



FONDATION  
GANDUR  
POUR L'ART

Press release

Exhibitions, art and science

## ***Noir, c'est noir? The Outrenoirs by Pierre Soulages***

### **THE FONDATION GANDUR POUR L'ART UNVEILS ITS FIRST EXHIBITION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SWISS FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY LAUSANNE (EPFL)**

*Geneva, 3 November 2016* – The Fondation Gandur pour l'Art has chosen the *Outrenoirs* by Pierre Soulages as the object of experimentation for its first joint exhibition with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). The exhibition, entitled *Noir, c'est noir? The Outrenoirs by Pierre Soulages*<sup>1</sup>, uses an experimental approach that combines art and science to offer a novel look at the works of the French artist. It opened today in the new EPFL campus building designed by the Japanese architect Kengo Kuma and inaugurated at the same time.

Born in France in 1919, Pierre Soulages has dedicated almost forty years of his life to researching "black light", developing a radical vision that gave rise to the works that he went on to name *Outrenoirs* [beyond black]. Through the colour black, the painter has been able to endlessly explore the relationship between matter and light, particularly the interaction of light with his own works. The *Outrenoirs* by Soulages produce ever-changing effects on light depending on the technique used and the thickness and treatment of the layers of paint, and according to the position of the viewer and the ambient lighting. These effects explain the importance that the artist places on the presentation and lighting of his works.

As part of this inaugural exhibition, five EPFL laboratories and related start-ups have researched this object of a relentless quest. Designed as an immersive experience, the scenography and the technologies used suggest new approaches to the understanding, presentation and preservation of the works. The exhibition focuses on the different ways in which the work of Pierre Soulages can be explored using light in a perceptive, experimental and interactive way, while at the same time examining the creation, conservation, reproduction and showcasing of the *Outrenoirs*, as well as the impact they have on the viewer.

**For Jean Claude Gandur, Chairman of the Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, this most recent project of the Foundation opens up a whole range of exciting new opportunities:** *"This first collaboration with EPFL laboratories and related start-ups allows us to envisage a whole new way of looking at our artistic heritage. The approach is, of course, fascinating to me as a collector, but is also of great interest to the art world in*

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<sup>1</sup> *Is black black ? The Outrenoirs by Pierre Soulages*



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*general, which will undoubtedly benefit from these new interactions. At the same time, I am a great believer in the educational and unifying properties of art within our society and I am delighted that we are able to provide students at a scientific campus with the opportunity to come face-to-face with works of art, whether as viewers or as researchers."*

Beyond the *Outrenoirs* by Pierre Soulages, the exploration of the relationship between art and science lies at the core of this new space on the EPFL campus, dedicated to museum research and experimentation. It also lies at the heart of the research that will be led, as of next year, by the Fondation Gandur pour l'Art Chair at EPFL. The *Outrenoirs* represent a particularly rich source of research and tie in perfectly with the Chair's objective of putting art at the disposal of scientific research with the aim of discovering new areas of interaction between the two disciplines.

The exhibition *Noir, c'est noir? The Outrenoirs by Pierre Soulages* will take place from 5 November 2016 to 23 April 2017.

#### **About the Fondation Gandur pour l'Art**

The Fondation Gandur pour l'Art was founded in Geneva by Swiss art collector and entrepreneur Jean Claude Gandur in 2010 with the aim of conserving, enriching and exhibiting the collections developed for over 40 years. Its mission includes making the collections available to museums, the academic world and the general public. Reflecting Jean Claude Gandur's conviction that culture should be accessible to all, the Foundation encourages access to art through temporary exhibitions, loans, online access and, more recently, the publication of reference catalogues. The Foundation has also developed a number of partnerships, notably with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL – Switzerland) and the National Museum Centre for Arts Reina Sofía (Spain). The Foundation strictly adheres to the code of ethics established by the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

The Foundation's collections cover three distinct areas: an archaeology collection with over 1,200 works of art from Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Near East; a collection with more than 750 European paintings, mostly post-war, considered as the most important one after the great Paris and London museums; a decorative arts collection with over 400 pieces, including decorative objects and pieces of art from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, as well as furniture by master cabinetmakers from the eighteenth century.

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