

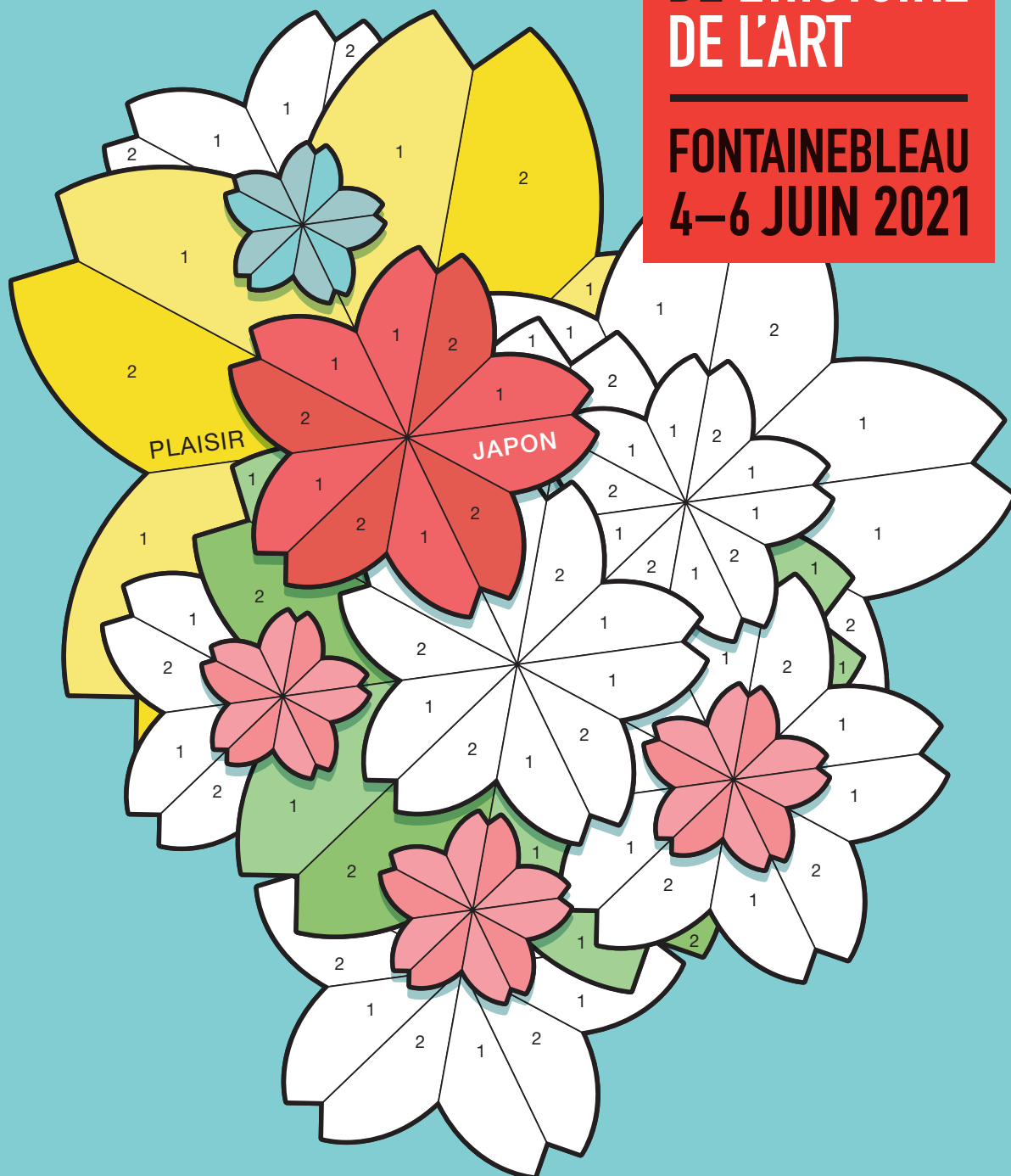


MINISTÈRE  
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# FESTIVAL DE L'HISTOIRE DE L'ART

FONTAINEBLEAU  
4-6 JUIN 2021





## PRESS RELEASE

10th edition of the Festival of Art History  
Guest country: Japan  
Theme: pleasure  
In Fontainebleau: June 4 to 6, 2021

Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin, French Minister of Culture, proudly announces the tenth edition of the Festival of Art History, which will take place from June 4 to 6, 2021 in the château and city of Fontainebleau, with the theme of pleasure and guest country of Japan.

Unique in the world, this event, organized in partnership with the Institut national d'histoire de l'art and the Château de Fontainebleau, offers to both amateurs and professionals a rich panorama of art history and heritage, from prehistory to contemporary creation. The Festival offers lectures, roundtables, discussions, screenings, workshops, and tours, bringing together art historians, artists, architects, filmmakers, writers, and others from all generations. An occasion ripe for discovery and exchange, a place rich with exceptional encounters, the Festival celebrates its tenth anniversary in a global context requiring certain adjustments of logistics, but not of ambition. Embracing a hybrid format, this year's program will combine elements of in-person and remote experiences.

The Festival kicks off with a series of exceptional events: an inaugural address by one of today's greatest artists, Annette Messager, a presentation by artist Gérard Garouste, guest of honor at the Springtime Academy of Art History (École de Printemps en histoire de l'art), and the inauguration of the exhibition *The Japanese Collections of the Château de Fontainebleau: Art and Diplomacy*.

While this edition's format will be hybrid, its structure and spirit will continue to reflect the design of Festivals past: an abundant offering of lectures, round tables, discussions, book presentations, and screenings, focused on the art history of the guest country and the annual theme. With regards to theme, the Festival will evoke creating, seeing, touching, smelling, and listening, pleasures that engage the five senses, as well as others experienced by the soul. With regards to the guest country, the Festival will offer a glimpse into the extraordinary creativity characterizing Japan's history and showcase "the land of the rising sun" from ancient architecture to recent creations, from the manufacture of handicrafts to contemporary design. Participants are invited to see and understand topics such as the phenomenon of Japonisme, the history of the Japanese garden and its exportation, the lure of Manga comics, or the protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s, as



[01] Palace of Fontainebleau, © Mathilde Hermouet

well as the role of contemporary Japanese art in the international art scene. To launch this marathon of events, a tea ceremony in the tradition of the Urasenke School will welcome participants with this traditional ritual of hospitality while paying homage to the Festival's invited country.

With its wide variety of formats and numerous threads bridging the various sections of the program, the Festival is accessible to the general public while at the same time addressing art professionals, teachers at all levels, and scholars. Participants are free to select the offerings that most spark their interests. The Festival provides many paths of entry into broad and significant themes, giving a lively glimpse into the somewhat mysterious discipline that is the history of art. Taking for example the Japanese garden, participants will have the chance to listen to lectures outlining its history and links with the tea ritual and architecture, or to learn about the taste of early European collectors for the tiny bonsai trees that they first discovered at the Vienna World's Fair of 1873 — and then go admire actual specimens at the Château de Fontainebleau. Or, considering the role of representations of the female nude in Western art, talks by art historians will be complemented by guided tours of the frescoes that have adorned the Renaissance rooms of the château since the arrival of Italian artists at the court of Francis I.



[08] Tea pavilion designed by Kengo Kuma, FU-AN, © KKAA, Courtesy Galerie Philippe Gravier

For those who would like more basic knowledge before venturing further, the educational team of the Château de Fontainebleau will provide introductory sessions to the history of art in the form of mini-lectures, courses and short films followed by the discovery of works on display at the château, and creative workshops.

The program also reserves a particular place for contemporary installations. The “Fu-an” tea pavilion designed by one of today’s greatest architects, Kengo Kuma, will float in the Saint-Saturnin chapel at the heart of the château. While exploring the gardens, the public can discover the ephemeral pavilion designed by Paris-based Tsuyoshi Tane, one of the new generation of Japanese architects. Two experimental video works by artist Toshio Matsumoto will be projected in the Cave of the Pines, nestled in the château’s park. Another guest, British artist and theorist Victor Burgin, will present a video installation in the auditorium of the municipal theater.

Japanese cinema will be showcased in its remarkable quality and diversity, spanning periods and genres, from historical films to *pinku eiga* (erotic films), animated cinema (*Miyazaki*) to documentaries, ghost movies to the avant-garde, not to mention the work of rising figures in contemporary cinema such as Katsuya Tomita and Momoko Seto. The Festival has extended a special invitation to Kiyoshi Kurosawa, who since the 1980s has been revisiting the codes of fantasy film while also reexamining the evolution of living conditions in contemporary Japan. In terms of pleasure, we recall that cinema — initially a fairground art — was from its earliest days associated with these popular places, combining elements of pleasure, spectacle, and voyeurism. In this spirit the cinematic program, ranging from silent films to contemporary cinema, includes the first appearances of nudes onscreen, the merry wanderings of burlesque, and the flappers of the Roaring Twenties, as well as aesthetic pleasures or violent, murderous impulses.

For three days, the public will have access to activities for families (in-person and virtual tours, concerts, educational workshops) which offer fresh discovery or deepened understanding of the Château de Fontainebleau. Music will resound through the château, from pieces linked to Japonisme, French compositions from the nineteenth century, or fanfares of hunting horns. The public will also be able to stroll through the Book Fair featuring some one hundred publishers, including several authors who will be present to speak about their work. As a tribute to Japanese comics and Manga, this Salon will exceptionally host stands from the Cité de la bande dessinée et de l’image of Angoulême and the Manga Café.

Our goal is to make the Festival a place for all professions affiliated with art history to come together, where practitioners in the field can express the pleasures associated with this career path, of engaging in research, writing about art, setting up an exhibition, or collecting and restoring objects. The Festival also devotes a substantial component to the latest in heritage news, which provides the opportunity to gain familiarity with the latest techniques of conservation and restoration and to address questions and issues raised by the role of culture in society today. This year, the program is complemented by a section specifically dedicated to art and heritage professionals, organized in partnership with the Service des Musées de France, in the form of training workshops. Further workshops will be specifically dedicated to young researchers and students, to help support their path of professionalization.

The Springtime Academy of Art History (École de Printemps en histoire de l’art), the national training seminar of the Ministry of National Education, will take place as usual during the three days of the Festival, echoing the programming of the 2021 edition.

Art History is a discipline open to all forms of creation, all periods, and all regions. A festival dedicated to this discipline would be incomplete without the participation of artists and designers. We thank those who responded so enthusiastically to our invitation: Jeanne Balibar, Nicolas Boulard, Victor Burgin, Yoshimi Futamura, Gérard Garouste, Chieko Katsumata, Tadashi Kawamata, Aki Kuroda, Kiyoshi Kurosawa, Kengo Kuma, Jean-Jacques Lebel, Etienne Lécroart, Kiyoshi Mami, Takesada Matsutani, Annette Messenger, Setsuko Nagasawa, Yuki Onodera, Hitonari Tsuji, Pierre Reimer, and Tsuyoshi Tane. May the last word be theirs!