

PRESS RELEASE

François Rouan

*Grands Formats Choisis au Musée Fabre à Montpellier
& Travaux D'aujourd'hui Découverts à Laversine*

(Large paintings from the Musée Fabre in Montpellier & Recent works from the artist's atelier)

October 27th-December 22nd

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François Rouan is born in 1943 in Montpellier, France. In 1971, he goes to Rome where he meets Balthus, at this time director of the French Villa Médicis. At the invitation of Balthus, he stays and paints at the Villa Médicis for several years during which they develop a friendly and artistic relationship, although both their artistic work – one is strongly figurative, the other one abstract – differs severely. During those years he spends also some time in Siena and studies the paintings of Lorenzetti and Siena's painters from whom his future work is straightforwardly inspired. This results in the **tressage** technique (weaving) which will structure his painting and will be exhibited on several occurrences in New York, Galery Pierre Matisse, and in Geneva, Gallery Krugier. François Rouan published also several books: *Balthus ou son ombre* (2001) and *Dire ou ne pas dire* (2017).

By creating and inventing the **tressage** technique François Rouan is undoubtedly a major artistic figure of his generation. This specific technique challenged indeed the tradition of American abstractionism and, more generally, the limits fixed in France by Matisse's heritage. His painting is affirmatively decorative, colourful, complex and integrates several layers of painting **within** the painting.

With the *tressage*, in fact, François Rouan takes the opposite course of his artistic generation which followed Lucio Fontana's watchword: "I do not want to make a painting; I want to open up space, create a new dimension, tie in the cosmos, as it endlessly expands beyond the confining place of the picture".

This solo exhibition (*Large paintings from the Musée Fabre, Montpellier & Recent works from the artist's atelier*) ambitions to cast a light on the various aspects of François Rouan's oeuvre (from the sixties onward). This offers also the opportunity to disclose some of his most recent works, some never exhibited, as much as some paintings of large dimensions exhibited on the occasion of his retrospective in 2016, Montpellier. The painting *Selon ses faces IV* (1983), which is without any doubt one of his most significant works, will also be part of this exclusive curating of recent and historical paintings.