



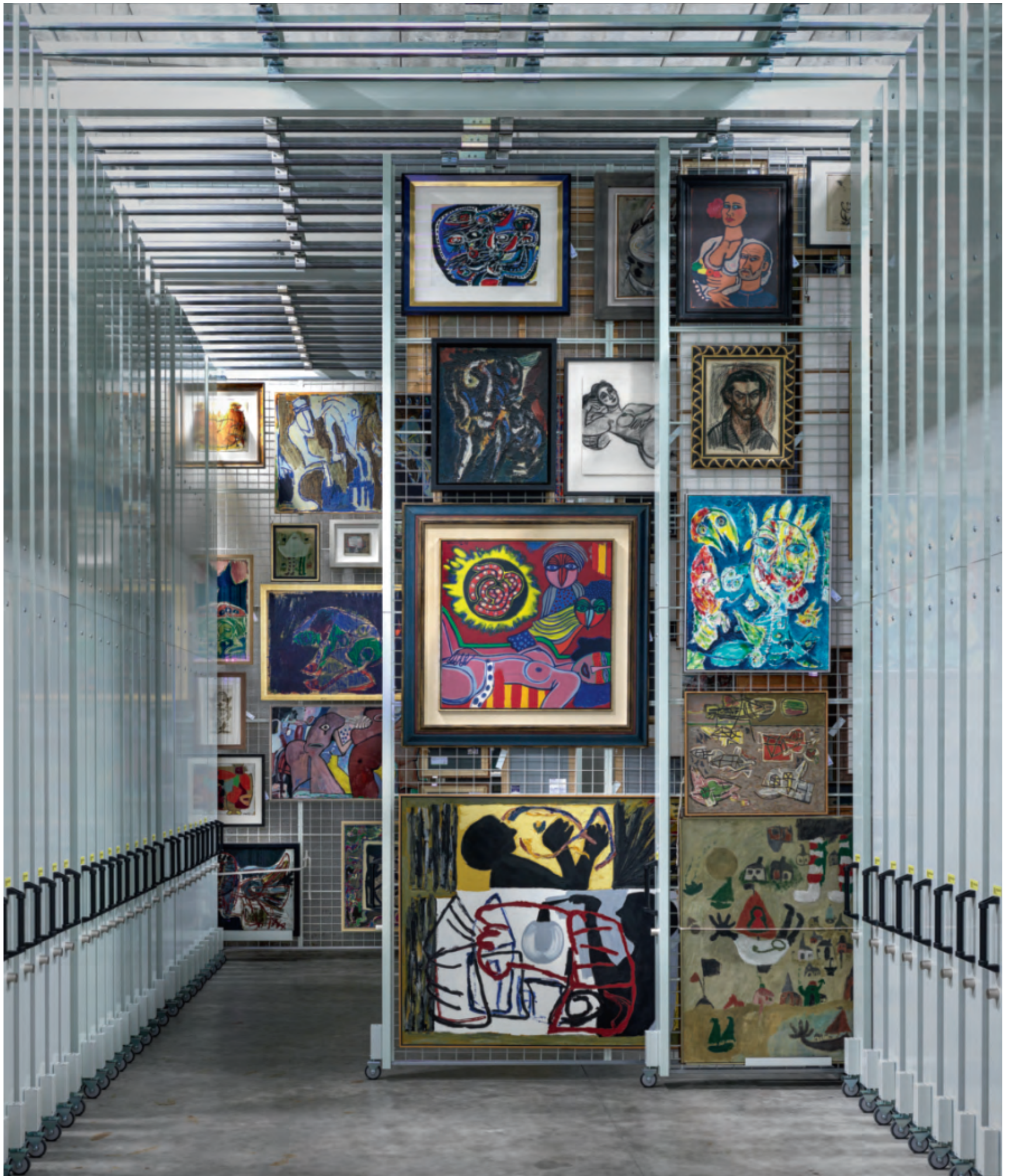
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COBRA

A PICTORIAL AND POETIC REVOLUTION

**EDITOR
PAUL HUVENNE**

HANNIBAL



THE ART PREFACE OF INTUITION

KARINE HUTS-VAN DEN HEUVEL

The story of the Cobra art movement is a classic one: in an unguarded moment, a new generation of painters, poets and dramatists succeeded in drawing attention to their work. They gained a degree of approval, a certain number of admirers and had little choice but to support each other. At first, they were reviled by art critics and the public: 'Is this art? How dare they call *that* art? It's primitive. Like the drawings of a child or a lunatic. And they're all Communists, you know!'

The movement's theorists, Constant Nieuwenhuys, Christian Dotremont and Asger Jorn, were indeed influenced by the ideas of Karl Marx. Before the emergence of Cobra, the so-called *Internationale van experimentele kunstenaars* [International for Experimental Artists], Europe and its art lay in ruins. Each of the artists who raised the Cobra banner in the turbulent post-war years responded fiercely and viscerally to this desperate situation. Carl Jung said that an artist's 'handwriting' was the most direct expression of the human psyche – one that reveals their unconscious stirrings. Many Cobra members were indeed devotees of Jung, yet most of all they loathed a Western culture founded on Reason. While they had all come through the Second World War, they had been deeply scarred by it and were under no illusions about what human beings were capable of. Art was straitjacketed by outdated rules and conventions. The artists were each looking, in their own way, for a new, untainted and indelible handwriting.

The critics were right: Cobra paintings really were primitive – annoyingly childish, even. Was this deliberate? The very colours they used seemed second rate. And to make matters worse, they smeared their garish primary tones almost formlessly over the canvas. Many exhibition-goers were shocked, just as they no doubt would have been by the Action Painting that was emerging in America at roughly the same time as a mode of expression by the likes of Jackson Pollock.

The cross-border aspect of the Cobra movement was also largely unique for the time: Copenhagen, Brussels, Amsterdam = CoBrA. Freakish though their alliance might have seemed, in reality the bond between the artists was remarkably faithful to a time-honoured tradition, forged chiefly in Paris. The seven-headed movement also recalled the *naga*, the legendary part-human, part-snake often found accompanying and protecting the Buddha.

The fact that the artists did not wish to work aesthetically was a secondary consideration, while their lack of specialisation was in their nature: some were poets who painted, others were painters who wrote poetry. They also took photographs and sculpted, and used junk to create all kinds of assemblages. Some even painted the occasional mural together. As Lucebert put it in one of his poems:

In this time, what was always called
beauty has scorched beauty's face

As they pursued their personal handwriting, the Cobra artists created a style with a language all their own – one based, incidentally, on a primitive alphabet, assuming that ‘primitive’ is not understood pejoratively. Cobra was all about returning to the source. It drew on authentic forms of folk art, Eastern calligraphy, occult symbols, rock drawings, what was referred to at the time as ‘Negro Art’, and other forms of primal expression. But it was perhaps children’s drawings that were the greatest source of inspiration, especially in terms of colour and form. Such drawings undoubtedly bubbled up from them spontaneously, like old memories reborn in powerful colours out of the deepest obscurity.

The sheer number of artists who belonged to the movement tells us that they were all expressing the same *air du temps* – and for all their apparent carelessness, they did so with immense precision. No matter how different Cobra’s artists might have been, what they had in common was the way they intuited and recorded colours and emotions in an entirely innovative way – and with unprecedented brutality. It would trigger a profound generational conflict: ‘How dare they use the world of the child to daub over the serious intent of previous generations?’

In its purest form, Cobra was not destined to survive for long as an artists’ collective or style. The group fell apart after a few years, not least because of the quashing, in the early 1950s, of post-war utopianism as the Cold War brought a new chill. Yet Cobra had awakened something fundamental in everyone who belonged to the group, as well as in the generations that followed. Art became more spontaneous and broke out of its conventional straitjacket. Virtually all the erstwhile Cobra members went off in different directions after 1951, some more successfully than others. It is then up to history to decide whether the movement added anything substantive to art in the second half of the twentieth century.

Why collect Cobra art?

Curiosity is an important motive for collecting modern and contemporary art. The Cobra movement leaps out in this respect, with what were, at the time, entirely new and powerful forms of expression. In the 1940s and early 1950s, Cobra was the only fully-fledged, contemporaneous European response to American Abstract Expressionism and Action Painting.

The movement’s forerunners prior to and during the Second World War included the Danish painter and art theorist Ejler Bille and his compatriot Egill Jacobsen. The latter had expressed his fury at the German invasion of Czechoslovakia in the work *Ophobning* [Accumulation], resorting to splatters, dripping and proliferating smears of paint to evoke the inwardly lucid individual who finds himself surrounded by terrifying and irresistible forces. Carl-Henning Pedersen was another forerunner as well as a highly accomplished poet. In roughly the same period, he painted masks and seemed to delight in the fantasy world of the child. The result was an extremely personal and mysterious world of fable, shrouded during the war years in sombre reds, fierce greens and menacing blues. Once the conflict was over, his palette brightened to include whites and yellows. After the war, it was a certain Asger Jørgensen who took the lead. Shortening his name to Asger Jorn, he forged contacts with fellow artists

abroad, including the Dutchman Constant Nieuwenhuys. This ultimately led to the founding of the journal *Cobra*, which for several years provided the movement with a legitimate platform.

Another of Cobra's forerunners was undoubtedly the Le Havre-born Jean Dubuffet. The Frenchman's wild style (which included incorporating broken glass and asphalt in his paintings) offered a powerful prelude to the brutality of Cobra. Dubuffet, too, was inspired by the drawings of children, people with mental illnesses, and prisoners. He built up a substantial collection of their work, for which he coined the name *Art brut* to describe their shared style. The bright and spontaneously boisterous blue, red, yellow and green colour patterns we see in Dubuffet mean that he is rightly regarded as one of the grandfathers of Cobra.

Cobra's importance lies not only in its brutal splattering of colour and almost rudimentary expression of emotions, but also in the reception of its visual language. A telling illustration is provided by a seemingly trivial incident in January 1950, when a mural entitled '*Vragende kinderen*' [Questioning Children] in the canteen of the then City Hall in Amsterdam was hidden behind a false wall and papered over. The Dutch artist Karel Appel had painted it the previous year, having been inspired by the dozens of children he had seen begging in German railway stations after the war. Rarely has a work of art sparked such debate. Journalists lampooned it, council staff declared that they would no longer eat in the canteen, and visitors were mostly united in their opinion that the work marred the walls. So, despite the protests of his fellow artists, Appel's mural disappeared behind the wallpaper for ten years. *Questioning Children* illustrates both the social and political engagement of several of the artists affiliated with Cobra, a stance that ultimately fed into the student protests and strikes of May '68, among other things. Parallels with Cobra can also be found in the work of the contemporary Belgian artists Jan Fabre and Wim Delvoye.

This undeniable generational conflict and accompanying break with the past aroused the curiosity of art lovers, encouraging them to investigate and collect Cobra. Many of the group's artists were strong personalities and, like Asger Jorn, clung doggedly to Cobra's original energy. Jorn turned down a prestigious award from MoMa in New York, for instance, as he failed to understand how the deepest stirrings of his soul could possibly qualify for a prize.

The war had ripped people's souls apart. Beauty had turned to rubble. Culture and politics had been lumped together. Many had shown their true face, stripped of the veneer of civilisation. Yet an unprecedented optimism arose from the same ruins. The time was ripe and painters were more perceptive than ever. A shared feeling emerged, a remarkable togetherness. It would culminate in Cobra and, within a few short years, in other styles and forms of expression, exuberant or gentle, each according to the artist's own nature. It is not the subject matter in Cobra that screams out, but the colours; not beauty that appeals to the imagination, but the primal images. Cobra's poetry was childlike, its monsters the terrors of children. Cobra is never entirely done, not even in your deepest stirrings. There is always something to discover in Cobra. It never grows dull. And Cobra often awakens the child in us too. The movement contained the stem cells, as it were, that have since proliferated in many modes of contemporary art to form something untouchably tangible. Which is why, to us, Cobra represents the art of intuition.

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COBRA: INVITATION TO A DÉGUSTATION

PAUL HUVENNE

This book is intended as a tasting session. Like a visit to a fine wine cellar. For those who are new to Cobra, it offers a solid and thorough introduction to the movement. For the connoisseurs, however, it will be a moment of intense appreciation and an invitation to apply your knowledge and discernment because what we serve up in this publication is of the very highest quality.

We have not set out to be exhaustive or to present the kind of encyclopaedic survey you might expect from a formal course. The aim is rather to showcase the pleasure that is to be had from this work. Our hope is to draw the reader/viewer into the unique experience that Cobra artists had in mind for their public – with the same sense of artistic joy and freedom, free from any whiff of academic condescension or bourgeois prejudice. The fascinating collection that prompted this project arose from within just such an atmosphere. By looking through the same eyes as the collectors Karine Van den Heuvel and Fernand Huts, you will discover how that collection came about and how to experience Cobra as a pictorial and poetic revolution. Their story shows that the Cobra movement is still very much alive in contemporary art circles.

For my part, I intended this book, this experience, to map out the anarchic history of Cobra. Its story is expertly retold in a series of essays, each time from a different, specific angle. A little like a novel in which the same event is recounted in successive chapters by a different witness each time.

Johan Pas uncovers the stories of the Cobra artists through their own publications. Hilde de Bruijn explains how their subject matter motivated them. Piet Thomas links them with their literary contemporaries, and Piet Boyens examines the Cobra legacy through to the present day. Their contributions can be read in any order, depending on your inclination. The same obviously goes for the biographies of the twenty-two Cobra artists whose work is included in the collection, mini-monographs that outline the artists' highly varied contribution to the movement. Some of them – Dotremont, Alechinsky, Tahiri and Pedersen, for instance – remained loyal to Cobra throughout their lives, whereas others, such as Appel or Claus, viewed their involvement as one stage in their artistic careers. We automatically associate Jorn, Appel, Dotremont and Alechinsky with Cobra, but it is fascinating to learn how many others were also involved.

Most of all, however, this book focuses on the collection itself, with some two hundred works. The pleasure of viewing is heightened by a series of box texts authored by true Cobra experts: Laura Stamps looks at *Haan [Cock]* by Constant, Shinkichi Tajiri's *Sentinelle* and *Torso* by Henry Heerup... and for some added seasoning, several iconic Cobra themes are explored in more depth: Naomi Meulemans writes about the myth of spontaneity, while I discuss the origin of the name 'Cobra', the bird motif, the snake motif and the legendary hospitality with which the movement is associated.

Anyone wishing to immerse themselves in the movement will find several metres' worth of reading matter on the bookshelf. This will inevitably bring you to Willemijn Stokvis' standard work on the history of Cobra – her doctoral thesis, which first appeared in book form in 1974.

She continued to update and improve this, her life's work, throughout her career. If you start with her book, you are well advised to look at Cobra's magazine too, as well as related publications such as *Le Petit Cobra*, *Le Tout Petit Cobra*, and the many pamphlets and other printed matter. A great deal of original material can be found in The Phoebus Foundation's collection, some of which can also be consulted in the form of reprints and facsimiles. They plunge you straight into the atmosphere of the early Cobra period and reveal, for instance, that the movement was much broader than the visual arts alone. Cobra was the lovechild of Surrealism and also sums up just about everything to do with Modernism. Following in the footsteps of the Russian avant-garde, the movement was eager to demolish the barriers between the various art forms. *Cobra* magazine thus featured a blend of poetry, folklore, reports, discourses, accounts of contemporary art, cartoons, comics and photography. The movement was also receptive to film and jazz music. The Cobra world was too complex, however, to be shoehorned into a manifesto, too hospitable to turn in on itself. Wayward, liberated and provocative, the group cast aside all the bourgeois values that had led to a failing new order. It set its face against nationalism, capitalism, colonialism and the docile good manners associated with them. In that respect, Cobra was a precursor of the Dutch Provo movement and of May '68.

To anyone with a knowledge of Cobra's literature and reception it is perplexing to see how curators over the years have reduced the art-historical significance of the movement in their retrospectives and catalogues to a simple grouping within the visual arts, even if we have to admit that the interaction between these passionate and disparate figures – poets, writers, critics, painters, sculptors, filmmakers – was stormy and chaotic, and that its offshoots and collaborations continued long after the group had officially called it quits. The ceramic adventures in Albisola, for instance, or Dotremont and Noiret's exhibition *Cobra et après (et même avant)*. *Un panorama graphique* [Cobra and After (and Even Before): A Graphic Panorama].

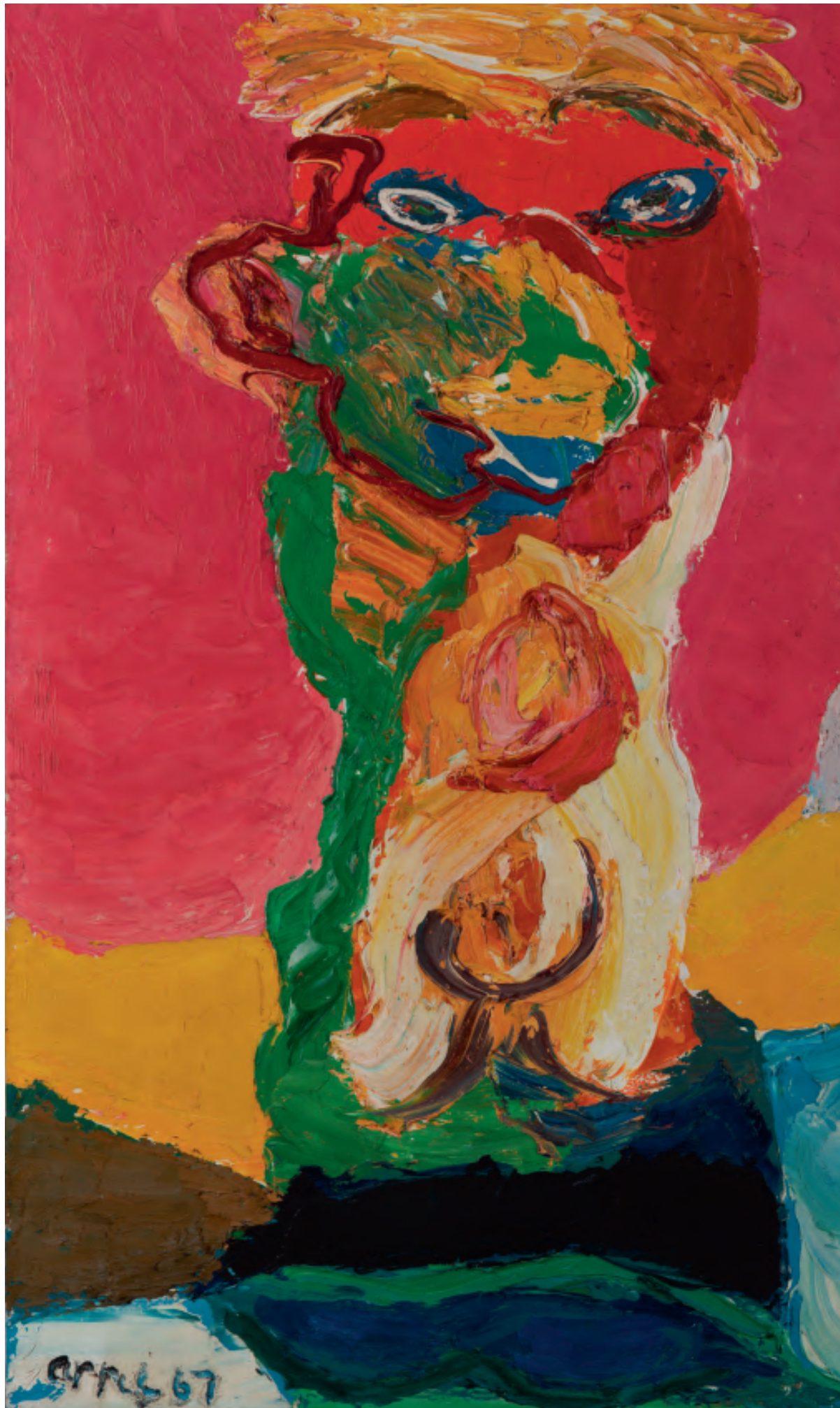
It is also striking that Cobra has been appropriated all too often within a national context, even though the movement was globalised before the term even existed and embraced many more nationalities than its acronym name suggested. In Denmark, for instance, Cobra became Danish. Due not only to the role that Asger Jorn played in the group's creation, but also very much to the way the group went on to colour the Danish museum landscape. In the Netherlands, meanwhile, Cobra and Karel Appel were canonised as exponents of Dutch national heritage. Any number of exhibitions with interesting catalogues and monographs have merely confirmed the trend. It took a while for the Belgian branch of Cobra to reach its full potential, despite the fact that Dotremont – creator of the CoBrA acronym – had initially managed the entire organisation; long after the group had broken up, he was still paying off its debts. In the end, though, Dotremont too received the recognition he deserved. Together with Alechinsky, the group's only survivor, he constantly pointed out that Cobra was more than a style, it was an attitude: something that punk rockers in the late 70s and beyond could readily identify with.

An open attitude towards experiencing art; the spontaneous expression to which interaction with the material pushes and seduces the maker; the easy sense of casual togetherness in the creative moment. Cobra is what you do. Cobra is what you are. That's the feeling this book wants to evoke in the reader/viewer.

It will not come as a surprise that a movement so focused on material and on the process of making was not readily understood by a generation to whom conceptual art was the be-all and end-all. Cobra seems to have dropped out of the discourse of contemporary art museums in recent decades. Yet a visit to the richly stocked collection of The Phoebus Foundation instantly makes clear just how relevant Cobra remains today.

Ejler Bille
Dyreformer
[Animal Forms], 1984
Oil on canvas, 55.5 × 46.5 cm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp





Karel Appel
Twee baders in de zee
[Two Bathers in the Sea], 1967
Oil on canvas, 130 × 190 cm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp







Karel Appel
Figuren [Figures], 1993
Acrylic on canvas, 95 × 220 cm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp



COBRA: NEVER WENT AWAY

PAUL HUVENNE



Frank Maieu
International Art, 2013
25 painted sculptures,
10 × 65 × 60 cm
University of Antwerp,
Antwerp



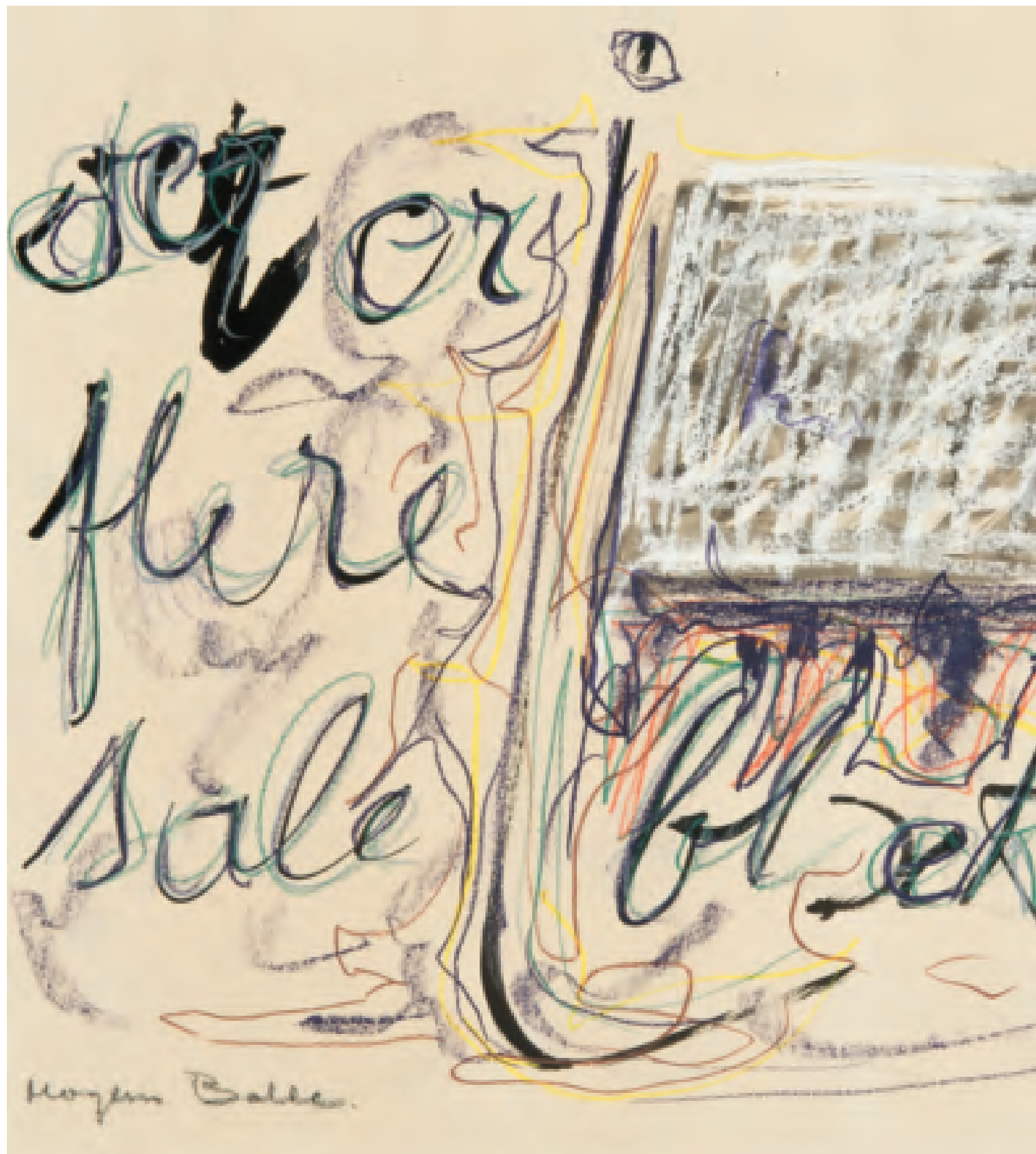
p. 18
Gathering of
Cobra artists,
undated

Nowhere is Cobra more aptly presented than in the little room that the artist Frank Maieu set up in 2013 for the 'Museum to Scale 1/7' – an initiative of Ronny Van de Velde – which you can visit at Antwerp University's city campus. Maieu used twenty-five cartoonish, polychrome figurines – each going wild in its own biotope – to offer a comical survey of modern art from the vantage point of Sigmund Freud's waiting room. You can spot Vincent van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp, all identified by a characteristic attribute.

While the big names of Modernism do their best to steal the show, the Cobra crew sit on a little bench in a corner at the back.¹ Freud ignores them, as the screaming Edvard Munch is an even more desperate case. For their part, the panicking Cobra members are caught in the stranglehold of a giant snake. The viewer recognises a neat parody of the Laocoön group – the Hellenistic sculpture that held Western academic art in its grip for centuries.² (Only a pedant would point out that cobras bite their prey rather than constricting it.) The little group captures, at a glance, so much of what the Cobra movement represents: a milestone in the history of modern art; an unbelievable mishmash of personalities; an infinitely tangled story, which Christian Dotremont once called a 'train wreck'.³ Cobra is the irresistible hand dragging its members to their destiny, before ultimately suffocating them in a chaotic mess or, to quote Dotremont again, a farce.⁴ A shared adventure that needs to be kept in perspective and in which humour is never far away. Cobra was always funny, even when things got serious. Looking at Maieu's Cobra-Laocoön group, we immediately recognise the painters Karel Appel, Pierre Alechinsky and Asger Jorn. You might wonder why he chose these particular artists. Why Alechinsky, for instance, where you might reasonably expect Dotremont? But these three are immediately recognisable and, as *pars pro toto*, neatly represent the overall movement.

Cobra was founded on 8 November 1948 in a room at the café-hotel Notre-Dame on the corner of the Rue Saint-Jacques in Paris. The Dane Asger Jorn (1914–1973), the Belgians Christian Dotremont (1922–1979) and Joseph Noiret (1927–2012), and the Dutch artists Constant (Nieuwenhuys) (1920–2005), Karel Appel (1921–2006) and Corneille (1922–2010) agreed to endorse Dotremont's pamphlet *La cause était entendue* [The Case was Decided]. And that was that.⁵ A few days later, Dotremont came up with the name Cobra (also written CoBrA and COBRA), as an acronym for COpenhagen, BRussels and Amsterdam. It proved to be a very strong logo.⁶ Dotremont's friend Alechinsky was not there at the very beginning but joined the group as a kind of D'Artagnan to their Three Musketeers. It is thanks to him, perhaps, that Cobra did not end up slipping through the cracks of the collective memory.

Cobra was short-lived: the movement disbanded in 1951. For many of its members it was just a phase in their career, from which they would later distance themselves, as Appel put it bluntly in his interviews with Simon Vinkenoog. When Jorn ended up in the sanatorium in Silkeborg, depressed and ill, he came to the bitter conclusion that 'the artistic venture we called COBRA had produced a splintered wreck...'.⁷ Yet no one summed up the hangover of Cobra better than the Flemish author Hugo Claus in his 1993 poem *COBRA*,⁸ in which he looked back on the events years afterwards, just as Maieu had done in his peepshow.



Royce Baker.



COBRA

**Was it a hot time back then?
Had the unending world become malleable
after the food shortages?**

**The golden ratio was despised,
symmetry was treason, knowledge ballast
gnomes popping up everywhere in shaky
scratches, doubled-up lines,
bumping into each other and crowing,
spattered with Prussian blue,
all with the black-rimmed eyes
of the Cow Goddess.
Playing at rapturous incarnation.**

**Until there were too many animals grazing,
too many morons mooing,
too many idiots painting with their toes.
The Bird Goddess saw and she commanded
that you should eat your dreams.
And so you did. You became a part
of the world's cake.
You kept painting the scarecrow
on the otherwise deserted playground.**

From Hugo Claus, *De Sporen*,
Amsterdam, 1993, p. 26.

Christian Dotremont &
Mogens Balle
Composition, c.1962-77
Indian ink and oil pastel
on paper, 420 × 495 mm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp

Yet not all the movement's former members looked back on their Cobra adventure quite so damningly. The Danes, for instance, kept the faith. Jorn and Constant, by contrast, gradually headed off in an entirely different direction after 1951. Corneille sold his soul and ultimately converted to Pop Art. Appel went on to do other things, but he never shed his Cobra attitude. In an attempt to recuperate some of the success (and financial rewards) that Cobra had enjoyed, Dotremont revived the movement in 1956 with his exhibition *Cobra après Cobra* at Galerie Taptoe in Brussels and the exhibition *Cobra et après (et même avant). Un panorama graphique* [Cobra and After (and Even Before): A Graphic Panorama], which he organised in collaboration with Noiret in 1962. The work of his friend Alechinsky, the longest surviving of them all, is permeated by the idea of Cobra to this day. When Dotremont was given his retrospective in New York in 1978, thirty years after Cobra, he wondered whether, in all those years, there had been another movement with such minimal artistic organisation that had been as firmly anchored in social reality. In his view, the fact that the group had broken up meant, paradoxically, that Cobra could remain itself: young, spontaneous and unconstrained. That it had no need to stage a comeback, since it never went away.

So it was that many of the former members became friends for life, and reunited years later to do all sorts of things in the true spirit of Cobra. This is how Dotremont came to work with the Dane Mogens Balle on his *quatre-mains* in 1962, 1963 and 1969. The collaboration between Alechinsky and Dotremont was shown, meanwhile, at the 1972 Venice Biennale, and they worked together again in 1976 on a piece for the Anneessens underground railway station in Brussels.⁹ For their part, Claus and Alechinsky collaborated in 1995 on a work that can be seen at Antwerp University's Middelheim campus.

In the meantime, the movement carved out its place in the art-historical canon. Cobra is represented internationally in just about every high-profile collection and museum of modern art. Denmark has its Jorn Museum in Silkeborg and the Carl-Henning Pedersen & Else Alfelts Museum in Herning, and there is a Cobra Museum in Amstelveen in the Netherlands. But there are also significant Cobra clusters in various museums of modern and contemporary art, including the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk, thirty-five kilometres from Copenhagen, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the Stedelijk Museum in Schiedam, near Rotterdam. Works by the Belgian chapter of Cobra can be found in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts in Brussels and the S.M.A.K. in Ghent. Outside Europe, there is a Cobra Collection & Research Center at the NSU Art Museum in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and fascinating ensembles of Cobra art can also be seen at MoMA in New York.

How it all started

Nowadays, Cobra is internationally regarded as an important catalyst in the history of art. With French as its working language, it was virtually the last truly European movement within Modernism as economic developments meant that the United States took over from the Old Continent at this point as the pre-eminent international cultural centre. What happened subsequently in Europe in the 1950s seems more like a prelude to postmodern conceptualism – a local flurry compared to the hurricane of activity in New York. Karel Appel, who sensed all this better than anyone, converted to US-style Abstract Expressionism via an exhibition at Martha Jackson's New York gallery as early as 1954, the very moment he was producing his most iconic Cobra work.¹⁰



Karel Appel
Vogel [Bird], 1954
Oil on canvas, 79 × 114 cm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp





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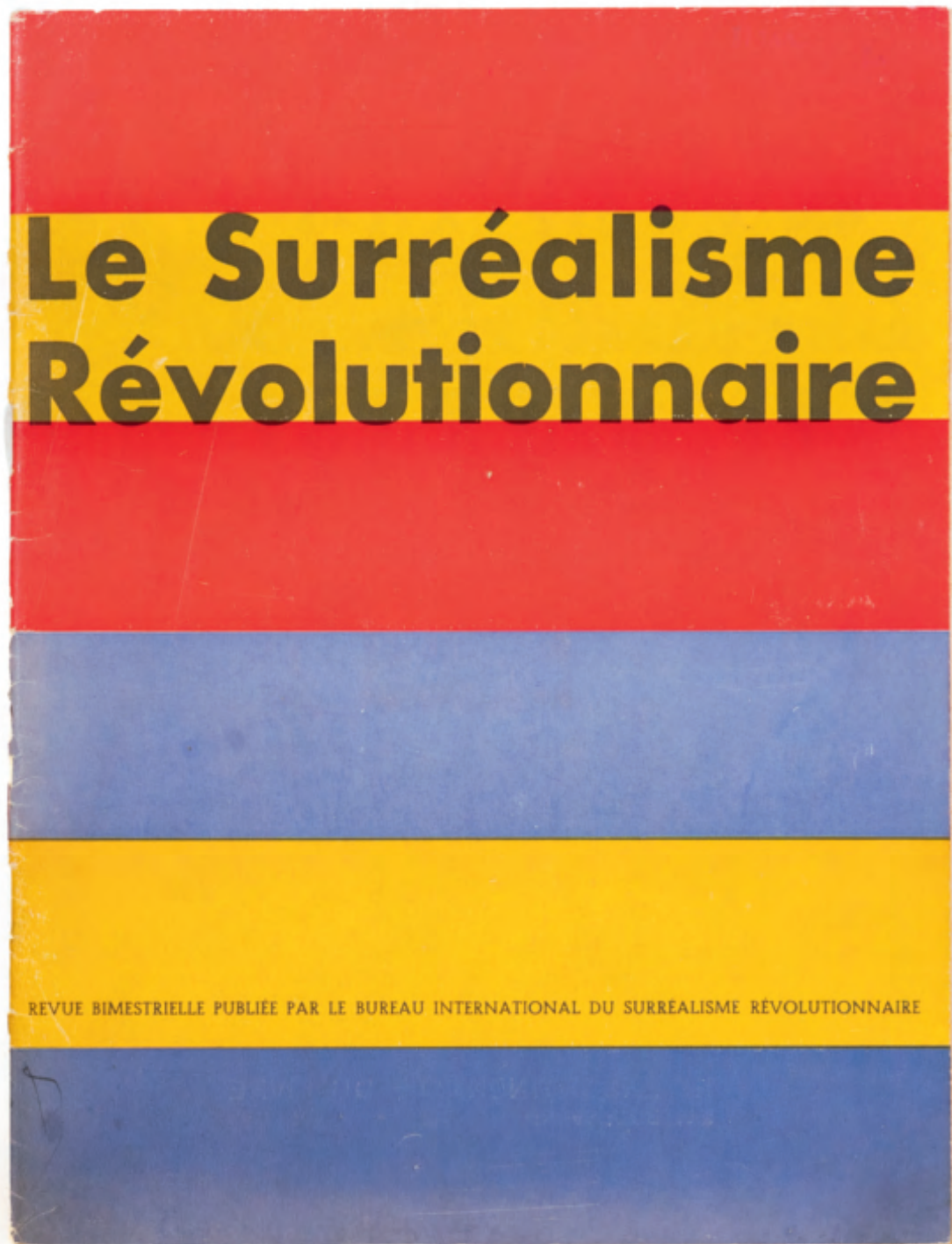
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THE COBRA'S FANGS:

**THE COBRA NETWORK
IN PRINT, 1945—55**

JOHAN PAS



Le Surréalisme Révolutionnaire, 1948

Print as a vehicle of pressure and expression

Isn't Cobra that cheerful, childish, naive style of painting? Don't you believe it. Dealers have a tendency to smooth off the rough edges of the art they sell. But focusing on aesthetics alone means that ethics and ideology can end up being pushed to one side. The many publications produced by Cobra artists put the movement's popular, commercial image into better perspective. These artists were not childish, and they were far from naive. Like the Dadaists after the First World War, their feet in the rubble, they wanted to put an end to bloodless rationalism and dry conformism.¹

Cobra artists fought for freedom and vitality, a struggle that was both waged and nurtured through artistic experiment. Conventional bourgeois thinking was overturned through the disruptive use of words and images. The principal aim of Cobra publications and exhibitions was to unite the fragmented forces of the post-war avant-garde as an international front of 'free artists'. Yet while an exhibition is bound to a specific time and space, a printed publication is not.² As demonstrated by the fact that we can still consult avant-garde journals like *Cobra* and even take inspiration from them.

All the same, such journals are not timeless: on the contrary, they kept their finger on the pulse, which makes them especially ephemeral. Their editors – for the most part experimental poets and innovative artists – formed nuclei of artistic resistance to a conservative environment. Magazines did not just report, therefore, they also agitated. The artists dispatched fresh ideas and ground-breaking images into the world in search of allies and adversaries alike. Their goal was to connect and to persuade. The magazines and books were the cobra's fangs, as it were. They show how discourse, debate and discussion played a central role in the quest for a radical, socially engaged art practice.

This combination of ephemeral content and physical permanence lends avant-garde journals – especially those from the Cobra period – a unique status. They are time capsules that carry today's reader back to the feverish debates and impassioned stances of the day. Cobra was the first international avant-garde movement to emerge in Europe after the Second World War. This, and the fact that Cobra was firmly rooted in pre-war Surrealism, means that the movement may be viewed as a pivotal moment between the avant-gardes of the interwar period and the neo-avant-gardes of the 1950s and 1960s.

The Cobra name stands for both a network of artists and a journal. A mere eight issues of the periodical appeared between 1949 and 1951, yet the contacts and collaborations that preceded and sprang from it led to a veritable explosion in post-Cobra magazines. These paved the way in turn for the growing number of artists' journals in the 1960s, the decade of movements like Situationism, Zero, the happening, Fluxus, Provo, Pop Art and, last but not least, Conceptual Art.

Paper is patient, as goes the saying, and that certainly applies to the experimental publications of the Cobra years. Besides the various periodicals, there were also one-off editions, often the result of spontaneous collaboration between writers and painters. The Dutch experimental poet Gerrit Kouwenaar, who worked closely with several of the Cobra painters, summed this up nicely in 1956:

'Modern poetry is pre-eminently visual and so it is entirely natural for there to be a powerful affinity and interaction between it and modern (free) visual art. Quite a few experimental poets are very creditable painters too, and there are plenty of little collections on which kindred poets and visual artists have collaborated to wonderful effect. Not simply 'illustrations' any more, not pictures as a guide or purely for aesthetic illumination, but a mutually enriching and complementary creation in two different media with a similarly oriented mentality.'³

Lucebert and Hugo Claus refused to be pinned down by one of the two fields and produced both visual art and poetry, while the painters Asger Jorn and Constant published critical and theoretical texts. The Belgian poet Christian Dotremont, who played a fundamental role in Cobra's foundation, highlighted the importance of humour in these spontaneous border crossings. He described the playful collaborations between poets and writers as 'interspecialism' and painters' writings as 'antispecialism'.⁴ This was reflected in an interest in both outsider art (tribal and ethnographic art, the artistic expression of children and people with mental illnesses) and new media (comic books, photography and experimental film). This daring and ground-breaking interdisciplinarity makes Cobra relevant again today, in a period of renewed DIY publishing.

The ruins of Surrealism

Cobra sprouted among the ruins. In a variety of European countries, the debris of international Surrealism offered a seedbed for a new, post-war avant-garde. The axis formed by the cities of Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam provides a geographical and chronological guideline in this regard. The absence of Paris, the leading art capital of the day, is significant considering that the movement had several French members, many Cobra artists were temporarily resident in Paris, and French was the day-to-day language in Cobra circles. The Cobra network is one of a periphery seeking to emancipate itself. In Denmark, the painter and printmaker Asger Jorn played a central role, acting as a link in the years after the Second World War between Denmark, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The driving force in Belgium was the poet and publisher Christian Dotremont, while in the Netherlands, the experimental painters Karel Appel, Constant and Corneille took the lead.

Cobra's roots stretched back to the war years. The first issue of the journal *Helhesten* [Hel's Horse] was published in occupied Copenhagen in 1941. In all, twelve issues appeared between then and 1944. The magazine was partly grafted onto its Surrealist predecessor *Linien* [The Line], from the 1930s, but there were influences from German Expressionism too. In addition to general cultural articles on subjects such as architecture, music, film, archaeology, folklore, ethnology, art by people with mental illnesses, and children's drawings, *Helhesten* included original full-page prints in the form of (semi-)abstract lithographs, and lino and woodcuts by Henry Heerup, Egill Jacobsen, Ejler Bille, Carl-Henning Pedersen and Jorn, among others. Jorn, who was influenced by Surrealism in his younger years, came up with the journal's name and influenced its artistic policy, which was dominated by an automatic, spontaneous graphic and pictorial approach.⁵ Each issue features an image of the three-legged horse belonging to the Nordic goddess Hel on its cover. The primitive character of this mythical creature, coupled with the interest in a spontaneous and direct visual language and writing, would also help determine the aesthetics and ethics of later Cobra art.



Helhesten 3
[Hel's Horse], 1941



Jorn also had a strong interest in book- and printmaking, not least because these forms had the potential to reach a wider audience.⁶ In 1945, he provided full-page illustrations and graphic notes for *Salvi Dylvo*, a collection of poetry by his brother Jørgen Nash, published by Helhestens Forlag. The result looks like a modern primitive booklet, in which the rapidly scratched drawings tend to overrun the printed text. A similar 'duel' between word and image is found in Carl-Henning Pedersen's feisty little book *Drømmedigte* [Dream Poems], also published by Helhestens Forlag in 1945. A second close collaboration between Jorn and his brother arose in 1948 with the collection of drawings and poems *Leve livet* [Long Live Life], which was likewise published in Copenhagen, but was conceived in a more traditional way.

In Brussels, too, the post-war avant-garde scene was dominated by Surrealism.⁷ The poets Christian Dotremont and Joseph Noiret, however, set out to resist the hegemony of André Breton and his classic Surrealism, which they considered unduly academic and intellectual. All the same, publishing journals, poetry collections and pamphlets was in the Belgian Surrealists' blood. Shortly after the war, Dotremont edited three issues of the journal *Les Deux sœurs* [The Two Sisters], the final one of which, published in 1947, contained a lengthy text by him on Revolutionary Surrealism. It laid the foundation for *Surréalisme Révolutionnaire*, whose manifesto was signed by the Belgian Surrealists René Magritte, Paul Nougé, Louis Scutenaire and the young poet Marcel Broodthaers.

With Dotremont at its head, the group published the first and only issue of the *Bulletin international du Surréalisme Révolutionnaire* in early 1948. This newspaper-style publication was followed a few months later by the supposedly bimonthly journal *Le Surréalisme révolutionnaire*. Once again, it would prove to be the sole issue. Compiled by Dotremont, Jorn, the Czech author Zdenek Lorenc and the French writer Noël Arnaud, printed on cheap paper and with the cover as its only colour accent, the journal featured contributions from more than eighty writers and painters from different countries. While it was still Surrealist and eclectic in appearance, it contained several ideological seeds of the future *Cobra*.



Reflex, Organ van de Experimentele Groep in Holland I
[Reflex, Experimental Group in Holland], 1948

Before a second issue could be published, alliances had already been formed with like-minded people in Denmark and the Netherlands, encouraged by their shared frustration at the international conference of the Centre international de documentation sur l'art d'avant-garde in Paris. In November 1948, the experimental groups in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark merged into the artists' association Cobra, the name of which was coined by Dotremont, who immediately assumed the role of secretary.

Around the same time as the Brussels publications, the first issue of *Reflex* appeared in Amsterdam. As the 'organ of the Experimentele Groep in Holland' [Experimental Group in Holland], it presented itself as the mouthpiece of a number of young painters who were seeking direct and free expression: Karel Appel, Constant (Nieuwenhuys), Corneille (Van Beverloo), Anton Rooskens, Eugène Brands and Theo Wolvecamp.⁸ The publication of a manifesto drafted by Constant was the subject of considerable internal debate. In addition to the *Manifesto*, which provided the new avant-garde with a Marxist-inflected ideological context, the journal contained short poems and reproductions of works of art by members of the group, as well as Jorn. The primitivist cover of the first issue was a lithograph by Corneille, and like *Helhesten*, it contained full-page prints – in this case black-and-white lithographs by Appel, Constant, Corneille and Jan Nieuwenhuys. The inclusion of these graphic inserts in a print run of a thousand copies highlights the intention to offer visual art in an accessible and democratic manner, a strategy that was also very important to Jorn.

They adopted a similar approach for the second issue of *Reflex*, which appeared in early 1949 and included prints by Corneille, Brands, Rooskens and Wolvecamp. With a cover by the French painter Jacques Doucet, it once again contained chronicles, poems (Lucebert's debut among them) and reproductions, but now from a larger group, including works by the Danes Erik Thommesen and Pedersen, and a poem by Dotremont. Constant elaborated on the social position of the artist, while Gerrit Kouwenaar advocated a new poetry in his manifesto *Poëzie is realiteit* [Poetry is Reality]. The issue also reported on the recent formation of the Cobra group. Shortly afterwards, the editors concluded that there was little point in publishing a third instalment of *Reflex* and the title was subsumed into the new journal *Cobra*.

REFLEX

ORGAAN VAN DE EXPERIMENTELE GROEP IN HOLLAND.

Conille
- 48





Karel Appel &
Jef Van Tuerenhout
Twee figuren
[Two Figures], 1976
Felt pen on linen, 32 × 48 cm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp

> Eugène Brands
Rustende vrouw II
[Resting Woman II], 1954
Gouache on paper, 435 × 470 mm
The Phoebus Foundation,
Antwerp



Reinoud [Reinoud D'Haese]

Belgium
21 October 1928
1 July 2007

In 1949, the sculptor Olivier Strebelle introduced Reinoud to Pierre Alechinsky, who was involved with Strebelle at the time in the foundation of the Ateliers du Marais – a house in Brussels that served as a studio and research centre. Reinoud would meet several other artists and Cobra members there, prompting him to join the avant-garde art collective and to take part in the final Cobra exhibition in Liège in 1951.

— Reinoud was interested in fine metalwork in his youth and trained under a goldsmith. He moved to Brussels in 1946 to study at the metalworking and sculpture department of the Institut supérieur des Arts décoratifs in La Cambre where his teachers included Oscar Jespers. He also enrolled in the evening programme to study industrial drawing and printing.

Reinoud first made his name as a gold- and coppersmith, making and repairing objects in brass. It was not until 1956 that he made his breakthrough as a visual artist, thanks to an exhibition at Galerie Taptoe in Brussels at which he actually won the Belgian Prix de la Critique [Critics' Prize]. This was followed a year later by the Young Belgian Sculpture Prize. Reinoud began to pursue his own path around this time, working exclusively under his first name to avoid confusion with his brother, the sculptor and printmaker Roel D'Haese. He collaborated frequently with Alechinsky and got to know the Danish gallery owner Børge Birch.

In 1959, a Belgian bursary enabled Reinoud to go to France where contact with other artists and styles stimulated his imagination. The following year, he began to weld large, imaginative insects in copper, which gradually evolved into original, hybrid creatures with both vegetal and human features. Reinoud collaborated with Birch, at whose Copenhagen gallery he exhibited a whole series of metamorphic figures made with pieces of bread covered with a thin layer of silver and copper. In 1962, he made crumpled leaves in metal and also showed his drawings at a gallery in New York, for which Christian Dotremont wrote an introduction to the catalogue.

After moving to Paris in 1965, Reinoud began to experiment with newspaper and chicken wire. Ten years later, he relocated to the United States to teach as a guest lecturer



in Minneapolis. On returning to Europe, the artist alternated between Paris and Labosse, with summers spent in Provence. He systematically brought back stones from Normandy to incorporate into his sculptures.

Reinoud died of a cerebral thrombosis in 2007. As well as a magnificent relief in the Ossegem underground railway station in Brussels, his legacy runs to countless works of sculpture.

Anton Rooskens

Netherlands

16 March 1906

28 February 1976

Rooskens joined Cobra in 1948 on the advice of his former colleagues from the Experimentele Groep in Holland [Experimental Group in Holland]. In 1949 he took part in the high-profile Cobra exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, but subsequently distanced himself from the movement in the wake of internal divisions and furious discussions. In contrast to the other Dutch members of Cobra, Rooskens drew his creativity from tribal art, not so much for its spontaneity, which is also a feature of Art brut and children's drawings, but for its sense of structure, from which he adopted the typical forms and rhythmic patterns.

Despite his short-lived participation in the group, Cobra had an immense impact on his art. Rooskens shared in the vitality of his colleagues, who were on average a dozen

years younger. In this way, he developed his own expressive painting language in which dark shapes and black lines, magical symbols and figuration were dominant. Equally characteristic was the emphasis given to the key colours: red, blue, yellow and black.

— Anton Rooskens trained as a mechanic and instrument-maker. He taught himself to paint and initially preferred the landscape genre. The influence of Vincent van Gogh and of Constant Permeke's Flemish Expressionism is unmistakable in this early work. He gradually assimilated Pablo Picasso's avant-gardism and the Art brut of Jean Dubuffet, with whom he was also personally acquainted.

Visiting the *Art in Freedom* exhibition in 1945 at the Rijksmuseum (he had lived in Amsterdam for ten years by then), Rooskens



was struck by the visual power of African sculptures and ancestral images from New Guinea. They inspired him to develop a new, expressive style of his own. His participation in the *Jonge schilders* [Young Painters] exhibition in Amsterdam brought him into contact with his much younger fellow artists Karel Appel and Corneille, as well as Eugène Brands. This led, in turn, to his association with the Experimentele Groep in Holland, set up on 16 July 1948 at Constant's home. Rooskens was the oldest member and the only one with a regular income, so he kept his colleagues supplied with expensive materials, paints and canvases.

All sorts of artistic movements emerged after the war – a phenomenon Rooskens knew well, having previously joined the avant-garde group Vrij Beelden [Free Images], founded by the artists Willy Boers and Ger Gerrits, with whom he had exhibited at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Rooskens also travelled with them to Paris, where he fell under the spell of the pre-Columbian art at the Musée de l'Homme. His preference for abstract surrealism led to his participation in the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles (Paris, 1948), which focused on aesthetic and geometrically oriented abstraction. The choice is also likely to have been partly responsible for his alienation from Cobra. When Willy Boers joined other advocates of abstract art to set up the group Creatie [Creation] in the 1950s, he was able, once again, to count on the support of Rooskens, who joined the editorial staff of the

journal of the same name (only one issue of which was published).

Rooskens was an avid traveller. A dream trip to Africa in 1954 resulted in several more geometric compositions with African motifs. By 1957, his style had grown more expressive and he aligned himself increasingly with the Tachism of Hans Hartung and Pierre Soulages. He was also in contact with Karl Otto Götz in Frankfurt and Édouard Jaguer, who produced the journal *Phases* in Paris. Rooskens worked on a large scale at this point, with broad, stirring brushstrokes in sombre tones and a predilection for black. In 1958, he spent time in Iceland and Greenland, where he lived among the Inuit for a month to collect and study their art.

Rooskens' work underwent a significant change in the mid-1960s, with more spontaneous, cheerful and playful subjects, such as fantasy creatures, making a comeback. With his new vital touch and intense colours he depicted birds, fish and other creatures with a solid black outline. His paintings – large in format once again – exuded dynamism and expression, with an unmistakable influence on the part of his former Cobra colleagues, especially Carl-Henning Pedersen. Rooskens continued to paint in this rediscovered, colourful Cobra style until his death in 1976. Since the 1950s, his work has received national and international attention, and the Cobra Museum in Amstelveen staged a retrospective in his honour in 2006.

Shinkichi Tajiri

United States

7 December 1923

15 March 2009

Tajiri was the only American artist in the Cobra group. He worked in Paris in the years after the war, making one-day sculptures on the banks of the Seine from scrap metal and plaster: spatial experiments with waste, which were later dubbed 'junk sculpture'. His practice of creating from within the material immediately caught the eye of Cobra members and, in 1949, Corneille invited him to show his sculptures at the group exhibition in Amsterdam. Tajiri's work also featured at later Cobra exhibitions. He got on so well with the other members – the Dutch contingent in particular – that he was fully accepted into the group. An entire room was devoted to his art at the final Cobra exhibition at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Liège.

One of Tajiri's final commissions was the design of a Japanese Zen garden for the Cobra Museum of Modern Art in Amstelveen (1995). Its name, *Karesansui*, means 'dry landscape garden' and has been described as 'an attempt to fathom the secret laws of nature, above all its proportions, rhythm, energy and movement'.

— Shinkichi Tajiri was born in Los Angeles, the fifth child of Japanese immigrants. In 1936, the family moved to San Diego, where he studied sculpture with Donal Hord. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, more than 100,000 Japanese-Americans were rounded up and interned. Tajiri was sent to a camp in Arizona – a miserable experience, which only



ended when he enlisted for three years in the US Army in 1943. He was wounded in Italy in 1944 and spent months in a hospital in Rome.

Following the end of the war, Tajiri qualified for a bursary under the G.I. Bill and was able to resume his studies at the Art Institute of Chicago. His early work displayed a stylised naturalism, with Native American and Mexican influences, but he began to work more geometrically in Chicago, creating mobiles and what he called 'three-dimensional Mondrians'. He also assisted the Japanese sculptor Isamu Noguchi, whom he knew from the internment camp.

After graduating, Tajiri secured a scholarship that paid for him to travel to Paris, where he studied under the sculptor Ossip Zadkine in 1948-49 and later under the painter Fernand Léger. The work of Picasso, Matisse and Calder was also a major source of inspiration. Tajiri took classes at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in 1950-51. During his time in the French capital, he made the acquaintance of the Dutch poet Simon Vinkenoog, who was paying his way by working as a model, and of artists such as Corneille, Appel and Constant. He wandered around Europe and took a teaching post at the Werkkunstschule in Wuppertal before his strong connections with the Dutch branch of Cobra led him in 1956 to settle in Amsterdam for six years. He and his wife then moved with their two daughters to Baarlo in the Dutch province of North Limburg.

Tajiri's time in Europe was liberating for him, as his Japanese roots did not attract the kind of hostility they had in America. He developed a style that combined Asian and American elements with European influences – spiky assemblages, welded in iron or cast in

bronze, that he combined with symbols of violence, sex and fertility. He handled his materials very roughly in the 1950s, whereas his sculptures from the 1960s are rather polished.

The work that led to his breakthrough consisted of warriors and samurai – slender figures on narrow legs. The sculptures not only mythologised the distant past and his roots in the Japanese nobility – his paternal family came from an old samurai lineage – but also expressed the trauma of his war experiences and his desire for liberty. Tajiri made unashamedly political statements too, as in his sculpture *Wounded Knee* (1953), through which he denounced the oppression of Native Americans.

Although primarily a sculptor, Tajiri also engaged in other artistic disciplines, including photography and film, all very much in keeping with the Cobra mentality. This artistic versatility made Tajiri so popular in the Netherlands that he was invited to represent the country at documentas II (1959), III (1964) and IV (1968). He also took part in the 1962 Venice Biennale. In the mid-1960s, he was a guest lecturer in Minneapolis and New York, and taught from 1969 to 1989 at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin.

In the 1970s, Tajiri began to experiment with a variety of media, including his own X-Press printing press, forgotten photographic methods such as the daguerreotype, and his computer drawings on the Commodore Amiga. Images of buttons became an obsessive motif. The international recognition enjoyed by Shinkichi Tajiri's work is evident, among other things, from the many retrospectives devoted to his impressive oeuvre.



COBRA: THE MILESTONES

1934–1939

Ejler Bille and Vilhelm Bjerke Petersen found the Surrealist artists' group Linien

1937

Linien: international group exhibition

1938–1942

Exhibition association Corner-Høst

1941–1944

Publication of *Helhesten* magazine (12 issues), with contributions from Carl-Henning Pedersen, Egill Jacobsen, Ejler Bille, Henry Heerup and Asger Jorn

1941–1945

La Main à Plume artists' group and publication

1942–1949

Høst experimental artists' association

1945–1948

La Jeune Peinture Belge artists' association

1946

June–July

Jonge schilders exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam, Netherlands), with work by Anton Rooskens, Karel Appel, Corneille and Eugène Brands

1947

February

Publication of Christian Dotremont's manifesto 'Le Surréalisme Révolutionnaire' in the magazine *Les Deux Sœurs*

October

Conférence du Surréalisme Révolutionnaire

1947–1948

Christian Dotremont and others found the artists' movement Le Surréalisme Révolutionnaire
Anton Rooskens and others found the avant-garde group Vrij Beelden

1947–1949

Mogens Balle and others found the artists' association Spiralen

1948

16 July

Foundation of the Experimentele Groep in Holland by Karel Appel, Eugène Brands, Constant, Jan Nieuwenhuys, Anton Rooskens, Theo Wolvecamp and Corneille
Creation of *Reflex* magazine

8 October–7 November

Vrij Beelden exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

8 November

The avant-garde movement Cobra is founded with the pamphlet *La Cause était entendue* by Christian Dotremont, Joseph Noiret, Asger Jorn, Karel Appel, Constant and Corneille

19 November–5 December

Høst group exhibition in Copenhagen with work by Corneille, Karel Appel, Constant and others

1949

Pierre Alechinsky and others found the Ateliers du Marais (Brussels, Belgium)
Cobra publication *Le Tout Petit Cobra* (four issues)

February

Creation of *Le Petit Cobra* magazine (four issues) in Brussels

March

Creation of *Cobra* magazine (ten issues of which two were never published), edited by Asger Jorn and Christian Dotremont. First issue published in Copenhagen (Denmark)

19–28 March

Exhibition *La Fin et les moyens (exposition expérimentale internationale de tableaux, dessins, objets)*, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Galerie du Séminaire des Arts (Brussels, Belgium)

8 April–8 May

Exhibition *Amsterdamse schilders van nu: Appel, Brands, Constant, Corneille, Rooskens*, Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

3 May–2 June

Exhibition *Trois peintres du Groupe expérimental de Hollande Appel, Constant, Corneille* (catalogue by 'Éditions Cobra, Amsterdam'), Galerie Colette Allendy (Paris, France)

1949

21 May–2 June

Appel, Constant, Corneille, exhibition at Galerie Birch (Copenhagen, Denmark)

6–13 August

Exhibition *L'Objet à travers les âges: Calonne, Dotremont, Bourgoignie, Havrenne, Noiret*, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Galerie du Séminaire des Arts (Brussels, Belgium)

August–September

Bregnerød meetings (Denmark)

3–28 November

Première exposition internationale d'art expérimental, Cobra, (catalogue published in *Cobra 4*), Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

1950

Cobra publication
L'Aventure dévorante
with text by Joseph Noiret
and drawings by Pol Bury
Publication of the
Bibliothèque de Cobra
monograph series

17 February–2 March

Exhibition *Apport 49:*
Alechinsky, Bury, Claus,
Collignon, Hannoset,
Van Roy, Welles, Galerie
Apollo (Brussels, Belgium)

8–15 April

Exhibition *Cobra 6: Claus,*
Corneille, Jorn, Österlin,
Götz (with dedicated issue
Cobra 6), Galerie Apollo
(Brussels, Belgium)

9–31 May

Exhibition *6^e Salon de*
Mai, Palais de New York
(Paris, France)

26 May–8 June

Cobra exhibition, Galerie
Tendances Contemporaines
(La Louvière, Belgium)

1950–1954

Creative artists' group
and publication, edited
by Eugène Brands and
Anton Rooskens

1950

6–30 October

Les Mains Éblouies
exhibition, Galerie
Maeght (Paris, France)

October

Bille, Jacobsen, Jorn, Pedersen,
Gudnason exhibition,
17^e Salon des Surindépen-
dants (Paris, France)

Autumn

Exhibition *Tendances:*
Appel, Atlan, Constant,
Corneille, Tajiri, Doucet,
Galerie Colette Allendy
(Paris, France)

21 October–1 November

Exhibition *Les Déve-*
loppements de l'œil (À propos
des photographies de Raoul
Ubac, Roland d'Ursel et Serge
Vandercam), Galerie Saint-
Laurent (Brussels, Belgium),
on experimental photo-
graphy in *Cobra*, organised
by Christian Dotremont

1950–1951

30 December–14 January

Spiralen 1950 exhibition,
Charlottenborg (Copen-
hagen, Denmark)

1951

9 February–1 March

Cobra exhibition,
Librairie 73 (Paris, France)

14–28 April

Exhibition *5 Peintres de*
Cobra: Appel, Balle, Corneille,
Jacobsen, Jorn, Galerie
Pierre (Paris, France)

8–31 May

7^e Salon de Mai exhibition,
Palais de New York
Paris, France)

6 October–6 November

Deuxième exposition inter-
nationale d'art expérimental,
Cobra (catalogue published
in *Cobra 10*), Palais des
Beaux-Arts (Liège, Belgium)

November

Cobra disbands

1953–1957

Asger Jorn among the
founders of the artists'
group Mouvement Inter-
national pour un Bauhaus
Imaginiste (MIBI)

1954–1955

Rencontres inter-
nationales de la
céramique in Albisola
(Italy), organised by
Asger Jorn

1955

Pierre Alechinsky and
Christian Dotremont
release the film
Calligraphie japonaise

1956

Asger Jorn organises the
Congres Mouvement Inter-
national pour un Bauhaus
Imaginiste in Alba (Italy)

1957–1972

Internationale Situation-
niste (IS) artists' group,
founded by Constant
and others

1962

Exhibition *Cobra et*
après (et même avant).
Un panorama graphique,
Palais des Beaux-Arts
(Brussels, Belgium),
organised by Christian
Dotremont and
Joseph Noiret
Joseph Noiret publishes
'Description de *Cobra*'

1972

Publication of *Cobra*,
including a revised version
of 'Description de *Cobra*', by
Bibliothèque Phantomas

1976

September

Opening of the Carl-
Henning Pedersen &
Else Alfelts Museum
(Herning, Denmark)

1995

8 November

Opening of the *Cobra*
Museum voor Moderne Kunst
(Amstelveen, Netherlands)

COLOPHON

Cobra – A Pictorial and Poetic Revolution

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Karine Huts-Van den Heuvel,
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Cover image:
Karel Appel
Carnaval [Carnival], 1951
Acrylic and poster paint,
graphite, Indian ink,
oil pastel, walnut stain
and paper on paper,
1425 × 924 mm
The Phoebus Foundation,
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[detail]
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Image page 2:
Constant
Kinderkopje
[Head of a Child], 1949
Oil on canvas,
70.5 × 60.5 cm
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