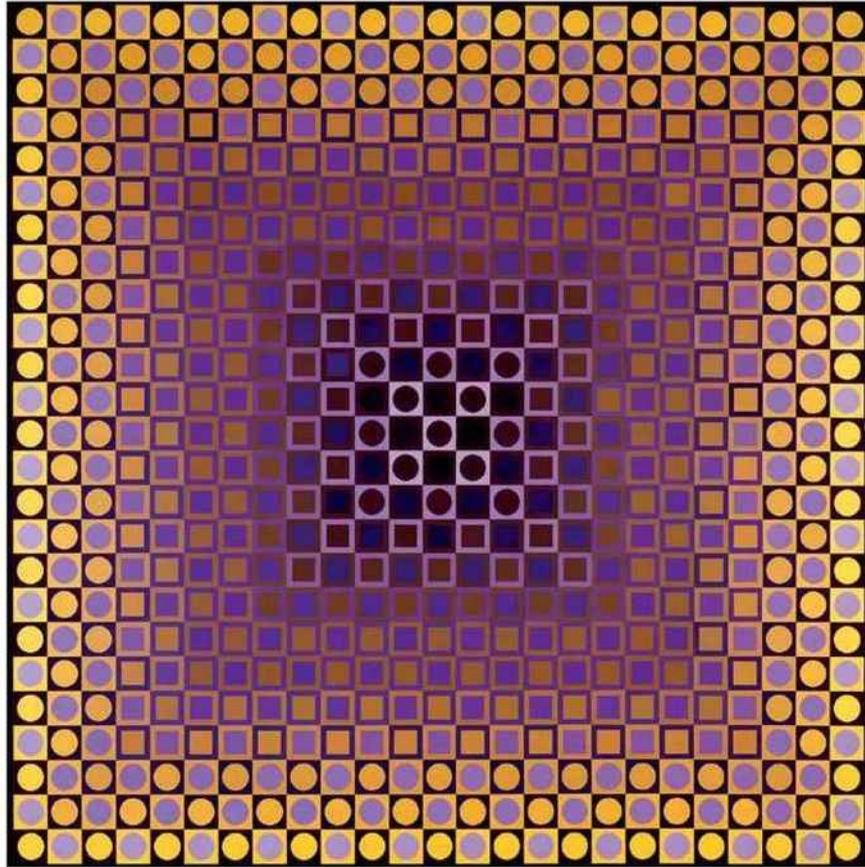


## Art Shows



The Whimsical Ladder in the Foliage by Maurice Denis at the Nab's Exhibition



Into the Universe of Victor Vasarely with Alom

# ART *for All*

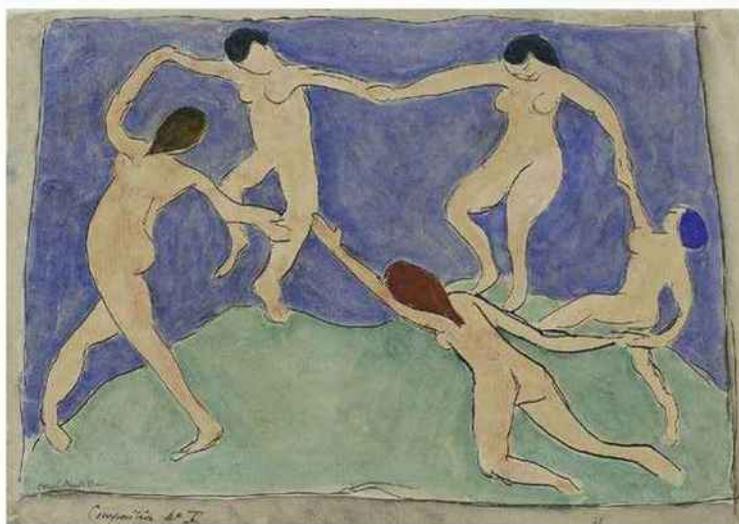
By *Patrica Valicenti*

There is never a shortage of cultural offerings in Paris and this month's offerings are particularly rich and diverse with, for instance, a veritable parade of the world's most prestigious painters in a host of shows ranging from the Courtauld Collection of 19th and 20th century French paintings, a dialogue between the works of Alexander Calder and Pablo Picasso, Van Gogh in digital and drawings by the masters from the Pushkin Museum. The divine, decorative works of the Nabis are also the object of a major exhibition and there is a retrospective devoted to the father of Op Art, Victor Vasarely. And on a different register and not to be missed is a comprehensive show telling the story of skin, our skin.

At the **Fondation Louis Vuitton** one of the most emblematic private art collections is on view through to June 17th, offering an opportunity to see the great French paintings of the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The exhibition, entitled the Courtauld Collection, brings together for the first time in 60 years in Paris some 110

works amassed by the English industrialist and patron of the arts Samuel Courtauld. The works on show include paintings and drawings all of which belonged to Samuel Courtauld and for the most part are conserved in the Courtauld Gallery in London. The path of the exhibition traces the development of Impressionism through to Post-Impressionism from the 1860s to the turn of the 20th century. Various sections of the show are devoted to major painters including Cézanne, Gauguin, Manet, Seurat, Renoir and Van Gogh. The show offers the opportunity to see a host of masterpieces including *Nevermore* by Gauguin, Renoir's *La Loge* (The Theatre Box), and Van Gogh's *Self Portrait with Bandaged Ear*.

The **Musée National Picasso - Paris** is hosting a show devoted to two of the most seminal figures in 20th century art, Alexander Calder and Pablo Picasso. While the crossover connections between the two artists are endless, both artists clearly explored the void, the absence of space, using it in the full range of their works from the figurative to the abstract. It is this theme that the exhibition, entitled *Calder-Picasso*, explores through some



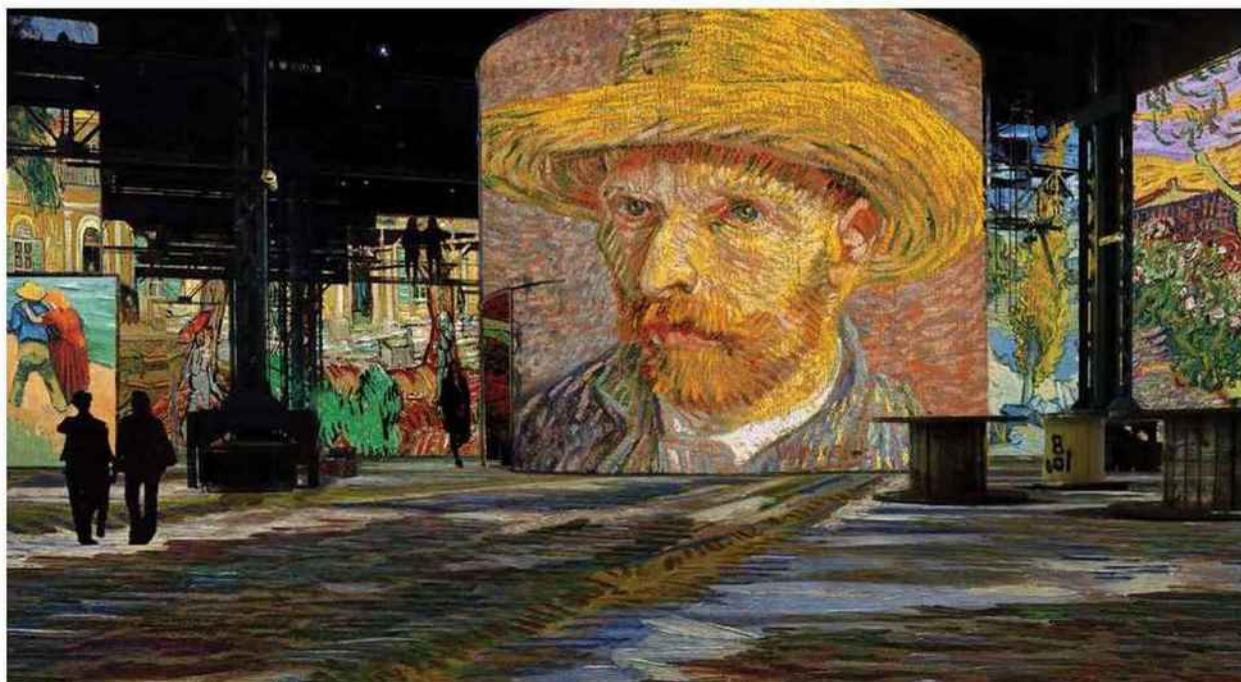
Top to bottom: Calder's iconic colourful oil on canvas at the Calder-Picasso exhibition  
The Celebrated Dance by Henri Matisse at the Pushkin Museum show  
An up close view of dry skin at the In My Skin exhibition

120 works from the two artists that show how they, each in their own way, dealt with the question of the void from a wider perspective. The show is running through to August 25th and includes iconic works including *Seven Black, Red and Blue* and *Josephine Baker IV* from Calder and *The Bull's Head* and the *Femme dans un Fauteuil* by Picasso.

The Nabis are taking centre stage at the **Musée du Luxembourg** in the Luxembourg Gardens marking the first time in France that a show has been devoted to the decorative arts of these Post-Impressionist avant-garde artists. The decorative arts were at the core of this movement whose artists sought to break down the border between the fine arts and the applied arts. It drew its inspiration from the ideas of William Morris who along with John Ruskin initiated the Arts and Crafts movement in England in the 1860s, which would spread to the continent. The ornamental occupied an important position in their creations and they would paint not only canvases but fans, screens, etchings, tapestries, wallpaper and stained glass. The Nabis would develop an art of simplified shapes, supple, marked by their lively colours and destined to brighten up contemporary interiors. They were pioneers of modern décor, Bonnard, Vuillard and Maurice Denis among them, who would defend a lively, joyful and original mode of expression. The show, entitled *The Nabis and Décor* and which opens on March 13th and is running through to June 30th, reconstitutes decorative ensembles that had been dispersed over time.

Meanwhile, **The Fondation Custodia** is presenting an exceptional exhibition of the drawing masterpieces of the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. This first exhibition of the graphic arts of the Pushkin Museum in France revolves around the European and Russian schools of drawing from the 15th to the 20th centuries. The incredible wealth of this selection unfolds through more than 200 works on display by, among others, Dürer, Veronese, Rubens, Fragonard, Tiepolo, Picasso, Matisse, Renoir, Van Gogh and Chagall. The show plunges the visitor into the history of drawing ranging from German works from the end of the Middle Ages through to the Renaissance and a journey into the 17th century with exceptional works by Poussin, Rembrandt and Rubens all the way through to the 20th century. The show, entitled *The Pushkin Museum, Five Hundred Years of Drawings by the Masters* is running through to May 12th.

One of the landmark exhibitions this season is the first retrospective in France dedicated to **Victor Vasarely**, regarded as the father of optic art, and which is being presented by the **Centre Pompidou**. Some 300 works, objects and documents have been brought together exploring the world of Vasarely, his prolific creation and showcasing every aspect of his work from the paintings to the sculptures, the multiples, architectural integrations to advertisements and the early studies. The show entitled *Vasarely. Sharing Forms*, follows a chronological and thematic path through the major periods of his career from his early training in his native Hungary in the 1920s, before settling in Paris in 1930,



Van Gogh's Starry Night goes digital at the Atelier des Lumières exhibition (top) and Van Gogh's Self Portrait with Bandaged Ear at the Courtauld Collection show (below)

to the development of abstract and optical art through to his final experiments inspired by science fiction. The show, which is running through to May 6th, also takes a look at the influence his art had on popular culture.

A colourful foray into the world of the digital arts is on hand at the **Atelier des Lumières**, the first centre for digital arts in Paris, which proposes monumental digital exhibitions plunging the visitor into the pictorial universe of major artists. Currently on the agenda is a show devoted to Vincent Van Gogh entitled *Van Gogh, the Starry Night*, running all year through to December 31st. The exhibition takes a digital look at the creativity of this major artist through his sunny landscapes, scenes of the night, portraits, the still lifes and the masterpieces all highlighting the chromatic wealth and diversity of his paintings. The sound and light exhibition traces the intense and at times tormented life of this artist who during the last 10 years of his life would create more than 2000 paintings.

And one of the most intriguing shows in town is devoted to the largest organ in the human body, the skin, which is the object of an exhibition entitled *In My Skin* at the **Musée de l'Homme**, the anthropological museum located in the Palais de Chaillot. The visitor enters the exhibition through a tunnel whose walls reproduce multi-photon images, a technique using a powerful laser microscopy that reveals the morphology of the various cells that make up the skin in their real-life proportions, the stratum corneum (the outermost layer of the skin), the epidermis, the dermis and the hypodermis. The show goes on to explore the complex structure of the skin, its role as the organ of touch, an explanation of the skin's colour including an interactive display, which enables the visitor to determine precisely the colour of his or her skin. The exhibition traces the functions of the skin, for example as a protective barrier to the elements, as well as exploring the signs of ageing, the micro-organisms that compose the skin and a section on how to heal it, from major burns, for example. The exhibition, which was conceived and produced by the French beauty company L'Oréal and the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle - Musée de l'Homme opens on March 13th and runs through to June 3rd.



#### ADDRESS BOOK

**CENTRE POMPIDOU** Place Georges-Pompidou (4th), 01 44 78 12 33

**FONDATION CUSTODIA** 121 rue de Lille (7th), 01 47 05 75 19

**FONDATION LOUIS VUITTON** 8 avenue du Mahatma Gandhi (16th), 01 40 69 96 00

**L'ATELIER DES LUMIERES** 38 rue Saint-Maur (11th), 01 80 98 46 00

**MUSÉE DE L'HOMME** 17 Place du Trocadéro (16th), 01 44 05 72 72

**MUSÉE DU LUXEMBOURG** 19 rue de Vaugirard (6th), 01 40 13 62 00

**MUSEE NATIONAL PICASSO - PARIS** 5 rue de Thorigny (3rd), 01 85 56 00 36