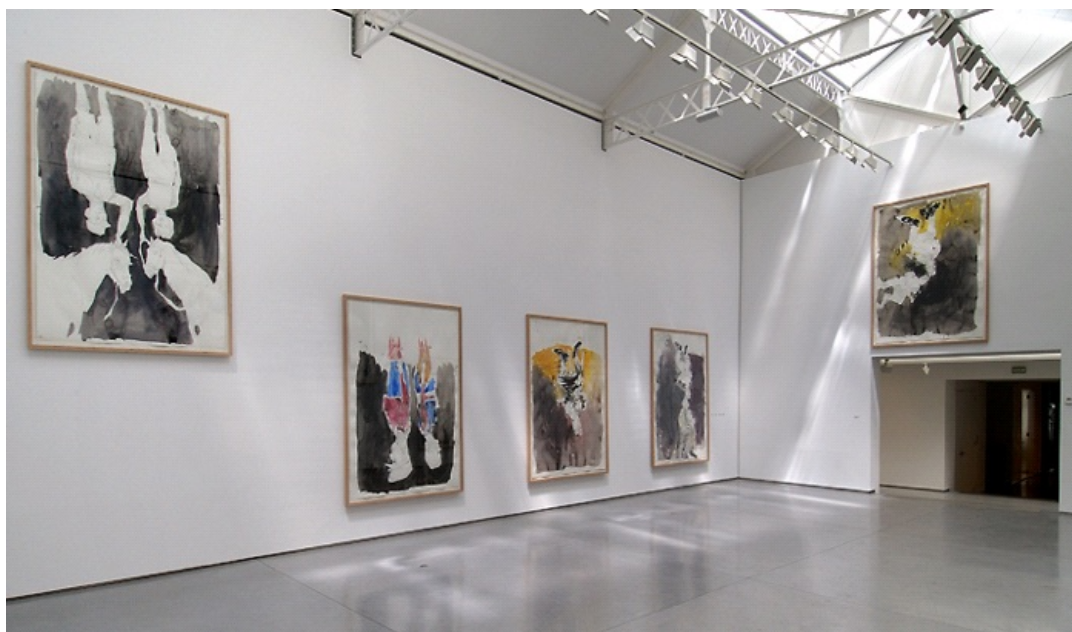

GEORG BASELITZ

MONUMENTAL WATERCOLOURS

PARIS DEBELLEYME

06 Thursday - 05 Monday



The Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery is delighted to present this new collection of 15 monumental watercolours – over two metres high – painted by Georg Baselitz, a major figure on the artistic landscape at the dawn of the 21st century.

Admired for his transformations of subjects which are seen as transformations of values, Baselitz has always developed a protean aspect to his art. His career has featured a constant dialogue between painting, sculpture, engraving and drawing. This collection features his latest remarkable works which convey a both formal and artistic vision: The huge size of these works, the subjects treated and the use of the watercolour medium break down the barriers of drawing and painting.

These collections can now be seen in Paris after exhibitions at the Albertina Museum in Vienna and at Frac Picardie. Three principal themes dominate the collection. First, the theme of iconography harking back to Soviet realism through reinterpretations of Vassili Efanov and Plastov - "Unforgettable encounter" and "Spring"- which embody the young vision of the painter who grew up in East Berlin. The "Russian Images" theme begun in 1998 – with pictures shown in the "Meine Neue Mütze" exhibition in 2002 (1) – is taken up again in these works on paper. Elsewhere are self-portraits with the artist's wife - Elke Kretzschmar, married since 1962- , and reversed double portraits - "Nase an Nase" and "Rücken an Rücken"- kinds of Siamese figures and fake Rorschach texts which visit the artist's unconscious mind. Lastly a series of horses bring a kaleidoscopic aspect to these watercolours with their symmetrical stances. Disjointed images of childhood memories in Saxony. This is an invitation to embark on an autobiographical voyage and an immersion into memory. Although these are no images of Epinal. Quite the opposite.

Baselitz overturns the idea of "minor" art that is often associated with watercolours: By his use – and here we are far from the tiny effects of the traditional watercolour technique – by his thoroughness, and freedom with which he uses this medium, these paintings acquire great power. Baselitz finds what Eric Darragon calls in the exhibition catalogue (2), "the anarchical principle" in watercolours which becomes anti-hierarchical against established models. Dilution of learned and set forms – Soviet realism – the emergence of memories as part of the unconscious flow of exploration. These massive flowing structures mark the journey into memory and past experience. Conversations with himself and his past to which this great painter invites us.

(1) in the exhibition CATALOGUE "Meine Neue Mütze". Ed. Ropac. Available in the gallery

(2) in the CATALOGUE "Die Monumentale Aquarelle" (Fr/ All) . Ed Minerva. Available in the gallery