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« Hermann Nitsch, *Bayreuth: Postlude.* »
From October 14th to November 25th, 2023

Galerie RX Paris is delighted to pay tribute to the artist Hermann Nitsch (1938-2022) with a fourth solo exhibition at its Paris location. Bayreuth: Postlude presents the artist's last series, produced during the 2021 Bayreuth Festival and some drippings of the following December. Featuring more than thirteen large-scale works taking up the entire gallery space, the exhibition is an opportunity to discover or rediscover Hermann Nitsch's powerful expressiveness.

From October 11, 2023 to February 12, 2024, the Musée de l'Orangerie is also presenting one of the artist's last series with a vivid palette as part of a counterpoint. (*Hermann Nitsch. Hommage*).

Hermann Nitsch, born in Vienna in 1938, remains a leading member of the Viennese Actionist movement, of which he was one of the pioneers. Sadly, in April 2022, he passed away in Mistelbach, not far from Prinzendorf where he had established his home and studio. Nitsch's reputation as a master of Austrian performance art transcends national borders, testifying to the expressive power of his work. Nitsch skillfully borrowed the mysteries of religious drama to create a captivating total art work. Since the 1950s, his artistic peak has been revealed at his "Orgien Mysterien Theater", a festive occasion during which he invited friends and audiences to a six-day uninterrupted cascade of exhilarating performances which intensify and sensitize all senses.

"Gesamtkunstwerk", the total work of art

Nitsch is an heir to the aesthetic concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which translates as "total work of art" and emerged from German Romanticism in the 19th century. This concept is based on the simultaneous use of numerous artistic disciplines and media. During his *Aktions*, Nitsch operated like an orchestra conductor. From the music he composed to the performers, he guided the performance through to its conclusion. The first creator of a total work of art was none other than Richard Wagner (1813-1883), who was also behind the Bayreuth Festival (founded in 1876). This common thread between Nitsch and Wagner motivated the Bayreuth Festival to invite the Austrian artist to perform.

"wagner has fascinated me all my life. because of this wonderful, indulgent, sensual music, which makes the sound blossom beyond the melody. even in its earliest forms of performance, art was connected with cult, religion and the gesamtkunstwerk. and wagner is the uncoverer of the gesamtkunstwerk. he made it shine." Hermann Nitsch

The Valkyrie

The *Valkyrie* is the second of Richard Wagner's four operatic dramas, *The Ring of Nibelung*. At the Bayreuth Festival, Hermann Nitsch based his total work of art on this three-act composition. The three acts of the *Valkyrie* are accompanied by an autonomous painting action, during which the musical score is metamorphosed scene by scene into a kaleidoscope of brilliant colors. This artistic transformation requires the generous use of up to 1,000 liters of paint per performance. The colors used by Nitsch are a catharsis for the spectator.

"the painting processes are meant to be like music. sounds become colors and wagner's score lures me into choosing my colors" Hermann Nitsch