

Focus on...

Happy coincidence... or the beauty of the unpredictable



Study, 1971
Simon Hantaï (Bia, Hungary 1922-2008 Paris)
Watercolour on canvas
46 x 46 cm

This study comes from a series of works begun by Simon Hantaï in 1968 and exhibited for the first time at Jean Fournier in June 1969. A fragmented vision of an orange-red intercut with a bright white, this work is emblematic of the studies of folding, or 'pliage', conducted by the artist from the beginning of the 1960s.

Simon Hantaï himself defined folding as a method: not an artistic technique involving a mastery of the means used and an area of competence requiring prior training, but rather a process, a protocol of successive actions without any control over the result it will produce.

"Matisse told painters: 'Cut out your tongue!' I add: 'Pluck out your eyes!'" (Hantaï cited in *Simon Hantaï* exhibition catalogue, Centre Pompidou, May-September 2013, p. 11). By opting for the folding process, Hantaï chose a blind method the result of which is necessarily unpredictable, where chance alone governs the distribution of forms and colours across the canvas.

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