

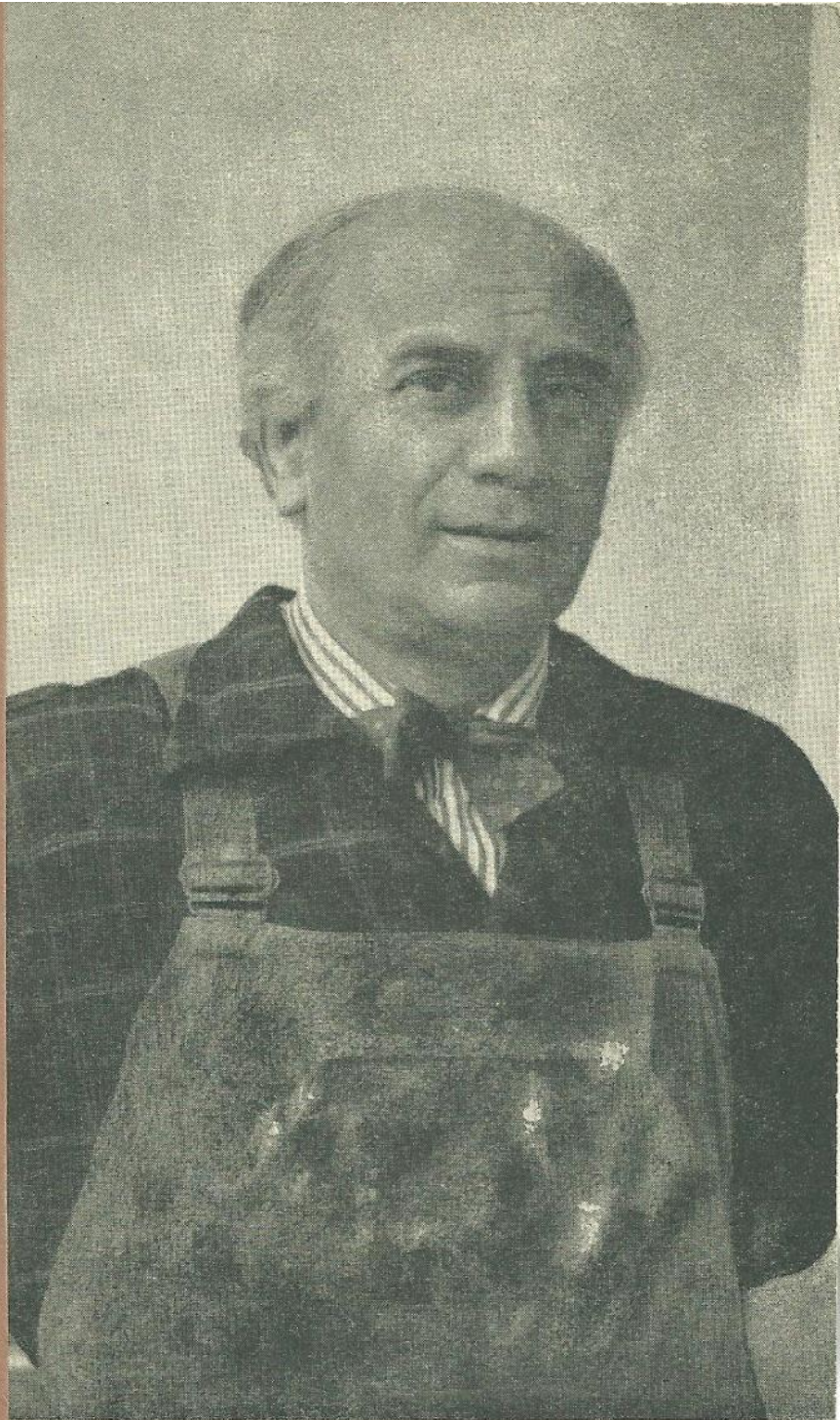
PRICES



Grosvenor  
Gallery

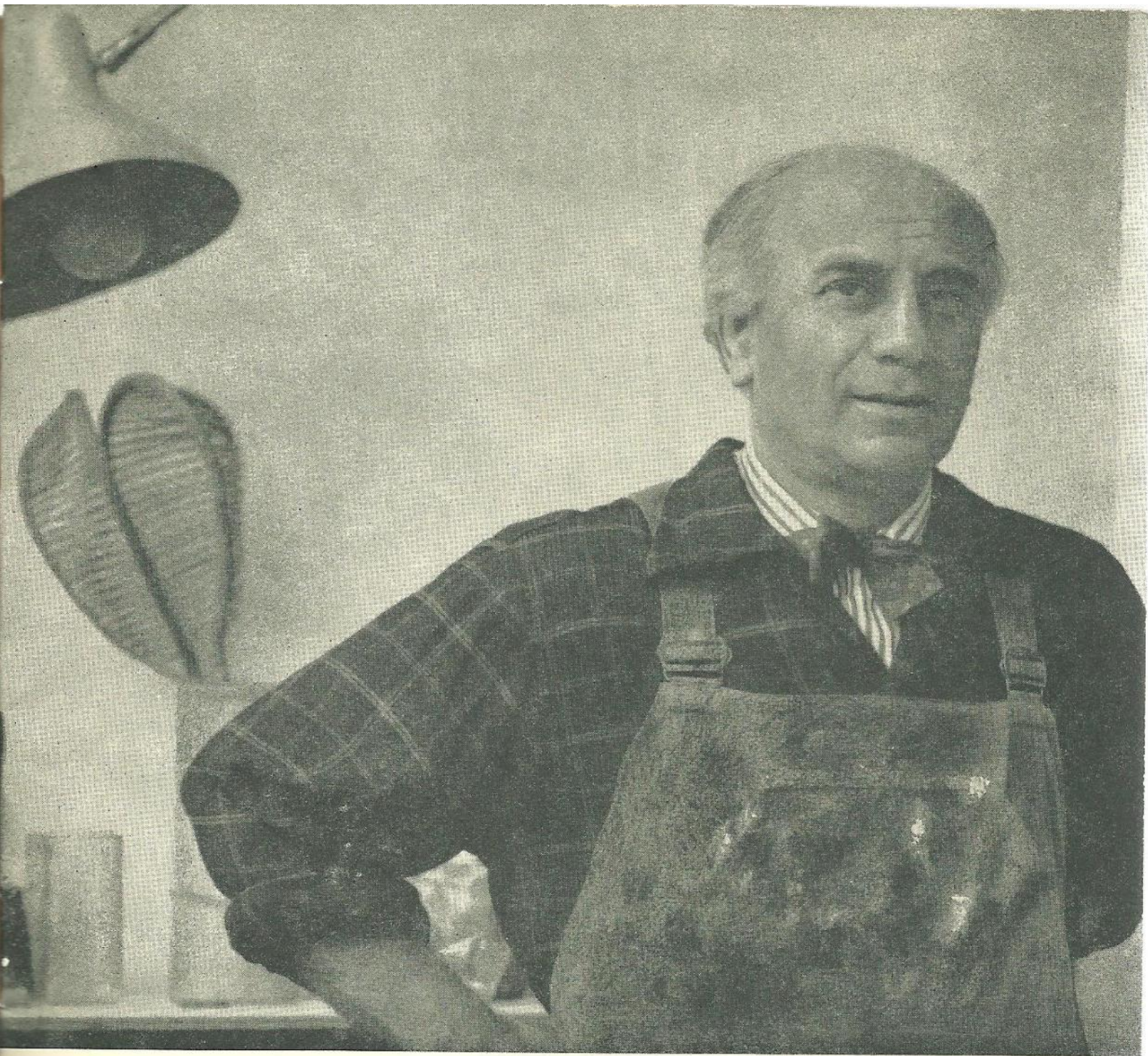
3rd-23rd March 1961

paintings



Jan Le Witt





Jan Le Witt







## A domain of the spirit

by Pierre Emmanuel    These paintings impose their presence: they exist in their own right. They do not force our attention but invite us to enter their world. Hardly have we glanced at the canvases and we are already within their sphere of influence, thinking of nothing else. The pleasure of being there fills us to the brim. In front of these paintings all problems disappear, thank God! It would be quite useless to attempt to classify an achievement of this kind among the successive varieties of contemporary art, where intrinsic value gives place to mere novelty, and the eye retains nothing that will last. So let us look at these paintings with no thought but for their own reality.

I hesitated long before writing this preface. There is evidence here of a powerful temperament, and comment will add nothing, quite the reverse: it may even take the edge off the surprise of the first encounter. But such is the custom that written word precedes the work of the painter: may mine be as discreet as possible and let it, at every instant, invite the reader to take leave of it and look at these paintings. What a poet can say about a painter is nothing else but a symbolic transposition of a purely material language. True, these pictures have titles: but even they hesitate to tie down or define. All extra-pictorial or metaphysical dreaming would be on one's own account.



Creation of the Rose



I do not think Jan Le Witt is concerned with anything else but seeing his colours take form: space is born out of their luminous depth. Hence, no doubt, when the painter ventures to give a name, it is genesis that he suggests to our mind. Here a world can dream its way out of the divisions of light—light laid up in the heart of the darkness. Clouds rather than rocks, fire still molten—these compelling visions are so many fragments of the ignited night. All colour is fire in one form or another, be it vapour, laval flow or clear outline. Presently—the canvas seems to say—a world of objects will appear: for the moment form dominates.

Painting is supreme. Nothing is more satisfying to the spirit than the perfect integrity of the canvas. Here I am: be with me. Upon the blues in all their depth, these sumptuous yellows: it is no kind of explosion that we witness, but things set out orderly in an abode of the spirit, a place we can make our own.

When presently we leave the exhibition, we shall take with us more than images, however persistent: a memory of this domain of the spirit, a point of reference for our eyes and our intelligence thereafter. Let him create colour, rythm, space: what more can one ask of a painter?

With forceful simplicity, rich in the economy of his means, Jan Le Witt has enlarged the world of creation as we know it.



|    |                      |      |           | <u>Gus</u> |
|----|----------------------|------|-----------|------------|
| 1  | Creation of the Rose | 1961 | 30" x 25" | 440        |
| 2  | Opus No. 5           | 1960 | 50" x 40" | 600        |
| 3  | Genesis              | 1960 | 50" x 40" | 600        |
| 4  | Andante Moderato     | 1957 | 40" x 30" | 480        |
| 5  | Orpheus              | 1960 | 40" x 30" | 440        |
| 6  | Aquamarine           | 1961 | 15" x 12" | 160        |
| 7  | Prelude              | 1960 | 50" x 40" | 560        |
| 8  | Etoile de Mer *      | 1959 | 50" x 40" | NFS        |
| 9  | Atlantis             | 1960 | 14" x 11" | Sold (140) |
| 10 | Earth Mother         | 1960 | 50" x 42" | 1200       |
| 11 | Delta                | 1959 | 40" x 30" | 440        |
| 12 | Foraminifera         | 1960 | 30" x 20" | 360        |
| 13 | Autumnal             | 1960 | 40" x 30" | 440        |
| 14 | Trésors Surgis       | 1959 | 40" x 30" | 480        |
| 15 | Arrow Grass          | 1961 | 24" x 20" | 380        |

\* Collection Baroness Alix de Rothschild, Paris



|    |                  |      |           | <u>Gms</u> |
|----|------------------|------|-----------|------------|
| 16 | Megalith         | 1961 | 40" x 30" | 540        |
| 17 | Andante Mosso    | 1960 | 40" x 30" | 600        |
| 18 | Canis Minor *    | 1961 | 15" x 12" | NFS        |
| 19 | Sottofondi       | 1959 | 40" x 30" | 440        |
| 20 | Half Moon Bay    | 1961 | 24" x 20" | 400        |
| 21 | Endymion         | 1961 | 15" x 12" | 160        |
| 22 | Hommage à Chopin | 1960 | 40" x 30" | 440        |
| 23 | Chinese Garden   | 1961 | 15" x 12" | 160 S.ed.  |
| 24 | Dordogne         | 1960 | 50" x 40" | 560        |
| 25 | Mid-ocean        | 1961 | 15" x 12" | 160        |
| 26 | Crustacea *      | 1961 | 24" x 20" | NFS        |
| 27 | Opus No. 2       | 1959 | 50" x 40" | 600        |
| 28 | Glass Mountain   | 1961 | 15" x 12" | 160        |
| 29 | Etruscan Ode     | 1960 | 22" x 18" | 280        |
| 30 | Eye of the Sea   | 1961 | 40" x 30" | 480        |

\* Collection Ivan Obolensky, New York

|    |                   |  |  |     |
|----|-------------------|--|--|-----|
| 31 | Moon shadows      |  |  | 160 |
| 32 | Chrysalis         |  |  | "   |
| 33 | Birth of Fire     |  |  | "   |
| 34 | Edge of the world |  |  | "   |
| 35 | Exfoliate         |  |  | "   |
| 36 | Ballet - Bleu     |  |  | "   |
| 37 | Signes            |  |  | 400 |



Jan Le Witt was born in Poland. He settled in England before the war and became a British citizen in 1947. He now works in London and Paris.

Painting was always his true vocation and yet years elapsed before he could devote himself entirely to it.

Among his various artistic activities, he has designed decors and costumes for the Sadlers Wells' Ballet Company, tapestries for Tabard at Aubusson and glass sculptures in Venice.

One-man shows:

- London 1947 Zwemmer Gallery
- London 1957 Hanover Gallery
- Rome 1952 Galleria San Marco
- London 1953 Zwemmer Gallery
- New York 1954 Associated American Artists
- Milan 1957 Galleria Apollinaire
- Paris 1960 Galleria Lacloche

Exhibitions:

- London 1950-2 Contemporary Art Society, Tate Gallery
- Milan 1955 Premio Lissone

Works in the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris; National Museum, Jerusalem; The British Council, and in public and private collections in Great Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Israel, U.S.A. and South America.



Painting is a conspiracy of the mysterious and the miraculous, aided and abetted by profound instinct, immanent truth and noble gesture; an autonomous reality predominantly sensuous, founded by the senses for the senses.

My paintings are the mirrors of my forces where my songs, dreams and constellations are captive. Here I am celebrating the mysteries of absence that miraculously become a presence.

I wouldn't rob nature of any of its precious mysteries. I would rather contribute one more to it.



The Directors of the Grosvenor Gallery wish  
to thank Monsieur Pierre Emmanuel for  
kindly allowing his essay on Jan Le Witt  
to be reproduced in this catalogue.



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