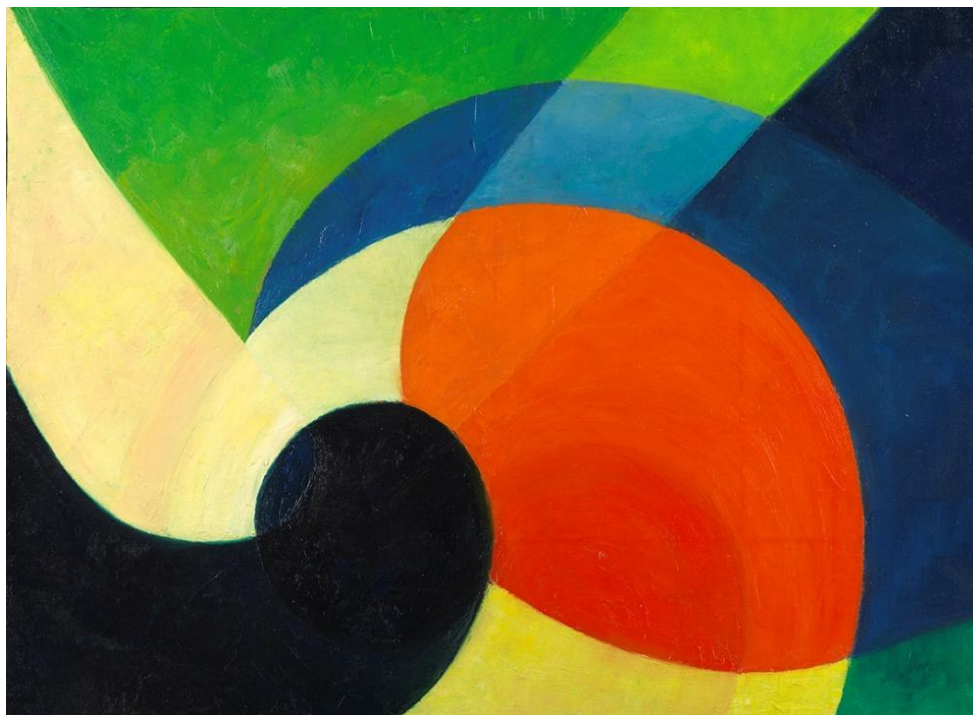


PRESS RELEASE BRAFA 2015

JOSEPH LACASSE (Belgian, 1894 – 1975)



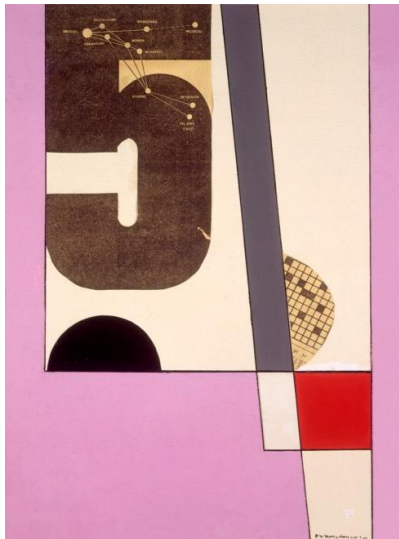
Whitford Fine Art, London, is pleased to present a collection of works by Belgian Abstractionist Joseph Lacasse (1894 – 1975) at BRAFA 2015, in preparation of a major exhibition at its Gallery in London during May – June 2015.

Lacasse is considered one of the most **individual abstract painters of the 20th Century**, with paintings predating the likes of **De Stael and Poliakoff**. When in 1912 Kandinsky published a manifesto about abstract art, he was unaware that his theories had already been put into practice by the Belgian teenager Joseph Lacasse. Whereas **Kandinsky** reached abstraction through a solid intellectual preparation, Lacasse found himself on the same road through pure intuition. Lacasse's first abstract pastels, dated 1910, were made after a day of hard work at the local Tournai quarry, where the austere structure of the quarry and its rocks fired his imagination.

During the 1920s, Lacasse's acquaintance with Robert Delaunay was crucial to his colouristic development. In 1928 Lacasse left Belgium and settled in Paris where he developed a friendship with Brancusi. What characterizes the work of Lacasse is the intense, continuous vibration communicated through the colour, which he practiced throughout sixty years.

Whitford Fine Art is handling the Estate of the Artist and all the works come therefore directly from the Lacasse family.

PAUL VAN HOEYDONCK (Belgian, b.1925)



At BRAFA 2015, **Whitford Fine Art, London**, is proud to present works from **Belgian ZERO artist** Paul Van Hoeydonck. Whitford has defended the career of Belgian artist Paul Van Hoeydonck (born 1925) since 1989 and organised a landmark exhibition of the artist's 1950s work in 1990.

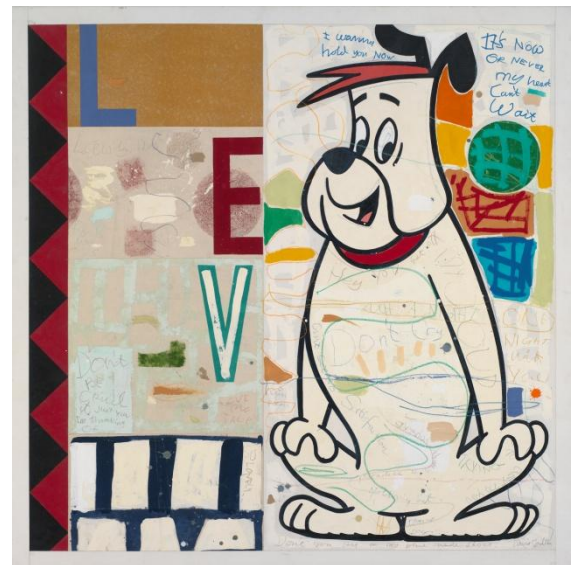
Van Hoeydonck had a successful career, exhibiting in **Paris, and New York**, with a sale to the Museum of Modern Art New York in 1964. Between 1955 and 1965, Paul van Hoeydonck was at the centre of artistic developments in **Brussels, Antwerp, Paris, Venice, Milan, Dusseldorf and New York**. He exhibited with Gallery Iris Clert in Paris, who sold his work to the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Van Hoeydonck also entertained friendships with influential critics such as Pierre Restany, and established exchanges with his fellow ZERO colleagues Piero Manzoni, Pol Bury, Yves Klein, Heinz Mack, Otto Piene, Daniel Spoerri and Jean Tinguely. **Lucio Fontana** became a close personal friend. Van Hoeydonck exhibited with the Zero group, founded in Dusseldorf in 1957, in Germany, Belgium and in Holland. In 1958, Van Hoeydonck was a co-founder of the legendary **G58 group** who exhibited their works at the Hesselhuis, Antwerp. By the summer of 1962, Van Hoeydonck was a guest of honor at the XXXI Venice Biennale.

Van Hoeydonck also has had a life-long interest in Space and was chosen by NASA to design an object to take to the moon. **'Fallen Astronaut'** was taken during the first moon-landing and placed by the crew of Apollo 15 on the moon, where it still is to this day, making Van Hoeydonck the first and only artist to have a **work of art on the moon**.

Interest in Van Hoeydonck's work has resurfaced lately with a large exhibition in the Felix Art Museum in Brussels, as well as with the fact that Paul Van Hoeydonck was recently awarded a doctorate honoris causa by Liege University for services to the Arts. **In 2013 he was also honoured by the American Space Museum in Washington, D.C.** in relation to his work connected to the moon landing and more in general to the artist's continuous interest in the Universe.

Van Hoeydonck's work has also been included in this year landmark exhibition titled *ZERO: Countdown to Tomorrow, 1950s–60s* currently held at the **Guggenheim Museum in New York**.

DAVID SPILLER (British, b.1942)



Whitford Fine Art is delighted to present at this year BRAFA a large selection of paintings by internationally celebrated **British Pop/Urban artist** David Spiller.

David Spiller's art is filled with life and energy. His bright, airy canvases and drawings compress a world of influences, ideas and impressions. His art is an instantly recognizable form of highly personal blend of styles, mixing the hard-hitting immediacy of Pop art with bright colours, punchy texts and clean lines, executed in the deceptively simple expression of free-style, rapid drawings and song-lines in crayon and pencil across the surface of the canvas.

When David Spiller attended art school in London during the 1960s, he witnessed the raise of **British Pop Art**. Being younger than the Pop artists, Spiller developed a different approach and offered another comment on the new mass-market urban culture. While Pop Art was interested in finding striking images and presenting them boldly, Spiller's focus became urban graffiti, in an approach much closer to **Dubuffet or Cy Twombly**. Spiller's paintings are overlaid with different painterly techniques, creating rich and complex surfaces. As a creator, Spiller is essentially lyrical - often drawing on popular songs for inspiration.

Spiller's iconography relates to his youth, when the **Beatles sang 'All You Need is Love'** as if it were a mission statement. Whereas the world is a changed place today, Spiller remains the perpetual romantic placing the theme of Love at the centre of his work.

Spiller's work is highly collectable worldwide but with a strong collectors' base in the UK and Belgium.

JESUS RAFAEL SOTO (Venezuelan, 1923-2005)



One of the highlights of **Withford Fine Art's** stand at BRAFA 2015 is undoubtedly **a major work by acclaimed Venezuelan artist Jesús Rafael Soto.**

A pioneer of Op Art and Kinetic Art, Soto was at the heart of the 'Réalités Nouvelles', a movement seeking to recreate a new reality by making *tabula rasa* of traditional techniques. Artists associated with the group include Yaacov Agam, Jean Tinguely, Victor Vasarely and Villeglé.

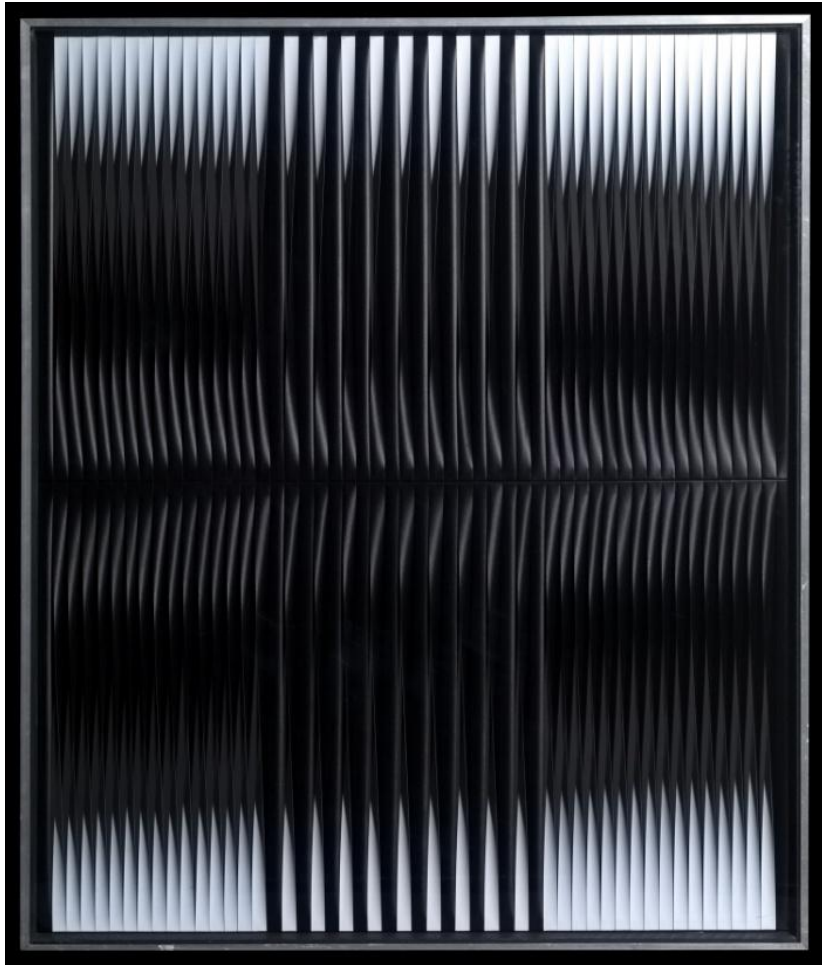
During the early 1960s Soto made his so-called 'Vibration Structures', with a wire structure in front of a background of black and white lines. From 1962 he also used paintings with suspended bars and fixed plaques. **Vertical Movement** is a prime example of this method that explores optical effects that give the illusion of movement in Soto's quest for pure vibration. As the spectator passes this work, an optical effect causes the background of black and white lines to vibrate and flicker producing an optical disturbance. This movement is enhanced by the optical effects of the stem against the hand-drawn lines.

In 1973, the Museo de Arte Moderno Jesus Soto opened in Soto's home town of Ciudad Bolívar.

Soto's works have been displayed at locations such as the Bern Art Gallery in 1968, Palacio de Velazquez in Madrid in 1988, and at the Bottrop Square in 1990. Soto's work has been exhibited in many public locations, including the hall of the **UNESCO building in Paris** (1969) and the Forum of the **Centre Georges Pompidou** in Paris (1987).

Soto's work is also part of the highlights of this year landmark exhibition titled *ZERO: Countdown to Tomorrow, 1950s–60s* currently held at the **Guggenheim Museum in New York.**

WALTER LEBLANC (Belgian, 1932-1986)



Whitford Fine Art is pleased to exhibit at **BRAFA 2015** a classic work from the 70s by acclaimed Belgian artist Walter Leblanc.

Together with Soto (see above) Leblanc has been internationally recognised as one of the main representative of **the Kinetic and Optical Art** movements. A co-founder of the G58 Hessenhuis, Leblanc associated with the **ZERO group**, with whom he participated in international exhibitions. Following his first one-man show at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 1961, Leblanc organised the exhibition 'Anti-Peinture', Hessenhuis, Antwerp, 1962 and became part of the international group 'Nouvelle Tendance'. In 1964 Leblanc won the prestigious prize Jeune Peinture Belge/Jonge Belgische Schilderkunst. During 1977 until his early death in 1986, Leblanc was teaching at the Instituut voor Architectuur en Stedenbouwkunde (NHIBS), Antwerp.

Leblanc's work is also part of the highlights of this year landmark exhibition titled *ZERO: Countdown to Tomorrow, 1950s-60s* currently held at the **Guggenheim Museum in New York**.

CLIVE BARKER (British, B.1940)



As with previous edition of BRAFA, **Whitford Fine Art** is proud to exhibit sculpture by one of the artist who was part of the original group that started the **Pop Art movement in Britain in the 60s**, Clive Barker.

Born in 1940, Clive Barker attained sculptural maturity in 1966. His work was exhibited at high-profile galleries in London and in Europe through to the 1970's, and has been included in numerous surveys and international exhibitions of Pop Art since.

By replicating functional, mass-produced objects in gleaming metals, Barker has redefined **Marcel Duchamp's** concept of the 'ready-made'. Despite the central importance of the mass-produced object to the iconography and processes of Pop Art, the movement produced surprisingly little in the way of sculpture on either side of the Atlantic. Barker's casts of the 1960s thus form a particularly important part of the Pop Art story.

During a three-week visit to New York in April 1966, Barker became acutely aware of American consumer culture embodied in the **Coca-Cola** bottle. He cast his first Coke bottle immediately upon his return to London in May 1966. In 1968 Barker returned to the Coke bottle as a subject for two years, when he subjected it to numerous permutations: bottles in pairs or groups of three, with or without straws, upright and on their side, with caps on, off or in the process of being removed.

Museums holding Barker's work include: British Museum, London; Museo Berardo, Sintra; Städtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim; Tate, London; The Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.; National Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.