in magazine *Reflex* the work of Appel, Constant and Corneille, three Dutchmen he instantly became fascinated with. Jean-Michel Atlan had shown him the first issue of this "Experimental Group Holland" magazine while they were preparing, in the fall of 1948, to visit Denmark on the occasion of an Atlan-Pignon exhibition that Ragon had proposed there as guest curator. On their way to Copenhagen, they very well could have bumped into the three Dutchmen, who were returning to Amsterdam after taking part in the annual avant-garde show *Høst*, which had just ended[10]. The 1948 edition of *Høst* brought together for the first time members of CoBrA, the as-yet unnamed movement founded in Paris just eleven days before, on 8 November 1948, at café Le Notre-Dame[11]. The group photo from the Danish exhibition entered history as the first ever picture of CoBrA, although it features many artists who never exhibited under this label. Copenhagen was where the label CoBrA was coined, and where the first issue of its eponymous journal was edited. It was also in Copenhagen, where Ragon stayed from December 1948 to January 1949, that he first found out, through Asger Jorn, about the movement, which after all had been founded in Paris[12].

Atlan had met the three Dutchmen through Jacques Doucet — probably during the conference the scission from which spawned CoBrA[13]. Although Doucet and Atlan, both members of the French arm of Revolutionary Surrealism, were on the opposite side when the conference split, they were later to exhibit under the CoBrA label and remained important friends for Appel in Paris. Édouard Pignon, too, was probably of great assistance to young Appel, then eager to discover the Paris world of art but not yet fully versed in the language. For his third visit to Paris in May 1949, on the occasion of an exhibition organized by Doucet at Galerie Colette Allendy, he also presented three paintings at the Salon de Mai, which Pignon had contributed to create in 1943. In a manuscript preserved in the Karel Appel Foundation archive, he reacted strongly to the exhibition's general theme, "Space/time in art": the text constitutes his CoBrA counter-manifesto[14].

10
Ibid., p. 9-13.

11
Years later, the King of Denmark unveiled a commemorative plaque in the café.

12
Ragon, op. cit., p. 15.

13
Ibid., p. 9.

14
The text penned by Constant, which became the official CoBrA manifesto and which Appel's own manifesto criticized, had been published the previous year in the first issue of *Reflex*, which Atlan showed Ragon; see Franz Wilhelm Kaiser, *The Manifesto by Karel Appel — Explanation* in The Hague's Gemeentemuseum *Appel Retrospective* exhib. cat. (The Hague / Cologne, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag / Verlag Buchhandlung Walter König, 2016), p. 28. Appel's counter-manifesto was first published — albeit in a modified form — as late as 1988, in the book by Michel Ragon cited in note 1, p. 374-376.

Besides these early contacts, Appel's most important discovery in Paris was the work of Jean Dubuffet, whom he did not meet personally until much later. He was deeply impressed by his *Portraits* exhibition, which he discovered at Galerie René Drouin, and may well have viewed the artist's collection of Art Brut in the gallery cellar[15]. In any case, this is when he started to take an interest in the art of the mentally ill; he saw exhibitions in Holland and Belgium and, soon after settling in Paris in September 1950, paid several visits to a display of "psychopathological" drawings presented on the occasion of a psychiatric congress at the Sainte-Anne Hospital. Perhaps Atlan, who under German occupation had been interned at Sainte-Anne as mentally ill, keeping him from certain death (he was Jewish and active in the Résistance), had told him about the exhibition? The accompanying brochure described mental patient pathologies, but included no illustrations: Appel covered the text with drawings and collages, inserted others between the pages, and carefully kept his *Psychopathological Art* notebook for the rest of his life. One could very well regard it as the intimate dictionary of his pictorial language; he later used many of these drawings as a starting point for his canvases. The notebook was shown for the first time in the *Parallel Visions - Modern Artists and Outsider Art* exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1992; five years later — and half a century after it was made — Johannes Gachnang published a facsimile edition[16].

Appel first settled at 20, rue Santeuil, in the 5th Arrondissement — above a soap factory and next to a tannery, where the hides of freshly-slaughtered cows stacked up, filling the air with a terrible stench. The first floor was shared by seven people, including three couples, and provisionally divided accordingly. It was let out as a workspace: sleeping there was forbidden, but people did anyway. Despite the precarious conditions — just one fresh water tap in the corridor and no toilet — Appel lived there with his first wife, Tonie Sluyters, for the first five years they were in Paris. The rue Santeuil became a quarters for many Dutch artists who wanted to try their luck in the art capital[17]. Appel soon befriended Amsterdam writer Simon Vinkenoog, who had been working in Paris since 1948 at UNESCO. Flemish writer Hugo Claus, who had already exhibited with CoBrA and lived near the rue Santeuil, became a close friend with whom he would later collaborate on numerous occasions. Claus's wife, Elly, modelled for fashion house Balenciaga and knew photographer Paul Facchetti, who had just converted part of his studio into an art gallery run by aristocrat and intellectual Michel Tapié de Céleyran, a key figure in the Paris art scene. Tapié, all at once art critic, dealer and exhibition organizer, boasted an extensive international network: in March 1951, he organized the exhibition

15

Appel wrote Willemijn Stokvis, in a letter dated 25 June 1969, that he had seen the Art Brut collection displayed in the gallery cellar; see Stokvis, *Cobra – de weg naar spontaniteit* [1978] (Blaricum, V + K Publishing bv, 2001), p. 165 (note 238); French edition: Stokvis, *Cobra — la conquête de la spontanéité* (Paris, Gallimard, 2001). Although Appel much appreciated Dubuffet's work, he thought the words 'Art' and 'Brut' did not go well together, and that Dubuffet's art was not 'Art Brut': he believed the term was much better suited to the 'Street Art' he had seen in the streets of New York; see Ragon, op. cit., p. 448.

16

Karel Appel, *Art psychopathologique – carnet 1948-1950*, dessins et gouaches (Neuchâtel, Éditions Ides et Calendes, 1997).

17

Van Houts, op. cit., p. 165.

Véhémences confrontées at the Nina Dausset gallery, which for the first time brought together the avant-garde from both sides of the Atlantic: Pollock, De Kooning, Russell, Riopelle, Bryen, Hartung, Mathieu, Wols, Capogrossi[18].

Appel met Tapié in 1952, through Elly Claus; the meeting was crucial to the artist's international breakthrough. The two men immediately got on: later that year, Tapié featured Appel's work in two of his exhibitions at Facchetti's, *Peintures non abstraites* and *Un art autre*, as well as in his eponymous book-manifesto. From then on, things went very fast: the following year, Appel obtained a major solo exhibition at the Brussels Palais des Beaux-Arts. In the texts Tapié and Claus wrote for the catalogue, CoBrA was not even mentioned, which may be taken as evidence for the movement's limited impact in Paris. In 1953, Guggenheim Museum director James Johnson Sweeney paid him a visit on the advice of Willem Sandberg, director of the Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum and one of Appel's strongest supporters: Sweeney bought two paintings, which he featured in *Younger European Painters*, his travelling exhibition in the United States. Soon after, Edy de Wilde, director of the Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, purchased several paintings. In 1954, Tapié organized a solo exhibition of Appel at Studio Facchetti, and suggested New York gallery owner Martha Jackson to visit his studio. She bought two canvases and several gouaches, and later that year offered to host his first US exhibition in her gallery — the start of a relationship that was to last seventeen years. Also, in 1954, Appel represented the Netherlands at the 27th Venice Bienniale, received the UNESCO award, then took part in the exhibition *Caratteri della pittura d'oggi* (Characters of painting today), organized by Tapié at Galleria di Spazio in Rome. It was again Tapié who brought Appel to Italy, where he introduced him to Beatriz Monte della Cortea of Galleria dell'Ariete in Milan, among others. He also introduced him to many major collectors of the time, such as Igor Troubetskoy, Carlos Rua de Angeli, Philippe Dotremont or Bertie Urvater, and coined the term "tragic force" which emerged in the titles of Appel's works[19]. When leafing through Michel Ragon's monograph, one cannot help but notice the replacement — perhaps not radical, but notable enough — of typical CoBrA subjects, like children and animals, by more classic themes: figure, portrait, landscape, as well as the use of a thicker paint.

A mere glance at the list of Appel's exhibitions confirms how his international reputation skyrocketed after he met Tapié[20], who in 1955 became adviser to the Rive Droite gallery, then the Stadler gallery where the artist now presented his work. More comfortable financially by 1956, Appel was able to

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Monfort, op. cit., p. 59. Tapié, who coined the term 'Informel' to describe the abstract art of the 1950s and played a crucial role in connecting its diverse currents internationally – all the way to Japanese movement Gutai – is finally being given the credit he deserves; see the doctoral thesis by Juliette Evezard: *"Un art autre" : le rêve de Michel Tapié de Céleyran*, 'il profeta de l'art informel' (1937-1987) : *une nouvelle forme du système marchand-critique*, defended on 16-01-2015 at the University of Paris X , as part of the "Milieux, cultures et sociétés du passé et du présent" doctoral school (Nanterre).

19

Van Houts, op. cit., p. 533.

20

The most comprehensive list can be found in the catalogue for The Hague, op. cit., note 14.

buy a small house in a courtyard at 7 rue Brézin, in the 14th Arrondissement. He moved in with his second wife, Machteld van der Groen, whom he had met in Rotterdam[21]. When UNESCO's first headquarters were built in 1958, a number of renowned artists of the time were commissioned to decorate the building's interiors, including Jean Arp, Alexander Calder, Pablo Picasso, Roberto Matta, Joan Miró, Henry Moore… and Karel Appel. He painted a huge mural, *Rencontre du printemps*, for the UNESCO restaurant, which was transferred to the organization's Conference Forum in 2009.

[21] Van Houts, op. cit., p. 219-224.

From his first travels to New York, where he met painters of the New York School — most nobably Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline — Appel brought back a dramatic increase in the size of his canvases and, for a while, a rapprochement toward abstraction. The classic theme of the female nude also appeared powerfully in his work. Probably inspired in part by de Kooning, but even more so by the contacts Machteld, then a fashion model for Balenciaga, had with many beautiful women, he painted an spectacular series of nudes. Another body of work around 1960 was inspired by Jean Larcade, the owner of the Rive Droite gallery, who invited him to the Abbaye de Roseland, his estate near Nice. Eighteen ancient olive trees had burned down there: all that remained were the 600-year-old roots, which were dug up, cleaned and stored in a barn. During the summers of 1961 and 1962, Appel worked on these roots and produced a series of colourful sculptures — three-dimensional paintings as it were.

His career had now reached a peak. His reputation, scandalous as ever in his native country, was further amplified by the repercussions of his international success, and had already drawn many Dutch journalists to Paris, eager to meet the *enfant terrible*. Among them, Jan Vrijman, whose interview, published on January 29, 1955 in the weekly *Vrij Nederland*, contained a quote from the artist that, taken out of context, became an iconic expression of the permanent scandal attached to Karel Appel. Explaining his methods, the indefatigable worker declared, no doubt with a hint of provocation: "I am just messing around with paint". In the early 1960s, he became such a star in the Netherlands that Vrijman obtained a 100 000 guilder grant to produce a documentary about Appel — a quarter of the Dutch Film Fund's annual budget[22]. The film — his first — appears to be less a documentary than a tribute to Paris as the capital city of modernity, and a visual representation of Appel's infamous quote — which probably explains its extraordinary permanence as qualifier of the artist's public image in the Netherlands. Outdoor scenes were shot in Paris; the courtyard, facade and roof of his home in rue Brézin are easily recognisable. Interior scenes of Appel while painting — or rather interacting with the canvas — were shot

[22] Ibid., p. 307.

in a castle in Holland, as his Paris studio was too cramped. In order to film Appel in action, Vrijman had a brilliant idea: he cut a hole in one of his canvases, through which he could shoot the artist's front face in action. The idea was obviously inspired by two prior examples: Hans Namuth's 1950 film about Jackson Pollock and Clouzot's about Picasso in 1956. In both, the artist painted on a glass pane behind which the camera was placed. Vrijman's system improved on this, as it more truthfully reflected the relationship between the painter and his canvas. Dizzy Gillespie, whose portrait Appel had painted in New York, composed *Lyrics for Appel* especially for the film soundtrack. The rest is *Musique Barbare*, composed and improvised by Appel himself in the recently-founded Studio voor Elektronische Muziek (Studio for Electronic Music - S.T.E.M.) at the University of Utrecht. The fifteen-minute film is a true masterpiece, although it also contributed to further entrench the clichés attached to Karel Appel as a scandalous savage who takes it out on the canvas, which in fact is a far cry from what the film title claims: *The Reality of Karel Appel*. Convincing Appel to let himself be filmed at work was no easy task; biographer Cathérine van Houts says that he returned to the filming set at night to complete his paintings, alone and quietly[23].

[23] Ibid., p. 311.

One of the consequences of the art capital moving from Paris to New York was that painting was now considered obsolete — and with it, all the painters who in the fifties were still seen as the avant-garde. Judging by the list of his exhibitions, Appel did not suffer much from this change of preferences; true, solo exhibitions became less frequent in the second half of the sixties, but they recovered in the mid-seventies. His participation in group shows remained unaffected. He engaged in all sorts of experiments, adding plastic toys and other kitschy objects to his canvases, or playing with torn poster collages, innovations that emerged in the context of *Nouveau Réalisme* — he had met César in the 1950s[24] — but he was no longer an avant-garde artist. As if to retire to the countryside, he purchased a chateau in Burgundy, near Auxerre, had it restored and moved in with the love of his life, Machteld, while also keeping his Paris studio. The couple enjoyed but a few years of felicity: Machteld died of cancer in 1970.

[24] To the point he proposed Willem Sandberg to display him together with his first monographic exposition at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum; in ibid., p. 220.

In 1976, Appel unenthusiastically left France to settle in Monaco. Not for tax avoidance purposes, as one might think, but because President Giscard d'Estaing had instituted a tax reform that hit the self-employed, particularly artists. And then, immigration services stopped renewing his residence permit. Appel already had a flat in Monte Carlo, which he had acquired for Hennie Sutopo, the daughter of an Indonesian shipowner and

his girlfriend for a time after Machteld's death, because he couldn't obtain French residency for her. He could have emigrated to New York, where he had a studio cum apartment and spent much time anyway; but in Monaco, he was closer to the south of France where he had made new acquaintances through a friend, poet Jean-Clarence Lambert, among which Jean-Louis Prat, director of the Maeght Foundation, and Michel Delorme of Éditions Galilée, who introduced him to intellectuals associated with his publishing house, such as Jean Baudrillard, Pierre Gaudibert, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Edgar Morin and Pierre Restany. Subsequently, a number of publications about Karel Appel by some of these authors appeared, and on occasion collaborations between author and artist[25].

During this period, as heralded by exhibitions such as *A New Spirit in Painting* at the Royal Academy of Arts in London (1981) or *Documenta 7* in Kassel (1982), painting was making a comeback in the international contemporary art world. Karel Appel, although featured in two previous editions of Documenta, did not appear in this one, but his revival didn't take long; it was probably facilitated by the fact that the main protagonists in the return to painting worked halfway between figuration and abstraction. One of them, Georg Baselitz, encouraged Dutchman Rudi Fuchs, the *Documenta 7* director, to take a closer look at his fellow countryman, a great star of the previous generation. As such, Fuchs had until then considered Appel rather a subject of derision or to antagonize. Now he took a closer look and in 1987, this led to an exhibition at the Castello de Rivoli, of which he was the founding director, and many others thereafter. Fuchs was largely instrumental to Appel's comeback to this day.

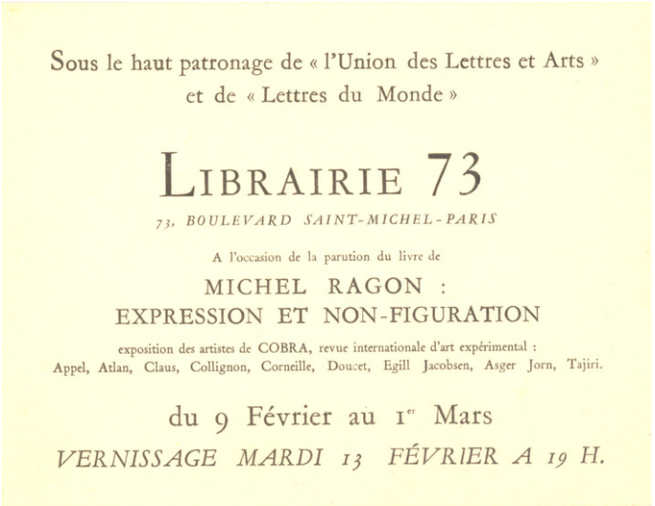
Until his death, as he had always done since the early sixties, Appel continued to travel extensively and kept several homes: in 1988, he purchased a large estate near Florence; the following year, he built a house and workshop in Darien, Connecticut. When I first met him in the 1990s, he was active across five workshops — two in the US and three in Europe, including one in Amsterdam, where he lived in hotels. You can tell the series in his later work apart by the place they were painted. His legal domicile was still Monaco, however, and he maintained close links with a number of French acquaintances. His relationship with France and his role in French art history in the second half of the 20th century extend well beyond the fifties. In recognition of this fact, the French government made him an Officer of the Legion of Honour in 2003 — and his final resting place is the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris. Much remains to be discovered about this significant portion of Karel Appel's work and life.

25

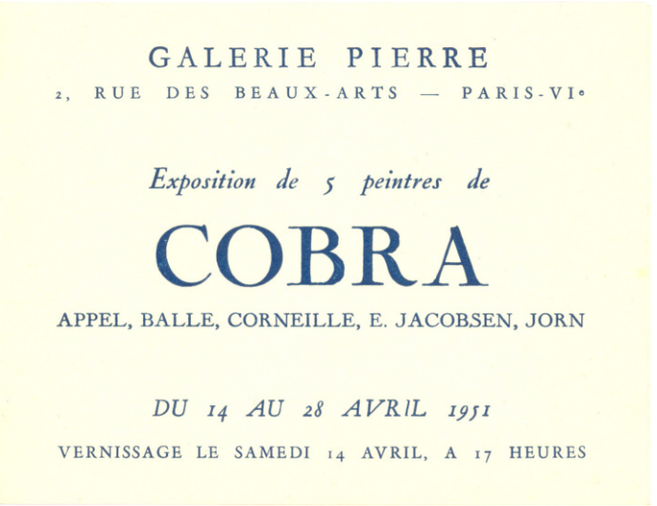
For instance: Pierre Restany, *Street Art. Le Second souffle de Karel Appel*, (Paris, Éditions Galilée, 1982); Edgar Morin / Karel Appel, *New York*, (Paris, Éditions Galilée, 1984).

Poster group exhibition Galerie Colette Allendy, Paris, 1949

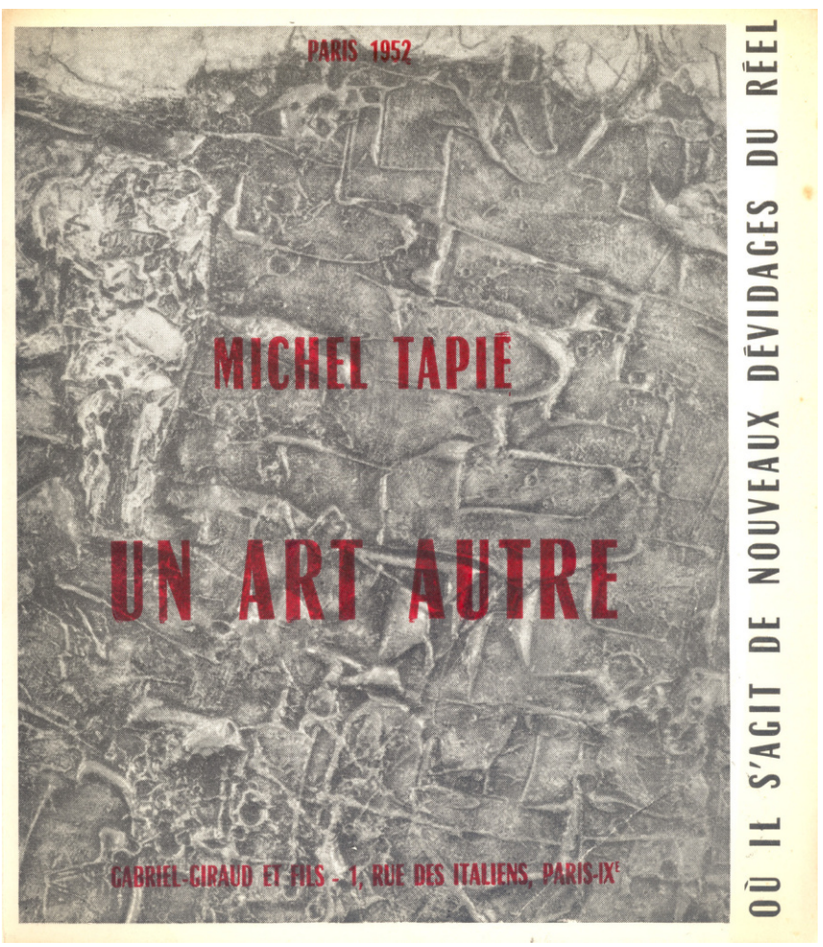

Karel Appel and Jacques Doucet, photograph from the album of Karl Otto Götz, 1949



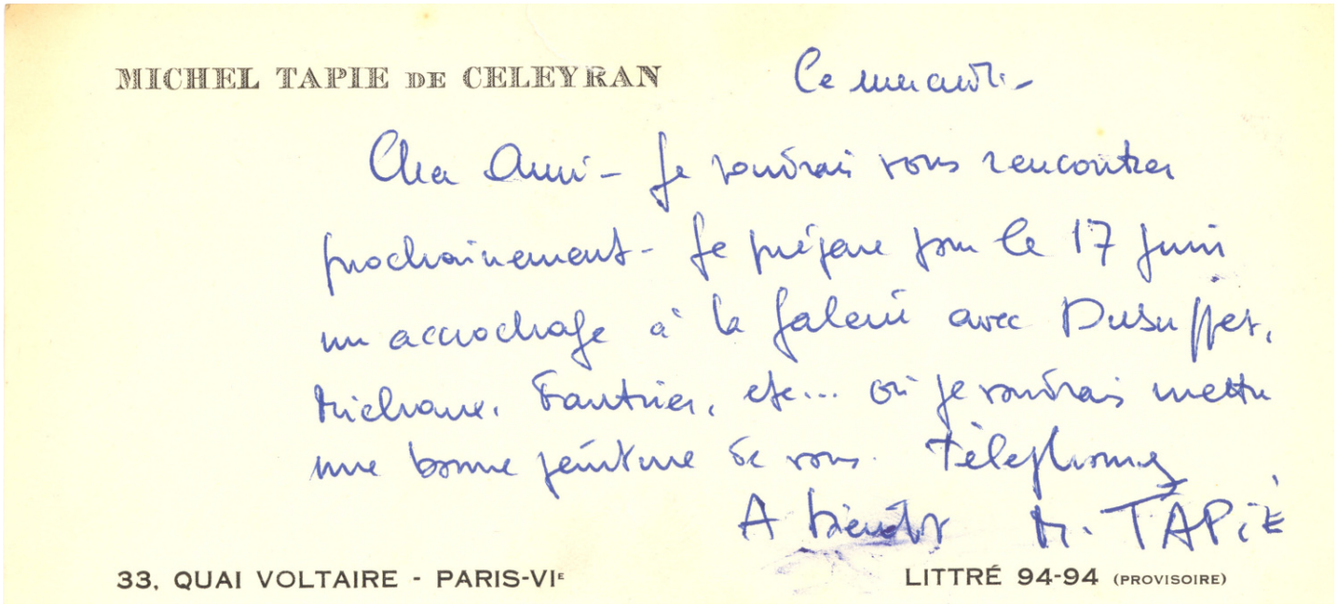
Announcement first CoBrA exhibition in Paris, 1951



Announcement second CoBrA exhibition in Paris, 1951



Cover *Un Art Autre*, 1952



MICHEL TAPIE DE CELEYRAN

Ce mercredi -

Cher Ami - Je voudrais vous rencontrer prochainement - Je prépare pour le 17 juin un accrochage à la Galerie avec Dubuffet, Michaux, Fautrier, etc... où je voudrais mettre une bonne peinture de vous. Téléphonez

A bientôt M. TAPIÉ

33, QUAI VOLTAIRE - PARIS-VI[E] LITTRÉ 94-94 (PROVISOIRE)

Note Tapié to Appel asking for the loan of a painting

Karel Appel's first trip to the USA, in company of Martha Jackson, 1957

Leaflet second exhibition at Martha Jackson Gallery, New York, 1957

LP Cover *Musique Barbare*, 1963