

## The Donation in Brief...

According to Bernard Blistène, former director of the Musée national d'art moderne (2013–2021), this exceptional donation brings an entirely new and unexpected dimension to the Museum's collection. As he emphasizes, assembling such a body of work today would be nearly impossible given the rarity of the pieces offered by Bruno and Barbara Decharme. These works enter into dialogue with the Museum's already rich holdings, particularly those by Jean Dubuffet, as well as the Donation Cordier, the studio of André Breton, and the more recent Kopac donation, all of which are closely linked to the history of art brut.

For Bruno Decharme: 'It was essential for me to create a body of work bringing together the major pieces in the collection. Many have no equivalent and are now impossible to find. To make them inalienable, to protect them from the risks of dispersal linked to the vagaries of time and family inheritance. To bring them into the spotlight by offering them to a prestigious museum. I also see this as a form of redress for a troubled history, marked by ignorance and misunderstandings—a responsibility shared between institutions that failed to recognize their value and certain defenders of outsider art who considered "official art" to be corrupted. Finally, to restore to these creators, so often ostracized, the place they deserve alongside renowned figures. And more simply, to offer visitors the opportunity to discover or rediscover extraordinary, enigmatic works.

The collection itself is structured around two main axes: on the one hand, the key figures of art brut, particularly those identified by Jean Dubuffet and considered part of its "classical" canon; on the other, contemporary productions, reflecting the ongoing vitality of art brut today.

The historical depth of the collection is further reinforced by the provenance of certain works. These include embroideries by Jeanne Tripier from Dubuffet's former collection, anonymous works discovered in Angola and acquired by Charles Ratton, as well as pieces reproduced in *Dictionnaire abrégé du surréalisme* (1938) by André Breton. Other works passed through significant hands, such as Dr. Gaston Ferdière, Anatole Jakovsky, and Claude Wiart, further anchoring the collection within both artistic and intellectual history.

Decharme's approach reflects a broader vision for art brut. While Jean Dubuffet originally positioned it in opposition to what he called "cultural art" in order to preserve its authenticity, Decharme adopts a more open perspective. Through this donation and the creation of a dedicated permanent gallery within the Museum, he seeks to highlight the specificity of art brut while encouraging dialogue with modern and contemporary art.

**Bruno Decharme began collecting art brut in the late 1970s and made his collection publicly accessible in 1999 with the creation of the abcd (art brut connaissance & diffusion) association. Its mission is to promote research on art brut through the study, publication, and exhibition of works, as well as through film production dedicated to these artists. With the support of Barbara Safarova—president of the association and program director at the Collège international de philosophie—the donation is accompanied by the creation of a research center within the Kandinsky Library. A permanent gallery dedicated to the donation will also be established, with displays renewed every six months.**