



Geer and Bram van Velde

Older than him by a generation, **Geer van Velde** (1898-1977) was almost the spiritual father of Piet Moget. Also of Dutch origin, he settled in France very early on with his brother **Bram** (1895-1981), attracted by Paris and the Mediterranean. Piet met Geer in 1952 and a long friendship ensued, including regular visits to Port la Nouvelle, where the Mogets settled that same year.

As a pair of non-identical twins in art, Bram and Geer would follow different unfamiliar paths, holding their last joint exhibition at Maeght in 1948. After a figurative episode lasting until the mid-1930s, they each moved towards abstraction, more lyrical for Bram, and more rational for Geer.

After the War

In the mid-1950s, at a time when he began a style of work from which he would never again deviate, Piet Moget showed a tireless curiosity in his contemporaries. Particularly in those who drew on foundations that were very different to his: totemic art, art brut, automatic writing and so on.

All these models reflected a new appetite in art between the end of the war and the 1960s, abiding by many characteristics of the COBRA movement, whose influence is palpable in each of the works on display, and whose impact would be felt until the 1990s.

A collection is reflective of a life, always shaped by encounters and friendships. **Bengt Lindström** was an intimate friend of Piet Moget; the two works displayed here illustrate his attachment to the painter and his family.

The 1960s

From 1952 Piet Moget organised exhibitions of contemporary art in Scandinavia, where he was then staying.

On his return to France, he organised "Les Rencontres", the first forum for contemporary art created in Languedoc-Roussillon, from 1954 to 1956.

This approach, in the 1960s when art was both the object and instrument of protest, resulted in an eclectic combination of artists with contrasting fates, from the unclassifiable and too furtive **Malaval** (1937-1980), to the feminist artist **Cynthia Carlson** (1942-), and even to **Maurice Henry** (1907-1984), the incurable Surrealist.

The major trends of the era – conceptual art, minimal art and hyperrealism – also entered the collection, at the time they appeared on the artistic scene.

Dado

Dado (1933-2010) is indisputably the artist of a universe. This universe, made up of allegorical carved figures, is haunted by the war and its ghosts. His style is virtuoso, powerful and highly sonorous. A friend of Piet Moget, he is, along with the Van Velde brothers, the most represented artist in the collection.

He was the subject of a memorable exhibition at the L.A.C. in Sigeon in 1997.



The 1980s

After two decades marked by conceptual and minimal art, the start of the 1980s saw the emergence in the United States of an alternative art drawn from graffiti, punk and rock.

This art grows in Europe through the New Wild in Germany (**Immendorf**, Baselitz, Penck) and the Free Figuration in France (**Combas**, Di Rosa, Boisrond).

Cheri Samba is one of the first contemporary African (Congo) artists to attain critical and institutional renown.

Today

The Lieu d'Art Contemporain (L.A.C.) was founded in 1991. Although its collection includes works by renowned figures (Seurat, Matisse, Basquiat, Matta, Bellmer, etc.), the L.A.C. is not a museum, instead it is an open platform for contemporary art, that leaves ample space for young artists and daring exhibitions.

The exhibition continues in the Salle Rouge at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, where works by Piet Moget from the 1950s to the 2000s are on display.

NARBONNE

11 juillet
> 31 août 2015

Ouvert tous les jours
10 h > 18 h

PIET
MOGET

CONSTANCE
& CURIOSITÉS

Palais des Archevêques,
salle des Consuls

Musée d'Art et d'Histoire,
salle rouge



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PIET MOGET

Biographie

28 May 1928. Born in The Hague (Holland). Although he is an only child, he grows up in a modest background, where art plays a major role, in the form of music and painting. His education focuses on creativity and independence, turning him into a real prodigy at a very young age.

1937-1938. Meets the landscape painter Jan Blockpoel, his first teacher.

"The adventure began very early (...), I went straight into painting, there were no childhood drawings."

1941. The youngest ever student (aged 13) to be admitted to lessons at the School of the Arts on Prinsengracht (Amsterdam) for academic instruction. Discovers the paintings of Mondrian and Sluijters.

August 1942. Sells his first canvas entitled "La Rue" (The Street). Tries out various techniques (oils, watercolours, drawing) and works in the Dutch landscape tradition.

1945. Travels in Europe and stays in France for six months.

1946. Enters The Royal Academy of Art in The Hague where his teachers include Mrs Giacometti, Paul Citroën and Reinder Juurt Drayer. However his painting is inspired by Monet and Pissarro.

1946. First individual exhibition at the Schipperus Gallery in Arnhem (Holland).

1947. Founds the Kontakt Groep, a student collective which organises exhibitions, debates and encounters based around art. In the same year he discovers the work of Geer van Velde (Mediterranean) which would have a major influence on his own work.

1946 to 1951. Travels in Europe. He travels around France and discovers the Languedoc and Catalonia. He visits the region of Narbonne, the étangs of Sigean and Port la Nouvelle. He is interested in light and transparency and attracted by the theme of water, the canal and the quays.

1951. Marries the painter Mary Schallenberg. They move to Sweden.

1952. The couple settle permanently in Mas de la Grange Basse in Port la Nouvelle. They would go on to have two children, Layla and Pierre-François.

1955. Meets Geer van Velde, whom he would come to regard as "his spiritual father." With him he would further develop his work on light and Mediterranean landscapes and paint a lot outside. In parallel he produces various paintings of Mary for which he was influenced by Cézanne.

1956 to 1964. Organises "Rencontres", the first contemporary art encounters in Languedoc-Roussillon.

1957 to 2001. Several individual and collective exhibitions.

1960 to 1977. Piet Moget focuses on the essentials, producing square-format works where the space is divided by a lowered horizon.

1978 and 2001. Exhibits at the FIAC in Paris (on the stand of New Style Gallery of The Hague).

1980 to 1990. His works take on a pared-down tone, almost abstract.

1991. Founds the L.A.C. in the hamlet of Lac in Sigean.



Piet Moget, Constance et Curiosités (Piet Moget: Constancy and Curiosities) offers a fresh perspective on the work and collection of Piet Moget, a Dutch painter who settled in the Narbonne region more than sixty years ago.

The exhibition in the **salle des Consuls** presents a chronological display in 10 sequences, featuring the highlights of the collection.



Modern Classics

Both the twilight of an era and an age of rebirth, the turn of the 20th century saw the emergence of highly unique or solitary artists. The art of the old masters such as Rodin transformed, and young artists such as **Matisse** emerged. The era was unstable and politically sensitive; it was the golden age of caricature and social satire, of which **Jean-Louis Forain** was one of the most superb representatives.

In the Moget Collection, two artists of this period deserve to be better noticed, as they are rarely seen in public collections. **Rodolphe Bresdin** (1822-1885), an "accursed" wandering artist, a tanner by trade who turned to the art of engraving around a world haunted by the fantastical and the medieval imagination. **Achille Laugé** (1861-1944), largely unknown outside regional borders, is an artist of retreat, of starkness, whose Pointillist work draws on the immediate environment and everyday life.

Alongside the Avant-Garde

From the early 20th century, the avant-garde broke spectacularly away from the aesthetic and intellectual academism of the preceding century.

The figurative art was no longer the art of academism; it was profoundly shaped by Classicism (**Maillol**), Fauvism and Cubism (**Lhote**) and it sometimes invented its own formula, like with **Chagall**, exploring the ancient with the new and vice versa.

Abstraction

A historic contribution of the 20th century. The first abstract works appeared in the 1910s and opened up an inexhaustible field of exploration. Although we speak of abstract art in general, there are multiple forms, schools and hybridisations. **Piet Moget** himself illustrates this complexity, as a painter dedicated to landscape and therefore figurative, but working in the field of the abstract.

The works in the Moget Collection are particularly valuable as they are early examples of the genre. Four date from before the First World War. They share a geometric style, sometimes indisputably decorative like that of **Kupka**, or more minimal like that of **Hélión** or **Carlsund**.

The Figurative within its Era

A new type of realism emerged throughout Europe from the 1920s, a realistic art that was political, poetic and contemporary, and whose most brilliant incarnation was a movement that emerged in Germany known as the Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity). This movement, largely unknown in France – or even unloved – encompassed a multitude of variations: expressionist (**Dix**); classic (**Hélión and Gromaire**); or even infused with magic, and a pretext for aesthetic misappropriations of non-artistic objects (**Wols**).

The paintings on this theme in the Moget Collection were all produced around the Second World War, at a time when Neorealism was also emerging in film.

