



Dado, *Boukoko triptyque*, 1975. Oil on canvas, 162 × 454 cm.
 Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris. Photo : Jean-Louis Losi.

DADO

— Mémoire épidermique

OPENING

Thursday May 12, 2016, 6 pm
 St Germain Space

EXPOSITION

from May 12 to June 18, 2016

CONVERSATION

around the compilation of
 interviews with the artist,
Peindre Debout, with
 the participation of
 Daniel Cordier and
 Jean-François Jaeger
 on Saturday June 4, 11 am

We are pleased to present MÉMOIRE ÉPIDERMIQUE, an exhibition of paintings, collages, drawings and prints from the 1970s by the artist DADO (1933-2010). Having moved to France in 1956, Dado was quickly noticed by Jean Dubuffet in his printmaking studio, as well as by Daniel Cordier. He was then steered towards the gallery by the collectors Boulois who were passionate about his work, as well as François Mathey, and he would be given four solo exhibitions in the 1970s-80s and be regularly shown in themed exhibitions, before the homage that was rendered him by the gallery in 2011, which centered around three large triptychs, collages and drawings.

The paintings of Dado shed light on the symbiosis between the events of his life at the time in Montenegro, in Central Africa among the Pygmies (*Triptyque de Boukoko*) and the tragic circumstances of the war that marked his childhood, that the artist exorcised through an indefatigable, human creation that would dominate his entire life. His fabulous mastery of his means of expression confer on his visions an absolute reality, either through a vast erudition— his *bébés* («babies») make reference to the *Vierge à l'enfant entourée des Saints Innocents* of Rubens at the Louvre— or through infallible technical means of the pen or chisel, where the gesture is left naked through a subtle system of contrasts and lighting.



Dado, *À la ville de St Denis*, 1974. India ink on paper, 105,3 × 150,5 cm.
Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris. Photo : Jean-Louis Losi.



Dado, *L'atelier II*, 1974. Dry point and aquatint on Arches paper, 76 × 56 cm. Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris.

Dado became interested in drawing for its rigorous, austere qualities, recording everything like an *electrocardiogram*. To draw was to reveal a classical representation of painting. Drawing “*is hard like salt*,” Dado tells us: “*drawing with a pen is 60 times slower than lead mining; the pen slows you down and one must almost nick the paper, like a tattoo, since the paper is in some sense a skin*.” The exhibition also presents his long-lasting relationship with the printer Alain Controu, in works where the artist engraves brass directly, without any initial drawing, and gives birth to forms issuing from the fusion of those two glacial elements, steel and metal. Dado engraves like he paints: he begins an image that he reworks incessantly for months, years even, to a point where the slab might change from vertical to horizontal. His chisel seeks profoundly, hollowing and scratching the body like a surgeon would, as if, in the words of Michael Peppiatt, “*the flesh had been woven, like a spider’s web, around the bones*.”

This monthlong exhibition has been conceived in conjunction with the publication of the collection of interviews with the artist *Peindre debout*, published by l’Atelier Contemporain (François-Marie Deyrolle). Richly illustrated, the publication reunites 23 interviews given over the course of four decades by the Montenegrin artist for the first time. With a preface by Anne Tronche, the publication was assembled and annotated by the daughter of the artist, Amarante Szidon. A conversation is organised in the St Germain Space on Saturday, June 4, at 11 AM, in the presence of two of his historic dealers, Daniel Cordier and Jean-François Jaeger.

— Véronique Jaeger

