### ASGER JORN

#### BIOGRAPHY

- 1914 Asger Oluf Jørgensen is born on March 3 in Vejrum in Jutland, Denmark. He is the second child of Maren, née Nielsen, and Lars Peter Jørgensen, both of whom are teachers.
- 1926 Jorn's father dies after a sudden illness, and his mother is left to raise their six children on a modest pension.
- 1929 The family moves to Silkeborg, where Jorn begins a five-year college education.
- 1930 Jorn comes into contact with the syndicalist Christian Christensen (1882-1960), who lives in Sejs, near Silkeborg, Denmark. The acquaintance with Christensen sharpens Jorn's political opinion. He becomes a member of the Danish Communist Party, but retains a highly independent political opinion throughout his life.
- 1932 Jorn's first encounter with modern painting is a traveling exhibition of Danish artists in Silkeborg. Jorn comes into contact with the painter Martin Kaalund-Jørgensen (1889-1952), who encourages him to draw and paint.
- 1933 On Kaalund-Jørgensen's request Jorn is invited to exhibit three paintings with the Frie Jydske Malere group in Silkeborg.
- 1936 After college Jorn decides to live and work as an artist, and takes his motorcycle to Paris. Here he is a student of Fernand Léger (1881-1955). The impulses from Léger and the artistic community in Paris become important for Jorn's subsequent development. In the following years, Jorn returns to Paris on shorter stays, but he spends the winter season at the Art Academy in Copenhagen.
- 1938 Jorn exhibits in Copenhagen with the French artist Pierre Wemaëre (1913-2010), whom he meets through Léger. In Paris Jorn fluctuates between the Léger School's strict style – with studies from nature and defined compositions – and the direction of surrealism that Joan Miró (1893-1983), Max Ernst (1891-1976), and Hans Arp (1886-1966) represent. Shortly before the war Jorn, through Léger, becomes aware of Franz Kafka, and is the first to translate selected works into Danish. Jorn travels around France and Norway with Wemaëre.
- 1940 Along with Egill Jacobsen (1910-1998), Ejler Bille (1910-2004), Carl-Henning Pedersen (1913-2007), archaeologist Peter V. Glob (1911-1985), and others Jorn publishes the journal *Helhesten*. Helhesten the animal that heralds death reflects what is happening within the new music, poetry and art.
- 1941- Jorn's works from these years range from simple shapes to rich landscapes populated by

- 1945 animal-like figures, with the use of a color scheme indebted to early Danish expressionism. He strives to combine the inspiration of the Modern European Art with traditional Danish techniques, producing many painting, drawing, graphics, and ceramic sculptures. Even before the liberation from german occupation, Jorn believes that the art development in Denmark is significant.
- 1946 Jorn travels to Lapland. In fall he returns to Paris, now under the name Jorn, where he meets many artists including Pablo Picasso.
- 1947 Jorn prepares for his first solo exhibition in Paris.
- 1948 During summer Jorn stays on the small island Hjarnø in Horsens Fjord, Denmark. Together with Bille and Robert Dahlmann Olsen, who had been editor of *Helhesten*, he authors a manifesto on the future collaboration with other artists in Europe. Jorn returns to Paris in the fall, where he attends a conference organized by members of the French Surrealist Group. The conference proves divisive, and together with the Dutch artists Karel Appel (1921-2006), Constant (1920-2005), and Corneille (1922-2010), Jorn and Christian Dotremont (1922-1979) form the initiative CoBRA: COpenhague, BRussels and Amsterdam. The group lasts for three years, but becomes highly influential in years to come. Jorn travels to Tunisia with his family.
- 1949 Together with Constant, Jorn plans a conference to work and discuss with the participating CoBRA artists for the fall, however, many in the group do not attend in protest of Jorn's relationship with Constant's wife, Matie van Domselaer.
- 1950 Jorn paints his *Krigsvisioner* (War Visions) series, characterized by the fear of nuclear war, expressed in the form of biting and snarling animals.
- Jorn marries Matie von Domselaer. They move to an apartment on the outskirts of Paris
  with her two daughters and their newborn child. For several months the family lives in
  poverty. In April Jorn physically breaks down with severe tuberculosis and malnutrition.
  With the help of his friends, he returns to Silkeborg. Jorn spends nearly eighteen months
  in the tuberculosis sanatorium in Silkeborg. The first few months are critical, but after
  several months of treatment, he gets permission to paint again.
- 1953 The board of the Silkeborg Museum pays potter Knud Jensen 2000 DKK to work with Jorn for a few weeks in return to choose 30 of the best ceramic works for the museum's collection. In September, Jorn leaves Denmark with his wife and their four children. He goes to Switzerland on a longer recuperation stay.
- 1954 Jorn settles in the pottery town Albissola near Genoa, Italy. At first Jorn lives with his family in a tent on the beach, but later stays at the summer studio of artist Lucio Fontana (1899-1968). He works with many artists from various countries creating ceramics in Albissola. Jorn joins Guy Debord (1931-1994) as one of the driving forces behind the foundation of the Situationist International.
- 1955 Jorn goes to Paris, where he buys a loft that accommodates him and his entire family. The purchase is financed by an exhibition at Galerie Birch in Copenhagen. He spends

the summer months in Albissola, where he'll later buy a house, and the winter months in Paris.

- 1956 Jorn begins his greatest painting ever: *Stalingrad, No-Man's Land, or the Mad Laughter of Courage.* He continues to work on it until December 1972.
- 1957 Jorn exhibits at the Galerie Rive Gauche in Paris.
- 1958 Jorn exhibits at Galerie van de Loo in Munich as well as at other international exhibitions in Brussels and London.
- 1959 Jorn begins work on a 295 square-foot ceramic wall relief for Aarhus State Gymnasium, commissioned by the Danish Arts Foundation. He then begins the execution of a fortysix-foot-long long tapestry, *The Long Journey*, with Pierre Wemaëre in Paris. The Silkeborg Museum exhibits a variety of works from Jorn. He also participates at Documenta II in Kassel.
- 1959- Jorn exhibits his *Modifications* series in Paris, a series of landscape paintings that he hadfound at flea markets and painted over.
- 1960 Jorn travels to Egypt.
- 1961 Jorn founds the Scandinavian Institute for Comparative Vandalism (SICV) with the objective to make available the aspects of European culture that had long been either systematically excluded from the canon or missed by the limited conceptions and tools of classical research. He exhibits his *Luxury Paintings* series in London.
- 1962 Jorn exhibits more works from his *Modifications* series in Paris, this time painting over found portraits.
- 1963 Jorn exhibits 36 paintings at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice.
- 1964 Jorn participates in numerous international exhibitions, including the 32nd Venice Biennale. His first retrospective exhibition takes place in Basel and travels to Amsterdam and at the Louisiana Museum in Humlebæk. Jorn is awarded the Guggenheim Prize but angrily rejects the award.
- 1965 The SICV project is abandoned due to funding problems.
- 1966- Jorn produces a number of large lithographs in Switzerland. He travels to Iceland,1967 Mexico, and New York.
- Jorn goes to Havana where he participates in a cultural conference and exhibits his
  monumental painting *Stalingrad*. Rather than participating in the discussions, Jorn paints on the walls of the revolutionary archive. Jorn observes the youth rebellion in Paris with interest, but at a distance. He exhibits in galleries in Munich, Copenhagen, London, New York, and Milan.

- 1970 Jorn begins a trip around the world, including destinations such as New York, Las Vegas, Honolulu, Kyoto, Tokyo, Hong Kong, New Delhi, Tehran, Beirut, and Baalbek. In Colombes, on the outskirts of Paris, Jorn buys a small house and for the first time in his life furnishes a real studio. Here he produces eighteen paintings that are exhibited in Paris.
- 1971 Jorn's girlfriend Nanna Enzensberger gives birth to their son.
- 1972 During the summer in Albissola Jorn works on a number of clay sculptures that are later cast in bronze.
- 1973 In January, Jorn is admitted to Aarhus Municipal Hospital. In early April, after having married Nanna Enzensberger, he travels one last time to Albissola. On May 1 Jorn dies in Aarhus.

#### **SELECTED EXHIBITIONS**

2023	An Apartment for Ghosts: '57–'23, Petzel Gallery, New York, NY
2022	New York Eye & Ear Control, Montauk Beach House, Montauk, New York MARMOR, Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg, Aalborg, Denmark Christian Dotremont: Peintre de l'écriture, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels, Belgium CHAISSAC&CoBrA: Sous le signe du serpent, Musée Soulages, Rodez, France The Westport Idea, MoCA Westport, Westport
2021	Asger Jorn og Per Kirkeby, ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Aarhus, Denmark
2019	Asger Jorn Das drukgrafische Werk, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg Strategic Vandalism: The Legacy of Asger Jorn's Modification Pantings, Petzel Gallery, New York
2018	<i>Without Boundaries</i> , Deichterhallen, Hamburg <i>Positive Barbarism: Brutal Aesthetics in the Postwar Period</i> , National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.
2017	Jorn + Munch, Museum Jorn, Silkeborg
2016	<i>Jorn + Munch</i> , Munch Museum, Oslo <i>Asger Jorn: The Open Hide</i> , Petzel Gallery, New York
2015	The Avant-Garde Won't Give Up: Cobra and Its Legacy, Blum & Poe, New York and Los Angeles
1993	Asger Jorn, André Emmerich Gallery, New York
1985	Asger Jorn, Lefebre Gallery, New York
1983	Asger Jorn, Lefebre Gallery, New York
1982	Asger Jorn, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Asger Jorn's samlinger, Silkeborg Kunstmuseum, Silkeborg
1981	Asger Jorn in Silkeborg: Die Sammlung eines Künstlers, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern
1978	Asger Jorn à Silkeborg: Le muse d'un peintre, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
1976	Asger Jorn: lithos, etchings, woodcuts, Lefebre Gallery, New York
1974	Asger Jorn, Silkeborg Kunstmuseum, Silkeborg
1973	Jorn, Galleria Narciso, Turin

	<i>Asger Jorn</i> , kestnergesellschaft, Hannover; travelled to Berlin, Brussels, Aalborg, and Lousiana Denmark
1972	Jorn, Lefebre Gallery, New York
1971	<i>Asger Jorn: Recent Paintings</i> , Arthur Tooth & Sons, London <i>Asger Jorn: La luxure de l'esthésie</i> , Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris
1970	Asger Jorn: oils, acrylics, collages, Lefebre Gallery, New York
1969	<i>Jorn</i> , Galleria Arte Borgogna, Milan Asger Jorn: Au pied du mur, Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris
1968	Asger Jorn, Galerie van de Loo, Munich
1967	<i>Campo vitale</i> , Palazzo Grassi, Venice <i>Asger Jorn</i> , Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris <i>Asger Jorn: Recent Works</i> , Lefebre Gallery, New York
1966	Asger Jorn: Recent Paintings, Arthur Tooth & Sons, London Cobra: 1948-1951, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam Asger Jorn, Konstförening Gothenburg, Sweden; travelled to Lund, Sweden
1965	Asger Jorn, Kunstforening Bergen, Bergen, Sweden
1964	Asger Jorn, Eugène Dodeigne, Kunsthalle Basel, Basel; travelled to Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Louisiana Foundation, Humlebæk Documenta III, Museum Fridericianum, Kassel Painting and Sculpture of a Decade, Tate Gallery, London Jorn 50, Galerie Birch, Copenhagen Guggenheim International Award 1964, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
1963	Visione Colore, Palazzo Grassi, Venice 23 peintures de Asger Jorn, Galerie Rive Gauche, Paris Asger Jorn: Gouachen, Aquarelle, Collagen und Tuschen aus den Jahren, Galerie van de Loo, Munich
1962	Asger Jorn, Lefebre Gallery, New York Nouvelles défigurations de Asger Jorn, Galerie Rive Guache, Paris Art Since 1950: American and International, World's Fair, Seattle
1961	Arte e contemplazione, Palazzo Grassi, Venice Asger Jorn: Luxury Paintings, Arthur Tooth & Sons, London
1960	Le long voyage: Tapisseries 1941-1960 with Pierre Wemaëre, Quatre Saisons, Paris Roël d'Haese, Asger Jorn, Galerie van de Loo, Munich Trente et une peintures de Asger Jorn, Galerie Rive Guache, Paris

- 1959 *Modifications*, Galerie Rive Guache, Paris
- 1958Asger Jorn, Galerie van de Loo, Munich<br/>Asger Jorn, Institute of Contemporary Art, London
- 1957 Arnal et Jorn, Galerie Rive Guache, Paris
- 1955 Keramik, Kunstindustri-Museet, Copenhagen

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	Tom McGlynn, "Strategic Vandalism: The Legacy of Ager Jorn's Modification Paintings," <i>Brooklyn Rail</i> , April 2019. Martha Schwendener, "New York Art Galleries: What to See Right Now," <i>The New York</i> <i>Times</i> , April 3, 2019.
	Howard Halle, "Top five New York art shows this week," <i>Time Out</i> , March 11, 2019. Sarah Cascone and Caroline Goldstein, "23 High-Energy Gallery Shows Opening in New York This March That You Won't Want to Miss," <i>artnet News</i> , March 6, 2019. Marion Maneker, "A Legacy of Found Object Art at Petzel's Asger Jorn Show," <i>Art</i> <i>Market Monitor</i> , March 5, 2019.
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