

“PASSEURS”

HISTORIANS, ART CRITICS AND ENLIGHTENED ART LOVERS EXHIBITION-DOSSIERS MAY-DECEMBER 2015

Indicated by grey-coloured walls, the exhibition-dossiers found throughout the circuit intensify the experience, offering numerous windows onto the history of modern art. These modules in various formats are renewed every six months, and explore a common issue. The first two sequences (in the second half of 2015 and the first half of 2016) are devoted to great “go-betweeners” in the shape of art critics and historians, enlightened art lovers and leading thinkers of the time, whose keen eye, tastes and friendships with artists made a decisive contribution to the development of 20th century art. Through their specific points of view, these figures helped to promote and shed light on modern works. The tribute paid to them within a circuit focused on the major landmarks of modern art provides some powerful, singular moments in exploring the writing and construction of the history of art.

Georges Duthuit, Blaise Cendrars, Guillaume Apollinaire, Jean Cocteau, Will Grohmann, Louis Aragon, André Breton, Georges Bataille, Jean Paulhan, Michel Ragon, Pierre Restany, Carla Lonzi and André Bloc are some of these

outstanding “go-betweeners”. All driven by an unflinching curiosity, attentive to the new and bold in their choices, they were genuine discoverers. Duthuit was one of the first to acclaim the work of Bram Van Velde, Sam Francis and Jean-Paul Riopelle. Meanwhile, Ragon supported the CoBra artists, informal art and outsider art right from their very beginnings, before developing an interest in architecture: a discipline that reflected his political convictions. Some of these often magnetic personalities with strong standpoints attracted constellations of artists, like Breton, the father of Surrealism, and Restany, the founder of New Realism. Occasionally themselves creators – such as the poets and writers Cendrars, Apollinaire, Cocteau and Aragon –, they launched out into the depths of modernity alongside the artists of their times.

These exhibition-dossiers, the joint endeavour of all the museum’s teams, are further highlighted by the *Cahiers du Musée national d’art moderne* (which will be devoting a special issue to each half-yearly sequence), and by various conferences and special study days staged at the Centre Pompidou.

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LEVEL 5, EXHIBITION-DOSSIERS CIRCUIT

