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# L'ARGENT DANS L'ART (MONEY IN ART)

MONNAIE DE PARIS, 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENTED BOTH IN MONNAIE DE PARIS HISTORIC EXHIBITION ROOMS AND CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES THE 'MONEY IN ART' EXHIBITION COVERS MORE THAN 20 CENTURIES OF ART HISTORY, WITH A FOCUS ON THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND MONEY, FROM ANTIQUITY AND ITS MYTHS UP TO TODAY.

Money has captivated the imagination of artists since Antiquity, in particular gold which has always been so present in myths and ancient art (Danaë and the golden calf for example). There have been countless representations of money throughout the centuries, from its origins to myths, not to mention the professions related to money, religious belief, and up until the invention of the art market.

Religious paintings illustrate the 'transactional' episodes from the Bible (The Adoration of the Magi, Caesar's denarius, Judas and his 30 pieces of silver, etc.), including the notions of greed, charity, 'good wealth and bad wealth' and moral injunctions (Vanitas, memento mori). In countries that had converted to the Protestant reform from the 16th century, representations of monetary transactions, developing trade and professions related to money were increasingly depicted.

The birth of the Impressionist movement was a historic turning point with the emergence of new economic models in the art business. Indeed, the second half of the 19th century witnessed a separation from the artistic approach of the Academie, which then undermined the links between the value of work, the value of use and the value of exchange. The control the State once held over art through the Academie was deregulated, and as a result, it was critical judgement that would decide on the value of artworks, as opposed to academic criteria.

From the 20th century, the artist was no longer content with representing traditional topics related to money, and so reflection about its mechanisms was set into motion, from the moment that the latter were immanent to the artwork.



Andy Warhol, Dollar Sign, 1981  
Muriel Anssens / Mamac Nice © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by ADAQP, Paris, 2023



PRESS RELEASE

Portrait à la Bourse, Edgar Degas, Entre 1878 et 1879, Musée d'Orsay - Donation d'Ernest May sous réserve d'usufruit, 1923 © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée d'Orsay) / Tony Querrec



here are two opposing attitudes, on the one hand, giving value to the artist's talent, regardless of the reality of the piece of art, and on the other hand, a provocative claim over art as a way to make money.

*"This exhibition is a wonderful portrayal of Monnaie de Paris cultural programme. Money, coins, are not only instruments used for economic exchange. They carry a meaning and are a key part of the social sphere. This is what we would like to portray in the exhibition rooms at La Monnaie: the way in which artists have approached the topic of money and how it is represented in society".*

**Marc Schwartz**, Managing Director of Monnaie de Paris

Visitors will be guided from room to room, via themes such as 'Money according to Christian morality', 'The world of finance', 'The value of art: what have artists been selling since Duchamp?' or 'Money as an exhibitionist'.

The exhibition will display around two hundred pieces of varying kinds, from different eras and diverse backgrounds, including pieces on loan from public collections such as from Musée du Louvre, Musée d'Orsay, National Museum of Modern Art - Centre Pompidou, and also from a number of regional museums, galleries and private collections.

A selection of films on the theme of money will also be included in the exhibition. Some of the films will be shown in the exhibition rooms, others will be featured in open-air showings in the La Monnaie de Paris courtyards.

**The curator of the exhibition** will be Jean-Michel Bouhours, former chief curator at the Centre Pompidou and director of the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2003-2008), art historian, author of many works and texts on the topic of 20<sup>th</sup> century art. His main exhibitions: Len Lye (Centre Pompidou, Le Fresnoy, Musée d'Art Contemporain de Strasbourg), Kees van Dongen (NMNM Monaco, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal, Museu Picasso Barcelona), Arman (Centre Pompidou and Tinguely Museum), Dalí (Centre Pompidou, Museo Reina Sofia Madrid), Anselm Kiefer (Centre Pompidou), Michel Nedjar (LaM-Villeneuve d'Ascq), Dali Eureka & André Masson (Musée d'Art Moderne de Céret), Van Dongen (Franciscaines de Deauville).

*"The relationship between art and money cannot be reduced to the economic element between values and exchanges. Capitalism has of course turned artwork into a commodity, just like any other, but art also carries an ideational, irrational, transient or even blurred value, with endless possibilities (or almost), because it is concerned with immeasurable concepts such as desire, pleasure, dreams and urges, emphasising what Karl Marx referred to as: "The mystery of value".*

**Jean-Michel Bouhours**, Curator of the exhibition



Marcel Duchamp, Obligation pour la roulette de Monte Carlo, 1924. Collection particulière © Association Marcel Duchamp / Adagp, Paris, 2023

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